

1966

## 1966: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text

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**"THE  
BIBLE  
TODAY"**

Being the  
**Abilene Christian College  
Annual Bible Lectures  
1966**

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## PREFACE

Current trends and issues in theological study focus upon the significance of the Bible. Indeed, all theological differences within Christianity are dependent upon differing attitudes toward the Bible and how to obtain its meaning.

The Lectureship Committee at Abilene Christian College, with a view to keeping the Bible relevant to needs and issues of the present day, has outlined the 1966 Lectureship program to meet these problems head-on, and thus to furnish our visitors and the readers of this book with as much help as possible toward an adequate defense of "the faith once for all delivered to the saints." Several of the speeches grapple outright with the theological challenge at the doctrinal level and deal with matters like revelation, inspiration, authority, interpretation, and relevancy, in which are examined the basic attitudes toward the Bible itself. Next as a group come lectures which deal with major doctrines taught in the book—the Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the inner man. Then there are practical topics such as using the Bible devotionally, the proper attitude toward the Old Testament, and studies about the enduring Word and the influence of the Bible. Then there are practical applications like the relationship of the Bible toward science and toward "the New Morality."

As a continuing emphasis, several of our main speeches have a mission theme since we feel that this is always an urgent concern of real Christians.

To continue the theoretical and practical concerns of applying New Testament teaching to the needs of our own day, our panel discussions concern translations, archaeological finds, apologetic issues, and our attitude toward other religious groups as we try to win them to the New Testament way.

The committee feels that the Lectureship themes and speech topics in the past have faced issues which confront the church from year to year in a very satisfactory way, but they also feel that this is a continuing obligation and they desire to make the Abilene Christian College Annual Bible Lectureship to be a place where brethren can exchange and discuss ideas that will help them fight for the Lord in the very "forefront of the hottest battle." The Lectureship, of course, has many purposes in inspiring and informing Christians to greater service for the Lord, but this matter of staying relevant is an especial and continuing challenge.

This volume is dedicated to all who are armed with "the sword of the Spirit."

J. D. THOMAS  
Director

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# THEME SPEECHES

The Bible Today



# THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

RAY F. CHESTER

Ray F. Chester recently (January 1, 1966) began his ministry with the College Church in Searcy, Arkansas. Prior to his move to Searcy, he served as minister of the Sixteenth and Decatur Church in Washington, D. C. for almost nine years. While serving as minister in Washington he also was a liaison between Churches of Christ and the Military Chaplaincy. As a representative of the Endorsing Agency, he traveled in Labrador and Greenland in 1963, and in Germany in 1965. He was the speaker for the "Church of Christ Retreat" in Berchtesgaden in May, 1965.

Chester was born in Dalton, Arkansas in 1925. He is married to the former Fern Carver of Amarillo, Texas, and they have four children: Paul Douglas, 10; Philip Ray, 9; Nancy Katherine, 5; and John Thomas, 2.



He has served churches in Vernon, Texas and Lawton, Oklahoma, in addition to the ones mentioned above.

He is a 1950 graduate of Abilene Christian College. He has an M. A. from Eastern New Mexico University and an S. T. B. from the Wesley Theological Seminary. He has done additional work at American University.

He is a member of the Editorial Council of the Christian Family Book Club and Book Review Editor of the "North American Christian."

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There can be little question but that the Bible has lost some of the hold that it one time held over the lives of people. There is, however, still a lot of lip service paid to it. Every four years in January our President-elect places his hand on the Bible to be sworn into office. In June the bride goes down the aisle carrying a white Bible topped with an orchid. In September parents see that the departing college student puts a Bible into his trunk. It is a perennial best seller. We give it a kind of symbolic honor but perhaps withhold from it the highest honor—that of ordering our lives by it.

Perhaps you remember seeing the coronation of Queen Elizabeth on Television. During the ceremony she was presented a copy of the Bible. The words of the presentation were: "To keep your Majesty ever mindful of the Law and the Gospel of God as the rule for the whole life and government of Christian Princes, we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is Wisdom; this is the Royal Law; these are the lively oracles of God."

While the majority pay it lip service, there have always been those who have acted as though it is "the most valuable thing that this world affords." There have been those who have gone to the ends of the earth at great personal sacrifice to master curious, complicated languages, and have risked and given their lives so that this Book could be published and distributed, and its message proclaimed, in the face of official threats and popular violence. Whether in ancient catacombs, medieval dungeons, or modern prisons there have always been those who have staked their lives on the validity and veracity of this Book.

While the few have taken it seriously the many have treated it lightly. During World War II, the Shakespearean actor Maurice Evans daringly undertook to present Shakespeare to GI audiences. One soldier wrote this comment: "I must confess that my limited experience of Shakespeare has caused me to regard him in rather the same light that most of us regard religion: concede that it is good and let it go at that!" This is what all too many have done to the Bible. No doubt the Bible still takes a place and exercises a power far greater than we commonly realize as suggested by Henry Rogers' *THE ECLIPSE OF FAITH*. He imagined what the world would be like if all traces of the Bible were wiped out. Many art treasures would disappear and much of the world's great literature would vanish. "But it is incontestable that interest in the Bible has generally receded, the practice of Bible reading steadily declined, and knowledge of the Bible rapidly diminished"<sup>1</sup>

### CRITICISM AND EVOLUTION CONTRIBUTE TO DECLINE

The reason why the Bible is not credited with the same authority today is not located in the Bible, because the Bible has not changed. The reason for its declining influence is to be found in the attitudes of those who come to the Bible. Because of certain methods of approaching the Bible, many are not sure how much of the Bible is left to us. The two methods that have been most influential in producing the attitude of skepticism are Criticism and Evolution.

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1 J. K. S. Reid, *The Authority of Scripture*, (1957), p. 11.

Criticism began with secular literature. The classics were examined in order to discover how far a pure text could be reconstructed from which would be excluded all the errors that had been included through transmission through the years. Criticism was applied in other ways also—to discover the sources from which the author had drawn his material. For a time distinction between sacred and secular literature was maintained and criticism was applied only to secular literature. But suddenly the distinction gave way and the Bible was studied as any other book. The techniques of criticism were applied and these have led to the theory that in the Pentateuch, which had been believed to have been written by Moses, we have a compilation of material from different writers at different times. The gospels were subjected to the same treatment and have come to be viewed as compilations from earlier sources. With the authenticity of the Bible thus questioned its authority received a damaging blow.

Evolution is a second factor contributing to the loss of authority the Bible holds over modern man. Just as recovery was being made from the Copernican revolution which displaced the earth from the center of the universe and it was understood that it was still possible to have faith and to read the Bible, there was administered another blow. The theory of evolution was advanced which seemed to contradict the Biblical view of creation. According to the theory man is not the immediate creation of the Creator. This seemed to contradict Genesis and it was held that the veracity of the Bible was undermined. This led to a diminishing of its authority. The Scriptures that had been divided up into fragments by criticism were now divided up into the

valuable and the valueless. An evolutionary principle was applied to the Scriptures that saw man beginning with a very primitive conception of God and evolving to the ethical monotheism of the prophets. Whatever authority was left was to be found in only a small part of the Scripture. This view of the Bible commonly allowed no room for the supernatural activity of God, and treated the kingdom of God in terms of man's moral progress rather than in terms of God's action in salvation and judgment. Though the evolutionary view with its optimism has been largely abandoned, the damage has not been repaired.

#### TOWARD A TRUE VIEW OF BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

Believers have at times claimed too much for the Bible and have tried to make it authoritative in areas where it does not claim to have authority. The Bible is not a scientific textbook. Science is concerned with how things happen; the Bible is concerned with why they happen. Some have been so obsessed with proving the Bible by science that they have missed what it is really saying to us. The Bible is neither proved nor disproved by science. The Bible is a book about God. It is not a book about astronomy. Though it tells of stars, its real concern is the Bright and Morning Star. It is not a book about botany, although it has some lovely things to say about flowers. Its main concern is about Him who is the "Lily of the Valley"—the one altogether lovely. It is not a book of jurisprudence, though it has law in it. The Bible does not tell us how to make machinery, but it does tell how to make men who are safe with machines. It does not tell how to build political techniques, but it does tell how to make men who can be trusted

with government. It does not tell how to build roads, but it does tell how to make men who can be trusted on them.

The Bible has educational authority as history, literature and religion. We cannot hope to understand the history of the world unless we are prepared to take seriously the Bible as one of the shaping forces. We cannot hope to enter richly into the literature of the world in ignorance of one of the most pervasive influences upon it. If we are concerned in any way with the hold of religion upon the minds of men we cannot afford to be ignorant of one of the major sources of and witnesses to that influence.

We are concerned, however, with a more searching claim for the Bible—that it is God speaking to us and that our response to His word determines our destiny. The stakes are high and the issues are clear. If it is what it claims then it is ignored at our eternal peril.

### Our Religion Centers in a Person

To properly understand the authority of the Bible we must get some other things clearly in mind. One thing is that ultimate authority resides in God and in His revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ. Our religion is not the religion of a book. It is a religion that centers in a person. We begin then, in both evangelism and in apologetics, not with proof for a book, but with the proclamation of a person. Recently in a certain area a television program was started. The first program dealt with the infallible book. The effort was made to establish our source of authority in this book by rather elaborate arguments from fulfilled prophecy, miracles,

and its excellence in various ways. Then on the basis of the infallible book, knowledge of God, Christ, the church and the way of salvation was derived. The theme song for the program is, "How Precious is the Book Divine, by Inspiration Given." How would one defend against the charge of bibliolatry? I submit to you that they would have had a difficult time had they lived in the first century. Although the church had its Scriptures, the Old Testament, it did not have the New Testament. They did, however, have the gospel. They proclaimed the message of Jesus Christ with authority. They wrote down what they had been proclaiming as their testimony to God's saving act in Jesus Christ and the continuing work of the Spirit of God in those who were called into the new fellowship—the church. I believe that we must begin at the same point today both in our preaching and in our understanding of the authority of the Bible. The church lives by proclamation—the proclamation of Jesus Christ and not by a polemic on the doctrine of the Bible. I hasten to add that we know Jesus Christ only through the book about Him and thus the Bible is indispensable, but I still maintain that our starting point is of utmost importance if we would come out at the right place. This was the position of the great conservative scholar B. B. Warfield. He declared:

Let it not be said that thus we found the whole Christian system upon the doctrine of plenary inspiration. We found the whole Christian system upon the doctrine of plenary inspiration as little as we found it upon the doctrine of angelic existences. Were there no such thing as inspiration, Christianity would be true, and all its essential doctrines would be credibly witnessed to us in the generally trustworthy reports of the teaching of our Lord and of his authoritative agents in founding the church,

preserved in the writings of the apostles and their first followers, and in the historical witness of the living church. Inspiration is not the most fundamental of Christian doctrines, nor even the first thing we prove about the Scriptures. It is the last and crowning fact as to the Scriptures. These we first prove authentic, historically credible, generally trustworthy, before we prove them inspired.<sup>2</sup>

Warfield expressed himself even more forcibly as follows:

We are in entire harmony in this matter with what we conceive to be the very true statement recently made by Dr. George P. Fisher, that 'if the authors of the Bible were credible reporters of revelations of God, whether in the form of historical transactions of which they were witnesses, or of divine mysteries that were unveiled to their minds, their testimony would be entitled to belief, even if they were shut up to their unaided faculties in communicating what they had thus received.' We are in entire sympathy in this matter therefore, with the protest which Dr. Marcus Dods raised in his famous address at the meeting of the Alliance of the Reformed Churches at London, against representing that 'the infallibility of the Bible is the ground of the whole Christian faith.' We judge with him that it is very important indeed that such a misapprehension, if it is anywhere current, should be corrected.<sup>3</sup>

Don McGaughey has written:

While we affirm that the Bible is propositional revelation, we must remember that the revelation of God in Jesus Christ cannot be 'proved' from miracles, prophecy, or infallibility. We must not lapse again into the error of put-

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<sup>2</sup> B. B. Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, (1948) p. 210.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 211.

ting the Bible ahead of Christ.

We cannot bring the world to the Bible and say, 'See, there it is, an infallible book, verified by its fulfilled prophecy and miracles.' Modern man will not believe it. He is not convinced by the argument from prophecy. He is left cold by the miracles. And he questions infallibility.

What we can do (and this is precisely what the Bible does) is to bring modern man to the message and say, 'Listen, listen to what it is saying. It is speaking to you, in your condition.'<sup>4</sup>

### Christianity—An Historical Religion

We also need to understand that the Christian religion is an historical religion. "The history of Israel, culminating in Jesus Christ and his church, is a unique history with a significance paralleled by no other historical development."<sup>5</sup> The decisive manifestation of God and His will for man is to be found in historical events that transpire at specific times and places. The Biblical faith takes history very seriously since it is the arena where God has revealed Himself. We often meet religious people who have a religion of contemplation and their scriptures or sacred books seek to lift one's thoughts to the heights but they have no interest in historic events. Others have a religion of morality and their criterion for right action becomes reason or common sense. But the feeling is that our reason is just as good as anyone else's and there is no reason to look back except

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<sup>4</sup> Don H. McGaughey, "Revelation in Jesus Christ—An Apologetic for Today," *Restoration Quarterly*, Vol. 6, No. 4, (1962), p. 250.

<sup>5</sup> Alan Richardson, "Scripture, Authority of," in *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. 4, p. 250.

for examples of right action. There is no real interest in decisive acts in history.<sup>6</sup>

The Bible is a book of history. The religion of Israel was based on the decisive event of the Exodus and the making of the covenant at Sinai. Long before the Old Testament came into being as a collection of sacred literature, it was the belief of Israel that God had spoken to her with authority in the wonderful act of deliverance in the Exodus from Egypt, and had given her the covenant through Moses at Sinai. "Throughout her history Israel looked back to these events as conveying proof of God's graciousness and of his imperious, moral claim." The revelation was not given all at once, though this was the formative event. By subsequent events and by men who interpreted their significance Yahweh made known to Israel His character and purpose. Repeated references are made to the Exodus throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. The prophets were God's spokesmen in His controversy with Israel for having failed to live up to the demands of the covenant; thus they sought to call Israel back to the faith and practice of Israel in her first days as a covenant people.

The formative event for the New Testament faith is the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. This was what Paul said he preached (I Cor. 15:1-4). Upon the basis of the resurrection Jesus was proclaimed as Lord (Acts 2:36-38). Jesus Christ is the central figure in the Christian faith. His

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6 Roy Bowen Ward, "Is The Restoration Principle Valid?" in *New Testament Christianity: The Message for Modern Man* (1965 Pepperdine Lecture) p. 54.

7 A. M. Ramsey, "The Authority of the Bible," in *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*, (1963), p. 1.

importance imparts an importance to the book which is the record of His life. The Bible is the only book of its kind. All we know about Jesus Christ is to be found in this book. Other books may tell of the work of Jesus Christ in the lives of men today but the New Testament is the only historical witness.

The Scriptures, like the church, have no authority apart from Christ. The Bible derives its authority from the authority of Christ. If Christ is "Lord," then the Bible is authoritative. But if Christ is just a man like other men, even though a very good man, perhaps a religious genius, then the Bible is just a book like other books, doubtless a very good one, and perhaps a work of religious genius. But if Christ is unique, then the Bible is unique. This is not because of the "ideas" found in it, but because it is a book of history.

### THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST

There is no possibility of driving a wedge between Christ and the Scriptures. The only Christ we know is the Christ of the Bible but the authority of the Bible is dependent on Christ. He was a real person who lived at a certain place and time in history and expressed His divine authority in many ways. He expressed it in what He claimed for Himself. He claimed to be the Son of Man, the Son of God, and the Savior of men. "The Son of man" he said, "came... to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). Men were in the power of sin, captured by it like a traveler captured by a brigand in a strange land, in servitude to sin as a man is a slave to a master from whom he cannot es-

cape. Jesus is the emancipator of mankind from the power of sin. He refused to acquiesce to the wishes of James and John who wanted to call down fire from heaven to obliterate an inhospitable Samaritan village by saying, "The Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives but to save them" (Luke 9:56). Here is the very essence of the gospel—He didn't come to destroy but to save. He desired to save men both from the continued folly and the ultimate consequences of their sin. Christ is the Son who is greater than John the Baptist (Luke 3:15); than Jonah (Matt. 12:41); than Solomon (Matt. 12:42); than the Temple (Matt. 12:6); and He is Lord of the sabbath (Matt. 12:8). His word is to be accepted as authoritative not because He is a religious genius, the most sensitive of religious souls, the most perceptive prophet, but because He was the Son.

He claimed to be the determiner of destiny. It was His claim—and no claim can go any further—that a man's reaction to Him settled that man's eternal destiny. "Whoever is ashamed of me and of my words," he said, "of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory" (Luke 9:26; Mark 8:38). "Everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God; but he who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God" (Luke 12:8f.; Matt. 10:32f.). It is the claim of Jesus that response to Him is the test which settles a man's eternal destiny. This distinguishes Him from a prophet. A prophet spoke the word of the Lord, but the nature of his own person did not enter into the destiny of his hearers. But with Christ it was different. He ended the Sermon on the Mount by saying that the disposition one made of His words determined whether he was wise

or foolish (Matt. 7:24). He claimed to be the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Good Shepherd, the Judge at the last day. In Him is light, life, salvation, and the resurrection. To reject Him is to choose doom, darkness and judgment.<sup>8</sup>

In the manner in which He taught, our Lord expressed His authority. Whereas the scribes and rabbis taught by appealing to other authorities, that is, other rabbis who had lived before, Jesus said repeatedly, "I say unto you" (Matt. 7:29). He spoke as one who knew truth and was truth.

By His actions He expressed His lordship. He commanded the blind to see, the lame to walk, the deaf to hear and the dead to live. He demonstrated Himself to be in control over the forces of nature by stilling the storm and by walking on the water. The demon possessed acknowledged His authority. (Mark 1:23-27; 5:7; 3:11).

The Lordship of Christ was at the center of the Christian proclamation. On Pentecost Peter declared: "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36). In the classic statement about His Lordship in Colossians there are three tremendous truths which are the basis for Paul's claims, any one of which would be sufficient reason why He is Lord. "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the

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<sup>8</sup> Bernard Ramm, *The Pattern of Authority*, (1957), pp. 46-49.

head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross" (Col. 1:15-20). (1) He is Lord because He is God. "For in him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell" (vs. 19). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh..." (John 1:1, 14). (2) Christ is Lord because He is Creator. "For in him all things were created" (Col. 1:16). "All things were made through him" (John 1:3). (3) Christ is Lord because He is our Redeemer. "And through him to reconcile to himself all things, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him..." (Col. 1:20-22). The New Testament as a whole bases the Lordship of Jesus upon this fact. It does not shrink from declaring that Jesus is God and that He is the Maker of all things, but when it speaks of His lordship, it bases that lordship not so much upon His deity or His creative activity as upon the fact that Jesus died for our sins. With wonder and adoration Paul recounted the humiliation and exaltation of Christ. He spoke of His pre-existence: Christ existed from eternity in the form of God and on an equality with God. Then he spoke of the incarnation: Christ emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant and being made in the likeness of men. He showed how He died the shameful death of the cross. And having thus traced the steps in the humiliation of Christ all the way from

heaven's glory to Calvary's cross, Paul then recounted the exaltation of Christ: "wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). Christ has been given lordship because He died for humanity's sins. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory" (Rev. 5:12).

Somewhere I read about a little boy who carved a boat for himself out of a block of wood. He cut away at the wood and finally had the boat just as he wanted it. He took a piece of cloth and fashioned a sail for it. He took some bright paint and painted it the desired color, and then proudly he took his boat in hand and walked to the nearest stream to put it to the test. With great joy he watched it as it floated upon the water. But in his excitement he let the boat get out of reach, and very sadly he saw it float farther and farther away until finally it was gone. Dejectedly, he turned and went back home. Sometime after that as he walked down the streets of his town, he looked in a shop window and saw a boat that looked very much like his. The more closely he examined it, the more convinced he was that it was his boat. There were on it the marks of his own workmanship, and he knew that it was his.

Going into the store, the boy inquired of the owner about the boat and was told how much it would cost. He went

out and worked for the money, came back, and bought the boat. As he fondly took it into his arms, the storekeeper heard him say, "Little boat, you are mine. You are mine twice. You are mine because I made you. You are mine because after I made you and lost you, I bought you back with my own money. You are mine twice, little boat."

Now I think that Christ could say of us, "You are mine. You are mine twice. You are mine because I made you. You are mine because after having lost you through your sin, I bought you back with my own blood. I have the right to be your Lord, to claim your love and your loyalty."

#### THE AUTHORITY OF THE APOSTLES

Although Jesus Christ is the supreme revelation of God He did not leave any written material. While He was here in person He exercised His authority in person but when He left this world it was necessary that His authority be mediated in some manner. The apostles were called and appointed for this purpose. They were witnesses of His life, teaching, death and resurrection (Luke 1:2; Acts 1:21-22; Heb. 2:3-4; I John 1:1-3). They received a special anointing of the Holy Spirit in order to carry out their mission (John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26; 16:13ff.). As ambassadors they carried in their persons the authority of the one who sent them (Luke 10:16).

The apostles proclaimed the good news of God's redeeming action in Christ (II Cor. 5:19). When men responded to the grace of God they were baptized into Christ and were thus a part of His body, the church, and in union with the crucified and risen Lord (Rom. 6:1-11; I Cor. 12:13). They shared together in partaking of the body and

blood of Christ and affirmed their faith in His atoning death and His future coming (I Cor. 10:16-17; 11:26). The preaching of the apostles set forth the gospel of divine salvation through the life, death and exaltation of Jesus Christ in fulfillment of the scriptures, and His gift of the Holy Spirit. The sacrifice of Christ and His resurrection had a central place in their preaching. The apostles were regarded as having special authority. This authority was exercised with humility and self-effacement but was essential to the unity of the church. Thus from the beginning the church was ruled by the divine word, even though it was not as yet inscripturated.

### THE CANON

As the generation of the apostles died out and the church confronted heresies it was necessary for the church to consider the nature and source of its doctrine. The Old Testament was accepted by the church as a Christian collection because it testified to Christ. The apostolic writings were accepted as the doctrinal norm because of the special relationship the apostles sustained to Christ as eye witnesses. There was a gradual acceptance of the canon of twenty-seven books as making up the New Testament.

Though the church made the canon of the New Testament this does not make the authority of the Bible rest on the authority of the church. The church did not confer authority on the apostolic writings; it only acknowledged their authority. It is the faith of the church that God had revealed Himself in great acts in history and that men were inspired by the Holy Spirit to interpret and witness to those events and thus the writings become a part of the self-

revelation of God. "No prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (II Peter 1:21).

Having adopted a canon of scripture the church must submit every question of faith and morals to a test of scripture and is no longer free to adopt new doctrines which are not founded in the canonical writings. Far from placing itself above Scripture, the church placed itself under Scripture, saying in effect: This is the rule and standard to which the faith and conduct of the church must conform if it is to remain genuinely Christian. The fixing of the canon was of singular importance because it was a marking out of the boundary lines beyond which the church was not to wander. Oscar Cullmann has written:

The fixing of the Christian canon of Scripture signifies precisely that the Church herself at a given moment traced a clear and firm line of demarcation between the period of the apostles and the period of the Church... in other words, between apostolic tradition and ecclesiastical tradition. If this was not the significance of the formation of the canon the event would be meaningless. By establishing the principle of a canon, the Church recognized in this very act that from that moment tradition was no longer a criterion of truth. She drew a line under the apostolic tradition. She declared implicitly that from that moment every subsequent tradition must be submitted to the control of the apostolic tradition. In other terms, she declared: here is the tradition which constituted the Church, which imposed itself on her.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Oscar Cullmann, "Scripture and Tradition," *Scottish Journal of Theology*, VI, 2 (June, 1953), p. 126.

Church history has amply demonstrated that when the Bible has been lost from sight, overlaid with the traditions of men, Christianity has fallen on evil days—has languished and sunk into ineffectiveness. When the Bible has been restored to its rightful place, then renewal of vitality, purpose and authority result.

The Bible is authoritative for the Christian because it is God's word. In the Old Testament He speaks the word of promise, in the New Testament, the word of apostolic witness. Through these we are enabled to hear the Word who is Jesus Christ Himself. The Bible does not become a mere text-book of rules for living or a book of creedal proof-texts. It presents to us the King who draws us into a Kingdom where the fundamental relationship is that of love for God and man. The Bible does not give us rules to deal with every ethical problem but it does tell us how Christ masters all of life (Gal. 2:20). In a sense every verse contributes to an understanding of what His authority involves. The Bible is very specific on some matters but on many of the great issues of today it gives no slick answers. It does suggest what it claims to be the right attitude toward life as a whole, and gives us certain signposts pointing in the direction we ought to be traveling. Speaking on this Lectureship in 1962, Everett Ferguson said:

The authoritative Word, first oral and then written, called men into a fellowship. This new community partook of the character of the revelation-event itself, and we must assume therefore that it forms a standard and pattern for our participation in God's revealing activity. The apostles organized churches in a certain way. This is the way the new life in Christ expressed itself in an outward way when that word was spoken in its purity and churches were organized by men who were the closest to the fountain of

divine truth. To seek to go through the outward forms to the inner spirit would surely be a fatal mistake, often made by our people. On the other hand, to seek to respond to the Spirit in an amorphous way or to suppose that we have been left without authoritative guidance on how to express and preserve the community intended by the word is to follow a path of uncertainty and futility. When men respond to the word in faith, they naturally turn to that word for guidance in all that pertains to their religious life. In worship, organization, and discipline, we find the early Christians acting according to the genius of the message they had received. Their activity of response is of course not as basic or essential as the redemption itself but in its own sphere is as normative.<sup>10</sup>

We need the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we approach this book that we may truly submit to the authority of Jesus Christ. It is possible to appeal to the Bible to prove only what we have already accepted as true and want to preserve. We need to let it sit in judgment on our actions and to be corrected by its penetrating word. Let us not pay a lip service to the proper doctrine of the Bible but deny it the authority over our lives. Sometimes as a people, we have let tradition come between us and the authoritative word. We who stand in the tradition of the Restoration Movement with its plea of "Back to the Bible" should be willing to take the risks involved in such a plea and be willing to change our practices as we study and apply the word of God to our day.

The Bible is a drama—there is the struggle between good and evil which is characteristic of drama—but it is not one that you can view from a grandstand seat. We must be

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<sup>10</sup> Everett Ferguson, "Religious Authority," *The Restoration Principle* in the Abilene Christian College Annual Bible Lectures (1962), pp. 62, 63.

willing to get on the stage and be participants. Paul Minear has put it this way:

It is as if in the theater, where I am hugely enjoying an esthetic view of life, God interrupts the show with a stentorian announcement: "Is John Smith in the house?" And I am John Smith. And the interruption continues; "Report immediately...for a task intended for you alone!"<sup>11</sup>

William Lyon Phelps once said that every Bible ought to have written on its cover these words: "Highly explosive, handle with care." The word of God is dynamite. Its truth can revolutionize life. Obedient to its teaching, men and women have left home and family to carry its message to the uttermost parts of the earth. But whether at home or abroad, those who take it seriously face the prospect of judgment upon their selfish ways and of being led through new paths of witness and service into the joys of their Lord.

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<sup>11</sup> Paul Minear, *Eyes of Faith* (1946), p. 19.

# THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURE

FRANK PACK

Frank Pack was born March 27, 1916, in Memphis, Tennessee, where he attended the public schools and the Memphis Technical High School. He attended David Lipscomb College and received the B.A. degree from the University of Chattanooga and the M.A. degree from Vanderbilt University. He was awarded the Ph.D. by the University of Southern California. Pack holds membership in the following honor societies: Phi Beta Kappa; Phi Kappa Phi; Pi Gamma Mu; Alpha Chi. He holds membership in the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, the American Academy of Religion, and the American Society of Church History.

Brother Pack has served as local minister for the Reid Avenue and the Grace Avenue Churches in Nashville; the St. Elmo Church in Chattanooga, the Burbank, California, congregation, the Northside

Church in Abilene, Texas, and is currently serving the Culver-Palms congregation in Los Angeles.



Pack has taught in David Lipscomb College, in the University of Southern California, and has served as professor of Bible at Abilene Christian College, where he taught for fourteen years. He was professor of religion at Pepperdine College of Los Angeles from 1947-1949 and returned to Pepperdine in early 1964 as Chairman of the Department of Religion.

He serves on the staff of the *Gospel Advocate* and the *20th Century Christian* and is a member of the editorial committee

of the Gospel Press. He is the editor of *Our Bible*, a book of essays written as a *Festschrift* for six retiring faculty and staff members of Abilene Christian College.

Among Brother Pack's honors are the trustees' citation as an outstanding teacher in Abilene Christian College for 1958, and the annual McGarvey award for the outstanding article in the *Restoration Quarterly*, "A Study of Papyrus Bodmer II." His dissertation study on the methodology of Origen in New Testament Textual Criticism received special mention in an article on textual criticism written by Dr. M. M. Parvis in the *New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*.

Frank Pack and Miss Della Carlton were married June 22, 1947, in Los Angeles, California.

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The subject of this lecture takes us immediately to the heart of the authority of the book that we know as the Bible and its uniqueness among all the books of the world. Why can the Bible be called truly The Book? What gives it such a profound place in the history of man, in the experience of the faithful believer, in our own personal lives from day to day? Whatever may be said of its beautiful language, its literary qualities, and its many styles of writing its uniqueness and power do not lie here. Rather its power as the living word that transforms and shapes men's lives lies in the fact that it is a book that claims to have been inspired by God and brings God's word as its message for each one of us, laying us under its demand and judging our lives. This claim is made simply in the language of Paul in II Tim. 3:16, "All scripture is inspired of God." The expression "inspired of God" translates a Greek word "theopneustos" which literally means "God-breathed." Our English word "inspired" and its noun form "inspiration" come from the

Latin "inspirare" meaning "to breathe into." Thus when Paul says, "All scripture is inspired of God," he is asserting that all scripture is an expression of God's Spirit, that God's Spirit is in scripture as my breath and my spirit are in my words. As my words reveal and communicate to you the thoughts of my mind, so the things of God are made known to men through the words of the God-inspired scriptures.

What a mighty claim this is! How dramatically it confronts rebellious and sinful man, so often proud in the discovery of his own ways, and so often heedless of the light and direction that come from God.

In studying this theme, we need to have the same honesty and desire for truth that we would in the study of any Biblical theme. We need to lay aside preconceived ideas that may be in our mind and allow the Biblical witness to speak to us fully and completely, approaching this testimony honestly. This is a difficult thing to do, because in this modern age the inspiration of the Bible has been treated so emotionally pro and con. Those who have opposed the traditional position of the Bible's inspiration have spoken derogatorily of the erection of "a paper pope." They have set up a straw man in speaking of "verbal dictation" and declaring that this position looks upon God as a boss who dictates his word to the writers as though they were secretaries. On the other hand those who have defended the traditional point of view have oftentimes found themselves swept away by a kind of hysteria that has made them claim more for the scriptures than they claim for themselves. There have been times in church history when the pointing of the Hebrew text was claimed to have been divinely in-

spired, and translations of the Bible had claims of inspiration advanced in their behalf. It seems to me that the only way believers in the Bible can approach this subject is the same way in which we have endeavored to approach any other subject connected with the Christian faith. First, we must study the claims that the Bible makes for itself. What do the writers claim directly or indirectly about their inspiration? Second, we must study carefully the phenomena of the scriptures to understand the nature of that guidance from God that is called inspiration.

When we raise the question, "What does the Bible claim for itself?" the cry arises that this is an illegitimate quest. The scriptures ought not to be appealed to for their own vindication, it is said. Yet in all fairness it seems that a witness should be allowed to give his own testimony, to make his own claims, and set forth his defense. This is recognized as a right in any court of law. We see how that this same objection was made during the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ to the self-testimony that he gave. While he introduced other witnesses he himself recognized the fact, "Even if I bear witness of myself, my testimony is true, for I know whence I have come and whither I am going, but you do not know whence I come or whither I am going" (John 8:14, cf. John 5:31). The divine Son of God could not have a higher witness than the testimony that he gave to himself because of his origin. Likewise the Bible itself makes certain claims that must be heard, and because the Bible claims to be the word of God, it has the self-authenticating and verifying value that makes it right for us to look at its own testimony.

We can best begin our investigation of the Bible's teaching on inspiration by looking at a group of basic texts on

this subject. In beginning the Epistle to the Hebrews the writer states, "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world" (Heb. 1:1, 2). This passage of scripture makes the fundamental declaration that God has spoken to man, but he spoke in many and various ways to those of old through his prophets, who were his messengers to bring his unfolding will. He did not give his last and full word to any one of these prophets nor to them collectively. It also tells us that he has climaxed this by speaking unto us today through a Son, the heir of all things in this universe as well as the Son through whom he created all things, by whom he upholds all things, and through whom he redeems a lost and tragically misguided world. God is depicted upon the pages of the Bible as a God who mightily *acts* to carry out his purposes in the universe and in the affairs of men. But he also *speaks* to man that man may understand his actions and may discern his purposes and yield himself to the purposes of the Almighty. This passage also tells us that God has spoken through men using them as his messengers and supremely through that man Jesus who is called the Christ and is here called a Son. In Jesus Christ God spoke through his mighty deeds and through his words of teaching that were given with authority. He also spoke through his death upon the cross and his resurrection from the grave. He spoke through the Spirit-guided apostles who received their commission and their power from the Lord himself. It was the risen Christ who said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matt. 28:18). The writer of Hebrews further declares that this great salvation was first declared by the Lord himself and was confirmed or attested to us by

those who heard him. God's witness was added to their testimony through the signs and wonders and mighty miracles that were worked through the Holy Spirit (Heb. 2:3, 4). Thus in both the Old Covenant and the New Covenant God has spoken, to the fathers through the Old by the words of the prophets, and to us through the New by a Son whose words and deeds have been attested by God through those who heard and who were with him.

Paul in writing to Timothy declares, "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 Tim. 3:16, 17). While this passage has primary reference to the Old Testament scriptures, it expresses a general principle that is applicable to the other scriptures, including the writings of Paul (See II Peter 3:16). For through the Old Testament comes the testimony pointing to Christ and thus can instruct for salvation through faith in Christ (II Tim. 3:15). These writings are profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training that makes the man of God complete because they are inspired by God. One notices immediately that this passage is speaking of the product or end result, which is the scripture or the writing. The very nature of the authority of the Bible is bound up with the fact that it is the word of God. This is why the New Testament can say "the word of God is living and active" (Heb. 4:12). It is God's Spirit that has produced the writing and it is God's authority that is back of the message.

The meaning of inspiration is enlarged to include the human persons who produced the writing in II Peter

1:20, 21. Peter declares, "First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." Peter asserts that just as he and the other apostles had not followed "cleverly devised myths" in declaring the great events of the gospel, neither did the prophecies of the Old Testament come out of the private interpretations and guesses of the prophet. He is not writing here concerning the right and responsibility of each individual to read and properly interpret the Bible for himself. Throughout the scriptures and in the practice of both the Jewish synagogue and the early church this responsibility was taken for granted as can be abundantly shown. Peter is discussing the origin of prophecy and refutes the notion that the prophet was giving his own private interpretation when he was foretelling the great events that the gospel bears witness to. No prophecy "ever came by the impulse of man," for it has a higher source than this. "Men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God," which emphasizes the fact that these were inspired men. They were borne along by the power of God's Holy Spirit as a sailboat with its sails filled might be borne along by the power of the wind. They were divinely filled to speak what they spoke "from God." Not only are the writings inspired but the men who spoke God's message and wrote these prophecies were inspired.

To understand how authoritative their message is we recall a statement made by Jesus in a discussion that he had with his critics in John 10:35. His argument turned upon a quotation from the Psalms, and he states the principle of authority basic to his argument by saying, "And the scripture

cannot be broken." The scripture's validity cannot be impeached. This principle is not confined to the Old Testament writers, for we hear the testimony of Paul concerning the authority of what he delivered in his preaching. In I Cor. 2 he describes a wisdom from above that is greater than the wisdom of the world. It involves things beyond what eye has seen or ear heard or even the heart has imagined, for it is what God "has prepared for those who love him." In other words, it involves the purposes of God. Paul then tells how we know about these things. "No one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit" (I Cor. 2:12, 13). This passage shows us that the revelation of God's will to Paul extended all the way to the words that the Spirit taught him to use. The words were the vessels that would convey the spiritual truths God wanted men to have. Verbal inspiration or word inspiration simply means language inspiration, first oral and then written, so that truth from God might be conveyed. These words spoken through men are written by them in real historical situations and form the text through which God speaks to us and makes known to us his mighty acts and the significance of those acts in his plan of redemption.

In the upper room on the night in which he was betrayed Jesus discoursed intimately with his disciples and promised them as another "Counselor"; the Spirit of truth would guide and direct them in making known his will (John 14:16, 17). The Holy Spirit would bring to their memories what he had

taught them, in addition to revealing the things that they needed to know (John 14:26). He would take the things of God and Christ and make those known to them and show them the things that were to come (John 16:12-15). His activity was not simply to be limited to times of persecution and trial, although he was promised in a special way to take away their fear and terror when they would come to trial and hardship (Matt. 10:20). Jesus promised further guidance and direction from the Holy Spirit in their teaching concerning his ministry, his glory, and his resurrection, after he was gone. He wanted an authentic and authoritative record of his ministry and teaching to be preserved. Through this word, first given orally and then inscripturated in the New Testament the Christ in all his authority confronts men. "So then faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ" (Rom. 10:17).

Let us now turn our attention from the general to the more specific claims of inspiration.

In amount, the evidence is amazing as we look at the Bible's claims in both the Old and New Testaments. Four terms in the Hebrew Old Testament occur very often in one form or another to describe the claim that God is speaking to the prophet, or the king or the priest for his people. These are found in the statements, "the word of the Lord," "thus saith the Lord," "the word of God," and "thus speaks the Lord." The number of times in which these expressions occur is staggering, as the consultation of any concordance or Bible handbook will show. For instance, each one of the twelve prophets beginning with Hosea starts his prophecy with the expression, "The word of the Lord came to—." The Law is filled with the claim of

the "Thus saith the Lord." In addition, the Old Testament is spoken of as "the scriptures" in a number of places in the New Covenant and these writings are looked to authoritatively. The expression "it is written" occurs again and again to give foundation to action, as in the case when Jesus made use of it as the shield in his temptations (Matt. 4; Luke 4). Our Lord made a sharp distinction between the commandment of God and the traditions of men that broke that commandment in meeting the criticism of the Pharisees about eating with unwashed hands (Matt. 15:9; Mark 7:13). He pointed out the error of the Sadducees in failing to know the scriptures or the power of God (Matt. 22:29). It is very interesting to see how Jesus made use of the scriptures in his controversies.

In meeting his critics during the last week of his ministry he asked, "How is it then that David, inspired by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit at my right hand, till I put thy enemies under thy feet' " (Matt. 22:43, 44; Mark 12:35, 36). To His disciples He gave these words, "These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled" (Luke 24:44). This covers the whole extent of the Hebrew scriptures in its three divisions of Law, Prophets, and Writings of which the Psalms is the chief representative. In the expression "from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah" we have a reference to Genesis at the beginning and II Chronicles which is the last book of the Hebrew scriptures, just as we might think of Genesis through Revelation (Matt. 23:55). Jesus showed the key to the Old Testament in saying, "You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal

life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life" (John 5:39, 40). At the same time Jesus declared the eternal character of his teaching to his apostles by saying, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away" (Mark 13:31).

As we turn further in the New Testament we recall that Paul commends the Thessalonians for receiving his teaching "not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers" (I Thessalonians 2:13). He claims for his gospel that it is "not man's gospel," for he did not receive it from man nor was he taught it; it came through revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11, 12). He commended the elders at Ephesus to "the word of God that is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). He claims that what he wrote in I Corinthians was "a command of the Lord" (I Cor. 14:37). He reminds the Thessalonians that in disregarding his letter, they disregard "not man, but God who gives his Holy Spirit to you" (I Thess. 4:8). He describes the resurrection of the righteous "by the word of the Lord" (I Thess. 4:15). He further declares that anyone refusing to obey what he said in the letter should be ostracized from the church's fellowship. (II Thess. 3:14) In I Tim. 5:18 he quotes as scripture a passage from Deuteronomy (Deut. 25:4) and another found in Luke 10:7 as equally authoritative. It is Peter who places Paul's writing, though difficult at times to understand, on a par with "the other scriptures" in II Pet. 3:15, 16. This is only a sample of what may be gleaned as one looks through both the Old and the New Testaments to see the claims that are made in the scriptures for the authority back of what these men are saying and writing.

The second task that we have set for ourselves is to examine the material that we see in the scriptures in order that we may understand what is meant by saying, "All scripture is inspired by God." As we look at the scriptures we are amazed by the different types of literature we see. There are so many different literary forms through which God has chosen to express Himself. One senses as he reads the different books that there are varying purposes that control the writing of specific portions of the Bible and that these things were written to specific audiences whose needs were different at different times and the message was designed to meet those needs. One realizes the accuracy of the statement made in Heb. 1:1 that in many and various ways God has spoken through his servants, here partially and there partially with "line upon line and precept upon precept." The word has come to men in varying historical circumstances, with different cultural conditioning, since it is in history that God has made himself known and that God confronts man with his demands. This is the reason why it is so necessary for us to understand the historical circumstances that operate and the backgrounds and cultures that are involved when we come to grasp the meaning of a passage of scripture in the Bible. This should not startle us since we realize that the Bible is like any other book in this sense, and we should expect it to bear these traits. We are conscious also of the differences in the abilities and experiences of those whom God has chosen to be His messengers. God's providential ordering of their lives fitted them to do the task that he called them to do. Some messengers have occupied a major place in the transmission of His will while others only a minor role, but a God who promises that He works in all things for good for those who love Him (Rom. 8:28) and who providentially rules and overrules in the affairs of men and nations to accomplish

his will is the God who likewise can providentially prepare and develop the kind of messengers through whom he will bring His will to confront man. Within all the variation the student of the scriptures beholds also the underlying unity, a unity of God's great unfolding purpose revealed to redeem man from his lost and estranged condition to enlighten his darkness and to lead him to life abundant and everlasting. The word continues to have power to show man his sinfulness and convict him as a sinner of his need for trusting and obeying God's authoritative commands. How the drama unfolds; how God makes use of men and nations to realize His purposes across the great stage of history is a fascinating story the final chapter of which awaits His own action.

Because this revelation is given in a historical context there are many ways in which historical data and archaeology have been used to illustrate the accuracy of the basic historical picture given in the scriptures and details have been confirmed in remarkable fashion through modern discoveries. One leading archaeologist has spoken of the "remarkable memory of the Bible" through which he was able to identify and unearth remains of civilizations that had been lost to the memory of man otherwise. And yet, one must say in all fairness that there are problems in the materials within the Bible. If we come to the scriptures with the standards of historiography that have developed within the last 100 years, we shall find ourselves disappointed in many places because there is neither the preciseness, nor the interest in such clarity of details as the modern historian might be concerned with. For instance, there are minor differences that occur in parallel accounts of events in the gospels. There are problems that arise which puzzle us as we endeavor to understand and synchronize some of the events described in

the Bible with the records that are found elsewhere. What the modern historian finds interesting is not after all what the inspired writer is primarily concerned with, for his purpose is motivated by a different perspective than the mere chronicling of events. The understanding of this purpose will help us to appreciate the nature of the Biblical witness and not allow ourselves to be entangled with preconceptions that we thrust down upon the material that we find in the Bible.

Many of our problems in the study of the scriptures may arise from the fact that we are still not able to put ourselves back into the thought world and understand the situations and concepts of the times when certain writings took place. Our own ignorance and inadequacy pose a limitation upon us. But we must at the same time recognize that the Bible itself as it unfolds the message of God must be seen to speak to the various groups of people within the context of their own thought world and to utilize the imagery, the figures of speech, and the methods of teaching that would be helpful and decisive for them. Any humble approach to the scriptures recognizes that there are many problems within the text of the Bible that still puzzle the honest seeker for truth just as there are problems within the natural world that still puzzle those who study and search to know more of God's nature. These challenge men to further pursuit of the truth.

To make one's own statement of the meaning of inspiration is a very difficult task, and one that should constantly be revised in the light of the scriptures themselves. We shall endeavor to make such a statement ourselves. Inspiration means that God has powerfully acted through his Holy Spirit in the lives and in the words of his chosen servants

the prophets and the apostles so that they may declare to men what God wants men to know of His will. Where there were facts and truths that could not be known except through God's revealing action the Holy Spirit gave these so that the inspired men might properly record God's word. Inspiration also covers the guidance of those who were eye witnesses of events, such as the apostles during the ministry of Jesus, in their selection and recording of the facts. The inclusion of whatever documents, statements, teachings, or other materials that should find a place in the record was under the Spirit's supervision. God is in the fullest sense responsible for His word, yet the evidence that comes to us in the Bible emphasizes the fact that God respects constantly the human agent through whom he makes known his will. The oral message of the apostles as eye-witnesses empowered by the Holy Spirit came before the written New Testament. Yet it is not a different oral message from the New Testament scriptures, but sets down what was that oral message and the teaching that Christ would have his followers to know. Inspiration does not involve doing violence to the nature of the writers. The distinctiveness of each man's style, the coloring of his personality as evidenced in his vocabulary, the use of the various talents are all a part of the human side of the scripture. Inspiration allows for the study, research, and the careful investigation of the writer. Luke in the prologue to his Gospel states, "Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things which have been accomplished among us, just as they were delivered to us by those who from the beginning were eye witnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the

truth concerning the things of which you have been informed" (Luke 1:1-4). Luke still used his study and investigation in writing his account, yet was so guided that he taught no error, only what God wanted men to know of the life of Jesus. The divine and human aspects are blended in the production of the Bible so that it is God's book for men using human language without doing any violence to their natures. These two aspects, the human and the divine, cannot be placed into neat compartments. Inspiration does not mean that each man will approach his material in the same way. One may follow a chronological arrangement, while another may take a topical or didactic order. One must not understand inspiration as simply an addition of a few words from God to a great many human words from the prophets. God has spoken *through* them. The supervision of the Holy Spirit is complete so that we can say with Paul, "All scripture is inspired of God."

I cannot express the answer to the question "How?" better than in the language used by Dr. Lemoine Lewis of the Abilene Christian College faculty several years ago. "Theories of inspiration are legion. The watch words of some are natural inspiration, degrees of inspiration, partial inspiration, inspired concepts, universal Christian inspiration, verbal 'dictation,' verbal inspiration, plenary inspiration, etc. I am skeptical of any solution that cannot be expressed in Bible terms. Here let us be warned by the controversy over the nature of Christ that so distracted the church in the early centuries.

"When God sent his Son into the world he took the form of a man. When he gave his Word it took the form of a book. To reconcile, delimit, define the divine and the human in one is no easier than in the other."

As a people who desire to call Bible things by Bible names, and who have been careful to draw away from the involved theological systems that men have built, let us take care to state our faith in terms drawn from the Bible itself.

The central figure of the Bible is Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal (John 17:3). Its whole purpose is to bring men to know God as he is shown in Jesus Christ and help men to find through him life that is abundant and eternal. It must never become for us a dead letter, a book of mere proof-texts for us to hang arguments upon as we deal with some favorite subject. It is God addressing us and showing us through his Son his salvation. We must listen to what the Bible says, we must heed the message to us, and we must answer its call in humble obedience.

## THE BIBLE AS REVELATION

THOMAS H. OLBRICHT

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Anyone who takes seriously the claims in the scriptures that God has disclosed himself, must ultimately come to grips with the Bible as revelation. Even theologians who commence from a liberal posture recognize the claims of revelation regardless of the form

they assume it to take. Revelation is at the heart of contemporary theological discussion, and, as the result of divergent affirmations, is a critical problem. The nature of revelation is particularly crucial for the heirs of the restoration since our fundamental claim is that the Bible is God's revelation.

We live in days in which even in our midst the traditional views are being called into question. It is time to bring the discussion of revelation into the open so that a Biblical view can be delineated. In order to open the matter anew I propose to (1) characterize the view held by Alexander Campbell and maintained in the Restoration tradition, to (2) examine the retreat in the eighteenth century and later from the traditional Christian view, to (3) observe the conservative response, and to (4) confront both liberal and conservative views with the scriptures themselves. The program set forth could easily be a book and I have therefore had to be selective. I should also add that I do not presume to answer all the questions raised in this lecture, but I hope that the facets of the subject and its peripheries are set forth cogently.

#### I. The Restoration View of Revelation.

The view of revelation prevailing in the Restoration movement is essentially that set forth by Alexander Campbell. Campbell was in the tradition of Lockean positivism which provided the starting point for much English and American thought in the early nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Positivism, in the Lockean sense, accepts as true that which is built from sense impressions and the fundamental constituent of knowledge is the individual entities from which general conclusions are built. The conclusions resulting are real, but never in an absolute manner as the individual facts or entities. The facts

and entities exist exterior to the human mind and are real regardless of any individual's doubt. In this tradition the scriptures are conceived as reporting individual facts and are therefore of the same composition as nature. Nature and revelation are identical, the difference being that whereas nature was created by God, the Bible consists of words from God.

Upon reading Campbell's statement about the Bible in *Christian System* one receives the immediate impression that it is obviously in the positivism manner that Campbell conceives revelation.

The Bible is a book of facts, not of opinions, theories, abstract generalities, nor of verbal definitions. It is a book of awful fact, grand and sublime beyond description... The meaning of the Bible facts is the true biblical doctrine. History is, therefore, the plan pursued in both Testaments; for testimony has primarily to do with faith, and reasoning with understanding.<sup>2</sup>

Truth commences from facts, but reason is required to ascertain what the facts mean. From reading Campbell's rules of interpretation it is clear that in order to ascertain what is truth from the scriptures one must treat them as he would items of testimony or evidence in a court of law.<sup>3</sup>

The positivistic nature of revelation is even more forcibly affirmed by J. S. Lamar in his book *Organon of Scriptures*. Lamar's frame of reference is obvious in his praise of and quotations from the writings of John Stuart Mill and Sir John Herschel. Lamar's thesis is that since both nature and revelation are from God, they are in character the same, and hence the truth must be extracted via the same method, that is, by induction.

God has spread out before his children two great volumes—the Book of Nature, and the Book of Revelation... Our proposition is, that the same method should be pursued in the interpretation of both volumes.<sup>4</sup>

Nature is characterized as individual entities governed by law, and by observing these entities one may infer "from these numerous particulars the general law of the whole creation."<sup>5</sup> The Bible is similarly constituted of particulars. "The Bible is not an abstraction, but... the comprehension of its revelation and truth is just as dependent upon the facts it contains as a knowledge of the laws of nature upon the facts of nature."<sup>6</sup> The Biblical facts are historical.

...the whole Bible is founded upon facts—historical events, persons, and things; and that even those portions which might seem to be less dependent upon history, as the poetry and epistles, have, nevertheless, their basis on history, and derive their significance and their claims from the facts with which they are connected. The whole Bible, then is history, and allusion to history, past present, or to come.<sup>7</sup>

From these presuppositions emerge a method of ascertaining Biblical truth. The scriptures must be studied so as to bring together scattered facts so that a conclusion may be derived therefrom. The crucial facts for the Christian are those in the New Testament, and though discretion must be employed, any one fact is essentially as important as any other fact, and may serve as a starting point for an induction. Through induction one derives spiritual truth in precisely the same manner as natural truth. Furthermore, the truth from revelation is as certain as the truth from nature since they are both given from sources exterior to man, and both come from God.

We of the restoration movement have clearly retained the essential features of this outlook on revelation. The manner in which we collect all the pertinent passages of scriptures on a given subject in order that we may induce a conclusion betrays the presuppositions from which we operate. The positivistic tradition is also obvious in our hermeneutic principle of "commands, examples, and inferences." This principle is operable only if, as we have assumed, the Bible is a collection of particulars in the same manner that individual trees comprise a forest. The one point at which we may have departed from the Campbell-Lamar view is that we have been more inclined to treat the Bible as a book of constitutional law (propositions) than as a book of historical facts. One does discover legal code in the Old Testament, but taking the Bible as a whole, I think Campbell and Lamar were more correct in seeing the Bible as a book of history.

## II. The Retreat from Tradition

Now that the restoration view of revelation is in focus I should like to turn to what has happened in the world of scholarship outside our movement. In order to appreciate contemporary views of revelation it is essential that we take up the retreat from tradition in the late eighteenth century. Some attempt has been made in recent years to show that current conservative views are a hardening in response to liberalism and do not represent the views of the Protestant Reformers. Everett Ferguson, in his 1962 ACC lecture on "Religious Authority," has shown that such an undertaking has proven abortive. I therefore take it that the views arising in the late eighteenth century are a departure from tradition.

The response to eighteenth century rationalism was the first occasion for a significant breach with the view of revelation which had survived in Christendom for more than a millenium and a half. Deism accepted rationalism with open arms and treated the scriptures accordingly. The deists did not reject revelation as "out there" knowledge but they rendered it impotent by claiming that adequate knowledge of God was available through nature alone. But they had difficulty with the miracles since miracles do not conform to the laws of nature and therefore not all the Bible was to be accepted. The second major response to rationalism was that of Friedrich Schleiermacher who located religious truth in feeling so as to make it impervious to the critique of reason. By doing so he introduced an entirely new concept of revelation. Revelation for him no longer existed "out there" in the sense of a proposition or a stone being outside man. Revelation rather sprang from within man and even if recorded could not become revelation for another, for the other *himself* must apprehend the feeling of absolute dependence on God.

We should be careful about accusing Schleiermacher of making revelation mere emotion since "feeling [is] in the understanding and understanding in the feeling."<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, such feeling hardened into language cannot be truth once for all since it is apprehended in a specific historic context. The scripture, for Schleiermacher, is theology in the sense of any other theology. The Bible "...is the original translation of the Christian feeling,"<sup>9</sup> and hence is of special interest to the theologian. But the feeling of dependence must be renewed in each age and theology must reflect that feeling as it emerges from the contemporary Christian community. The truth that Christianity claims

is always relative to its historical context, and since the scriptures are no more than an original response of feeling to a historical situation, they too are relative to that context. Their truth is not absolute, but merely a witness to heights attained in the past. The new direction of Schleiermacher is therefore his withdrawal of revelation from the category of knowledge and locating it in the feeling of absolute dependence. Man cannot locate God "out there"—though Schleiermacher does not deny that he is, in the manner of certain contemporary theologians. All that man receives from God is that which he finds within himself. Revelation therefore has to do neither with propositions nor events in history, but only with a feeling of dependence. Revelation is different from nature and history; and, as Schleiermacher would have it, Lamar is deluded to think that one studies it in exactly the same way.

Schleiermacher constructed his theology in the first part of the nineteenth century. By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the traditional Christian view of revelation was challenged by other opponents unknown in the days of Schleiermacher. Psychology in particular became destructive to locating revelation in feeling; for, after the Freudians and others got through with emotion, to locate revelation there was to relegate it to the status of an individual emotional quirk. At the same time Logical Positivism became destructive to the older Lockean view, since the new positivists admitted only those propositions which can be verified by sense experience. Since the Scriptures obviously cannot be verified by sense experience, according to the Logical Positivists, they are to be rejected as containing divine truth. The theologian in the days of Campbell could assume that both nature and scripture provide data from which to construct the truth, but by the twentieth century

most philosophers had rejected the scriptures as such a source.

It now became the task of those twentieth century theologians who wished to meet the challenge of the psychologists and philosophers to hew out a niche for revelation which eluded the new critique. Three major efforts to this end have been those of Rudolph Bultmann, Emil Brunner, and Karl Barth.<sup>10</sup> For Schleiermacher, since religious feeling was absolute dependence on God, revelation was primarily passive. These three theologians, in contrast, chose to locate revelation in activity or encounter. Such a location is furthermore compatible with Existentialism, which after World War I was rapidly becoming *the* continental philosophy. If all of man's faculties are inadequate avenues to truth, then, unless he resigns himself to nihilism, the one road remaining is to act, to encounter.

Among those who conceive revelation as encounter, Rudolf Bultmann least of all attributes to revelation its traditional status. For Bultmann, the world in which man lives is a closed system in which the causes are always this-worldly.<sup>11</sup> When man studies physical nature he searches for objective causal relations, but when he studies man and human history he looks for subjective motivations and human decisions. No exceptions are to be granted, not even the scriptures. The scriptures, traditionally considered as revelation from God, take the status of human production and must be studied as such. The scriptures, as every other phenomenon, are thus this-worldly, but they assist the one who comes in faith to discern the acts of God in this world. But these acts are and are not the acts of God, for they are still this-worldly. The fact that an event through the eyes of faith

both is and is not the act of God is the fundamental paradox of Christian theology.

The result of Bultmann's approach is to withdraw revelation from the world of scholarship. Bultmann accepts the objections of the rationalists, the Logical Positivists, and the psychologists against the scriptures as truth. He argues that the scriptures are to be studied in the same manner as any other human document for they are human. Jesus Christ is the decisive act of God, but only to those who believe. The scriptures witness to Jesus Christ, but they become revelation only through faith; they do not produce faith as Alexander Campbell argued. Through the eyes of faith the world comes to have a new existential meaning, but even so the meaning is this-worldly. Revelation is thus located in such a manner that it is not touched by the criticism of modern scholarship, but on the other hand it is not accessible to that scholarship unless scholarship comes in faith. When scholarship comes in faith, however, it is no longer scholarship in the usual manner that Lamar conceived Biblical scholarship.

Emil Brunner, in contrast with Bultmann, conceives revelation in such a manner that unquestionably it is God who is encountered.<sup>12</sup> But even so, the scriptures as revelation fare little better. Brunner criticizes Liberalism, charging that it became man-centered and substituted the "science of religion" for Christian theology. The scriptures for the liberal were revelation only insofar as they coincided with human thinking and feeling about religion. But Brunner also criticizes Protestant orthodoxy because its position has forced it to defend human ideas about science, history, and the cosmology found in the Bible. The scriptures contain a report of revelation which is Jesus Christ, but are not to be

idolized as if they themselves are revelation. The revelation of God is the encounter with Jesus Christ which is reported in the Bible. As encounter, revelation is neither subjective nor objective and hence Brunner side-steps the charge of subjectivism leveled at Schleiermacher. The encounter with God is a relation which involves the personal centers of both God and man. In the encounter man is not merely the subject nor God the object, but each are both at once.<sup>13</sup> We know that God has revealed himself in Jesus Christ because we have met him there. We cannot add up the historical facts as Campbell would have it because we cannot be sure of the facts. We can, however, be sure of an encounter with Jesus Christ whom we come to know with our whole being, head as well as heart. Revelation is knowledge, but not in the usual sense. It is a knowledge of ourselves, but not subjective knowledge, since it is not from ourselves, but from God. It is hence a unique form of knowledge and may not be studied as mere positivistic knowledge (Lamar) nor subjective (Schleiermacher).

For Karl Barth revelation is also encounter, but of a different sort so that the word-event is more descriptive. Barth's concern in locating revelation is to make it God's prerogative. God reveals himself in various ways such as through the church, sacrament, scripture, and proclamation. When or how God reveals himself is a mystery which man cannot ensnare since God's presence occurs in revelation according to his own free decision. When revelation occurs man can acknowledge it, but he cannot grasp the secret of it so as to make it occur again. But we must be clear that this Word is not mere human "inner geography" as with Schleiermacher and Bultmann, for God actually speaks from time to time in human proclamation.<sup>14</sup> The Bible becomes God's word when and only as God freely determines, but regardless, it fails to take to take on an

objective divine quality. The scriptures remain wholly fallible, and wholly human until God wills otherwise.

Barth thus rescues revelation from being merely human for it is clearly divine. But in so doing he has snatched it from the arena of positive knowledge. If the Bible becomes God's Word only at His desire, then the Bible cannot be studied as revelation as one would study stones and propositions. In fact, it would appear that one cannot study revelation at all; he can only wait for it to come to him. The sceptical posture of modern man toward knowledge and especially knowledge from or about the divine is thereby eluded since such knowledge is taken away from human resources. Even when revelation arrives, man cannot make it into positive knowledge of God.

From the thinking of these leading Protestant theologians it is clear that the Bible is no longer considered revelation in the sense that it is divine data out there which may be studied by any man who picks it up. Such a retreat may create a theology more compatible to contemporary intellectuals, but it results in a Christianity that is always on the border of theological nihilism. The early church proclaimed a message unacceptable to the intellectuals of its era. Why should we be apprehensive about declaring the Bible to be knowledge from God, even in the face of disbelief?

## II. The Conservative Response

Conservatives have not been slow to respond to the shift from the traditional view of revelation. Many responses were made in the twentieth century and continue to be made even now. Because of our conservative background we are familiar with various modes of response. I shall therefore

not attempt a historical analysis, but focus rather on major conservative views current today. Unfortunately, those who object to liberal views of revelation have not been as careful as they might to determine whether the ground upon which they object is Biblical.

### (1) The Authentication of the Spirit

The oldest response to the attacks on the Bible as revelation is that the Spirit authenticates its truth. This was the view of John Calvin, Martin Luther, and also of the American, Jonathan Edwards, in such sermons as "A Divine and Supernatural Light." But the authentication of the Spirit has served more as an affirmation for those who are already believers than as a response to the liberal retreat. The authentication of the Spirit would have been useless as a response to the eighteenth century Deists for what they explicitly denied was the influence of the Spirit in this world. But it was little better as a response to Schleiermacher, for though he accepted the influence of the Spirit, he denied that the Bible was its chief avenue. Furthermore, he argued that revelation was contemporaneous with every man in his epoch rather than located in a book, and hence the scriptures have little need of authentication. If the authentication of the Spirit is the manner by which the Scriptures become knowledge of the divine, then the same problem emerges as in liberal theology. If one does not know the Bible as knowledge until the Spirit affirms it, then the Bible is knowledge only for those who have the Spirit. But traditionally Christianity has claimed more, that is, that the Bible is knowledge from God to anyone who picks it up, and conservatives today wish to make the same claim. If it is not, then the Bible is another order of knowledge unlike the stuff with which scholars in other areas work.

On the contemporary conservative scene one can point to such men as James I. Packer of Bristol, England, and G. C. Berkouwer of the Free University of Amsterdam as supporters of the authentication of the Spirit. Their view sounds similar to that of Karl Barth except that for these men, once the Spirit authenticates the scriptures for a man, it remains revelation for him. For such conservatives the scriptures retain a "hard" character which makes it possible for man to study and comprehend the Word of God. For Barth no such undertaking is possible since the scripture only becomes knowledge of God when he wills that it be. The scriptures for the conservative are therefore divine revelation and as such provide hard knowledge. But such knowledge becomes hard upon the authentication of the Spirit.

We turn now to other attempts to retain for revelation the status of knowledge. The two primary types of knowledge that are claimed for the scripture are rationalistic and positivistic. If the Bible is knowledge of either of these types it remains as data for truth regardless of who approaches it. Revelation or Scripture (the two are the same for the conservative) is now located in the world of knowledge and takes its chances there in the same manner as any other knowledge.

## (2) The Rationalistic Response

The primary response of those who willingly call themselves conservatives is a rationalistic one. The reason for this is that most conservatives come out of a tradition of systematic theology which makes it desirable to visualize the Bible as a book of propositions. The conservative rationalist maintains that the Bible is a collection of propositions with a truth value equal to or superior to those of philosophy or science. Such propositions are absolute in the

sense of the scientific propositions of Newtonian physics. In this they differ from the contemporary proposition of quantum physics in which the proposition is merely a statistical norm.

The chief conservative proponent of the rationalistic view of revelation is Gordon H. Clark, professor of philosophy at Butler University and a contributing editor of *Christianity Today*. His rationalistic presupposition is obvious in the title of an article, "Special Divine Revelation as Rational."<sup>15</sup> Elsewhere he writes,

Christianity is rational because the God who made the Bible his revelation declares that he is a rational Being of wisdom and understanding. He created man in his own rational image; and these two rationalities, if they are to communicate at all, must because of their nature communicate intelligibly.<sup>16</sup>

Clark defines reason as the law of non-contradiction, with the claim that by rational he points to the self-consistency of the scriptures.<sup>17</sup> But it becomes clear, as one reads Clark's writings, that self-consistency is propositional. Revealed truth must be propositional for Clark, since mere encounter has no truth content. Clark clearly aligns himself with philosophical axiology (axioms, hence propositions) of the Cartesian school and it is this position which informs his view of revelation. He affirms that positivism of the sort which Campbell approved is inadequate. The question therefore becomes whether the Bible is chiefly axiological in the manner that Clark presupposes.

### (3) The Positivistic Reaction

Very few conservatives have responded to liberal views of revelation from a positivistic posture because of their

creedal orthodoxy. One must go therefore to contemporary Biblical scholars who are not altogether conservative to find a response employing the methodology of Campbell. Such men are William F. Albright, G. Ernest Wright, and Krister Stendahl in America, and Oscar Cullmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg of Europe. The American school, the Scandinavian school to which Stendahl belongs, and the Heilsgeschichte school of Cullmann and Pannenberg, all take seriously Biblical history even though they may reject some of the acts as actually happening. Revelation, for them is historical in the manner conceived by Campbell, but they do not admit an event to the realm of truth merely because it is in the Bible and for that reason they are not "conservative" as we employ the word.

Albright's comments about studying the scriptures sound much like statements of Campbell and Lamar.

"I continue to maintain, without reservation, that we must approach history, as the story of man's total past, with just as rigorous a method as is used by natural scientists..."<sup>18</sup>

The difference between Albright and Campbell is that Albright proposes to study the Bible as if it were any history, but with the exception that it is about divine events. Campbell, in contrast, recommends that the Bible be studied as other history, but as history, it is by the divine Himself and is not merely a report on his acts. Among Albright's students is Wright, who emphasizes that the Bible "consists of the acts of God" rather than propositions. It is comprised of "acts of God, together with the inferences drawn therefrom."<sup>19</sup> To point up the contrast Wright affirms,

Christian theology has tended to think of the Bible chiefly as 'the Word of God,' though in point of fact a more accurate title would be 'the Acts of God.' The Word is certainly present in the Scripture, but it is rarely, if ever, dissociated from the Act; instead it is the accompaniment of the Act. To speak of the Bible solely as the Word, as has been done so frequently, incurs the risk of obscuring this fact with the result that the Word becomes a substantive, dissociated from history and dealt with as an abstraction.<sup>20</sup>

In spite of his emphasis on the acts of God, Wright does not pretend that they are God's acts except through the eyes of faith. But he differs from Bultmann in that they are actually from God, and thus no paradox is involved. The scriptures, however, are human in that they reflect human reports about history which may or may not be accurate. Such a position undermines the traditional views on inspiration and canon, aspects of revelation to which Oscar Cullmann has recently given attention.

The Scandinavian school, though having a somewhat different focus, is in the same positivistic tradition as the Albright school. Whereas in America the thrust has been largely linguistic, archaeological, and anthropological, in Scandinavia it has been more theological and perhaps philosophical. Stendahl's positivistic presuppositions are borne out by his emphasis on descriptive Biblical theology.<sup>21</sup> Descriptive theology can be carried on by the believer and unbeliever alike because the truth of the Bible has an out-there-ness in the sense of Lamar and Campbell. "This descriptive task can be carried out by believer and agnostic alike. The believer has the advantage of automatic empathy with the believers in the text..."<sup>22</sup> There is one point, however, at which Stendahl differs from the Restoration tradition. He argues that in constructing descriptive theology

the Bible is not to be considered a collection of passages in the manner of a forest of individual trees.

An attempt has been made to show that such a task does not necessarily imply the disintegration of the biblical material into unrelated bits of antiquated information. It is quite capable of presenting the different elements as an organic unity *if that unity is the one which actually holds the material together in the Bible itself.*<sup>23</sup>

A significant new direction taken by Wolfhart Pannenberg of Mainz has given new impetus to a positivistic view of revelation. It is too early to determine how much influence the Pannenberg school will have or precisely what form it is going to take. It is clear, however, that as a theologian Pannenberg wishes to return revelation to the realm of positivistic knowledge so that it is subjected to the same critique as other knowledge. In particular he is interested in revelation as history and claims "if one really takes history in earnest, he will find that God has revealed himself in history."<sup>24</sup>

### III. The Bible as Revelation

In order to confront views about revelation with the Biblical view we shall examine phrases that appear in the literature, both liberal and conservative. Part of the confusion in the contemporary discussion of revelation is semantic. This is not to claim that the different schools are saying the same thing but employing different vocabulary. They are not. But it is obvious, upon perusing the literature, that different writers mean something different when they employ the same word. Furthermore, many words have a Biblical thrust to them when employed in a Biblical manner, but as used by

respective authors, take on a meaning quite foreign to a Biblical orientation.

### (1) The Traditional Views

The terms in contemporary literature, both conservative and liberal, which are employed to depict the traditional view of revelation are "rational," "propositional," "objective," and "positivistic."

The person who claims that revelation is rational assumes that its truth commences with propositions from which one can construct a whole view in which all the pieces can be joined together. The main tool of the rationalist is the law of noncontradiction. But in order that this rule be operable the universe would either have to be a static one, or if change were present, it would be in one predetermined direction. I argue that the world disclosed in the Bible is not this sort of world. In the Biblical world it is God who gives ultimate direction, but he is a God who changes his mind (Genesis 6:6, Numbers 11:1, 2) and he creates the new (Isaiah 43:14-21). Of course, the Bible presents a consistent view of the world, but it is not a world perfectly flowing from a series of axioms. Those who attempt to impose axioms upon the scriptures always end up denying some of the great affirmations of the scriptures, for example, human freedom. It is no mere accident that a neo-Calvinist such as Clark finds no problem in applying the law of non-contradiction to the scriptures since from a predestinarian view the world is headed in a predetermined direction. In the scriptures a few great paradoxes appear, for example, man's freedom yet God's overruling providence. Clark claims that the admission of a contradiction of this sort opens up the need to accept any contradiction. But such is not the case. One need only accept the Biblical paradoxes, the law of

non-contradiction being applicable in every other case.

I think the word rational is not a fruitful description of Biblical revelation, but this is not to say the revelation is non-propositional. Those who speak of the non-propositional nature of revelation do the Biblical faith a great disservice. Bultmann, Barth, and Brunner claim that revelation is non-propositional since they wish to take revelation out of the realm of the verifiable. Unfortunately some follow these theologians in making this statement without understanding their reasons. Wright, in contrast, insists that the Bible is non-propositional because it consists of the acts of God and their interpretation. I think Wright has a point because this is an important insight which one misses if he conceives the scriptures as only a collection of axioms. But I think Wright clouds the issue by his use of the phrase "non-propositional." If one takes non-propositional seriously he is affirming that the Bible makes no truth claims and this is not the affirmation which Wright wishes to make. Of course, the Bible contains propositions! It is full of them, e. g., "God is love." "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved," "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us," etc. The substance of these propositions, however, is not the same as that found in most logic texts and people such as Wright do well to point this out. One notices that these propositions have to do with action and response.

The word "objective" is often employed in conservative literature to distinguish the conservative from the liberal view of revelation. It is not easy to select the proper words in this dispute, but it is my judgment that conservatives bestow meaning to the word objective which confuses the issue at stake. In the first place the word fails to take into account the differences between rationalistic and positivistic objectiv-

ity. What most conservatives have in mind when they use the word is rationalistic objectivity. The second objection is that some think by employing the word that they bestow to revelation a divine source. In an article in *Revelation and the Bible* Packer labels reason as subjective because it is human rather than divine.<sup>25</sup> The conclusion seems to be that the only objective knowledge is that which comes from God. Now one may give a word any power he wishes, but by doing so, he only confuses the discussion. I am in sympathy with what Packer is attempting to say but I think he confuses matters by his use of the words "subjective" and "objective." I think this vocabulary helps the case but little and it is to be passed over whenever possible. Another problem which results from too much emphasis on the scripture as objective is the practical concern that even though the scriptures are out-there truth, they never become efficacious for any man until they are internalized or become a part of his very life. If revelation never becomes "personally applied" truth for me, then it is of no value as "truth," regardless of how "objective" I view it to be.

Not many conservatives claim revelation to be positivistic, but it is this tradition which we of the Restoration have inherited. If we accept this tradition, and I see no reason for rejecting it, we accept Biblical revelation as history, as a book of the acts of God. But revelation must be both act and interpretation. The difficulty with many of the current *Heilsgeschichte* (history of salvation) school of theologians, including Wright, is that for them only the act is revelation, and the interpretation always stands in the possibility of being only human, thus subject to error. However, it is difficult to see how the power of revelation could be given to an act, which itself provides only a minimum of knowledge. The death of Jesus on the cross has no meaning as mere act inas-

much as many men died on a cross. In fact, numbers of those who saw Jesus hanging there saw nothing unusual in the event. The difference between the death of Jesus on the cross and that of other men lies in the fact that He is the Son of God, which fact, however, we learn from the affirmations of the Biblical revelation that He was in truth the Son of God dying for the sins of the world.

The main problem which results from a positivistic approach to the scriptures is that the Bible tends to be viewed as only a collection of individual facts. When we have set out to decide what is scriptural, we have tended to treat the Bible as containing isolated facts, of equal importance to each other, but we have not treated them in relation to the dominant themes of the Bible. The difficulty, if any one fact is as important as any other, is how do we decide the manner in which the facts are to be interpreted? The interpretation of the facts should grow out of the Bible itself rather than some exterior scheme imposed upon the Bible. If one examines the New Testament writings to determine how the Old Testament material is interpreted one finds that the facts were seen in the light of the great themes of man's alienation from God and God's love and forgiveness to be revealed in the Messiah—the Christ. It is these great themes of sin and salvation which provide unity to the Bible and help us determine what God's terms for us are.

In my opinion Campbell was correct in viewing the Bible as positivistic, but its unity does not derive from the individual commands and examples considered as separated, loose facts, but rather from the grand scheme of redemption of which they are a part. If we more seriously searched out the great themes of the Bible and attempted to interpret the

facts from this perspective, we would be more Biblically oriented than ever before. We would not do away with commands and examples, but we would have a manner of working with them provided by the great over-all unity of the Bible itself. The Bible does indeed contain facts, but in addition, and this is the point we have sometimes missed, it includes great themes by which the facts are to be interpreted. A positivistic approach to scripture, when employed thematically, permits revelation to be what it is without embarrassment. In the scriptures one finds history, propositions, laws, poetry, proverbs, etc., all of which can be examined according to their own form. If one conceives the Bible as only a collection of propositions, however, he is embarrassed by poetry and metaphor and must assign it some inferior status as a vehicle of revelation.

## (2) The Liberal Views

The liberal views as I have delineated them are those which find the truth of revelation somewhere other than in the scripture as an out-there presentation of the real. I argue that a Biblically oriented person must reject such efforts for they withdraw revelation from the world of knowledge. Though revelation is knowledge we should be clear that we cannot check it against sense experience in the manner in which the truth from nature is checked. We cannot check the claims of revelation by anything in this world for our claim is that revelation is not from or of this world. The proof for the trueness of Biblical knowledge lies beyond the perimeters of human resources. We through faith hold revelation to be knowledge from God, "the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). This is not to say that the claims of revelation are without this-world

evidence, but the proof is not conclusive in the sense that the evidence for propositions about nature is.

With this delineation in mind we are in a position to examine some of the favorite vocabulary of the liberals in depicting revelation. The terms are "personal" or "encounter," "subjective," and "event."

The liberal often wishes to depict revelation as personal rather than propositional.<sup>27</sup> The claim is that God reveals himself personally, rather than in propositions or facts about himself. I think revelation does have a personal or encounter element to it. For example, Moses, Isaac, Isaiah, Ezekiel and many others were confronted by God, and this confrontation is reported in the scriptures. The Bible therefore is not merely propositions since, at least as I would argue, one loses something of the confrontation when he attempts to extract the truth from it propositionally. The approach to the scriptures I have advanced here willingly admits Biblical confrontations which have non-propositional elements. But I must insist that because revelation contains the personal is no reason for affirming that it is non-propositional. To do so is first of all to shut one's eyes to the propositions that are clearly in the scriptures, but it is also to claim that revelation is not knowledge in the usual sense of the word.

The conservative refutation of the liberal view often depends upon depicting the liberal view as "subjective" in a pejorative sense. Such a label is fitting for Bultmann's view of revelation since he readily accepts the term, but most other contemporary theologians wish to defend their view against the charge of subjectivism, and I think rightly so.

This is not to admit, however, that they have a Biblical view of revelation. If revelation is affirmed as only having an existence within man as Schleiermacher and Bultmann would have it, then we must oppose such a view. But let us not forget that revelation arrives at fruition only when it becomes an inward reality for the person whom it confronts. We become "obedient from the *heart* to the standard of teaching" (Romans 6:17).

We come finally, to the word "event." Revelation can be event, an historical act, and this we have discussed. It can also be event in the Barthian manner in which revelation is an act of grace. But Barth's view of the activity of the Spirit in revelation destroys the scriptures as positive truth. The conservative view which emphasizes the Spirit as assuring proper interpretation is always on the verge of extending the canon. In fact, some conservatives have, in effect, canonized Reformation Theology. The Spirit does not bring new information about the "faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." The Spirit witnesses to the truth of the Scriptures, but creates no additional scriptures.

### Conclusion

Our route has been a long one, but I hope not devious. Were it not for the accumulation of human cogitations about revelation for two thousand years, this task would not be necessary.

It is strange that in these days in which we admire those who are acute in their analysis of baseball, politics, or the stock market, we sometimes criticize others who attempt to come to grips with the issues of contemporary theology.

Theology must in the end be more important, since, if we take our own commitments seriously, it is for eternity. Of course, one is to be criticized if he only enters such an undertaking as if it were merely an intellectual game. It is not a game for the stakes are life itself, now and eternally. I therefore close with Peter's affirmation which I have made my own, "No prophecy ever came by the impulse of men, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (II Peter 1:21).

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# HOW TO INTERPRET THE BIBLE

HAROLD HAZELIP

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Hazelip was born in Asphalt, Ky., in 1930, and has preached 16 years for two Kentucky congregations: Owensboro and Taylor Blvd. in Louisville. During the decade with Taylor Blvd., a 900 seat auditorium and classrooms were built, and the congregation became active in foreign and domestic mission work, including establishment of a deaf congregation in Louisville. He has preached in meetings in eleven states, including Alaska, and in frequent meetings in Canada. He worked in the Wellington, New Zealand campaign in 1963, and

visited mission work in sixteen nations around the world, preaching in Australia, Singapore, Pakistan and Israel.

In 1956, he married Helen Royalty of Louisville, Ky. They have two sons: Patrick Harold and Jeffrey Alan.



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The mythical Hermes was said to be the messenger of the gods and the interpreter of Jupiter. The people of Lystra, in the Bible, identified Barnabas with Jupiter and Paul with Hermes, since Paul was the chief speaker. Hermeneu-

tics—the science of finding and expressing an author's meaning—is derived from Hermes.

When we avoid wide areas of Scripture, or use texts only as pegs on which to hang our own thoughts rather than as rich treasures from which to draw, we indicate that the use of the Bible is an enigma to us. Particularly the plain man who lives with the results of the scientific revolution of the past few centuries tends to leave Bible study to the experts, while he seeks to excel in his chosen vocation. He doesn't know the ancient languages, does not have sufficient time for the study of the culture and literature of the Biblical period, is unacquainted with textual criticism, archaeology or numerous other fields of knowledge he considers necessary for Scripture interpretation, so he becomes discouraged before beginning.

If this man does make the attempt, we have taken further steps to discourage him. We have bound the Bible in funeral black, sliced the natural paragraphs into verses, made its poetry look like prose, set the type too small to read, and cluttered the page with references and footnotes. The Reformers' dreams of the plowman knowing more of the Bible than a medieval pope may have been accomplished, but we have hardly fulfilled Wycliffe's hope that every private in the Lord's army should have ready access to the king's regulations.

The medieval church was more concerned to communicate a series of pictures to its laity than the Scriptures. The stained glass in the church buildings was so arranged that as one walked up the nave, the prophets were depicted on the left uttering prophecies, with the apostles and evangelists on the right announcing their fulfilment. As one ap-

proached the east end, the major events of the gospel from the annunciation of Christ's birth to His ascension were portrayed in succession. Then one turned to see the West windows, with the flaming pictures of judgment.

This simple outline was not enough for the Reformers; they wanted the complete Bible in the hands of the common man "without note or comment." Those men who were martyred because of their efforts to give us the Bible believed in the message of the Bible, not in the morocco binding or the gold leaf edges. A family Bible kept undisturbed in a special place and used only as a register of births, marriages, and deaths may have a genealogical interest, but it will not automatically bring the favor of God.

Nor is there any magical effect produced by the mere reading of the Scriptures without understanding. To read without a conscious effort to comprehend is as valueless as repeating prayers when the words come only from the lips and not from the heart. The person who reads aimlessly will likely decide, like the man who had been reading the dictionary, that the Bible has "great variety, but little plot." But if we learn diligence (II Tim. 2:15), and seek guidance (Acts 8:30-31), we will find gold both in such ready nuggets as the Sermon on the Mount or Psalm 23, and in the mining and refining processes of thorough study.

### *Methods of Interpretation*

Detailed treatises on interpretation either discuss the history of interpretation or describe the various schools of interpretation without assigning them to fixed periods of history. We may better appreciate the simple grammatical,

historical approach which is common to us after a brief view of some differing principles which have been used through the centuries.

From Jewish interpreters like Philo of Alexandria, an allegorizing of the Scriptures gained prominence among early post-apostolic writers and dominated interpretation until the Reformation. The four rivers of Eden became the four cardinal virtues, while the five wise virgins became the five physical senses of a man who has abstained from unlawful tasting, touching, etc. It was always assumed that there was both a simple meaning and, for the enlightened interpreter, a concealed meaning. The danger of allegorizing was that anything could stand for anything else, and ridiculous extremes were common.

A "fourfold meaning of Scripture" became the common medieval system of exegesis. A Latin formula announced: "The literal (meaning) tells what happened, the allegorical what you are to believe, the moral what you are to do, and the anagogical (or mystical) what you may hope for." A common example would be the word 'Jerusalem.' Literally, it represents a city of that name. Allegorically, it means the church. Mystically, it is the heavenly city, and figuratively, it is the human soul. This system of manifold interpretation is believed to go back at least to the Greek Christian writers of the fourth century. Aquinas defended and used the system. Luther's words, however, indicate what happened to this approach at the Reformation: "When I was a monk, I allegorized everything; but now I have given up allegorizing, and my first and best art is to explain the Scriptures according to the simple sense; for it is in the literal sense that power, doctrine, and art reside."

Other commonly used systems include the dogmatic method (where the Bible is interpreted in view of a creedal statement of dogma), varieties of the rationalistic method (in which the interpreter claims to approach the Bible without presuppositions, but usually shows radical bias), and the devotional method (including Pietists and mystics). Prominent twentieth century views include neo-orthodoxy, which considers the Bible to be primarily a *witness to* revelation rather than being itself the Word of God; and the demythologizing school, which seeks to remove all Biblical language which it considers offensive to modern man, and replace this language with what critics of the school have called a re-mythologizing" process, using the language of modern existentialism.

For at least two centuries, conservative writers on hermeneutics have set forth the principle that, without denying its divinely-given character, the Bible is to be interpreted in the same manner, and by the same principles, as any other book. The fundamental principle is to gather from the Scriptures themselves the precise meaning which the writers intended to convey. This entails a study of the language and historical circumstances of the writing, and thus is commonly called the grammatical, historical interpretation of the Bible.

### *Things That Hinder*

Several years ago D. R. Dungan (in his *Hermeneutics*) set forth some "Things which hinder a right interpretation of the Scriptures." His list, which has often been fashioned into sermon outline form, includes: (1) a desire to please the world; (2) making the Bible the property of the priesthood; (3) using the Bible to prove doctrines; (4) making

the Bible merely a book of wonders; (5) reading without intending or expecting to understand; (6) interpreting from sinister or unworthy motives; (7) a desire to be known as persons of "leading thought," and (8) undue efforts to harmonize the Bible and Science. These suggestions place heavy emphasis upon the *attitude* of the interpreter. Early leaders in the Restoration movement believed that the principal clue to unity lay in this problem of interpretation: "All the differences in religious opinion and sentiment, amongst those who acknowledge the Bible, are occasioned by false principles of interpretation, or by a misapplication of the true principles" (Campbell). Unanimity upon the correct principles of interpretation, along with a proper attitude in their application, would bring unity within reach.

#### *General Maxims of Interpretation*

Alongside these hindrances to correct interpretation, it should be helpful for us to note some generally accepted maxims for interpretation. Bernard Ramm attempted to condense such rules from all the great classics in his own *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*: (1) The Bible is to be interpreted in view of the fact that it is an accommodation of divine truth to the human mind; (2) Realize that the Bible is progressively unfolded, becoming more clear as it nears the completion; (3) Interpretation must keep a sound historical basis; (4) We must discover the meaning from the passage, not attribute one to it in advance; (5) Give preference to the clearest and most evident interpretation of a passage; (6) Statements should not be taken to have more than one meaning unless very strong reasons warrant this; (7) Interpretation is one; application may be manifold; (8) Interpret the Bible harmonistically; (9) Everything essential

in Scripture is clearly revealed; (10) Interpretations must square with the original languages; (11) Difficulty—or even ignorance—as to the meaning of some passages must be admitted; (12) Obscure passages must not take precedence in interpretation over clear passages; (13) Interpretations should be checked, where possible, by secular studies (i.e. archaeology, history) and by other great efforts in the past; and, (14) Each of the two Testaments must be searched for assistance in understanding the other.

These are helpful principles, but one is apt to become lost in, or discouraged by, the mass of materials available. Let us remember that the Bible was being read and understood long before hermeneutics was reduced to a science, and that ultimately, the Scriptures are not subject to our rules. These maxims have their place for whatever help they can give us, but how does the ordinary person actually begin his practical task of understanding the Bible?

### *Profitable Study Habits*

To read and re-read the text without being discouraged is the most important task for all of us. It is vital that we read at length, regularly, often, and that interruptions while reading or long intervals between readings, be avoided. A regular "quiet time" should be set apart each day for Bible study. While it is true that the whole Bible can be read in a year by reading three chapters each weekday and five on Sundays, profitable study comes more slowly. Most of us read newspapers, magazines or books entirely to ourselves—silently, perhaps rapidly, using only the eyes and the mind. The Ancients formed their words orally, even in private study, the lips pronouncing and the ears hearing. When one

uses the eyes to see, the lips to form, and the ears to hear, he will find the impressions more indelible. Then as he learns to use additional time writing down in his own words a summary of the thought, without direct regard to his immediate needs, his study will begin bearing rich fruit.

We usually come to know the great beauty spots of the Bible first—Psalm 23, I Corinthians 13, the Sermon on the Mount or certain of the parables. Then we get to know its characters—Joseph, Hosea, Jeremiah, Paul... Later we begin to discover the theme of an individual book like Philemon, or the cardinal themes of the longer ones. Finally, the great over-all structural ideas of the entire Bible become clear to us and a great goal of life starts to come to fruition.

#### *Practical Hints for Study and Interpretation*

One will be greatly assisted in his daily study by utilizing different translations. While there is much to commend the King James Version, there are faulty translations in any version, and our living English has changed the meanings of many words during the centuries since the KJV was made. Familiar instances of the former include: Easter instead of Passover (Acts 12:4), the one word "Hell" used to translate four Hebrew and English words (which embrace more than one meaning), or, the translation of Jesus for Joshua in Acts 7:45 and Heb. 4:8. Words which have changed meanings make a catalogue: "let" no longer means "hinder," "prevent" does not now mean "precede," "conversation" should be "conduct," "charity" should be "love," "privily" should be "secretly," "curiously wrought" in now "wrought with care," "cunning" generally means artful trickery today instead of honorable skill, and so on. This

does not take into account the difficulty the average person has in reading *with interest* the so-called "Bible English," with its strange (to us) pronouns, verb endings, etc. Different translations will help one to see the text from different viewpoints and to arrive at a better understanding of the original.

A second practical suggestion is that one must always view the context of a passage to avoid the pitfalls of "grasshopper" or even "kangaroo" exegesis. The rookie reporter must learn his "W's": Who? When? Where? Why? What? And the Bible student must also learn his "W's" in order to be sure he understands the passage in its setting. John Wycliffe expressed this need in the 14th century:

"It shall greatly help ye to understande Scripture, if thou mark not only what is spoken or wrytten, but of whom, and to whom, with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, and what circumstances, considering what goeth before and what followeth."

These considerations will prevent such misapplications as I Cor. 1:17 being made to minimize the importance of baptism, or on the other hand, Amos 6:5 becoming a text against instrumental music in the worship of Christians. Not only will a study of the context preclude many misunderstandings, but this will also make other passages glow with greater beauty; e.g., begin reading I Cor. 13 at I Cor. 12:27 and behold the added force which comes with a recognition of the unity of the section.

It is also necessary for us to approach the Bible to learn what to believe rather than going there for confirmation of what we already believe. If, like Balaam, one is dissatisfied with what he reads and continues looking for what he wants, he will probably find his strong delusion! Thus, the

water of purification under the law (Ezek. 36:25) has become Christian baptism, the seven churches of Asia (Rev. 1:4) have been made into modern denominations, and "by grace through faith" has eliminated the necessity of gospel obedience—in the thinking of some. All of us face the additional problem of forming ideas from art, sculpture and literature, which we impose as preconceived mental pictures upon what the Bible says.

Finally, one must take a balanced view of the Scriptures as a whole, accepting all of the evidence on any given subject. If one singles out and isolates a few favorite texts, and ignores all of the others or explains them in terms of his one-sided interpretation of the few, erroneous conclusions are inevitable. We must go even further than the immediate context and see each text in the fuller setting of revelation as a whole. Some are concerned only with prophecy, or with healing, or another particular emphasis. Behind almost every heresy is this problem of warped emphasis which seizes upon one thought of one writer and proceeds to "out-Paul" Paul or to "out-John" John until unwarranted conclusions are reached. Even the grand text, John 3:16, is not *all* God has said on the subject of salvation from sin!

### *Conclusion*

The Bible, like other books, really has only one meaning—the one given it by its Author. This meaning, Peter reminds us, is not a matter of one's own private, special interpretation. Bengel's advice is appropriate: "Apply thyself wholly to the text, then apply the whole to thyself." The Lord of Scripture said, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:31-32).

## THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE

CHARLES J. FELIX

Charles J. Felix was born in Lynch, Kentucky and his early religious training was denominational. After high school he engaged in coal mining as a profession until the beginning of World War II, when he enlisted in the U. S. Marine Corps and served four and one-half years as a marine infantryman. After leaving the military he attended the University of Tennessee, University of Michigan, and Washington University of St. Louis. Felix holds the B.A. degree from Tennessee and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Washington University with majors in botany and paleontology and minor in geology. Felix is a University Fellow of Washington University and has served on the science faculty of Washington University and as geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey. Since 1956 he has directed the paleobotanical research program of the Sun Oil Company and is presently Senior Research Geologist in their Richardson, Texas laboratory. He is a



member of the honor societies of Biologia of Tennessee, Sigma Xi, Phi Kappa Phi, and Phi Beta Kappa and is an internationally recognized authority in the field of fossil plant studies. He has lectured in this country and abroad on scientific subjects and is the author of many published scientific monographs and reports. Brother Felix obeyed the gospel in April of 1957 at Dallas, Texas and has maintained an active and faithful role in the church as Bible teacher and speaker. He married the former June Ann Alsbrook of Loraine, Texas in July of 1957, and they are the parents of two daughters. His family presently worships with the Waterview congregation in Richardson, Texas.

It is difficult to say whether I view this subject from a vantage point as a scientist or at a disadvantage for being a scientist. I am frankly awed by its significance, and I earnestly pray that all who hear and read these thoughts will do so with the intellectual and emotional maturity upon which both Christianity and true science are so dependent, for that is the spirit in which I have attempted to present them. The matters considered have all received considerable attention previously, and of necessity I must often repeat many well known viewpoints.

By deliberate intent this discourse may not be conducive to light perusal, and it is meant to have some substance to it. The church has many capable scientists, and if we are truly ready to consider these problems, then they should be presented in some detail. Perhaps in considering science's effect upon religion, we have been somewhat prone to be satisfied with milk much as were the Christians of Hebrews 5:12 in other matters affecting belief.

We assemble here as New Testament Christians, wholly dedicated to the fundamental truths of the Bible. Unfortunately the Bible must be all things for all critics. Though given to man as a spiritual guide, it has nevertheless been challenged on scientific specifics by an incredible array of questioners, ranging from serious sceptic to charlatan. The geologist, paleontologist, biologist, anthropologist, physicist, and many others have all seen fit to put the Scriptures to test from the viewpoint of their special fields. In a recent work, Klotz (1961) states in the very opening line, "One of the most important agents of God in bringing blessings to those living in the middle of the 20th century has been

the scientist.”<sup>1</sup> This is a remarkably truthful statement. Yet it is peculiar, even unbelievable, that science, the blessing of our age in so many ways, has perhaps contributed most to destroying man’s faith in God. This may seem bitter language from a scientist, but I am convinced of the veracity of my statement.

*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.* As this magnificent pronouncement of the first verse of the Bible thunders down the corridors of time, it should be enough. But the world will not permit this explanation to suffice. Science has not always presented so hostile an attitude towards Christianity as it does today, and in times past rose vigorously to its defense. However, in their very ardor, early scientists actually did Christianity a disservice at times, which the scientifically motivated detractors have never forgotten and which still often exists as a barrier to dialectical discussion. Johann Scheuckzer (1731) in his classic “*Physica Sacra*” made the never-to-be-forgotten mistake of describing the remains of a giant salamander as *Homo deluvii testis*, a human witness to the flood. Johann Beringer (1726), a doctor of the University of Wurzburg, stood as a strong advocate of fossils’ being the capricious fabrications of the Creator, possibly made as tests of man’s faith. He fell victim to a cruel hoax in publishing his “*Lithographica Wirceburgensis*” filled with illustrations of pseudofossils planted by pranksters, and his faith and scientific reputation became an object of ridicule. Similarly, noted theologians have contributed misinterpretations which fail to stand up under both the test of science and scripture. Martin Luther in his Genesis commentary considered fossil woods to be from the univer-

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<sup>1</sup> J. W. Klotz. *Challenge of the Space Age*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961. (By Permission)

sal deluge. John Wesley, as well as the statesman Thomas Jefferson, excluded the possibility of extinction on theological grounds. Well meaning and perhaps filled with faith these men may have been, but 20th century science has never forgiven them. And Charles Darwin himself could well have ministered the Bible a telling blow when he wrote, "My theology is a simple muddle, I cannot look at the universe as the result of blind chance, yet I can see no evidence of beneficent design."<sup>2</sup>

The scientist is dedicated to the spirit of search for answers and information about the world, and today science has become highly specialized and often glamorous. Because of the publicity given it and its astounding developments, scientists have achieved great influence. Since they speak with great authority on matters within the scope of science and utterly amazing to the layman, it is sometimes erroneously assumed that they can speak with great authority on all subjects. It is frequently this belief, that science can wisely solve nearly every problem, that has led man to abdicate his own responsibilities. In the glow of science's momentous accomplishments, it is small wonder that man believes it capable of any miracle necessary to solve any problem. He often attributes to science a quality of wisdom wholly outside its sphere or capabilities.

We might ask the question: why concern ourselves as to whether the Bible and science agree or disagree? Is religion not independent of such matters? This is not an entirely valid assumption, for science has been used by men to create anti-Christian systems. It may be said by some that

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<sup>2</sup> Gavin de Beer. *Atlas of Evolution*. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1964, foreword. (By Permission)

science has little to do with the spiritual, but it is also contended by others that, in the name of science, no such state as spiritual exists. Modern science has made it difficult for the student to remain intellectually honest and remain a Christian. It is impossible to accept the Biblical creation account and also the current geological teachings concerning the origin of the earth and life, and there exists a seemingly irreconcilable difference between Genesis and geology.

There have been four especially great events in history, which have been recorded in the Bible. These may not be the four most important, though it would be difficult to rationalize otherwise, but they have served to make Christianity incompatible with modern science. These landmarks consist of: (1) The Creation of the Universe; (2) The Creation of Man; (3) The Noahic Flood; (4) The Resurrection of Jesus Christ. These exist as almost insurmountable barriers to modern science's embracing Christianity, and the fundamental believer comes to grips with the wide discrepancy between the apparently young earth and recent life of Genesis and the apparent ancient earth and life of geology.

### THE ORIGIN OF LIFE

What is Man? Still with us today, this question was asked by Job (Job 7:17) and by the Psalmist (Psalms 8:4), who also described man as "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalms 139:14). Man has always had an almost insatiable curiosity regarding origins, especially his own. The desire to know more about his beginning has provided a powerful stimulus for scientific investigation. The motivating stimulus for much of the problem has been the theory of the Russian biochemist Oparin (1938) and the publicized experiments

of Miller (1953, 1955), who produced amino acids in an inorganic system. Barghoorn (1957) has ably reviewed most of these theories and their present status. Oparin has a large scientific following, and his theory is admittedly interesting. He postulated a primitive earth with an atmosphere of hydrogen, water vapor, methane, and ammonia. Electrical energy, heat, and ultra violet light formed complex molecules, which were carried by rain to the oceans, accumulated, and evolved. I have always been amused by the fact that he had the entire universe with earth and an atmosphere in it, in which to begin his creation. From whence did they come?

### EVOLUTION

Man's desire to know his origin brings us to the strongest clash between Christianity and science, at least in modern times, the theory of organic evolution. More than any other scientific subject today it exercises a profound influence upon our religious thinking. In my own opinion it is capable today, in its present context, of the mass creation of atheists and agnostics. This subject was probably dealt with far more effectively in the 1965 ACC Lectureship. It was pointed out then that the disagreements are basically philosophical, rather than truly scientific. I propose to reiterate and reemphasize the magnitude of its scope and attempt once again to demonstrate the danger it constitutes to Christianity. Perhaps most importantly, I wish to offer the testimony of one more scientist, myself, who challenges the factualness of materialist evolutionary thought. There seems to be present today an almost fanatical preoccupation with evolution, and perhaps it is a "fashion" as Dodson (1960, p. vii) has labeled it. Even a casual survey of current scientific contributions reveals a seemingly never ending flow of evolution titles.

There does exist today a substantial scepticism, even opposition, to evolutionary doctrine, as admitted by the evolutionists themselves at the Darwinian Centennial Celebration at the University of Chicago in 1959. However, it would be difficult to draw this conclusion in examining the available literature since the evolutionary perspective has admittedly captured the intellectual world and is making alarming inroads on the religious world as well. The present day educational philosophy seems to follow that the Scriptural account of creation must somehow be accommodated to the current scientific theories of origins.

Any examination of the professional literature reveals an overwhelming advocacy of evolution, ranging from sincere to derisive by influential scientists. This universal engrossment may be largely explained in the viewpoint expressed by the respected microbiologist-pathologist, Rene Dubos (1965), and it also may reveal the frightening inroads evolution has made into our intellectual culture. Dubos compares evolution with progress and notes with surprise that only in modern times has the myth of eternal return been displaced in the Western mind by the concept of progress (evolution). He also states:

"Most enlightened persons now accept as a fact that everything in the cosmos—from heavenlybodies to human beings—has developed and continues to develop through evolutionary processes. The great religions of the West have come to accept a historical view of creation." (p. 6)

Even in the most innocent appearing books, this doctrine is prevalent. In his captivating and refreshing story of pollination, Meeuse (1961) refers to the story of pollination as a "glowing testimonial to the theory of evolution." He ends his interesting book with this reference to evolution:

"It is a religious belief in the sense that it imposes upon us moral obligations and restrictions not different from those recognized by people who are religious in a more conventional way." (p. 219)<sup>3</sup>

Paradoxically, in his preface he refers to butterflies as "God's little magicians." Barry Commoner (1964), renowned physiologist and this writer's former teacher, in pondering the enigma of life, dismissed as untenable the notion of a mystic non-material "vital-force." My personal friend and respected colleague, Dr. Theodore Delevoryas (1962) of Yale University, opens his recent book with the statement:

"The most convincing evidence of plant evolution is the record of fossil plants." (p. 1)<sup>4</sup>

Locy (1935), the biological historian, in speaking of the concept of evolution:

"It means nothing less than the elimination of the miraculous from our knowledge of nature." (p. 373)

Le Gros Clark (1962), an advocate of evolution but distinguished by his open-minded willingness to admit weaknesses in the theory, makes this observation in the opening page of his book:

"The general conception that the more elaborately organized forms of life have evolved from simple forms may be regarded as fairly established in the minds of biologists today, and indeed in the minds of most educated people." (p. 1)<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> B.J.D. Meeuse—THE STORY OF POLLINATION Copyright © 1961. The Ronald Press Company.

<sup>4</sup> T. Delevoryas. *Morphology and Evolution of Fossil Plants*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1962. (By Permission)

<sup>5</sup> W. E. Le Gros Clark. *The Antecedents of Man*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1962. (By Permission)

De Beer (1958) in his comments on the Darwin-Wallace Centenary said:

"The alternative to evolution is so naive that it comes as a shock to realize that as recently as one hundred years ago, ideas such as called for the following questions could still be current: 'Do they really believe that at innumerable periods in the earth's history certain elemental atoms have been commanded suddenly to flash into living tissue? Do they believe that at each supposed act of creation one individual or many were produced?'" (p. 75).

Writing in the more scoffing style of which he is a master, the avowed disbeliever and famous paleontologist, Simpson (1953), remarked, in speaking of man and his role in life as based upon the fossil record:

"He responds to no plan and fulfills no supernal purpose. He stands alone in the universe, a unique product of a long, unconscious, impersonal, material process, with unique understanding and potentialities. These he owes to no one but himself, and it is to himself that he is responsible. He is not the creature of uncontrollable and undeterminable forces, but his own master." (p. 155)<sup>6</sup>.

Suffice it to say, the reader, whether layman or scientist, is literally inundated by the sheer quantity and the positivism of evolutionary thought. It goes far beyond implication and claims to be absolute fact. Today there usually exists ready denial that evolution is taught as factual, and one can always encounter heated opposition by its supporters to the charge that it is incompatible with Biblical teaching and that it negates the idea of God. This is the easiest defense for the Christian to refute with the published quotes of the

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<sup>6</sup> G. G. Simpson. *Life of the Past*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953. (By Permission)

Darwinians themselves. Julian Huxley, the dean of organic evolutionary thought, will suffice to personify the mockery of God accompanying this heretical doctrine. Morris (1963) quotes Huxley as asserting in a 1960 television interview:

"The first point to make about Darwin's theory is that it is no longer a theory, but a fact. No serious scientist would deny the fact that evolution has occurred . . ." (p. 25).<sup>7</sup>

Huxley (1957), in his *Religion Without Revelation*, proclaimed:

"The supernatural is being swept out of the universe in the flood of new knowledge of what is natural. It will soon be impossible for an intelligent educated man or woman to believe in a god as it is now to believe that the earth is flat, that flies can be spontaneously generated, that disease is divine punishment, or that death is sometimes due to witchcraft. God will doubtless survive . . . sometimes . . . in the shelter of lazy minds, or as refuge for unhappy and ignorant souls." (p. 62).<sup>8</sup>

The adherents of evolution do indeed possess a near overwhelming monopoly over our educational and publication media. Though these subjects may appear to some to be too far removed from theology to discuss in the church and its lectureships, I personally am grateful to God for these channels of communication to oppose these atheistic and agnostic dogmas. They may be viewed with repugnance, but man's immortal soul is the pawn. In the face of such dominance as I have just outlined, it possibly may seem presumptuous for there to be any disagreement. It is small

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<sup>7</sup> H. M. Morris. *The Twilight of Evolution*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Co., 1963. (by Permission)

<sup>8</sup> J. Huxley. *Religion Without Revelation*. New York: New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 1957. (By Permission of Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc.)

wonder that we often receive short and impatient hearings when we publicly oppose them. It must also be acknowledged that our opponents do bear some impressive credentials and should merit our cautious respect. Huxley, Simpson, De Beer, et. al. may advocate a most distressing and distasteful doctrine, but they are men of high mental gifts and most obviously have the public ear.

So in the face of such adversaries can we refute the theory? First it must be recognized that there actually exists a vast army of scientific opposition to organic evolution and Darwinism, an army largely silent but now beginning to stir. The press media have remained largely closed to the Biblical believer, and the epithet "anti-evolutionist" usually brings such derision as to test sorely the courage of even the hardiest.

In visualizing evolution, we are prone to focus our attention on man, but an almost minuscule amount of science's evolutionary data is based on a study of man, and it has been mostly to the invertebrate animals and the plant world that attention has been devoted for attempted verification. At the same time, it has been largely from the fossil record that the corroborative evidence has been sought. It is almost unanimously agreed that only fossils provide the absolute documentary evidence that life has evolved from simpler to more complex forms. The transition from speculation and theory on the origin of life to examination of the tangible evidence of life is a difficult one, and if life existed in a primitive earth, it must have left some record in the geologic past. However, search for ancient and primaeval life has been hard pressed to find anything with which to theorize. The study of man has suffered most in this respect, for the paleontologic evidence is based on an almost ridiculously

few remains, and it has been largely for archaeology to produce the burden of proof.

The much publicized excavating of L.S.B. Leakey in Tanganyika provides much of today's popular primate evolutionary theories, yet Leakey himself has lamented the paucity of fossils, general disagreement among experts, and the enormous time gaps he recognizes that cannot be bridged.<sup>9</sup> Le Gros Clark (1955, p. 162), perhaps the greatest of physical anthropologists, has constantly emphasized the lack of evidence for many primate claims, inadequacy of the fossil record, and the alarming divergence of opinions among experts.

In the study of man, anthropologists and archaeologists perplexedly return to a blank wall historically about 6000 B.C. Braidwood (1948) summarizes the problem ably and in layman's language, while Childe (1946) does so in a wider and more technical perspective. The earliest known village cultures are estimated at 6000-5000 B.C.; beyond that is a disturbing gap for the scientist. Again and again physical and cultural anthropology return to an area in the middle east as the point of origin of civilization. It is variously referred to as the "Cradle of Civilization" or the "Fertile Crescent" and encompasses an area from the Nile Delta arching up through Palestine, Syria, northern Iraq and terminating in Iran. Braidwood acknowledges that Mesopotamia and Egypt are where civilization began, with Mesopotamia being the older. He also wondered why it did not originate in Palestine, Syria, northern Iraq, or Iran, where he considered that food-production had a longer

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<sup>9</sup> M. M. Payne. *Family in search of prehistoric man*. National Geographic, vol. 127, no. 2, p. 196, 1965.

time to develop. He developed a plausible theory based on the presence of the great rivers of Egypt and Mesopotamia. But significantly, as science theorizes and gropes with the undeniable evidence of Mesopotamia and its rivers, it returns also to the incontrovertible fact of Genesis 2:14 and substantiation of what every Christian already knows.

Most of the scientific evidence for earlier dating of man is based upon artifacts and virtually no skeletal remains. The Neolithic or New Stone Age is said to have preceded civilization and is estimated at about 10,000 years ago. We are also told by the anthropologists that the Palaeolithic or Old Stone Age existed some 250,000 to 500,000 years ago. A little known fact, but admitted by Childe (1946, pp. 17-18), is that the Maoris culture of New Zealand was still classified as Neolithic in the 1800's, and the aborigines of Australia and numerous other Asiatic and African peoples are classified as Palaeolithic cultures today. On occasion, especially in the southwestern United States, remains of man have been found with those of extinct animals, and the appellation "Early Man" is frequently the result. However, does this imply antiquity for man or recency for animal? Extinction is not the sole province of the past. It has occurred in very recent history and constantly threatens segments of our flora and fauna to the consternation of present day conservationists. Finally, we must realize that the opinion that man has been on earth for only some 6000 years is not a Biblical expression. Actually the Bible is silent as to the exact time of his appearance. I present to you this evidence for man's physical recency in view of science's extension of man into a distant, misty past via the vehicle of organic evolution.

There has often been criticism voiced of the non-scientist

for interjecting himself into the evolution question, and certainly on occasion this has produced undesirable results. But let me assure you that it has been my own personal experience that the average biological and geological scientist understands very little more about the subject than does the layman. This may have the aura of a preposterous statement, but it has not been an uncommon experience for a professional colleague with graduate degrees, upon discovering the startling (to him) revelation of my stand, to assure me vigorously of the truths of evolution and Bible inadequacy with the assertion, "the fossils prove it; it's in all of the textbooks." This does not condone the novice exercising expertness in a foreign field, but to his credit he has often had the courage of his convictions to do so.

#### UNIFORMITARIANISM - CATASTROPHISM

The great underlying principle of modern geology is that of *uniformitarianism*. This states that the natural processes we see at work on earth today are sufficient to account for all past events. Originated by the geologist Charles Lyell (1830), it is often referred to as, "The present is the key to the past." The concept of *catastrophism*, considered untenable by modern geology, had been conceived previously by the paleontologist Cuvier<sup>10</sup>, who theorized that the earth had periodically been the scene of great catastrophes, of which the Noahic Deluge was most recent. Although Cuvier was convinced of the Genesis Flood with his theory of catastrophism as the answer, he was no scientific savior for the Scriptures. He drew a vast following of the theological

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<sup>10</sup> C. C. Gillispie. *Genesis and Geology*. New York: Harper Brothers Publ., 1959, pp. 98-120. Gillispie gives an excellent survey of Cuvier's views and their development.

community who abandoned the Genesis account for the variation of Cuvier's theory, which developed a theme teaching a great series of floods separated by immense time spans, and depositing the various fossil strata long before man's creation. In recent years the Creationist has insisted that uniformitarianism must be rejected as completely unable to explain all the facts of the fossil record, and that catastrophism provides the key for scientific accounting for the records of the rocks and agreement with the Biblical account. On the other hand, the principle of uniformity has taken the attitude that natural secondary processes have been occurring at the same rates as at present, rather than in accordance with the same physical laws. *This is the only way the enormous time lapse for placement of the slow evolutionary processes may be obtained.* If it seems that an inordinate amount of attention is being devoted to this subject in a paper of such limited scope, it should be realized that upon the unqualified acceptance of uniformity depends organic evolution and other scientific teachings contrary to Bible belief. It is their foundation; pull it down and they exist unsteadily on a materialistic foundation of sand. Suffice to say that uniformitarianism has become synonymous with the evolutionist and catastrophism with the creationist. However, what has become increasingly evident to every thinking geological scientist is that both principles must be considered in any explanation of geological history.

Catastrophes not only occurred, they are still taking place. One of the most notable is the Ice Age. Scientists do not deny the ice age, but theories and debate as to the cause, extent, and meaning are innumerable. Here was evidently a cataclysmic event of nearly the awesome magnitude of the Biblical Flood. The fact that its physical evidence still exists, and perhaps because it is not a Biblical subject, prevents its

being harangued by science. Most heartening too, is the logically satisfactory explanation of the Ice Age by Whitcomb and Morris (1965, p. 293) as a result of the universal Biblical Deluge, a thoroughly scientific reasoning without bypassing any natural law. On Big Horn Mountain in the Yellowstone National Park there is a remarkable exposed sequence of fossil forests. Each has apparently been destroyed by volcanic activity and entombed, with subsequent development of another forest, with it in turn meeting the same catastrophic fate. These spectral giants of the past have been re-exposed by erosion, and at one exposure 27 successive forests can be counted, silent witnesses to catastrophism. A further example may be cited in the awesome volcanic explosion of the island of Krakatau in 1883, for here was an event of such stupendous violence that it is difficult to fit adjectives to a description. It is quite obvious that certain uniformitarian processes are at work today as evidenced in erosion and sedimentary processes, but it does not necessarily follow that all secondary rocks of the earth's crust had their origin by this slow method.

### DECLINE OF UNIFORMITARIANISM

The pendulum has already commenced its slow swing away from uniformitarianism as witnessed by Krynine's (1956) revelation before a national geological gathering that the doctrine of conventional uniformitarianism is contradicted by all post-Cambrian sedimentary data, and all quantitative interpretations since Ordovician time are meaningless. He is referring to some 400 million years of the geologist's time scale in this opinion. More drastic still is the suggestion of Gould (1965), who has called for complete abandonment of the term *uniformitarianism*. He justifies

this on the argument that divine intervention is no longer an issue, and the supernatural is not a valid consideration (p. 223). Science today is retreating as it abandons the uniformity principle because it is inadequate to explain the fact that catastrophism is occurring. Gould (1965) also notes that only if God intervenes would natural laws be variant (p. 227). Yet he also admits that natural laws are variant, when he chooses to drop uniformitarianism. I am quite certain that catastrophism, derided for decades by agnostic scientists, will soon find respectability again as their tool, and certainly with some skillful maneuvering they will attempt to remove God as the First Cause. But here again, as so many times before, the Scriptures will emerge unscathed and vindicated. The Bible has always been explainable by catastrophism, and today modern geological science is beginning the reluctant and ponderous turn towards its acceptance.

A very important key to the interpretation of geologic history and a cornerstone of organic evolution is the geologic timetable. Here the rock systems are presented in an organized sequence with gradual progression of life from the simple to the complex supposedly depicted. It is true that over vast areas of the earth rock formations are found with similar fossil assemblages, and economic use is made of this fact. However, there is less proof here for antiquity than there is for contemporaneousness of origin. The timetable scheme, based upon uniformitarian principles, finds Biblical evidence strongly opposed to its accuracy. However, the writer utilizes these conventional geological division names throughout this discussion, not because of his acceptance of the principles involved but rather for the sole purpose of communication.

## DATING METHODS

The very existence of uniformitarianism and confirmation for most of the claims for the extreme antiquity of the earth and of life rest upon the reliability of the radioactive dating techniques, and the majority of these have produced estimates of age incalculably greater than any based upon Bible chronology. These methods have received scientific criticism, and charges and counter charges have been exchanged, but the evidence for their accuracy is an open book. Perhaps the best known technique, and one responsible for the more extreme calculations, is the Lead Method based upon the disintegration of uranium and thorium into lead. Hailed by Knopf (1949, p. 1) as being "impregnable," it was announced by Aldrich (1956, p. 871) that the method produced serious errors of analysis and was inadequate for measurements. The highly publicized helium method of a decade earlier had already been discredited and proven worthless by the discordant ages obtained with it.

The Radiocarbon (Carbon-14) method is the latest and most eulogized in use. Its claim for accuracy is extended to some 50,000 years, but actually there is little evidence for its exactness beyond 4,000 to 5,000 years. It has been harshly criticized by Antevs (1957, p. 129), a noted geochronologist, and its inconsistencies are well scattered throughout existing literature. Tschudy (1964) has recently illustrated the uncertainty of the isotope ratios due to the common lack of concordance between physical dates obtained by more than one method, and the decision as to exactly what geological phenomenon is being dated. Teichert (1958, p. 102) noted that presently no coherent picture of the earth could be built on the basis of radioactive dating due to the wide margin of error and scarcity of suitable

material. Defenders of the method have laid their problems frequently to contamination, faulty equipment, and misapplication of data. However, regardless of what problems have plagued it, the erroneous figures become firmly entrenched in the literature for the unapprised to cite. Distrust of them is valid so long as they are in error, regardless of the cause.

Whitcomb and Morris (1965, p. 344) point out the interesting fact that the serious inconsistencies and contradictions of these methods after a few thousand years harmonize with Biblical records and inferences associated with the Creation and the Flood. It is not surprising that when rocks are divided into their constituent minerals they produce highly different age values, for the universal Deluge with its intense mixing and diffusive action can account for the heterogeneity of the rock components and the inability to accurately extend dates beyond a few thousand years.

## THE DAYS OF CREATION

There have been many sincere efforts by religious scholars to demonstrate that the sequence of origins as theorized by science compares with that related in Genesis. This has resulted in an array of distorted explanations such as the "Gap Theory" with the necessity of vast time lapses between the first and second verses of the Bible or the "Day-Age Theory" and postulation of creation days corresponding to various geological ages. These allow the operation of Theistic Evolution and permit God to create the first life and let evolution take over as His tool of development. You are well aware of the scope of these arguments, even in our brotherhood. Nearly half a century ago the question was

put to E. G. Sewell<sup>11</sup>, and that great preacher simply and faithfully expressed his belief in an ordinary twenty-four hour day. I am inclined to agree with him, for Theistic Evolution places limitations on God's power of creation and denies Him the authority which Genesis states He has. It is rather futile to engage in debate over the time element as an interpretation of days being the long periods of geological time, as this only results in presenting even more perplexing problems for the scientist.

An example of this is the third day of creation (Genesis 1:9-13) which provides interesting speculation, for on this day God brought forth plants from the earth. The writer is a student of fossil plants, in the field of paleobotany. This phase of paleontology has been an active and respected discipline for about 150 years, including several thousand professional workers, and over ten thousand publications have been indexed in the field. Therefore, the creation of the plants is of special interest. The Scriptures state only that God made all plants in this one day. Geology teaches that plants appeared over a time span of nearly one-half billion years, becoming progressively more complex through evolution. For instance, the first ferns are postulated to have originated about 250 million years ago, the flowering plants 125 million years ago, the grasses some 30 million years ago. Viewing it from theistic evolution the third day of creation must be reckoned at 400 to 500 million years in length. Certainly a twenty-four hour day is impossible if one accepts the theory that production of the plant kingdom has required eons. Yet, this writer has been impressed, his colleagues baffled, and Darwin himself frustrated by the

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<sup>11</sup> M. C. Kurfees. *Questions Answered by Lipscomb and Sewell*. Nashville: McQuiddy Printing Co., 1957, p. 158.

sudden appearance of each plant group and the complete absence of a single transitional group. Many transitional theories are prevalent today, but an actual link has never been substantiated in the fossil record for the plant kingdom. Over one hundred years ago Darwin, effectively thwarted by the sudden appearance of fossil flowering plants in what is known as the Cretaceous age, labeled this as an "*abominable mystery*," Despite an all-out attack for over a century by all of paleobotany, the mystery of the flowering plant's ancestry is still just as abominable to all who ignore divine origin as the explanation.

To those who would demonstrate that the order of creation as taught by science compares with the order given in Genesis 1, the third day becomes utterly incompatible. The scriptures indicate that all vegetation was created in this one day. Science instructs that many plant groups did not originate until long after the fowls (5th day of scripture and 135 million years ago geologically) or beasts of the earth (6th day of scripture and 200 million years ago geologically). Even theistic evolution fails to explain this anomaly of constantly overlapping life and cannot correlate theistic with organic evolution. A classic example of this is Morrison (1944), who does one of the better jobs of demonstrating design and purpose in creation under the guidance of a Supreme Being and the unreasonableness of chance. Unfortunately he becomes engrossed in a final theistic evolutionary explanation and attempts to use the plant before animal sequence as part of his evidence (p. 102).

### WHERE SCIENCE SUPPORTS SCRIPTURE

Some of the finest testimonials to Biblical accuracy are to

be found in the science of botany, and the excellent treatise of the Moldenkes (1952) on the plants mentioned in the Bible is perhaps the best. Though technical in nature, it is a literal treasure house of plant lore substantiating the events of Bible history and written by two of the foremost botanical scientists of our time. The Bible stands up beautifully under their scholarly scrutiny, and these writers themselves, though not New Testament Christians, note the Bible as not being intended to serve as a textbook of natural history. The world of plants sheds additional light upon many Bible occurrences. The mode of hiding Ahimaaz and Jonathan from Absalom in the well (II Samuel 17:19) is explained by the practice of storing wheat in dry wells. The strange beheading of Ishbosheth (II Samuel 4:6) by seekers of wheat is clarified by the knowledge that in Old Testament times wheat for home consumption was stored in the central portion of the house.

The barren desolation of much of Palestine today after centuries of misrule and neglect of the land is in sharp contrast to the bountiful agricultural prosperity enjoyed by God's chosen. But as erosion has removed the soil and the peasant demolished the forest, another prophecy of Isaiah has come to fruition (Isaiah 33:9). And the modern botanist has confirmed the literal accuracy of ancient prophecy: "Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briars; yes, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city" (Isaiah 32:13) and "the thorn of the thistle shall come up on their altars" (Hosea 10:8). And to the detractors who have questioned the authenticity of Matthew 13:31-32 and denied that common mustard could achieve the size noted in the scriptures, modern botany has revealed that the ordinary black mustard, *Brassica nigra*, of the Holy Land is indeed a giant among herbs, and at maturity the birds do

lodge in the branches of this herb with its main stem as thick as a man's arm. These and countless other instances of the scriptural story are substantiated by plant science.

The longevity of the antediluvians has particularly troubled both science and theology. Numerous proposals have been put forth in an attempt to relieve the problem of time reduction and the extreme ages these men lived. This is again an essentially uniformitarian viewpoint in assuming that man could never have appreciably exceeded today's life span. Science is also permitting non-scientific emotions to prejudice thinking since much of the problem is obviously one of credulity. I am especially impressed with the thesis developed by Whitcomb and Morris (1965, pp. 24, 399) on the dissipation of the earth's protective water vapor canopy during the Flood. Something significant obviously happened to man with respect to longevity at this time, for the ages of the patriarchs steadily declined from the 950 years of Noah, and the 175 of Abraham, to Moses who was old at 120, and the near 70 year span of today.

It would be almost futile and impertinently bold to theorize or try to improve on the Flood explanation after the examination given it by Whitcomb and Morris (1965). According to their thesis the original waters were evidently in the form of a great vapor canopy (Gen. 1:9), which resulted after God divided the waters of the firmament on the second day (Gen. 1:7). This canopy would have a profound effect on terrestrial climate, and the Scriptures indicate that this state existed until the time of the Flood, and the earth had no rainfall (Gen. 2:5-6). When the great vapor blanket was condensed and precipitated, "the floodgates of heaven were opened." Whitcomb and Morris have scrutinized all aspects of the Flood, from the capacity of

the ark, through post-flood animal distribution, to caring for the animals during the Flood. Their treatment is commendable in its lucid handling of scientific criticism.

### ARCHAEOLOGY

Probably the strongest scientific discipline in demonstrating Bible genuineness is that of archaeology, often referred to as the "Handmaiden of the Scriptures." Among its wonderful revelations is the identification by Pritchard (1962) of the dusty village of el-Jib with ancient Gibeon - Gibeon, perhaps best known as the place where the sun stood still in obedience to Joshua's bold command (Joshua 10:12-14). As he excavated from 1956-1960, Pritchard also unearthed the great "pool of Gibeon," where Abner and the men of Israel were beaten by Joab and the servants of David in their brutal encounter at that pool (II Sam. 2:13-17). And he established other ties between Biblical history and archaeology through discovery of written records on clay, bearing such familiar Biblical names as Hananiah, Azariah, Amariah, and Meshullam.

Free (1962) relates similar exciting finds such as the unearthing of the fabled "ivory house" of Ahab at ancient Samaria (I Kings 22:39). The searches at Bethshan from 1921 to 1933 have revealed the temple of Ashtaroth where Saul's armor was placed after his death (I Sam. 31:10) and the nearby temple of Dagon where Saul's head was placed (I Chron. 10:10). With these wondrous archaeological discoveries the Old Testament has been flooded with new light as familiar Biblical cities such as Jericho, Shiloh, Nineveh, Ur, and Bethel have been uncovered and produced materials which confirm the Scriptures at point after point. The science of archaeology is indeed the unifying thread in the sequence of Bible history.

## EVIDENCE OF SCIENTIFIC ERROR

The wide disagreement among evolutionists as to interpretations of fossil evidences and mechanics of evolution and similar fervent differences among experts in other phases of geology and biology has sometimes been an encouragement to the Christian believer, who has interpreted the differences as being synonymous with disproof of their theories. Often this assumption may be true, but it is not necessarily so, for despite their disparity of opinion, they usually believe firmly in their heretical propositions. But, does science really commit serious errors? Does it ever err in these disciplines in a manner endangering religious belief?

The specialized scientist of today, engrossed in his own restricted field, is as subjugated by anti-Bible opinion as is the non-scientist. That our questioning of the veracity of scientific teachings contrary to literal Bible facts is merited, is borne out by the testimony of science itself. No more scathing indictment of the lack of integrity and prevalence of error in modern science is to be found than is represented in the "Commoner Report" (Commoner, et. al., 1965). This influential report, authored by world ranking scientists, has received high praise in this land and abroad.<sup>12</sup>

Some of the mistakes, especially in fossil studies, have very serious implications. To demonstrate only a few of a vast array of such blunders, one finds the impressive treatise of Spencer (1964) replete with errors in the section on plant origins. She notes the considerable diversity the angiosperms had attained by the Jurassic age (p. 7), and citation of the

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<sup>12</sup> *The Integrity of Science*. Editorial in NATURE, no. 4991, 1965. pp. 1277-1280.

oldest known land plants (p. 6) in the Ordovician is an error of some magnitude. The earliest known angiosperms, as I have noted previously, are present suddenly, almost mysteriously in, the Cretaceous. The oft quoted Jurassic origin has never been substantiated, but the origin of this erroneous reference is well known privately in paleontological circles. De Beer (1964, p. 159) also made the same serious mistake in citing the Angiosperm-Jurassic origin. Spencer's Ordovician date derives from a report by Kozlowski and Greguss (1959). Of this latter paper, the world renowned paleobotanist, Henry Andrews (1960), after examining the fossils determined that they were simply samples bearing modern contaminants. Prior to this time the younger Silurian age had been cited as the point of origin of land plants, and even this has now been found to be in error. Banks (1964, p. 11) has called for a reassessment of the Silurian age date due to an error in identifying the key invertebrate fossil in the beds. This renders younger by some 25 million years a classic flora of virtually every paleontology text published since 1935, and it is a difference of some 100 million years in land plant origin from the mistaken Ordovician dating cited by Spencer, Kozlowski and Greguss. Seward (1963), the esteemed giant of paleobotany, has devoted attention to the numerous mistakes in fossil investigations, such as the instance of the handle of a Wedgewood teapot described as a fossil stem. He noted that though these may seem a comedy of errors, the researchers must view them as serious warnings against dogmatic conclusions on imperfect data. There are scores of other instances, such as the case of a New England lamplighter being described as a fossil gourd. A few years ago I had occasion to examine a rare fossil cone of an age estimated at 250 million years, submitted by a well known geologist. It proved to be a very modern, charred corn cob, rescued from a coal fire in a rural home.

But it deceived several reputable scientists.<sup>13</sup> Only in recent years (Gamow, 1953, p. 5) was it decided by astronomers that distances between galaxies were actually nearly twice as great as taught. This correction served to change the calculated age of the universe from 1.8 billion to 3.5 billion years, a mistake of a mere 1.7 billion years.

Perhaps not an error but certainly a mystery is the origin of mountains. The student of geology is exposed to an absoluteness in explanations of orogenesis and leaves college confident that they are explainable. However, Eardley (1960) in a Sigma Xi National Lecture, revealed mountain formation as an enigma of geology with wide disagreement among experts, described as a hopeless problem by some and as a fascinating riddle by others. If the uniformity principle were valid, a feature of the magnitude of orogeny should be explainable in terms of some contemporaneous observable and measurable process. But all that exists are hypothetical speculations and an impenetrable maze of unreconciled opinions.

### SUMMATION

I have no intention or expectation of having science corroborate the events of the Bible, nor the Bible the principles of science. I have endeavored here to demonstrate certain inadequacies of scientific theories which have challenged scriptural accounts. Admittedly there exists a vast area in which this cannot be done. But may I remind you that theories and hypotheses of science have become obsolete even in this decade, while God's word has endured throughout the centuries. The scientist cannot claim absolute truth

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<sup>13</sup> Newspaper account. *Knoxville News Sentinel*. Knoxville, Tennessee. March 26, 1953.

but the Bible does, and its claims for infallibility have been vindicated many times in the past. The Christian will still serve God in the same manner with the same scriptures when the popular bandwagon of 20th century science will have become archaic.

There are almost countless questions which cannot be answered by giving natural explanations, for they definitely lie within the realm of the miraculous. Questions of such events as the long day of Joshua and the great fish of Jonah cannot be answered by giving natural explanations. They were miraculous events, but the miracles of the Scriptures do not oppose science but actually stand as commentaries on the power of the Creator. There is little to be gained by debating with science on miracles, for they are historical problems, reliant upon the reliability of witnesses. The personalities and backgrounds of the apostles are an open book, and the documentary evidence of their intimate association with Jesus and the witnessing of many miracles is well established.

In actuality I have been asked as a scientist and a Christian why I believe in God, and I personally have never required nor sought scientific grounds to justify my faith. I do not believe in God because science has proved Him, but I do believe more firmly in God because science has not been able to disprove Him.

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## MAKING THE BIBLE RELEVANT

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Ezra lamented the intermarriage of Israelites with Hittites.<sup>1</sup> But the Hittites are now extinct. Amos warned the house of Israel against unacceptable animal sacrifices.<sup>2</sup> But the children of Israel no longer offer any form of animal sacrifice. Jesus Christ dealt with specific weaknesses of His apostles.<sup>3</sup> But the twelve are dead. Paul wrote a letter to encourage and instruct the Colossian church.<sup>4</sup> But in the twelfth century Colosse was attacked, the church destroyed, and the city forgotten.

We live in the twentieth century, almost two millennia after the completion of the Bible. Empires have risen and fallen. Before our century began, great epochs had passed: feudalism, the Protestant Reformation, and the French and American Revolutions, for instance. Even *within* our century cataclysmic changes have come about, especially through the effects of two World Wars. *Since* World War II we have entered the age of the atom, the computer, the emerging nations, the communications satellite, the astronaut, and the ecumenical movement.

Is a book written many centuries before the Renaissance pertinent for a generation which boasts ninety per cent of the scientists who have ever lived, in all human history? Can a book written in the days of ox-carts, blood-letting, and spears say anything relevant for the America of supersonic jets, wonder drugs, and hydrogen bombs? We shall see.

In attempting to explore the relevance of the Bible for our contemporary society, we will bypass certain areas which have been traversed recently in our literature, such as the relevance of the Bible to science, to the "sexplosion," to the ecumenical movement, or to the divorce problem.

## I. WHAT IS AMERICA LIKE TODAY?

Before we can determine whether the Bible is relevant for our life today, we must discover features in our society to which the Bible might relate. But we live *in* the society, and perhaps our perspective is limited. We need to step outside of it for a moment, if possible, to attain a more objective viewpoint.

What if it were possible for some deceased teacher or minister who passed away in the early years of our century to come back and visit America. Suppose J. W. McGarvey or David Lipscomb were here, and we said, "We give you *carte blanche* to travel throughout this country. Spend a year traveling in our great cities and towns. Keep a notebook with you, and, aside from the spectacular changes you note in such outward things as transportation or architecture or food processing, write down your impressions of our life today. What are we really like? Do you notice any changes in the things that really matter?"

What do you suppose would be the answer? I think we would be told that American life has been transformed fundamentally in several aspects. I think we would be told that we are sick.

### A. *Secularization.*

One of the first symptoms we would have called to our attention by someone who had lived in the United States a few generations ago would be the secularization of our society. According to one American history scholar, "In 1840 the president of every important college in the country

was a clergyman or trained to the church; a century later no clergyman adorned the presidential chair of any of the leading institutions of learning."<sup>5</sup> New York University is an example. It seems incredible to learn that Howard Crosby was the Minister of a New York Presbyterian church while he was Chancellor of N.Y.U. from 1870 to 1881,<sup>6</sup> and that he delivered the Yale lectures on preaching during his chancellorship.

The history of Yale itself is instructive. Yale began when ten ministers met at the dawn of the eighteenth century to donate books for the founding of a college.<sup>7</sup> The original charter, issued in New Haven in the Colony of Connecticut on Oct. 9, 1701, noted that the founders were zealous to uphold and propagate "the Christian Protestant Religion" and desired to establish a school wherein youth, "through the blessing of Almighty God, may be fitted for public employment, both in Church and civil State."<sup>8</sup> In their first meeting the trustees of the college observed that their fathers had come to America "both to plant, and, under the Divine blessing, to propagate in this wilderness, the blessed reformed protestant religion, in the purity of its order and worship."<sup>9</sup> They required that the rector of Yale "cause the Scriptures daily... morning and evening, to be read by the students, at the times of prayer in the School, according to the laudable order and usage of Harvard College, making expositions upon the same."<sup>10</sup> In addition, the rector was to "at all times studiously endeavor, in the education of the Students, to promote the power and purity of religion, and the best edification of these New England Churches."<sup>11</sup>

By the close of World War I, a course "preparatory to theology" was dropped by Yale College: "The B.A. course

was supposed to serve well enough, and Yale College had ceased to be a nursery of theologians and missionaries.”<sup>12</sup> By the mid-twentieth century, Yale had an atheist teaching a course in the psychology of religion.<sup>13</sup> Though he later moved to an agnostic position, in his well-known course in the psychology of religion he “was fond of shocking his young students at the opening session of it with the announcement: ‘I do not believe in God.’”<sup>14</sup>

But secularism has affected more than our educational institutions: it has permeated many areas of life. Much of the change has been justified by the American democratic doctrine of the separation of church and state. This makes one wonder. Though the founding fathers were greatly concerned about liberty, and desired that men be free to worship God according to conscience, they never conceived of the idea of the separation of God and state. The founding documents of our nation will bear that statement out.

When villages were built in early New England, there was a practice known as “centering the town.” The geographical center was located, and what do you suppose they built in the center? Yes, you guessed it; and you can still see their spires glistening in the center of some old New England towns. This was symbolic of something; the church was in the center of the life and thought of the people.

It is a spine-chilling experience to travel in the New York subways and to see this motto scrawled on billboards and signs: “Dios Esta Muerto” (“God is dead”). This is a symptom of the sickness of our times. Is there a cure? We shall see.

*B. Alienation.*

There is another evidence of our illness that our resurrected traveler would notice. We might call it alienation.

In its most vivid and horrifying form it has been in the headlines concerning crime. In New York City thirty-two people heard a woman scream for help, but not one even telephoned for help, much less rushed to her aid. When asked later by the police about their lethargy, some replied, "We didn't want to get involved." Get involved? If we are not involved in the troubles and the heartaches of others we are sick.

A woman in Oklahoma City delivered her baby on the street; a taxi driver and two automobile drivers sped off when they saw her condition. In Buffalo, N.Y. a young nurse reported that twenty persons had stood by, without helping, and watched a sixty-six year old man bleed to death from stab wounds. "I've heard of bystanders refusing to get involved in incidents in New York City—but I never thought I'd see it in Buffalo," she said.<sup>15</sup> "I always thought any human being would try to help another in trouble. People just let him lie there like an animal. Several were gazing through a restaurant window like they were watching a movie. It made me sick to my stomach."

When Hurricane Betsy struck Louisiana in September of 1965, dozens of people were killed and many injured and left homeless. The Governor appealed to the people to answer "yes" to the question, "Am I my brother's keeper." Why? Because scalping prices were being charged for scarce commodities. Thirty-five cent bags of ice sold for \$1.50. Prices were suddenly raised in some hotels in New Orleans

where evacuees sought refuge. Some establishments charged five and six times the usual price for gasoline or groceries. Some were charging a dollar for a loaf of bread, according to the mayor of New Orleans. <sup>16</sup>

Alienation has plagued churches, according to some scholars:

Impersonality, anonymity, and mass participation are prevalent in the large urban church. In tune with the rapid pace of urban culture, church members rush to church for a brief hour a week and then are just as quick in leaving its doors. The congregation on a Sunday morning is a sea of more or less impassive faces. Everyone is alone in the crowd, be it subway or sanctuary. Strangers they come and strangers they go. <sup>17</sup>

What is more pathetic than the sight of a human being walking down a crowded street, while tenderly holding his transistor radio to his ear; he is oblivious to all but his "friendly" announcer or disk jockey, a disembodied, impersonal voice.

What are the causes of this symptom called alienation? Moral decay, perhaps. Possibly urbanization has played a part. Possibly automation has. Machines now do the work people once performed for us. No longer do you talk with the telephone operator. You simply dial the area code. Whatever the causes, alienation is here.

But of course we are likely to think, "It can't happen here." I am reminded of the old preacher who spoke to me last year at the ACC lectures. With nostalgia in his voice, shaking his head slowly, he said, "I remember when every student you'd pass on this campus during lecture week

would smile and say hello. Now they all seem in a hurry, and they don't notice me." I am reminded of the Texas preacher who accompanied me in some visitation here in Texas. At some homes we were politely, but coolly, informed that the person we sought (usually the head of the house) was not at home, and that we might try such-and-such a place. My Texas brother reminisced, "I remember a time when we would have been invited in for a glass of iced tea, or at least to sit down for a minute."

Modern man feels alone, uninvolved, much of the time. Is there a relevant remedy for this malady. We shall see.

### *C. Obsession with Ease and Entertainment.*

A nineteenth century visitor to the twentieth century would surely be impressed vividly with our obsession concerning ease and entertainment. Perhaps he would think the prophecy had been fulfilled that Paul wrote to Timothy: "men shall be...lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

The number of hours per week that the average family television set is on is appalling, especially when one considers the judgment that one of the primary motives for viewing television is escapism—the desire to find release from real life. The need for occasional "laughter, amusement, even idle frivolity" in our tense world is obvious.<sup>18</sup> But with increased leisure time, and the boom in the amusement industry, we have gone to an extreme.

In a Long Island suburban area a dope ring was uncovered. The youngsters using the drugs were from well-to-do homes; they went to fine suburban schools; they came

from "good" families. Why were they taking drugs? They were not living in a deprived neighborhood or a crime-infested slum. The answer: "just for kicks." Is the Bible relevant? We shall see.

*D. Lack of Moral Fiber.*

As one scholar has noted, "Perhaps the best way to describe the contemporary state of mind is to label it as 'uncommitted' " <sup>19</sup> There is quite a contrast between the Muckrakers of half a century ago and the spineless periodicals of today which tremble lest they offend some professional group, product, or institution. There is quite a difference between the stalwart men who framed the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and many contemporary politicians who slavishly follow public opinion rather than try to transform it for the sake of justice and right. I am naive enough to believe that those early patriots meant exactly what they vowed when they signed the Declaration of Independence: "for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." Lives were sacrificed. Fortunes were given. Sacred honor was kept. Do we have this commitment in our nation today?

Actually, most are committed, but too few are nobly committed. So many are committed to status, to amusement, to cheap success images, to prestige, to material gain. So few are committed to honor, to dignity, to truth, to excellence, to fellowship, to justice, to purity.

A recent newspaper study of American morals came to the conclusion that we are living "in a time of ethical up-

heaval and convulsion and confusion," with the result that

Some of the most cherished truths and values of our forbears no longer obtain. Others are being re-examined and rejected. Many are being watered down. Some are still honored in theory but rarely in practice.<sup>20</sup>

The newspaper questionnaire study suggested that lying, cheating, and pilfering have become acceptable in American life, particularly among young people. The study supported a Columbia University report which revealed that at least half of the 6,000 students sampled engaged in cheating, and it went on to state that over half the grammar school children questioned admitted they cheated in school.

The study raises some frightening questions. Why do we allow our young people to be seduced by the clever advertising of harmful, habit-forming products? Why have fraudulent insurance claims increased? Why do we tolerate built-in obsolescence, deceptive advertising, and shoddy workmanship?<sup>21</sup>

Does the Bible relate to all of this? We shall see.

#### *E. Shoddiness and Uselessness.*

Our dedicated, industrious, purposeful nineteenth-century preacher or teacher might also note the vanity of much of our employment and commerce.

Goodman's picture of a young man becoming aware of the idle nature of his work is painfully graphic. He describes an auto mechanic:

That's a good job... You please people in trouble by

fixing their cars, and a man is proud to see rolling out on its own the car that limped in behind a tow truck... But what when he then learns that the cars have a built-in obsolescence, that the manufacturers do not want them to be repaired or repairable?... Repairing the new cars is often a matter of cosmetics, not mechanics... Gone are the days of keeping the jalopies in good shape, the artist work of a proud mechanic... But everybody is paying for foolishness, for in fact the new models are only trivially superior; the whole thing is a sell.<sup>22</sup>

Tragically, we can take this example and multiply it hundreds of thousands of times; for multitudes are prostituting their talents to create trifling products or squandering their lives in employment which processes, promotes, or sells meaningless merchandise or services. They cannot have a sense of integrity, of contribution, of creativity, of meaning. This sort of employment, as ephemeral as cotton candy, shrinks men's souls. A cheapness pervades society when a man's work is frivolous and when his profits or wages become ends in themselves. Does the Bible relate to this symptom of modern man's sickness? We shall see.

#### F. Conformity.

Our nineteenth-century, rugged-individualist brother would probably be revolted by the tendency of many modern Americans to look to societal norms for direction.

William H. Whyte, Jr., has treated this topic in his now famous book, *The Organization Man*. His thesis is that group-mindedness, pursued with *moral fervor*, is strangling individuality. Let us create a fictional character, John J. Jones, and trace his assimilation from his community play pen to his placid position in the home office of the corporation. Little

Johnny's first social experiences will be in the courtyards or streets of a suburban development in which each house is quite like the others. For the sake of harmony, Johnny's house will never be altered in any noticeable way.

Johnny's friends are more likely to be determined by arbitrary physical boundaries in the neighborhood than by personal choice or ties of kinship. His junior-executive father and "kaffee klatching" mother will be more deeply concerned with what the neighbors think about their behavior than they will be about thinking, or agonizing, through to a code of ethics based upon their personal encounter with life and destiny.

When Johnny marches off to school he will learn that the chief goal there is not excellence or individual achievement. The major ends of his education will be togetherness, belongingness, and vocational readiness. At college he will find that most of his fellow students are enrolled in technical or business programs. His parents and many of his advisors will steer him away from being greatly concerned with such questions as: What is man? Who am I? Where are we headed? Where should we be headed? He will be encouraged rather to concentrate on becoming a desirable commodity on the employment market on graduation day. The corporation representative will not be looking for the aggressive individualist or for the person who thinks too deeply on grave issues. He will look for the man who thinks in terms of group achievement, the man who will be ambitious for the success of the Organization.

When Johnny finds a wife, she will marry the corporation when she marries him. Their tastes, political interests, church life, and social life will be directed by the organiza-

tion's moral imperative—what will promote harmony and further the group? John will devote himself to securing a position with the corporation which will be comfortable and respectable, a job that pays well but does not involve great personal responsibility. He will follow the written and unwritten codes. He will always sign his name John J. Jones, for the corporation personnel people will label him "hypomanic" if he signs it J. J. Jones, "narcissistic" if he signs it John Jerome Jones, and "histrionic and narcissistic" if he signs it J. Jerome Jones.<sup>23</sup>

This is not the life of all men, but it is the life of many a corporation man in suburbia, U.S.A. Does the Bible have a pertinent word? We shall see.

### *G. Decentralization of the Home.*

The last symptom of the sickness of our society that we will mention in this lecture, and one that would certainly be noticed by our bygone-day preacher or teacher, is the break-up of the modern home.

Automobiles, airplanes, leisure time, and prosperity have all contributed to our mobility. Even if we stay at home, we are influenced by external forces. A man's home is no longer his castle: the moat has been crossed via the air waves, and radio and television now help shape his children's morals. The daily newspaper and the weekly magazine contribute largely to the topic of conversation at dinner. Dinner, that is, when the family is there. If Dad is not working overtime, he is either away on a business trip or out bowling with the local team. Mom, if she does not work full-time, is at a garden club meeting or a P.T.A. planning session.

Junior is either on a Boy's Club outing or is acting as assistant third base coach for a ball team (he hopes to be associate third base coach next year). Sister is taking her music lesson at the studio, or is she at the beauty parlor?

Without attempting to paint an idyllic picture of the past, it is true that the home is less and less an influence today, as compared with its potency a few generations ago. Our lives are scattered, and we have lost the cohesiveness, discipline, and fellowship that was more likely to characterize homes in past generations. We are shocked by godless societies which turn over the training of the young to forces outside the home, while giving parents only a marginal role and limited contact with their children; yet, through materialism, escapism, and lack of moral direction, *we are doing the same thing here in America*. Does the Bible have a relevant answer? Let us see.

## II. THE RELEVANCE OF THE BIBLE.

One of the fascinating experiences of life is to read ancient writers, whether it is a would-be Greek historian such as Herodotus, a Roman biographer like Suetonius, or a Near Eastern chronicler, such as those represented in James Prichard's *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Part of the fascination derives from the fact that we meet persons who might just as well be in the room with us as we read, we seem to know them so well. The vanity of a particular Roman general may remind us of our next-door neighbor. A moment of terror experienced by a Greek priestess may call to mind a scare we had last week. A situation before an Assyrian court may make us shake our head knowingly and say, "Yes, that's what life is all about."

Though the runway lengths for trans-Atlantic jets are longer than the total flight lengths of the earliest airplanes; though the Empire State building stands where Indians once hunted deer; though nuclear submarines now cruise beneath waters once crossed by Leif Ericson in wooden ships; though an astronaut can circle the earth in less time than it took Abraham to travel one lap of his journey to Canaan, man has not changed significantly in his basic nature. Viking or submarine skipper, patriarch or astronaut, man is man.

This is a primary reason why we can make the Bible as relevant for our generation as it was for the men who lived in the times during which it was written. This is a basic reason why "the word of the Lord abides for ever."<sup>24</sup> One day, when our present automobiles appear as antiquated as covered wagons now seem, and when our computers seem as quaint as the abacus, the Bible will still be relevant. Man will still be grappling with his faith, his morality, and his spiritual destiny. The voice of the Lord will still ring across the centuries, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away."<sup>25</sup>

#### *A. Modern Man and His Fellow Man*

In the Pentateuch, the first division of the Bible, concern for one's fellow men is obvious: the people were not to harvest all of their crops; nor were they to gather all the gleanings after the harvest; nor were they to strip their vineyards bare; nor were they to gather fallen grapes. They were to leave all this for sojourners and for the poor (Leviticus 19:9, 10). Not only were they to love their neighbors as themselves, they were to love strangers in the same manner (Leviticus 19:18, 34).

In the immortal story of the compassionate Samaritan, Jesus told us that we are not to turn away from those who suffer. We are not to ask, "Is he my neighbor?" We are to help, to serve, to give, to comfort. We are to rejoice with those who rejoice and to weep with those who weep (Romans 12:15). We are to do good to all men. Sympathy is to be felt especially within the body of Christ: "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together" (I Corinthians 12:26).

This message of concern, of kindness, of helpfulness is not merely relevant for our generation; it is desperately needed. Sorrow must flow from eye to eye, and joy from heart to heart, or we are undone. We must demonstrate and we must teach the Bible principle that every man's pain is our pain, every man's grief our grief.

### *B. Modern Man and God*

But our fellowship with our fellow man is not the sole aim: "that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3). We hope that our interest in others will motivate them to want to have fellowship with our Father.

Are we really teaching the first principles to our generation? We boast that we are, but there is one first principle that we neglect: "In the beginning God." To make the Bible relevant we must grapple, as did Paul at Athens, with the most fundamental fact of religion and life: I AM WHO I AM (Exodus 3:14). What could be more relevant for our age than to remind men that there is One who gave

and who sustains life, that there is One who rewards them that diligently seek Him?

*C. Modern Man and His Goals.*

When men recognize God, they must be moved to present themselves to Him as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable. They must be motivated to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, for the kingdom of God is righteousness, as well as peace and joy (Romans 14:17).

It is difficult to conceive of anything more relevant for modern man than the commitment of Paul. "To me to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21). In addition to his compassionate service to help those in need (Acts 20:35), we know of his truthfulness (II Corinthians 6:7), of his faithfulness (II Timothy 4:7), and of other qualities which made him an exemplary Christian.

There are dozens of exemplary men and women in the Bible, and the pattern of their lives is what modern man needs to know. There were the contractors who were so trustworthy that it was not necessary to require an accounting of the funds given them to repair the house of the Lord (II Kings 12:15). How many such contractors do you know? The Bible is relevant. There was Samuel, a man of great authority, who asked publicly if he had defrauded anyone, oppressed any one, or ever accepted a bribe. Do we need such leaders today in our nation? The Bible is relevant. There was Hannah, who kept her word and gave her son to the service of God (I Samuel 1:24). Do we need such mothers today? The Bible is relevant. There was Stephen, who died maintaining the truth, and who prayed for those who killed him (Acts 7). Time would fail to tell of the in-

tegrity of Daniel, of the faithful teaching of Timothy's mother and grandmother, of the sexual purity of Joseph, of the generosity of Barnabas, and of the moral courage of Jeremiah. Do we have a lack of such men and women and young people in our society today? The Bible is relevant.

The Bible tells employees to be faithful and employers to be fair. It tells parents to train their children in the discipline and teaching of the Lord, and it instructs children to obey their parents. It motivates mothers and fathers to love their children, and moves children to respect their parents. It teaches business men to use fair weights and just measures. It persuades rulers to lead in righteousness and citizens to honor and respect such authorities. It counsels nations to practice justice. It requires that wives be respectful and helpful, that husbands be considerate and sacrificial, that boys be pure and girls be chaste. It puts love where there was hate, honest work where there was thievery, truth where there was falsehood, and concern where there was indifference. It instills a passion for righteousness and a love for truth. How we need the message of the Bible in our society today. Yes, the Bible is relevant.

#### *D. Modern Man and Himself.*

The Bible is clear on the topic of conformity to societal norms: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2). The Bible is clear on the subject of personal responsibility: "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12). The Bible is clear on the subject of individual accountability: "So each of

us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12). No matter what others may choose, the man of God is expected to say, "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

### *Conclusion*

One night some boys entered a hardware store and switched some price tags. The next morning when customers entered they found that light bulbs sold for six cents a pound, while nails were thirty-nine cents apiece. Lawnmowers were priced at seventy-five cents, but cleaning fluid cost sixty-nine dollars a bottle.

But it isn't funny when the values of a culture get mixed up. Many social critics believe we are in that position. Many have abandoned the faith of their fathers, and in its place is nothing—a moral, spiritual vacuum.

The Bible brings man face to face with himself, with his family, with his destiny, with his God. It is timeless. "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord abides forever. That word is the good news which was preached to you" (I Peter 1:24, 25). That word is pertinent. That good news is relevant. May men find it so in our lives.

### FOOTNOTES

1. Ezra 9:1-4.
2. Amos 5:22.
3. Luke 22:24-27.
4. Colossians 1:1, 2.

5. Henry Steele Commager, *The American Mind*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 167.
6. *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1950), Vol. III, p. 308.
7. Ebenezer Baldwin, *Annals of Yale College*, (New Haven; Hezekiah Howe, 1831), pp. 11, 12.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 14.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
12. George Wilson Pierson, *Yale College: An Educational History; 1871-1921*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 503.
13. *New York Times*, March 21, 1965, obituary page.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *New York Times*, July 19, 1965.
16. *New York Times*, September 13, 1965.
17. Robert Lee, "The Organizational Dilemma in American Protestantism," *Ethics and Bigness*, ed. Harlan Cleveland and Harold D. Lasswell (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962), p. 203.
18. Charles A. Siepmann, "What Is Wrong with TV—and with Us?" *New York Times Magazine*, April 19, 1964, p. 13.
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22. Paul Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd*, (New York: Random House, 1962), pp. 19, 20.
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# THE CHRIST AND THE BIBLE

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J. B. Phillips, in his book *New Testament Christianity*, has a section entitled "The Angel's Point of View." He tells of two angels flying through space, when the senior of the pair points out to his companion what is called "the visited planet." As the two watch, the planet reverses its rotation, carrying it into its past, so the angels can see history relived. When the proper rotation resumes, ere long the pair see, in the upper half of the sphere, a tiny light, of such intensity that they must shield their eyes. But soon the light is extinguished, until, after three more rotations of the globe, it blazes once more with unbearable radiance. However, before long the dazzling light has gone again, but is supplanted by many small points of light, which begin to spread and give a glow to many areas of the planet.

The awestruck junior angel understands that this planet, Earth, though seemingly insignificant in the vastness of space and among the heavenly bodies, is the one that the Prince of Glory has chosen to visit. And, of course, the appearances and disappearances of the light were the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, and the spreading church.

This interesting perspective describes that which Christians regard as the most important event of all history—an event which man cannot fully comprehend, yet which he must understand as best he is able. The life of Jesus made a tremendous impact on the men of His age—an impact which is continuing to the present and which will endure eternally. None of us can really know the full nature of the psychological responses of Jesus' contemporaries, nor can we fully appreciate the continuing significance of His life as His earthly generation passed away, to be followed by another corps of disciples, and they by others. Surely for a time

Jesus' followers were content to spread the good news of the kingdom orally. But as time went by, under the direction of the Almighty Himself, it was necessary that the message of the Visit be enshrined and preserved in written form—thus eliminating the possibility that it would suffer from the deceptions that memory can work.

But in this recognition there is a point we do well to remember. The Lord was prior to the Bible. Men were committed to Him before anything was written. It will help us if we recall this as we approach our subject "Christ and the Bible." Something of a dilemma is posed by the fact that we are now dealing with the record of certain events and truths, rather than having experienced that history firsthand. First, since we are dependent on sources, it means that we must bring the best within us to bear on the discovery of Christ from the Bible. We neglect this important quest at our own peril. But second, it is equally important to know that the Bible is a witness to God, not God in itself. Many evils can arise if we forget the Bible is a means to an end, i.e., our complete devotion to God; not the end in itself. As Christ was before the Bible, so our approach to the Bible is to go beyond all exegesis and theologizing, debating and mere reading, to a meaningful personal communion with Jesus. If we stop at the Bible, and do not go on to the Lord, we may be well versed in knowledge and interpretation of words on pages, but we will not be energized and transformed by the living presence of Christ within us. We must never equate mere Biblical knowledge with real Christianity. Even an unbeliever can know the gross contents of the Bible, but it is through these contents that we are led to the level of commitment and salvation. To stop halfway can keep one from the Lord, while seeming to have

some sort of religious significance which the unperceptive could mistake for Christianity.

As the visited planet of Phillips' illustration continued to turn, men became increasingly dependent upon the Bible for their knowledge of Christ. But this was to occasion an entire series of problems through the ages, which arose due to certain paradoxes within the Biblical material itself, and due to the amazing variation in human intellects. We would like to center upon three of them in this presentation. First will be the Christological controversy, followed by a discussion of the epistemological problem (i.e. how can we know just what the Bible does tell us about Christ); and then we will discuss what we have chosen to term the practical problem—which will be more exactly defined in due time.

### The Christological Controversy

As Christians began to approach the questions raised by the Incarnation more philosophically, there arose two great controversies in the church of the third through fifth centuries. The first was the Trinitarian controversy, followed logically and chronologically by the Christological dispute. The latter was centered in the problems posed to the human mind by the recognition that God has become man. A number of seeming impossibilities were involved. How can the God who is limitless with regard to space and time become a creature who is limited in both these respects? How can the incorporeal and incorruptible God take on corruptible flesh? How can the absolutely Holy become a creature whose fate had always been to transgress against Holiness? How could the infinite wisdom and knowledge of

God be joined in one with the relative folly and stupidity of man? How could the Powerful God become one with powerless man? These, and other problems of a like nature, were compounded by another factor in human limitation. Man, with his finite mind, can barely begin to understand God as He is. The problem is intensified when we realize that man's languages cannot even always express what the human mind experiences. This dual inadequacy, then, makes even more perplexing the attempt to grasp the Infinite. This should contribute to a practical recognition which is relevant to us at the present hour. We should not expect to understand all. There will be some things in our present considerations which we cannot fully grasp. We need to learn that we must leave some dilemmas unresolved, since the human mind is not an adequate tool with which to completely comprehend Reality.

The Christological problem had as its raw materials two strains of New Testament thought, which had to be welded together intellectually (or so it seemed) as they had been welded personally in Jesus. First, Jesus had obviously been a man. He appeared that way to His contemporaries, and it was only gradually that many of them came to see Him as anything more than a man. He had emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, and been made in the likeness of men (Philippians 2:7f). To those who would deny the real humanity of Jesus, John replied by saying that He had been seen and touched—empirically demonstrating His humanity (I John 1:1). Yet, according to the New Testament evidence, Jesus was also God. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, was Paul's assertion (Colossians 2:9). All things had been made through Him and for Him (Colossians 1:16; John 1:3). He was the Word, with God,

indeed very God, and yet that pre-existent Word became flesh (John 1:1, 3:14). Continually through the gospel of John the evangelist records Jesus' assertions of divinity. The problem, then, with which the early church grappled (and with which the modern church still wrestles) was, what kind of a being do we have here who, if one is true to the New Testament representation of the Reality, is both man and God. This was the stuff of which the Christological controversy was made.

In addressing themselves to this problem, Christians have come to recognize that certain things must be said, both scripturally and logically. First, no definition must compromise the full deity of Jesus, both in order to square with the Bible, and to insure the possibility of salvation. Since man cannot save himself, but can only be saved by God, then Jesus must be fully God to save man. Second, the full humanity of Jesus must also be retained. Again, this must be if one accepts the Biblical statements; but also, if Jesus was not fully man, then He could not take our place and die in our stead. Without becoming involved in the difficulties of atonement theories (still another area in which problems arise in considering Christ), it must be granted that Christ could not die for us if He were not like us. Thus, neither humanity nor divinity must be compromised, else man's possibility of salvation be endangered.

When one probes into the nature of Jesus' person, there are again certain extremes that must be avoided, since they might lead to the extremes just cited. If the unity of Jesus' personality were to be emphasized to the extent that the humanity were swallowed up by the divinity, then we would not have One who is as fully man as we are, but would

only have Deity taking on flesh; i.e., it seems necessary to say that Jesus had a human mind, as we do. Yet if there were to be too strict a separation of the human and divine in Jesus, then one would make of Him two separate beings, which is also unacceptable. To suppose a mixture of human and divine would be to imagine a Being neither fully God nor fully man—a third thing. This would be subject to both dangers previously noted, and would imperil salvation from two sides. Jesus would not be fully God to save, nor fully man to be saved.

These varying viewpoints were what made the Christological controversy. On one side was Apollinaris, Bishop of Laodicea in Syria (to ca. 390), who seems to have said that Jesus had the body and animal soul of a man, but the reasoning spirit in Him was the divine Logos. Jesus, then, had no human mind. Though this view may have seemed to honor the divinity of Jesus, it essentially denied His humanity, and for that reason Apollinaris was to see his view condemned. His theological successor was Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria (412-444). While claiming that Christ's humanity was complete, yet he so emphasized the Divine that he said the human nature of Jesus was encentered in the Divine. His human nature had no center apart from the Logos, so that Jesus really had no existence as an individual man. What resulted amounted to an impersonal humanity being ascribed to Jesus—and this endangered His full humanity just as the view of Apollinaris had done.

The opposite side in the Christological controversy is traditionally ascribed to Nestorius. However, the discovery of his work, *The Treatise of Heraclides of Damascus*, shows that Nestorius was certainly not a Nestorian. The views

ascribed to him, though actually those of others, saw two independent persons in Christ, and did not adequately describe the unity of Christ's being in such a way as to avoid this. This view placed greater stress on the manhood of Christ than had Apollinaris or Cyril, but it was rejected because it sacrificed the unity of Christ's nature.

After much bitterness, disputing over words, political pressure, and several councils, the Chalcedonian Creed, since regarded as the "orthodox" solution to the Christological problem, was formulated in 451. This instrument confessed Jesus as "perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the manhood, in all things like unto us, without sin." He was "one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably, the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one person and one subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ..." This creed certainly did not explain the nature of Christ and is open to criticism on that ground, but it did seem to set effectively that which must necessarily be held if one is to be true to the Biblical witness.

In recent years there has been something of a revival of interest in the theology of the Trinity and Christology. D. M. Baillie's excellent work, *God Was in Christ*, gives something of a survey of recent efforts, but the same problems are still those to be dealt with, though they may be looked

at afresh in a new century. Baillie himself sees a clue to the understanding of Christ's nature in the paradox of grace which every Christian experiences. The good in our lives, he points out, is, on the one hand, the result of human achievement. Yet in a deeper and prior sense these good things are wrought by God. Paul said, "...I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Baillie suggests that this same paradox, at the absolute level, might help us understand Christ, whose life was a man's life, yet whose life was also, in a deeper and prior sense, the very life of God incarnate. As one must hold fast to both sides of the paradox in Christian experience, so one must hold both regarding the nature of Christ. Baillie does not solve the problem, but he does make the paradox one that we can live with, as we look into our own relation to God for a clue. He offers a valuable devotional insight in that the grace of God is brought into focus. The legalist, by this token, could not grasp this concept, since he has not really granted that it is God who works in him.

We can imagine a protest which might follow upon this discussion. "Why," it could be asked, "do we need to concern ourselves with such theoretical matters as this, when all they seem to produce is intellectual frustration?" Several responses could be given. For one, all is not frustration if one comes to understand his Lord more fully. The more we think of Him, the more of an incentive can be given to personal dedication. While thinking about things that we cannot fully grasp, we can be led, as a blessing along the way, to realize things that we can understand, but had not previously recognized. After all, it would seem to be a matter of considerable importance for a Christian to think about Christ. A second defense of our present inquiry might be phrased

in the words of a mountaineer who was asked why men wished to scale Everest. He replied, "Because it is there." So are the problems we have outlined, and unless we wish to play spiritual ostrich, and pretend we don't see, we must consider them. But this can have dire consequences for evangelism, personal devotion, preaching, and intellectual apprehension of Christianity. Third, one's doctrine, if worked out to its conclusion, can have certain implications. Unless we understand the problems surrounding our Lord and His nature, we might, by error, be holding a view which constitutes a serious denial of Biblical truth.

Before passing to a discussion of the epistemological problem, let us mention two gains that might be added to those we have noted which can come from considering the Christological problem. First, we can recognize the need for retaining paradoxes in our thinking. We cannot completely rationalize Christianity. Nor can we congratulate ourselves on having grasped everything with our minds. It extends beyond our horizons, not only intellectually, but, we might add, in terms of the possibilities for our lives in Christ, and in terms of the blessings which God waits to give us. We need to realize (and the recognition of paradox can help us) the vastness of this thing called Christianity, and we need to expand our thinking accordingly. Second, we may come to appreciate more fully Jesus as both man and God. Many people have the tendency to neglect one or the other more than they should. Seeing Him as God we are driven to fuller recognition of God's nature in all its ramification. Seeing Him as man we can understand the possibilities for our lives if we were completely surrendered to God, as He was. And we can be led to grateful praise in knowing that He has assumed our situation and thus has a

perfect sympathy with the many difficulties of our earthly pilgrimage.

### THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROBLEM

Though it may be relatively foreign to those who today are heirs of the Restoration Movement, contemporary religious thought is much involved in the question of how one can know just what material in the gospels can be validly used to reconstruct historical detail regarding Jesus. Since this problem pervades the general religious world, we must discuss it. Prior to the introduction of Biblical criticism as a thoroughgoing method of Bible study about a hundred years ago, students believed that all the New Testament said could be taken as valid historical evidence in understanding Jesus. Biblical criticism, however, refused to accept the New Testament as historically true *in toto*. By the application of various canons of critical study, scholars began to engage in a sifting process by which they kept some things and dismissed others. It was this method that lay behind the series of liberal "lives of Jesus," about which we are told so well in Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historical Jesus*. Often the presuppositions by which the liberals would conduct their studies were subjective (such as an objection to the supernatural), but there was this assumption that undergirded all the "lives": the historical Jesus can be discovered from the Bible. The accusation has been made that the Jesus discovered by a given critic might be no more than a reflection of that critic's theological views—but he still believed that he had isolated something concrete as to what Jesus did and as to whom Jesus was. Most of the liberals were outside the mainstream of the confessional orthodoxies, and thus they were often attacked as such. And by the early part

of this century, these "lives" had been pretty well exposed for not getting done the job of discovering the real Jesus. The individual who will take the trouble to read Schweitzer will see these things adequately documented.

Then a new movement arose, which had its earliest beginnings about the turn of the century with Hermann Gunkel's work on the Old Testament. It was Form Criticism. This method, pioneered with regard to the New Testament by Dibelius and Bultmann, was concerned to isolate in the gospels the various types of literature, tracing each type back to the particular way it was used in the early Christian community. Generally the form was connected to the part it played in the early preaching of the gospel. Form Criticism became highly concerned with the way the original stories had developed in the process of transmission, and with what the church came to believe about Jesus. Often Form Criticism assumed that the various units, or pericopes, were possessed of only a kernel of historical truth, about which the Christian community had wrapped many layers of tradition. These layers, though not historical, were true, in that they reflected the spiritual truths the church had come to believe about Jesus. Attempts to strip away the layers to get to the "core" often appeared subjective, however, so the critic of Form Criticism could well object that the whole process tended in the direction of a genuine skepticism as to exactly what one could know regarding Jesus. And such a charge would be justified. The Form Critic was frequently not concerned with the Jesus of History, but rather with the Christ of faith i. e., what the church had come to believe, not what really happened. In fact, as Baillie points out, Form Criticism, in some hands, came to doubt that historical material could be recovered at all, or that it was necessary to

recover it. Thus a strange historical paradox arose. The old liberal authors of the "lives" became, in comparison to some Form Critics, the conservatives, because they at least thought an historical life of Jesus could be constructed. The Form Critics, who were mostly within the framework of the orthodox confessional churches, became more liberal than their liberal predecessors, because they felt the history of Jesus was not recoverable.

As we assess Form Criticism today (for it is very much alive) we must recognize that for conservative Christians it is neither all curse nor all blessing. Certainly there are gains to be realized from seeing certain literary types in the Bible, and to some extent these may well reflect certain situations in life from which a certain form invariably arose. But the conservative cannot accept the skepticism often connected with such form analysis, especially when the use made of forms might be as subjective as the way the old liberal used the gospel material in writing his life of Jesus. Nor can it be forgotten that a central part of the gospel is that God's intervention through Christ took place in history, and that an understanding of it must deal with historical events. Thus one will look askance at any method of study which tends to minimize history as some Form Criticism does. A well written critique of Form Criticism can be found in E. Basil Redlich's excellent book, *Form Criticism*, to which the interested person will do well to go in pursuing this subject.

In establishing our posture toward criticism, we believe that unless we are shown excellent reasons for not doing so, then the New Testament evidence will be accepted as being fully reliable as history. Yet having said this, there are

things that must be kept in mind as we ask ourselves the question, "How do we know what the Bible says about Jesus?" The first of these is the recognition that Jesus did not communicate the complete truth about Himself, men were often slow to understand what they had been shown or told. The individual Christian would do well to make a private study of each of the gospels to discover (1) what Jesus said about Himself and when He said it; i.e., what was the nature of Jesus' self revelation; and (2) what people believed about Jesus, and how their understanding of Him grew through acquaintance with Him. Without in the least discounting the element of inspiration in the composition of the Bible, it only stands to reason that people who had been with Jesus came to gain as the years progressed ever increasing insight into what He had done and said. Surely, just as we come to comprehend Christ more fully the longer we are Christians, so the experiences they faced "in Christ" must have made Him continually more meaningful and understandable to those who were His disciples in the first century. The second thing to keep in mind is that the New Testament writers composed their gospels several decades after Christ had gone back to heaven. Thus they could not avoid reflecting the ideas about Christ which had developed in the years since His ascension, and they also could not avoid forming their writings in such a way as to make them most relevant to the audience they were addressing. Any moderately careful reading of the gospels will show the differing emphases of the various evangelists. And the recognition that each writer, in addition to telling about Jesus, had a particular theological purpose into which he fitted the materials he used can certainly be taken as a true one. Thus one writer will emphasize certain facets of Jesus more than another, or he may choose to use material not as necessary to the way another writer presents Jesus. The Jewish interest

predominates in Matthew. Yet the many touches that indicate Matthew's audience is Jewish are not found in Mark. Luke has a special emphasis on prayer that is not in the other gospels. And John is much more reflective in its treatment of Jesus and His relation to the Father. A comparative study of the first three gospels is most instructive at this point. Isolate those passages where material unique to any particular gospel is found, and then correlate the peculiarities of each gospel, and you will be amazed to find that they often form a pattern—a pattern which shows something of the particular interest and message of that writer. And certainly with regard to the gospel of John it should be obvious that it has a quite different emphasis from the other three. This in no way denies inspiration. It may be an offense to certain humanly formed theories of inspiration, but it does not obviate the fact. Indeed, since the gospels are this way, whether we like it or not, any theory of inspiration must take into account that the spirit of God working in a man could allow that man not only to tell of Jesus but to tell in a way consonant with his own theological purpose. We should not be alarmed, then, if we find varying Christologies in different parts of the New Testament. This does not mean they are contradictory, but simply represent a difference of emphasis on the part of the writers.

We are led by this discussion of understanding the presentation of Christ in the New Testament to our other area of concern, which is:

### THE PRACTICAL PROBLEM

In spite of all disputation about the New Testament message concerning Christ, in spite of what insights may be

reached, in spite of how well we know the contents of our sources, the fact remains that from the Christian perspective we have not apprehended Christ as we must until He is enshrined securely in our hearts. It may well be that the greatest need of the church today is to have a genuinely Christ-centered outlook and inward attitude. There is a genuine hunger among brethren to know more of the Lord. Too often in our concern with the New Testament we have emphasized the books from Acts to Revelation, but have not dealt with the gospels adequately. In discussing this practical problem, we would like to consider it from two viewpoints.

First, there is the intellectual problem, i.e., the need to learn intellectually of Christ. This is not to imply that simply knowing the surface contents of the gospels is adequate, but it is to say that we cannot survive as a people dynamically concerned about the restoration of New Testament Christianity unless we are continually going to our sources afresh to understand anew the nature of God's deed in Christ and the consequent religion. We must attempt to disabuse ourselves of any preconceived notions that make us demand that the Bible speak to us in a certain way, and which keep us from allowing the Bible to convey its own message. With all respect to the great work done by our historical predecessors, we must realize that they were men as are we, and that our minds are as well able to grasp the truth in the Bible as were theirs. We have an additional advantage in that the tools available for us to use in Biblical study are much improved over those available to past generations. We must cease to harbor the conception that anyone who disagrees with a particular position advanced by McGarvey, Lard, Lipscomb, Campbell, or Showwalter has thus disagreed with the Bible. We should be open

enough that we can change *any* idea we now hold, if the New Testament warrants such a change.

In our approach to the gospels, it would be instructive to assume that we know as little about Christ as does the average Buddhist, and then to approach our study to find out Who He really was, and what Christianity really is. In this quest, it would be well to put certain questions to the gospels, to be answered by our investigation—questions such as “Who was Jesus?”, “Why did He come?”, “What are the practical consequences of His life?”, “What did He teach on various subjects?”, “What is Christianity?”, “What is new about Jesus’ message?”, etc. We might be surprised to find such a study upsets many of our previously believed conceptions, and we might well find an entirely different emphasis in the New Testament presentation of Christianity than we have found in our own presentation of it. Who knows how our preaching, our personal work, or our debating might be changed as we look anew at the Christ in the Bible, and make our faith truly Christian by reaching for a fresh intellectual grasp of the Christian religion.

Second, there is the problem of learning about Christ experientially. There is something better felt than told about Christian experience. This is not in the sense of an anti-biblical feeling, but is true in the sense of a deeper than words inward apprehension of the Christ. We must become more Christ centered. We must learn to begin with Christ in all that we do. We must beware of the temptation to focus on what the church did to the exclusion of what Christ did prior to the church. We must become especially sensitive to the need to make Christ the heart of our preach-

ing to the church. Could it not well be that we are plagued by so much nominal Christianity because the Lord's people have not really understood the joy of a heart surrendered to the Lord? And could not this be because Christ has not been effectively communicated to them from the pulpit? We must make Christ the focus of our evangelistic proclamation. Surely we must speak to men about true worship, and about false doctrine, and about church government. But what do these things mean if they do not relate to Christ? Suppose we change a man's mind about certain doctrines of the Christian faith. Until his heart has been transformed by Christ, he has simply accepted a new set of ideas—he has not been converted. He may go and argue about the idea he now believes to be true, but the witness of Christ living in him will be absent. We need to make Christ the center of our personal work. Charts, film strips, records, special Bibles, etc., may be excellent aids, but unless they lead the prospect to the Lord they are failures. We must seriously evaluate all of our personal work aids and efforts and searchingly ask to what are we converting people. Do people come up from our baptistries filled with the Master, ready to live for Him and share Him with others, or do they come up as people ready to show others how wrong their doctrinal concepts must be? We must become Christ centered in our dialogue with other religious groups. We must assume, till convinced otherwise, that they are sincere. We must be sympathetic toward them, and have a genuine love for them, instead of the "instant hostility" that we are sometimes conditioned to feel around those of differing religious beliefs. We must become Christ centered in our morality, so that we no longer operate on the basis of rule keeping. Rule keeping can become legalistic and ultimately impossible, and can be one of the greatest sops to human pride possible. But having Christ within one can lead to a quality of life

which is informed by a personal transformation that leads one to want to do most those very things which God would have him do. We need to become Christ centered in our Christian work, so that we are constantly moved by prayer and consideration of the spiritual realities involved. We need to be so saturated with the Spirit of our Lord that we will never get means and ends confused, and so that we will never forget purpose in programming. We need to become Christ centered in our relations to those of other races, in our attitudes toward the communities in which we live, in our behavior in our homes, and in every other area of life. For, when the final chapter is written, it may be that we were right concerning the nature of our Lord, and concerning the use of the sources that tell us of Him; we may have known all the Bible presents us and may have been masters at proper exegesis. But the acid test will be the extent to which He has penetrated our lives and ruled there. And should this crucial ingredient not be found, it may well be that we will be the ones crying "Lord, Lord," only to hear Him say, "I never knew you."

## THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE BIBLE

ROBERT K. OGLESBY

Robert K. Oglesby was born in Sherman, Texas, on January 9, 1933.

He began appointment preaching while a sophomore in high school, being greatly influenced by Robert Bankes, who was preaching in Sherman at that time.

Brother Oglesby entered Abilene Christian College in 1951, and in 1955 received the B.A. degree in Bible, graduating summa cum laude. The following year he received the M.A. degree in Bible, also from Abilene Christian College.

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Upon graduation, the Oglesbys moved to Breckenridge, Texas, to work with the Walker Street Church of Christ. After six and one-half years there, he became minister in 1963 of the new Waterview Church of Christ in Richardson, Texas (a suburb of Dallas). This has been a very fast-growing work, having more than tripled in three years.

In addition to 3 or 4 gospel meetings each year, Brother Oglesby is active in teacher training work in the adult area, having taught classes at Abilene Christian College, Oklahoma Christian College, Harding College, and in a number of city-wide schools.

Oglesby wrote the adult section in the God's Son Vacation Bible School rotation series by Quality Printing. He is a contributing editor for Christian Bible Teacher, a staff writer for The Way of Truth magazine, and writes occasional articles for other brotherhood publications.

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It was Goethe who said, "Tell me of your certainties, I have doubts enough of my own." Perhaps no subject has known so much uncertainty in our brotherhood as the Holy Spirit. This uncertainty has robbed us of great riches available to us through the Holy Spirit of God. We therefore feel the great challenge and awesome responsibility as we endeavor to mine the ore of truth on this subject from God's book. It is not uncommon for misers to die in abject poverty with great wealth buried in their backyard. Could it be possible that we are living in spiritual rags while the Holy Spirit remains an untapped treasure?

There are two basic views of the Holy Spirit. One maintains the Holy Spirit does everything for man. The story of William Carey illustrates this position. Years ago when Carey was determined to go to India to preach, he presented his case to a group of ministers. After Carey finished his plea, one of the older ministers took him aside and said, "When God wants to save the people of India, He will do it *without* our help." The Holy Spirit has been sometimes cast in the role of God's irresistible and inscrutable force to save the lost. Such a view tends to degenerate into subjective emotionalism.

In this vein, John Wesley described his personal experience:

In the evening I went very unwilling to a society in Aldersgate Street where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation: and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death...

Writing in his journal later and referring back to this experience, Wesley analyzed what had happened in these words:

"The Spirit itself bore witness to my spirit that I was a child of God, gave me an evidence hereof, and I immediately cried, Abba, Father!..."

We turn away from such a description and call it a mere subjective reaction on Wesley's part. Certainly we do not find the Holy Spirit working this way in the scripture to convert the lost.

But then in our zeal to retreat from this position, we may run so far away that we miss the teaching of the Scriptures altogether. As the early Restoration preachers were accustomed to saying—it is possible in running from Babylon to build up such a head of steam that we run right past Jerusalem. The obvious lesson of history has been that "extremes beget extremes." Once the pendulum has made a full swing to one side, it is difficult to change its direction until it has made a full swing in the opposite direction. In our zeal to avoid religious error, we sometimes resemble the circus clown who goes through the ridiculous routine of trying to mount a horse. First he falls off one side, and then trying to over-compensate for his mistake, he with a mighty leap falls off the other side.

Taking the opposite position, we might say that the Holy Spirit does nothing for us apart from the written Word. If we deny the Spirit's personal influence, we must think of our life as being wound up like a clock and left to run on its own power. Consistent with this, we must continue quoting Acts 2:38½, and leaving off much if any mention of the Holy Spirit. If we are not careful, such an approach degenerates the Christian life into being merely a dry-as-dust intellectual experience. Perhaps between these two mountain-top positions lies the valley of God's truth.

## I. WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

First of all, we must ask ourselves what the Holy Spirit is. Nothing is clearer in the Scripture than the fact that the Holy Spirit is a divine personage and not a mere influence. We recognize that when Christ commanded the disciples to go forth and baptize in the name of the "Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19), that the first two mentioned are persons of the Godhead. Why must we balk at accepting as a person the third name mentioned? In spite of the fact that the Holy Spirit is often referred to in the scripture as "He," many insist on regarding Him as a glorified, impersonal "IT." Somehow He remains in most minds a shadowy configuration.

If the Holy Spirit is a person, we must ask what kind of person is He? The most emphatic impression which we receive concerning the Holy Spirit is that He remains somewhat in the background. He seems to be a rather self-effacing personality. We find Him in the dawn of creation "moving over the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:2). Moses mentions Him as striving with men before the flood (Genesis 6:3). In the background of our Lord's birth, Matthew records

that Mary "was found with child of the Holy Spirit...for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:18, 20). At the baptism of Jesus, the "Spirit of God" descended upon Him as a dove (Matthew 3:16). It was the Holy Spirit of whom it was said, "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil" (Matthew 4:1). And again we observe the Spirit's background work when we see Him serving as 'ghost writer' for the apostles' speeches. The Lord said, "But when they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you" (Matthew 10:19, 20). It is thus that we see the Spirit standing in the wings, assisting the plans of God, but rarely occupying the center of the stage.

## II. THE SPIRIT'S MIRACULOUS WORK

The Spirit of God had a very definite mission to fulfill in the early history of the church. His was the work of energizing the infant church for its task of reaching the world. This He began to do on the day of Pentecost after the Lord's resurrection and ascension. The Spirit made His presence felt on that day by coming like tongues of fire and the sound of a rushing mighty wind (Acts 2). For the next few years, the Spirit kept up a steady flow of energy in the church.

### A. Confirmation

The Spirit's work was one of confirmation. Mark 16:20 relates, "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word by the signs that followed." The Hebrew writer adds his testimony when he says, "God also bearing witness with them, both by

signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit" (Hebrews 2:4).

And yet all of these miraculous things had a planned obsolescence. Just as cars and clothes go out of style, God intended that these manifestations should fade away. Healing power was passed from an apostle to another person, but it apparently could not be passed on. Acts 8 portrays the Samaritans beholding Philip working many signs (Acts 8:6). Yet two apostles were sent to lay hands on the Samaritans in order that they might receive the power (Acts 8:14-17). Hence we believe the day the last apostle died, the supernatural power began to die also, because none could then pass it on.

I Corinthians 13 had suggested that prophecies would fail...and tongues would cease at some point. Ephesians 4 had spoken of gifts being given unto men (v. 8), but this was only until "we all attain unto the unity of the faith" (v. 13). At the close of the first century, Jude could speak of the faith being "once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). At the time the Apostle John wrote his gospel, the Holy Spirit's emphasis was shifting away from the signs that one saw to the signs that one could read about in the developing New Testament scriptures. John said, "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe"... (John 20:30, 31).

## B. Revelation

The Spirit's work also included the giving of an accurate revelation. On this we stand agreed. Jesus promised "the Holy Spirit, whom the father will send in my name, he

shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (John 14:26). John 16:13 also states, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth... (John 16:13).

The Holy Spirit was the "ghost writer" for the apostolic speeches, and His guidance of inspired men gave birth to the New Testament. Paul says that the Spirit "searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (I Corinthians 2:10). The Holy Spirit knew God's mind as no one else has ever known it; therefore, He was the perfect one to reveal God's will to the world. Mere men then did not write the Bible. Peter says it was men who "spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:21). The writers of the books in our Bible were not left entirely to their own resources as they chose their thoughts and even their words. Paul said, "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth..." (I Corinthians 2:13). This is why Paul calls the Scriptures "inspired of God" or "God-breathed" in II Timothy 3:16. Each author left his imprint on his work. Inspired books still bear the mark of each man's style. John wrote as a simple fisherman; whereas Luke, the physician, had a grander style. This should not surprise us. Pure sunlight filtered through a stained glass window will take on the tints of each separate color. But behind all the tones and tints of the Bible is the steady hand and the fluent tongue of a divine personality, the Holy Spirit!

### III. THE SPIRIT'S USE OF THE WORD IN CONVERSION

There is ample evidence that the Spirit used the Word in converting the lost in the first century. At Pentecost the

Spirit came as tongues of fire, but it was the words that Peter spoke that pricked their hearts (Acts 2:37). The Samaritans saw the signs which Philip did, but these miracles only served to make them take notice of what Philip had to say (Acts 8:5, 6). Saul saw a vision on the road to Damascus, and even heard a voice, but he was sent to Ananias to be told what to do (Acts 9:6). An angel appeared to Cornelius, and a vision was given to Peter, but all this was stage setting to get the preacher and the audience together for the saving message (Acts 10:33). The jailor experienced an earthquake and great fear, but he did not know salvation until the preachers "spake the word of the Lord unto him" (Acts 16:32).

When the Holy Spirit inspired men to write, He led them to say, the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16). The Spirit also explains that all men shall be drawn to the Father, and the drawing takes place when all are "taught of God" (John 6:44, 45). Again it is the "implanted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). We are begotten again by the incorruptible seed "through the word of God, which liveth and abideth" (I Peter 1:23). From these references it is easy to see that in conversion, the Word of God is truly "the sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17).

#### IV. RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT

##### A. Who Can Receive?

After we have recognized the Spirit's use of the Word in conversion, we still have another phase of the Spirit's activity to consider. We are promised something more than

just the use of the written Word. There is a measure of the Holy Spirit that is to be personally received.

### 1. The world cannot

Who is able to receive the Spirit? The world obviously cannot. When Christ promised His disciples that He would send the Holy Spirit to them, He also said the Comforter was the "Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive" (John 14:16, 17). Jude speaks of some "having not the Spirit" (Jude 19). How well this truth is made clear when we see Jesus performing miracles of healing by the "Spirit of God" (Matthew 12:28), and instead of receiving the Spirit as the performer of these miracles, the Pharisees chose to "blaspheme" the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:31). This is in line with Paul's comment that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God" (I Corinthians 2:14). We shall look in vain for the unbeliever to have the Spirit as a possession of his heart.

### 2. Christians can

Though the world cannot receive the Holy Spirit, Christians can. We are warned that "if any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Romans 8:9). The Thessalonian saints were told that God "giveth his Holy Spirit unto you" (I Thessalonians 4:8). The writer of Hebrews speaks of some of God's children "who were once enlightened and tasted the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit..." (Hebrews 6:4). John repeats the fact of the indwelling when he writes, "And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he gave us" (I John 3:24). Perhaps the apostle Paul sums up the whole case for a Christian possessing the Holy Spirit

when he says, "And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6). Note that we do not receive the Spirit in order to become sons of God, but because we are sons.

a. As a gift

Peter makes clear to us in Acts 2:38 that we should have the gift of the Holy Spirit. The nature of this gift has become a point of controversy. Some have thought that Peter was referring to a supernatural gift when he promised it to all who repented and were baptized. However, Paul says in I Corinthians 12:29, 30 "Are all workers of miracles? have all gifts of healings? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" The obvious answer Paul is aiming for is, "No, all do not have these things." Thus when the gift of the Holy Spirit is promised to all who repent and are baptized, a supernatural spiritual gift is not the promised gift. Instead this gift is something that all Christians are to receive. This gift is not to be a temporary measure either, because in John 14:16, Jesus says that the Comforter "may be with you for ever." Neither is the gift "salvation." Peter promises "remission of sins" in the first part of the verse. There would be no reason to make the same promise twice. We believe that the Holy Spirit promises Himself as the gift. It is the genitive of apposition; that is, the Holy Spirit is the gift.

b. As an earnest

The Bible is unmistakably clear that God has given us the "earnest" of the Spirit. The Corinthians were told that God "gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (II Corinthians 1:22). Paul said it again later in

this same epistle when he claimed, "Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit" (II Corinthians 5:5). And yet again Paul wrote, "Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance" (Ephesians 1:13, 14).

"Earnest money" is a time-honored term among us. We recognize it as money paid in advance and serving as security that we shall pay the rest of a debt. We might think of it as a first installment or to come a little closer to modern living, a down-payment. The Word is here revealing that the Holy Spirit has been given as a pledge or a down-payment of what God has in store for us. In another place, Paul speaks of the Roman Christians as having "the first-fruits of the Spirit" (Romans 8:23). Our inheritance is to be far greater, but God has given us the Holy Spirit as a foretaste of the coming delight.

### B. How Is the Spirit Received?

The most natural question we can ask at this point is, "How does one receive the Holy Spirit?" Peter said that when one repents and is baptized, he shall receive "the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Peter later says, "And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32). The Galatians were asked how they received the Spirit. Paul asked, "This only would I learn from you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? ... He therefore that supplieth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? ..." (Galatians 3:2, 5). Then Paul proceeds to answer his own question in the fourteenth verse when he writes, "that we might receive the

promise of the Spirit through faith." The same explanation of how we are to receive the Spirit is given in Ephesians 1:13 wherein the apostle speaks of Christ "in whom ye also, having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation,—in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." Admittedly therefore, the Spirit becomes our possession upon our obedience.

## V. THE INDWELLING SPIRIT

The Bible relates that once we have received the Spirit, He should dwell within us. As Paul said, "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" (Romans 8:9). In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul commands, "Be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit..." (Ephesians 5:18). Someone has well said, "Unless there is within us that which is above us, we shall soon yield to that which is about us."

### A. How Dwell?

Since the Spirit of God dwells in us, we may wonder exactly how this takes place. Certainly this experience is a great mystery. Even the name "Spirit" helps shroud this process in mystery. The Hebrew language used a word for spirit which also signifies "a gentle wind, or a movement of the air." The Greeks used a word for spirit from which we get the idea of "breath." Obviously there is nothing very tangible in these words for our practical minds to grasp. We are not even sure how the human spirit dwells within our bodies, much less the Holy Spirit. At what point does the human spirit enter the body? Is it in some embryonic

stage, or does it come at the first cry of birth? Are those who lose all signs of life and then are medically revived, bereft of their spirits in the intervening time? Even these questions baffle the human mind.

How then does the Holy Spirit dwell in us? It is apparent that we shall not be able to do more than scratch the surface since so little is revealed; however, it is not necessary to deny the presence of something we cannot fully explain. Paul does say that we may "be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man" (Ephesians 3:16). The Spirit is there, but the manner of His dwelling is not perfectly clear. Likewise does God dwell in us, for Paul wrote, "We are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them..." (II Corinthians 6:16). Paul boldly claimed, "Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20). The mysterious cloud is lifted a little when Paul says "that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (Ephesians 3:17). Since we receive the Spirit through faith (Galatians 3:14), He, as Christ, likely dwells in us through our faith. Ephesians 2:22 adds that in Christ we "also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." It would seem therefore that God and Christ dwell together in us through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The apostle put it another way when he declared, "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Corinthians 3:16). Elsewhere he wrote, "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God?" (I Corinthians 6:19). The pagans of Corinth knew well the temples of vice, but they did not understand the body as a temple of purity for the Holy Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit is an honored guest in our temple, we can

understand some thoughts implicit in this arrangement. Knowing the Holy Spirit is our guest, we can understand that we have some control over His presence. We expect to exercise some control over how our guests behave in our home. For example, we would not think of letting them tear up the furniture.

It seems that God has left us free to determine how much control the Holy Spirit will have while He is a guest in our temple. Even the supernatural manifestation of the Spirit was not overpowering to the human personality. Paul chided the Corinthians for their disorderly display of spiritual gifts. Perhaps they were pleading the impulse of the Spirit as the reason for their speaking out of turn. Instead Paul scolded them by saying, "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets" (I Corinthians 14:32). We also learn that the Spirit could be "quenched" (I Thessalonians 5:19). Stephen told his audience in Jerusalem, "Ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts 7:51). Paul even warns the early Christians to "grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" (Ephesians 4:30). Have you ever been a guest in a home where the husband and wife got into an argument? Do you remember how you were "grieved" that you had to witness such a display? How the Spirit must be grieved at the manner in which we sometimes defile the temple of our body and desecrate His abode!

The Holy Spirit dwells within us, but He subjects Himself to our reception of His presence. If the supernatural gifts of the Spirit could be "quenched," surely the indwelling measure can be slighted and alienated by the manner in which we treat our Divine Guest. We must welcome the Spirit if He is to dwell effectively in our hearts.

## B. What Does the Spirit Mean to Us?

The Spirit is obviously placed in our hearts for some purpose. We must ask ourselves what He means to us.

### 1. A helper

The Holy Spirit in scripture is promised to us as a "Helper." This promise Jesus made to His disciples in John 14:16. As one threads his way through the various translations of this passage, he encounters different words being used to describe the Holy Spirit. Such words as "helper, Advocate, Comforter," and even the Greek word "paraclete" are used. Usually when one meets such a profusion of words in an effort to translate one thought, he can be sure that translators are in trouble. They are finding it difficult to capture a word with just the shade of all-inclusive meaning that conveys the right thought. The basic meaning in this word is "one called in to help." Someone standing by to encourage can be a comfort. Out of this root grew the idea of a "Comforter." Someone standing by to help in court might be a legal advocate. Lawyers have a saying that "He who defends himself in court has a fool for a client!" The Lord is saying that God gives us the Holy Spirit as our "Attorney" for the trials of life. He therefore is our Helper in all times of stress—one who will lead and guide us properly.

There are many ways in which the Bible says the Spirit of God becomes our Helper. In that wonderful eighth chapter of the book of Romans, Paul lists just some of the ways in which the Holy Spirit helps us. We "by the Spirit... put to death the deeds of the body" (Romans 8:13). Likewise, "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our

spirit, that we are children of God." And again the Spirit "maketh intercession for the saints" (Romans 8:27).

## 2. A seal

The scriptures teach that the Holy Spirit is also our seal. Paul teaches that God "sealed us," (II Corinthians 1:22). To the Ephesians Paul wrote "ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Ephesians 1:13). And then again Paul repeats, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30).

Men seal things to denote ownership and genuineness. A trademark on a product separates it from all others and distinctively marks it as belonging to some company. God seals us with the Holy Spirit as the badge of our discipleship. If we have not the Spirit of God, then we are not truly His. There can be no mistake about those who belong to the Lord, for they have the seal of the Holy Spirit on their lives.

Men also seal things to guarantee the security of the product. The contents may be kept inviolate by the barrier of a seal. The seal of security has long been practiced, because we can read that at the Lord's death "they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone..." (Matthew 27:66). Some time ago a theft ring was broken up in a Texas railway yard. It seems that some men were breaking into box cars and stealing a portion of the contents. The factor which made this possible was that they had access to the company seal which was used to seal the door of the box car. With it they were able to open and then re-seal the car without leaving a trace of the theft. The Holy Spirit

is our seal of security if we allow Him to inhabit our lives.

### 3. A channel

Likewise the Spirit serves as a channel through which great blessings flow into our lives. Romans 5:5 declares, "The love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit." The kingdom of God itself is represented as "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17). We are encouraged to "abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13). Paul further states that we are strengthened with power "through his Spirit" (Ephesians 3:16). How thankful we ought to be for the Spirit, because He is the immediate source of much of our enjoyment in the Christian life.

### C. The Written Word?

There is always the question of how much the written Word does for us and how much the Holy Spirit does for us personally. Certainly we would not deny the great power of the written Word. There is no doubt but that our study of the written Word makes us better Christians and renews us day by day. The Spirit finds His dwelling easier due to our diligent study of God's will.

But somehow the Spirit's indwelling is too personal to allow us to believe that the written Word is all that Christians have to help them here below. In talking of the resurrection of the dead, Paul states that God "shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Romans 8:11). This passage teaches that God will literally resurrect our mortal bodies not by some abstract spirit, but through the very Spirit that now dwells in us.

Somehow the written Word does not seem adequate to do this operation attributed to the Spirit.

In like manner, the description of the Spirit's work seems to exceed anything that the Word might logically be expected to do. Romans 8:23 describes a process whereby "we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for our adoption..." Paul then says, "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26). When there are infirmities, the Spirit helps us. He intercedes for us. Surely this is something the Word does not do. Jude 20 speaks to this point when it mentions "praying in the Holy Spirit."

It would seem that Christians ought to look for a vital influence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Without denying the great value of the written Word of God, we must also believe what the Word has to say about the personal work of the Spirit. There is an area of our lives in which the Spirit of God can be of personal help without transgressing any prerogative which He reserved for the written Word.

#### D. Some Practical Considerations

Let us at this point conclude our study of the Holy Spirit with some practical considerations. It is well known that in New Testament times the Holy Spirit worked providentially with men and the Word to bring about good results. Acts 8 furnishes us a rather clear example of this. It is in this chapter that we are told how an angel of the Lord speaks to Philip and sends him out to meet the Ethiopian nobleman (Acts 8:26). When Philip draws near however, we are told it is the "Spirit" who says to Philip "Go

near and join thyself to this chariot" (Acts 8:29). From this we can see that the Spirit had a very definite hand in leading the preacher to the right spot. Once Philip was there however, he took his text for his teaching from the book of Isaiah which the nobleman was reading (Acts 8:30-35). Following the lesson and the baptism of this occasion, we are informed "the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip" (Acts 8:39). The Spirit set the scene and gathered the characters for the drama, but at the last moment, He too seemed to say along with Paul, "How shall they hear without a preacher" (Romans 10:14)? We must not forget that the Spirit played His part even though in the background.

Although the Spirit does not speak to us directly as He did to Philip, is it possible that we are led by the Spirit into providential situations? Recently in a North Texas town a gospel preacher was involved in the feverish activity that comes quite often in a preacher's life. It was moving day! He was very, very busy. That night he was to speak in another town, and he also faced a dinner engagement not thirty minutes from that moment. But in spite of all he logically and rationally should have been doing, the preacher kept feeling a compelling urge to go for that one last talk with a man who had resisted the plea of perfect obedience to the gospel for many years. Though he was a good man morally and very religious, many people had failed in their efforts to present the plea of the New Testament church. Why should this preacher feel that in the closing moments of his ministry in that city he could do anything for this man? It was not logical that he should feel led to that home some eight miles away when he himself had an appointment just minutes later. But he went and reasoned from the Word of God, and his efforts that afternoon led to this man's obedience that night. I believe with all of my heart, as does the

preacher who went, that the Holy Spirit of God was the compelling urge that led him. How grateful I am that this preacher did not quench the feeling of urgency which he had, because the man baptized that night was my father-in-law!

In no way am I indicating that the Spirit is responsible for conversion apart from the Word, but I greatly fear that we as a brotherhood have failed to be sensitive to the personal guidance of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We have often contended that personal help by the Spirit is a scriptural thought, but we have seldom admitted to any specific personal help.

Go and stand at the foot of Niagara's thundering falls. Be impressed as tons of water fall at your feet. Marvel at the sheer unharnessed power. Yet I am convinced that the Holy Spirit's potential influence over our lives is a thundering cascade of far greater power than even the mighty Niagara!

By way of summary, let us conclude that the Holy Spirit of God has been active in all generations. He has more often than not remained in the background and played the part of a self-effacing personality. Not until Christ left the earth did the Holy Spirit come in power to energize the church of our Lord. Once He came, the Spirit guided the infant church in its first feeble steps through the bestowal of supernatural spiritual gifts. The Spirit also inspired men to speak, and their words became the "sword of the Spirit" to convict and convert the lost of the first century. The Spirit of God also worked closely with men until they had committed to writing the revealed will of the Father. As the supernatural measure died out, the Spirit continued to

dwell with the church and with each Christian, comforting, helping, and assuring. It is His presence which helps us to survive the rigors of trying to live a pure life in an impure world. Probably none of us will ever be able, this side of eternity, to plumb the depths of all the Spirit should mean to the child of God; nevertheless, we can still enjoy the Holy Spirit of God as a priceless personal possession until we stand in the presence of the King.

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## THE BIBLE AND THE INNER MAN

BOB D. SMITH

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Dwain Evans of West Islip, New York, tells the story of Dana.

"Let me introduce you to Dana. Twenty-five years ago Dana was born into a home where both her father and mother were Christians. Not only were they Christians but they also at-

tended the assembly of the church with great regularity. No one could have loved Dana more than did her father and mother. They saw to it that she was taught the Bible. She attended Sunday School from the time that she was a small child.

"She finished high school near the top of her class. Everyone commented on what a fine Christian Dana was. Her parents were so concerned about her spiritual welfare that they sacrificed to send her to a private Christian college. Four years later she received her B.A. degree. Through all four years she was the model of Christian deportment.

"Upon graduation she moved to a distant city to begin her career as an interior designer. The letters she wrote home to her parents were vaguely encouraging.

"But this was not the woman her friends knew in this distant city, for she had looked upon this move as her emancipation. The lips that had abstained from alcoholic beverages now knew the difference between a martini and a whiskey sour. She played fast and loose with sex. Her wardrobe came right out of Harper's Bazaar. She was a woman of the world! Her spiritual interests were met by an occasional visit to a religious group noted for their broad view of morality and doctrine.

"Now this story is apocryphal only in the name of the young lady, and it is being repeated thousands of times every year. What had happened to Dana? The same tragic mistake that is happening to so many of our youth today. Although she was reared in a Christian home, she never met Jesus Christ. She was taught a form and a system. Her baptism was not a meaningful experience but a ritualistic

obedience. Although she went through all the actions, there was no real love for Christ and humanity. She knew all about Christ, but she never came to know Him. Then one day someone pointed out a flaw in the system which she had accepted intellectually; and because the flaw was genuine, the entire system came crashing to the ground. And her faith, which was in a system and not a personality, was gone."

Dana's family may include some of us: some still in college, a brother who preaches; the elder brother who stayed at home.

I know there are some here as at most schools, even Christian schools. Imagine my chagrin when a young man who wasn't a member of the church and whom I had indirectly influenced to come to such a school as this reported with obvious disappointment on a visit home that he and another one or two were the only ones who didn't cheat on a semester exam. Another boy tells his folks that the smoke gets a little thick and the language matches the color at times in the dorm. It seems the rules some grew up with haven't been internalized. Or it may be the pseudo-intellectual cousin who is in his own way just as infantile. He never has felt comfortable with the unintellectual approach of his brethren. It thrills him when someone comes along and demolishes the old dogmas and gives him a new set of intellectual sounding ideas with which to shock his brethren and parents.

The brother who preaches finds his appeals for sacrificial living conflicting with his materialistic ambitions and spending; his aspirations for recognition being sought by a route at odds with Jesus' formula for serving all; his unloving at-

titude toward a brother who blocks his cherished program and a man who preaches a doctrine contrary to truth rationalized to fit what Jesus said about loving and praying for our enemies.

Then Dana even has an elder brother who stayed at home. He's the one you see at church regularly, but he always seems disgruntled about something. His religion seems to be dull and drab though he does respond when the preacher gives the prodigal a hard time.

## I

### *The Dilemma*

1. We all recognize the need to develop and communicate spiritual values and to make Christ a living reality, avoiding the dangers represented in these cases.
2. But there are problems involved in emphasizing the inner man and spiritual values.
  - a. Our brethren haven't written much in this area, and the subject isn't too conducive to a good response.
  - b. Too, there is an uneasy feeling when principles of psychology are related to spiritual needs.
  - c. It's much easier to preach on external characteristics of the church. This has traditionally been our emphasis.
  - d. Then our brethren are likely to identify such an emphasis with the neo-Pentecostal groups, especially if we say too much about the need for the Holy Spirit.
  - e. Today, we might be identified with the new liberal sentiment that has affected some brethren.
  - f. Then there is a consensus that evidences for our faith must be external or objective to be valid. Trying

to authenticate our faith by the subjective responses of the inner man is too nebulous.

3. So what are we to do? We want to help the Danas, our young people, ourselves, our brethren. Let's take a Biblical view and see what emphasis is placed on the nature and needs of the inner man. The need is too great to do otherwise.

## II

### *Biblical View of Inner Man*

Paul's "inward man" is the immaterial part of man—mind, spirit—in distinction from the "outward man" which perishes (II Corinthians 4:16). It is the sphere of man who is capable of a new birth and of being strengthened with might by the Holy Spirit in the Christian (John 3:6; Ephesians 3:16). The term cannot be used interchangeably, however, with "the new man" for it exists prior to the new birth while "alienated from the life of God."<sup>1</sup>

It has been fairly surmised from scripture that man was originally created as spirit, soul and body, (I Thessalonians 5:23) with the spirit as the God-conscious part, in control of the whole man. At the fall, the spirit of man dropped out of communion with God. So long as the spirit is cut off from God and His new life, the whole man is in a state of death. Thus the possession of eternal life as distinct from mere animal life depends on the new birth.

Meanwhile there still remains the original central control-house in man, the human spirit, which apparently controls the man even if it hasn't been born again. It has an aware-

ness of the mind and body of which it is a part, so that Paul says, "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" (I Corinthians 2:11) He implies that such a person may even make an outward profession of Christianity, "holding a form of godliness but denying the power thereof" (II Timothy 3:1-5). Such a man is "natural" (*psychikos*), and only becomes "spiritual" (*pneumatikos*) at the new birth (I Corinthians 2:14, 15).<sup>2</sup>

### *Biblical Emphasis*

This vital part played by the inner man as our control-house explains why Jesus and the apostles placed such stress on the spiritual man and spiritual values, and why they should be central in our message. The values and spirit which control our inner man determine what we are. So Jesus emphasized as weightier matters that the inner man be dominated by "justice, and mercy, and faith" knowing that if these were in control, they would eventuate in right action. But if values that war against God's purposes for a man are in control, even if he acts hypocritically to the contrary, that man is apart from God. (Mark 7:20-23).

When the New Testament describes the kingdom of God, it does so with great emphasis on the inner man. The kingship of Christ involves His reign over this control center through faith (Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:17). This is why Jesus could truthfully say to Pilate: "My kingship is not of this world" (John 18:36). Its principles were from God and were intended to rule the heart. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). "The kingdom of God does not mean food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17). When

we seek the kingdom of God first therefore, it means more than "going" and "giving" (Matthew 6:33). One may show an outward profession of Christian values without the kingdom's being within. It involves seeking first such values as "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." We need to get to the heart of the matter, the inner man.

*Their Struggles Like Ours*

This struggle for control of man's inner self makes the Biblical accounts back to Adam and Eve meaningful for today, for our inner selves have much in common.

If we read the Bible with an eye to the portrayal of modern life we can see envy in control as Cain kills his brother; infantile selfishness driving on Absalom; pride and status seeking prompting deception by Ananias and Sapphira. Simon the sorcerer shows us what happens when the world still rules the heart after conversion; and the Pharisee graphically mirrors the tragic results of a religion that is only outward conformity to rules and has not filled the inner man with spiritual values.

We can also see the struggle working out the other way: John, the son of thunder becoming the apostle of love; the prodigal coming to himself; the Samaritan moved by compassion; and our Savior wrestling alone with fears in Gethsemane and His sacrificial love for His Father and us winning out as it did throughout His life.

Yes, even modern, atomic-age man can identify with those struggles meaningfully presented. If he is honest, he will have to say with the Congolese who was intently reading his Bible: "Ah, that is us, right there in those pages."

*The Bible and Psychology Describe Man's Behavior**Nature of the Struggle*

Let's take a little closer look at the nature of this struggle. In doing so, let's utilize some of the contributions of psychology which is also interested in the nature of the inner man. Such may not really be as far apart from the Bible as you might think. Some have even seen some similarities between Freud and what Paul had to say about man's nature. Both emphasized the struggle within the personality and noted that adjustments are called for in the midst of conflict.<sup>3</sup>

One author has likened man to a house with an upstairs and a basement.<sup>4</sup> The basement, like many, has a collection of discarded and hand-me-down furniture, heirlooms, and family portraits. The only difference is that the contents of our basements are very much alive and demand constant watching, so they don't come upstairs and take over. The upstairs he likens to the conscience or Freud's "super-ego." It stands in opposition to the instinctual life or the man in the basement. This represents the function of man which values, condemns, approves the self. It's a kind of judge. On the main floor between is the conscious self, akin to the "ego." It's a kind of arbiter between the basement forces and the man upstairs. What we are, they say, depends on our ego strength. It's the control of this main floor, analogous to Paul's "inner man" that religion aims at.

Jesus describes what can come out of a man like this: "and he said, what comes out of a man is what defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, fornication, theft, murder, adultery, coveting,

wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a man" (Mark 7:20-23). These tendencies to lust, cruelty, hate and greed are present in the basement. So James says, "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed" (James 1:14).

But it should not be thought that out of the heart of man only evil thoughts proceed. Some of the same drives which, misused, may produce degradation, provide the foundation of the family with its love and sharing. Altruism, unselfishness, devotion to noble causes also have their origin in man. Jesus also said: "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth that which is good" (Matthew 12:35).

The man on the main floor has his hands full. He is charged to "keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23). These forces in the basement are tricky. If we would "keep our hearts" we must be careful of the heart's deceitfulness. "The heart is deceitful above all things" (Jeremiah 17:9).

One of our biggest problems as human beings is determining which of these competing forces within us is the true self!

Within my temple there's a crowd;  
There's one of us that's humble, one that's proud,  
There's one that's broken-hearted for his sins,  
There's one that unrepentant sits and grins;  
There's one that loves his neighbor as himself,  
And one that cares for naught but fame and pelf,  
From much corroding care I would be free  
If I could once determine which is me.

Edward Sanford Martin

But thanks be to God the choice and decision are ours. Our inner man is not wholly at the mercy of instinctual drives or the lacerations of guilt-feelings from conscience. Call it "sublimation," call it "dedication," the fact is that these powerful impulses may be made the instruments of good and our guilt overcome.

### *The Needs of the Inner Man*

Let's talk about the needs of our inner selves. We could talk about the needs of the man whose basement self—the flesh—has taken over his house; or the man who is dedicated to less worthy goals but who has managed to sublimate some of his basement urges. We could talk about human methods such as power-of-positive-thinking, cults, and self-destruction rituals of Buddhism. But let's remember Dana and her family and talk about these needs.

### *Law is not Enough*

Paul's experience teaches us that law is not sufficient to overcome the flesh. It educated his conscience and made him aware of sin but it could not provide the resources to overcome guilt and control the man in the basement. He said it like this: "I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:22-24). We must be sure we preach more than a moral, or ritualistic law, even if it's from the New Testament, if we would help the inner man. Law first with Christ second or not at all, is cold legalism.

*Introduces Christ*

It is by the word that we become acquainted with the Christ. We learn that He wants to come in and help us run our house. He will renovate it and refurnish it. In other words, He will forgive. But more than this, He will ally Himself with our inner man and manage our house. He asks that we trust Him and turn our life over to Him. "Whosoever loses his life...will save it" (Mark 8:35). The word "psyche" here is the ego, the inner man which runs the house. The man commits himself to Christ by submission of his will to Christ's. We die to self. Christ moves in (John 14:23).

*New Creature in Christ*

The new creature in Christ is one who has been born anew. This creation is spiritual, not fleshly or legal. The source of the spiritual life is the indwelling Spirit. "They that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts thereof." Hence they can "walk by the Spirit" and bring forth its fruit: "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control" (Galatians 5:22-24).

It's a certain sign that the flesh and not the Spirit control the house when the works of the flesh and not the fruit of the Spirit are manifest. Baptism is not a magical act that changes the natural man into spiritual. One who has not spiritually died to sin (repented) cannot actually be buried with Christ. Here is clearly revealed the difference between legal and spiritual religion. One relies wholly on outward form while the other looks to spiritual values.

*Growth of the Inner Man*

The process of spiritual growth is the gradual building up of the new man. There will probably be a series of crises in the course of the period of growth, each marked by a step of surrender to God and a fuller trust in Him. He is told to "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you! immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, covetousness, which is idolatry" (Colossians 3:5). We never completely destroy these basement forces, so we must learn to live with conflict. In other words, since our enemies are constant, we must be constantly alert. Those who are so struggling are growing. Paul had to buffet his body.

Paul says we are to "grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ" (Ephesians 4:15). Christ is the goal of the inner man in all points. Peter says we are to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18). Keep on growing in Christ's kind of living. This involves Christ's inner life as shown by its fruit as well as what He did and said. We are to grow toward loving as He loved, being compassionate as He was compassionate, zealous, sacrificial, dedicated, walking as He walked. To so know Christ is what John calls abundant living or eternal life. John's word "eternal" involves quality as well as quantity. The quality we begin to experience here if we know Christ, not just factually, but intimately. "And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). Study the Bible to know Christ and God personally.

We need to grow experientially as well as theoretically. I know intellectually I've been forgiven; do I feel forgiven? I

know it's better to give than to receive; do I feel this? I know resentment and envy are wrong; but I resent or I'm envious. I know I should trust in the Lord; then why do I worry? I know about Christ; do I know Him? Our job as preachers is to lead people to know (not merely as an intellectual concept, but as a vital experience) the love of Christ which passeth knowledge (as intellectually conceivable), that they might be filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:19).

*Emphasis on Inner Man Not Heresy*

*Not Neo-Pentecostalism*

This Bible emphasis on the nature, need, and growth of the inner life and the necessary indwelling of the Holy Spirit does not require the espousal of the tongue-speaking revival. The Spirit promises to strengthen the inner man with might (Ephesians 3:16), shed abroad God's love in our hearts (Romans 5:5), cause us to abound in hope (Romans 15:13) among other blessings to the inner life without involving a tongue-speaking response.

At the same time we need to observe that those who have ridden the pendulum swing that far probably have done so, not because there has been too much said about the Holy Spirit and the inner life, but because our lack of spiritual emphasis has dried up for many the spring of living water provided by the Holy Spirit and people are thirsty!

*A Revival of Modernism Isn't a Necessary Alternative Either*

This emphasis on the inner man does not require that we

share the views of those among us or apart from us who believe that love and the inner man need no qualifying doctrinal restraints. Such critics have probably made some valid points. One observed that brotherhood papers, lectures, tracts have an obvious emphasis on externals. He states that any discussion about the church, truth, salvation, worship, or obedience most frequently rests on the correctness of some form. He then asks "Are we as willing to endure the frustrations and humiliation of loving the unlovable as well as we are to proselyte, criticize and condemn?"<sup>5</sup>

But again we need not ride the pendulum to the other extreme. As one author observed: "God has not left the nature and demands of *agape* so wholly undefined that no person can know what is right or wrong until, in the changing situations of life, he himself decides."<sup>6</sup> Everett Ferguson said it like this at these lectures four years ago: "To seek to go through the outward forms to the inner spirit would surely be a mistake, often made by our people. On the other hand, to seek to respond to the Spirit in an amorphous way or to suppose that we have been left without authoritative guidance on how to express and preserve the community intended by the word is to follow a path of uncertainty and futility."<sup>7</sup>

But, for the purposes of this study, we would re-emphasize the essential need for love—to love and to be loved—for the existence of the spiritual life within. Psychology tells us that person to person interchange is essential to help someone find the resources to overcome mental problems. The extended series of visits are not so much to inform the patient of facts as they are to create an emotional climate or rapport. "The patient 'falls in love' with the analyst... and

collects himself in an emotional outpouring." This procedure is called transference. In a similar way we come to know Christ. As we come to know and love Him, an emotional climate is created that calls forth our response in trusting obedience. One author says it like this: "The human instinct of self surrender may be awakened and nourished by any number of stimuli. But only *one* such means is adequate for the most profound surrender instinct. It is that stimulus which is so high, pure, and delicate that it is able to vibrate all the invisible, pure and fine strings which alone can give the song of life its proper melody. In the Christ, Christianity finds the most adequate stimulus."<sup>8</sup>

This is one reason why it is so vital to preach Christ. Not that people may simply believe facts about Him, but that they may come to know *Him*. Otherwise, their response, like Dana's, is a cold, legal response. In this love-relationship they come to want to do His will (John 14:15) and to reflect this love to others (I John 4:20) and to be able to affect great changes (John 3:5).

"But ye did not so learn Christ; if so be that ye heard him, and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus: that ye put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit; and that ye be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Ephesians 4:20-24).

*Certainty in the Inner Man*

*Spiritual Reality*

J. B. Phillips has a challenging thought about the reality of

spiritual values in his little book, *Your God is Too Small*.<sup>9</sup> He proposes that the whole concept of what men have thought real is being reversed. They used to consider spiritual values nebulous and unsubstantial and the physical as solid and reliable. So they talk about "real estate." But with the coming of the atomic age and the power to destroy matter and vaporize the hardest solids, they wonder if the opposite may not be true—that spiritual values and not material things are the true reality. The Christian has believed all the while, "Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day" (II Corinthians 4:16).

This is why those who believe this don't find much satisfaction in external or so-called scientific proofs. This is not to say they are unimportant. They serve for some as a kind of scaffolding while their house of faith is getting a start. But one author described such a system of proofs for many by observing that it's like describing a sunset in geometry or making love in mathematics.<sup>10</sup>

### *Certainty About God*

Since God is a spirit and invisible, we can see Him only with the eye of the inner man anyway. It's the pure in heart who see God (Matthew 5:8). Here is how John says the inner man can have certainty about God: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God; for God is love" (I John 4:7, 8). Jesus said: "If any man's will is to do his will he shall know..." (John 7:17). Paul said, "I know him whom I have believed..." (II Timothy 1:12). This is not intuition, mysticism, or superstition; it is recognition. It is similar

to the recognition of intelligence, sensitivity or feeble-mindedness or hardness in someone you meet. It is reported that Helen Keller observed when she was first told about God, "I knew there was such a person, but I didn't know his name."

But Jesus says this kind of certainty is hidden from the wise and understanding (Matthew 11:25-27). We first think of the pseudo-intellectual whom Paul encountered in the Greeks and also remember we have such today. Such a natural man cannot understand and appreciate spiritual values. The same is also true, incidentally, of those who are wise and proud of their religious knowledge. The real nature of God is hid from them (I Corinthians 8:1-3). We think here of the Pharisee. Maybe we should look at ourselves.

### *Test Your Certainty*

Just how secure are we in our relationship with God? Do we know Him or do we just know facts about Him? Is our faith, like Dana's, in a system or do we know the Christ? We might test our security system with some hypothetical questions and see.

1. Would your security fall if the scientist creates life in a test tube or discovers life on another planet?
2. Would it fall if it is conclusively established that the world is several billion instead of 6000 years old?
3. Would it crumble if someone gave you an argument about the church you couldn't answer?
4. Would your religious world fall in the dust if it were established that the hermeneutical principles you follow have some weak spots?

Someone said recently her faith would be shaken if life is created in test tubes. Faith in what? in God? or Christ? the Bible?—or in an idea or a popular answer?

Job is a beautiful case of faith under fire that does not crumble in spite of the fact that he lived in a distant day before Christ came to show us more fully what God is like. The popular doctrine in Job's day was that "all who suffer are sinners." Job may have previously held the idea, but he doesn't now. His friends who came to console him press this doctrine upon him with a great deal of strong feeling, even though they are wrong, as we know. He cries out in anguish but this faith—faith in God and not the popular idea of his day—grows and grows throughout the experience. It is Job who is vindicated at the end.

As Alexander Maclaren says it, "To know about God is one thing, and to know God is quite another. We may know all about the God that Christ has revealed and yet not know him in the very slightest degree. To know about God is theology, to know him is religion."

### III

Remembering the Danas, we feel such neglect has been costly, and that it creates for us a present challenge to more effectively communicate spiritual values and to cultivate the life of the inner man. We need, therefore to:

Recognize the strong Bible emphasis on the inner man. Utilize psychology to help learn the workings of our inner selves as we do other sources to learn promotion training, or preaching techniques.

Emphasize personal acquaintanceship with Christ, love, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Understand that such an emphasis does not require our riding a pendulum swing into the Pentecostal or Modernist camps.

Remember that reality is spiritual and that real certainty for the spiritual life involves our knowing and loving God personally.

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God" (Ephesians 3:14-19).

#### FOOTNOTES

1. I.S.B.E., III, p. 1490.
2. J. Stafford Wright, *Man in the Process of Time* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1956) p. 152.
3. Orville S. Walters, "Have Psychiatry and Religion Reached a Truce?" *Christianity Today* (October 8, 1965), p. 19.
4. R. Lofton Hudson, *Taproots for Tall Souls* (Nashville: Broadman, 1954) pp. 22ff.
5. Ralph Graham in Riverside bulletin, Wichita, Kansas.
6. C. F. H. Henry, "Love Without Law," *Christianity Today* (October 8, 1965) p. 32.
7. Everett Ferguson, *Abilene Christian College Lectures*, (Abilene: A.C.C. Students Exchange, 1962) p. 62.
8. Arvid Runestom, *Psychoanalysis and Christianity* (Rock Island, Ill.: Augustana Press, 1958) p. 82.
9. J. B. Phillips, *Your God is Too Small* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1961), p. 65.
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## THE CHRISTIAN'S USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

HUGO McCORD

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The importance of a taproot to a tree is the importance of the Old Testament to Christianity. If Christ may be likened to a Rose of Sharon or to a Lily-of-the-valley, then the Old Testament may be likened to the roots supporting



those beautiful flowers. Highly significant is the fact that Jesus<sup>1</sup> and every New Testament writer<sup>2</sup> made use of the Old Testament. Today every well informed Christian leans heavily on the Old Testament. For at least six purposes Christians use the Old Testament, namely: (1) to answer questions as to the origin of the universe and of man; (2) to prove the deity of Jesus; (3) to exhibit types foreshadowing Christianity; (4) to exhibit similarities between the Old and New Covenants; (5) to con-

trast Old Testament teachings with those of the New Testament; and (6) to set forth examples of obedience and of disobedience.

## I. ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE AND OF MAN

Every normal person is interested in how he came to be and how his world came to be. As to the origin of the universe, the New Testament points back to the Old Testament for "the beginning of creation" (Mark 10:6). As to man's origin, the New Testament likewise points back to the Old Testament: "have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female..." (Matthew 19:4). The New Testament uses the Old Testament when it discusses "the first man Adam" (I Corinthians 15:45). In other words, a Christian, when asked as to origins, thinks of nothing else but to refer inquirers to the book of Genesis. And he does so on good authority, for he knows that Jesus and Paul and others who knew whereof they spoke did the same thing.

## II. PROVING JESUS' DEITY

A second Christian use of the Old Testament is in the line of evidences: how one may be sure that Jesus is the Son of God. Many reasons converge in the one thought that Jesus of Nazareth was and is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Among these are His remarkable teachings ("never man so spake" John 7:46), His education ("how knoweth this man letters, having never learned" John 7:15), His sinlessness ("which of you convicteth me of sin?" John 8:46), His miracles ("the works that I do in my Father's name, these bear witness of me" John 10:25), His influence ("they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus")

Acts 4:13), and His unsurpassed sacrificial love ("the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep" John 10:11). But the proof most often appealed to by New Testament Christians was the evidence found in the Old Testament.

All of Peter's Pentecostal sermon pointed to one fact: "This Jesus whom ye crucified" is "both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). Most of His proof for that fact he took from the books of Joel and Psalms.

Peter's sermon on Solomon's porch asserted "The things which God foreshowed by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled" (Acts 3:18). That the Old Testament is properly used in supporting the deity of Messiah, Peter demonstrated by his saying the same thing in different words at least two more times in his sermon on Solomon's porch: "God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old" (Acts 3:21), he affirmed, and then also he stated: "All the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days" (Acts 3:24).

Similarly, when Peter spoke before the Jewish Sanhedrin, he set forth Jesus as one foretold in the Old Testament: "he is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner" (Acts 4:11). Peter's preaching was as the Spirit gave him utterance (Acts 2:4). His use of the Old Testament must therefore be exactly what God wanted.

Likewise, Stephen spoke by the Spirit (Acts 6:10). Informative then is the way Stephen used the Old Testament: he made direct reference to Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Amos, and Isaiah in his preaching the deity of Christ.

No surprise is registered when Philip seized upon an Old Testament passage from which the Ethiopian officer was reading and used it to preach Jesus.

To the Gentile Cornelius Peter affirmed concerning Jesus: "To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name everyone that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43).

Paul in his Antioch sermon, in addition to his direct references to the Pentateuch, to Joshua, to the books of Samuel, to the book of Psalms, to Habakkuk, to Isaiah, pointed out that "the voices of the prophets" were fulfilled when Jesus was crucified (Acts 13:27).

Apparently it was the regular practice of Paul, as well as of all other New Testament preachers, to reason from the Old Testament scriptures that Christ was predicted to suffer and to rise again from the dead (cf. Acts 17:3). This proper and perhaps most important use of the Old Testament had been employed by Jesus Himself: "Beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted" in "all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). Indeed, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Revelation 19:10).<sup>3</sup>

### III. TYPOLOGY

A third important use by Christians of the Old Testament is faith-building and edifying, namely: a study of the types foreshadowing Christianity, for coming events cast shadows.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Jesus Prefigured*

In the preceding section it was seen that often Old Testa-

ment writers predicted Jesus, that is, His sufferings, death, and resurrection. In addition, Jesus is set forth in the Old Testament by means of types or shadows. When a Christian reads in the Old Testament about Jacob's ladder, about the scapegoat, about the passover lamb, about the high priest, about the temple veil, about the manna, about the brass serpent, he sees Christ portrayed. Too, a Christian does not read of Adam, of Melchizedek, or Moses, or David, or Jonah without seeing Christ depicted.

#### *New Testament Teachings Prefigured*

Not only is Jesus exhibited typically in the Old Testament, but many teachings of His religion are set forth likewise by way of a type or shadow. A Christian does not read the story of Noah's flood without seeing it as a type of baptism (I Peter 3:20-21) and also as a type of the end of the world (II Peter 3:5-7). When he reads the stories of Sarah and Hagar, he sees an allegory of the Old and New Covenants (Galatians 4:21-31). In the Hebrews' crossing of the Red Sea he sees a sinner's baptism, and in the wilderness wandering he sees the church exemplified, and in the promised land he sees a foretaste of heaven. In the tabernacle he sees a picture of the New Testament church, and the priests are seen as Christians. The Old Testament circumcision made with hands is a type of the gospel's cutting away sins from one's life under the New Covenant.

#### IV. SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW

##### *Unchangeable Principles*

A fourth valid Christian use of the Old Testament is in seeing some principles which are the same in both the Old

and New Covenants. That man lives not by bread only, but by God's word also, is just as clearly taught by Jesus as by Moses (Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4). That man is not to tempt God (Deuteronomy 6:16; Matthew 4:7) is no less true now than when it was first written in the Old Testament.

That man is to worship only the one true God has always been true and will continue so to be (Deuteronomy 6:13; Matthew 4:10). Under both covenants an external lip service is wrong (Isaiah 29:13; Mark 7:6). Under both the eating of blood (Leviticus 3:17; Acts 15:20) is disallowed. Commands are written to be obeyed under both covenants (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; John 15:10).

Though the New Testament has qualities not in the Old, yet they are similar in that both are God's law (Deuteronomy 4:8; Galatians 6:2). Under both covenants the message of God was imparted by teaching (Isaiah 54:13; John 6:45). Haughtiness (Psalm 18:27) was not only a violation of the Old but of Jesus' covenant (I Peter 5:5-7). The two greatest commandments of the Old (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18) are the two greatest under Christ (Matthew 22:37-39).

#### *Old Testament Passages Buttress Christian Teaching*

Paul warned against a wrong use of the Old Testament by forced speculative meanings ("fables," I Timothy 1:4) and mystical meanings of names ("genealogies," I Timothy 1:4; cf. II Timothy 4:4; Titus 1:14; 3:9).<sup>5</sup> But a wrong use of the Old Testament does not weaken its right uses.

To fortify Christian teaching, at least four principles of New Covenant conduct are supported by Old Testament

passages: (1) Paul appealed for the support of gospel preachers by quoting the Old Testament (I Corinthians 9:9; I Timothy 5:18); "saith not the law also the same" was his forceful utterance (I Corinthians 9:8); (2) warning the unrighteous (I Timothy 1:9-11; Romans 13:8-10); (3) women's subjection to masculine leadership (I Corinthians 14:34); and (4) non-respect of persons (James 2:8-11). Similarities between the Old and New Covenants in these matters are properly used to buttress Christian teachings.

#### V. CONTRASTS BETWEEN THE TWO

"Every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 13:52) should bring forth out of the Old Testament storehouse the old principles which never fade, the similarities between the Old and the New Covenants. But the same scribe should also bring forth the new principles of the kingdom of God, and these he makes to be seen in bolder relief when set in contrast with nullified Old Testament laws.

The greatest "scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven" set forth what "was said" in the Old Testament over against "but I say" for His New Testament church (Matthew 5:21-22).

A lesser scribe, but also Spirit-inspired, set forth the contrasts between the circumcision of the Old Testament and the new creature of the New (Joshua 5:2; Galatians 6:15), the incense of the Old *versus* the prayers of the New (Exodus 30:1; Revelation 5:8), the dead animal sacrifices of the Old over against the living human sacrifices of the New (Leviticus 1:3; Romans 12:1), physical Jerusalem as contrasted with spiritual Zion (I Kings 9:3; Galatians 4:26), and mechanical

praise of the Old put in contrast with heart praise, the fruit of the lips (Psalm 150:1-6; Ephesians 5:19; Hebrews 13:15).

Christians do a service to humanity today when they point out the difference between easy divorces of the Old *versus* the one-cause only divorce of the New (Deuteronomy 24:1; Matthew 19:9).

No light contrast between the two covenants is that the former was on stones, but the latter on hearts (II Corinthians 3:3). And finally, the Old Covenant's law was graceless and unforgiving, but the New Covenant's law is subservient to grace and forgiveness.

## VI. EXAMPLES OF OBEDIENCE

A sixth right use of the Old Testament by Christians is causing Old Testament characters to be portrayed as actors watched by spectators in grandstands (Hebrews 12:1).

Jesus found a purpose in His preaching to refer to Elijah and a widow, to Elisha and Naaman (Luke 4:25-27). He illustrated His sermons by referring to Noah (Matthew 24:37), to the queen of the south (Matthew 12:42), to Jonah (Matthew 12:41), to Solomon (Matthew 12:42), to Lot and his wife (Luke 17:29, 32). Paul thought Christians were helped by seeing examples of disobedience among the Israelites (I Corinthians 10:1-12). James has affected people's lives by his use of Old Testament examples of faith taken from Abraham and Rahab. The writer of the Hebrew letter considered this purpose of the Old Testament to be so abundant it could not all be employed, "for the time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah; of David and Samuel and the prophets."

## VII. CONCLUSION

Though there are wrong uses of the Old Testament, strong evidence shows that it may be gainfully and properly employed to the salvation of souls in at least six areas: (1) to show how the world and humans arrived here; (2) to demonstrate how one may be assured that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God; (3) to see Old Testament incidents as shadows of Christianity; (4) to see many of the same principles in both parts of the Bible; (5) to see stark and vivid contrasts as the perfect law of liberty is made manifest; and (6) to see clear human examples of Old Testament people obeying or disobeying God in order to influence New Testament people to obey God.

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1 The following list does not exhaust Jesus' citations of Old Testament passages (the references in parentheses are to Matthew's Gospel): Dt. 8:3 (4:4); 6:16 (4:7); 6:13 (4:10); Ex. 20:13 (5:21); 20:14 (5:27); Dt. 24:1-4 (5:31); Lev. 19:12 (5:23); Ex. 21:24 (5:38); Lev. 19:18 (5:43-48); Ex. 30:13; 38:26 (17:24); Lev. 14:2 (8:4); Hos. 6:6 (9:13); Mal. 3:1 (11:10); 4:5 (11:13); I Sam. 21:1-6; Lev. 24:9 (12:3); Num. 28:9-10 (12:5); Hos. 6:6 (12:7); Jonah 1:17 (12:39); 3:5 (12:41); I Kg. 10:1-10 (12:42); Is. 6:9-10 (13:14); Ex. 20:12; 21:17 (15:4); Is. 29:13 (15:7); Gen. 1:27; 2:24 (19:4); Dt. 24:1-4 (19:7); Is. 56:7; Jer. 7:11 (21:13); Ps. 8:2 (21:16); Ps. 118:22-23 (21:42); Ex. 3:6 (22:32); Dt. 6:5 (22:37); Lev. 19:18 (22:39); Ps. 110:1 (22:43); Gen. 4:8; II Chron. 24:21 (23:35); Ps. 118:26 (23:39); Dan. 9:27 (24:15); Gen. 6:5-8 (24:38); Zec. 13:7 (26:31).

2 Matthew (citations in parentheses) made use of Is. 7:14 (1:23); Mic. 5:2 (2:5-6); Hos. 11:1 (2:15); Jer. 31:15 (2:17-18); Is. 40:3 (3:3); Is. 9:1-2 (4:14-16); Is. 53:4 (8:17); Is. 42:1-4 (12:17); Ps. 78:2 (13:35); Zec. 9:9 (21:4); Zec. 11:12-13 (27:9). Mark (citations in parentheses) cited Mal. 3:1 and Is. 40:3 (1:2). Luke (citations in parentheses) cited Ex. 13:2, 12 and Lev. 12:2-8 (2:23). John (citations in parentheses) cited Ps. 69:9 (2:17); Is. 53:1; 6:9-10 (12:38-41); Ex. 28:32; Ps. 22:18 (19:24); Ps. 69:21 (19:28); Ex. 12:46; Ps. 34:20 (19:36); Zec. 12:10 (19:37). Sample citations used by Peter would include Joel 2:28-32 (Acts 2:17-21); Ps. 16:8-11 (Acts 2:25-28); Dt. 18:19 (Acts 3:23); by Paul, would include Is. 49:6 (Acts 13:47); Hab. 1:5 (Acts 13:41); Ps. 14:1-2 (Rom. 3:10-12); by James, Amos 9:11-12 (Acts 15:16-18) Lev. 19:18 (Jas. 2:8); Jos. 2:1-21 (Jas. 2:25); by Jude, Gen. 4:3-8 (Jude 11).

3 The Jews in their Talmud and Targumim cite 456 Old Testament passages (75 from the Pentateuch, 243 from the Prophets, and 138 from the other books) referring to Christ and His days, according to Alfred Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (New York: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1900), II, 710-741. "Augustine in the fourth century spoke very often of the great advantage which Christians had in their arguments for the truth of the gospel, from the subsistence and dispersion of the Jewish people, who everywhere bear testimony to the antiquity and genuineness of the books of the Old Testament; so that none could say they were afterwards forged by Christians. He therefore calls the Jews the librarians of the Christians; he compares them to servants that carry books for the use of children of noble families, or that carry a chest or bag of evidence for a disputant." *Apud* Charles Pettit McIlvanine, *The Evidences of Christianity in External or Historical Division* (New York: American Tract Society, 9th edition, 1832), p. 271.

4 Cf. *skia*, Heb. 10:1; Col. 2:17; *typos*, Rom. 5:14; I Cor. 10:6, 11; *antitypon*, Heb. 9:24; *hypodeigma*, Heb. 8:5; *parabole*, Heb. 9:9; these are set over against *soma*, Col. 2:17, and *anten ten eikona*, Heb. 10:1.

5 As regards "fables and endless genealogies" (I Timothy 1:4), Newport J. D. White, "The First and Second Epistles to Timothy," *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, W. Robertson Nicoll, editor (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.), IV, 92, wrote: "There is a strong temptation to mystics to justify to themselves the continued use of an antiquated sacred book by a mystical interpretation of whatever in it has ceased to apply to daily life. Thus Philo (*De Vit. Contempl. Sec. 3*) says of the Therapeutae, 'They read the holy Scriptures, and explain the philosophy of their fathers in an allegorical manner, regarding the written words as symbols of hidden truth which is communicated in obscure figures.' Those with whom St. Paul deals in the Pastoral Epistles were not the old-fashioned conservative Judaizers whom we meet in the Acts and in the earlier Epistles; but rather the promoters of an eclectic synthesis of the then fashionable Gentile philosophy and of the forms of the Mosaic Law. *Muthoi*, then, here and elsewhere in the Pastorals, would refer, not to the stories and narrative of the O. T. taken in their straightforward meaning, but to the arbitrary allegorical treatment of them. *Genealogiai* may similarly refer to the genealogical matter in the O. T. which is usually skipped by the modern reader; but which by a mystical explanation of the derivations of the nomenclature could be made to justify their inclusion in a sacred book, every syllable of which might be supposed to contain edification." Cf. II Timothy 4:4; Titus 1:14; 3:9.

## DEVOTIONAL USE OF THE BIBLE

EDDIE G. COUCH

Eddie G. Couch has been preaching for the San Jose Church in Jacksonville, Florida for the past nine years. Prior to that, he worked with the Laurel Avenue Church in Knoxville, Tennessee; the Sixth & Washington Streets Church in Marietta, Ohio; the Manhattan Church in New York City; the church in Trenton, N. J.; and the church in State College, Pa.

He was born in White County, Arkansas and was reared in North Little Rock, Arkansas. He graduated from high school in the latter city, showing ability in public speaking and debate. His freshman year in college was spent at Harding College; his sophomore year at Freed-Hardeman College. He then transferred to Pennsylvania State College, where received his B.A. in Arts and Letters and an M.A. in Speech. During the three years in Pennsylvania, he preached for the small congregation in State College.



While working with the Manhattan Church in New York City, the building overflowed on several occasions. New congregations were started in Flushing, Hempstead, and Brooklyn. Brother Couch traveled extensively during this period, raising funds for the starting of these new works. He also attended Biblical Seminary in New York.

After 6½ years with the Manhattan Church, he moved to Marietta, Ohio. Here he helped in the establishment of the Ohio Valley Youth Camp. While working in Knoxville, Tenn.,

he aided in the starting of what became the Montview Christian Camp and taught in the Tennessee School of Religion on the campus of the University of Tennessee.

In recent years, Brother Couch has participated in the annual Blue Ridge Encampment. He has assisted in the Florida Bible Camp and is a member of the board of Georgia Christian School and Home at Valdosta, Ga. He is the only minister the San Jose Church has had. In 1962 this congregation completed a new building which will seat about 850 persons, giving them ample room for growth. His chief interests are personal work and mission work, devoting a great deal of time to both.

In 1942 he married Grace Shirey of Pottstown, Pa. and they have two children: Carl (who graduated from ACC in 1965) and Jena (a freshman at ACC this year).

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Several years ago in New Jersey an elderly man made quite a discovery as he was packing his trunk to move to his son's home where he expected to spend the rest of his life. He started to pack a Bible that had been given him by an aunt when he was just a young man. The aunt's will included this clause: "To my beloved nephew I will and bequeath my family Bible and all it contains, with the residue of my estate, after funeral expenses and just debts are paid." The estate from his aunt amounted to only a few hundred dollars which were soon spent and he neglected his Bible for 35 years and lived in poverty. Now as he packed to make his final move, he opened the Bible and therein found \$5,000 in bank notes. But what he had missed all those years was in reality worth far more than \$5,000. Every person who fails to use the Bible in the way God intended loses far greater treasure than that.

## WRONG USES OF THE BIBLE

How does God intend that we should use the Bible?

Some use it just as an ornament for their homes. I see beautiful Bibles, carefully chosen with just the right color binding to go with the decor of the room, outfitted with an ornamental book marker. But is this the use God intended?

A minister made an unexpected call in a home and, while waiting for the lady of the house, he was being entertained by her youngest daughter. Seeking to make conversation with the youngster, the minister reached over and picked up the family Bible from a table. He asked the child: "Do you know what this is?" The child said, "O yes, that's the Bible." "And," asked the minister, "do you know what's in this Bible?" The child quickly answered, "Yes." Surprised, the preacher asked, "Tell me, honey. What is in this book?" And the child quickly rattled off what was in it. She said, "It has a picture of Elvis Presley in it that belongs to me. It has some recipes of mother's in it. It has my sister's diploma in it. There are some snapshots of our family and a lock of my hair when I was a baby." Yes, she knew what was in the Bible because it was being used only for storage.

During World War I, the Bible was sometimes used for protection—actual physical protection. Mothers, wives, and sweethearts would purchase copies of the New Testament with a metal cover on the front. These they gave to their loved ones with the admonition: "Wear it over your heart." The thought was that this metal-covered New Testament over the heart might protect the man from harm. And perhaps there were examples of men whose lives were saved when a bullet or a piece of shrapnel hit one of these books instead of the man. But likewise, men's lives were saved by

metal cigarette cases and other objects. Is this the intention of God's Word that it should protect us from bullets?

Still others study the Bible merely to win arguments. Dr. John Sutherland Bonnell tells of a member of a church, who admitted, "I never read the Bible except when I am looking up a passage about which I have had an argument with someone."<sup>1</sup> I met a man in Tennessee recently who studied the Bible in order to argue with his cronies in the town square each day, but evidence of how little value it was in his life could be seen in the fact that none of his children nor his wife were Christians.

Dr. Bonnell tells of another woman who said to him, "The Bible is a wonderful book. I just wouldn't dream of commencing the day without reading my chapter." But on inquiring of her, he found that she was unable to recall anything from her reading that day and she admitted that this was true every day. This woman felt that in some way she was accumulating merit by reading a chapter a day.<sup>2</sup>

### RIGHT USES OF THE BIBLE

Of course we know that many read the Bible for proper reasons. Paul admonished a young preacher, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15). And the noble Bereans are praised by Luke in Acts 17:11 for the fact that when they heard Paul preach, "they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Timothy is credited by Paul, "That from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (II Timothy

3:15). Timothy had been taught by his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, in keeping with the admonition given by Moses in Deuteronomy 6:6-7: "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

We read the Bible for our own spiritual learning. Luke told Theophilus that he wrote his record of the life of Christ "that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed" (Luke 1:4). Paul wrote Timothy in order "that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God..." (I Timothy 3:15). And again Paul wrote, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4). When the Sadducees questioned Jesus regarding the resurrection, Jesus criticized them, saying, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God" (Matthew 22:29). And Paul tells how the Jews of Jerusalem, in ignorance of the very prophets who are read each sabbath, fulfilled those prophets by condemning Christ (Acts 13:27).

Not only must we read the Bible for our own spiritual learning, but also in order to be able to teach others. Paul wrote to Timothy, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2). It is proper and right that we should study, preparing lessons and sermons with which we may help others.

But there is still another purpose for reading and studying God's Word which we have not mentioned—the study of the Bible for devotional purposes. It is this usage which is so beautifully described in Psalm 1:2, where we see the upright man depicted as one whose "delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Joshua instructed the Israelites after the death of Moses, "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Joshua 1:8). Moses had written in Deuteronomy 17:19-20 of how that some day when the Jewish people chose a king, this king should take a copy of the book of the law and "he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel." This would surely involve a devotional use of the Bible.

### CHRISTIANITY—A TAUGHT RELIGION

Not only then must we study God's Word for our own learning and in order to be able to teach others, but we must meditate upon it—use it in a devotional manner—in order for it to serve its proper function in our lives. To use it merely for ornamental purposes, or for storage, or to think that it is to serve to protect us from harm, is surely not God's intent. Seven centuries before Christ came Jeremiah prophesied concerning the coming of the New Covenant: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will

make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more" (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Note the distinguishing features between the Old covenant and the New. The Old Covenant was written upon tables of stone but the New Covenant would be written upon the fleshly tables of the heart. But you say, "Isn't the New Testament written down just the same as the Old Testament?" Yes, but the New Testament does not become our covenant with God until it gets off the pages of the book and is written into our hearts. Note also: "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." Under the Old Covenant, a man was born a Jew and on the eighth day he was circumcised a Jew. He didn't know anything about it. But as he grew up he had to be taught that he was a Jew and it had to be drilled into him: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). But

under the New Covenant, we will not have to teach those that are under the covenant to "know the Lord," for they will have to know Him before they can become covenanted to Him. Under the New Covenant, we must teach people before they are converted, or "born again," to "know the Lord."

Indeed the Christian religion is even more than the Jewish religion a TAUGHT RELIGION. The Great Commission as given in Matthew 28:18-20 calls to our minds that we must teach all nations, baptizing them, then teaching them to observe all things that have been commanded us. Teach, teach, teach. Study, study, study. Learn, learn, learn. Again and again Paul tells us that he does not want us to be ignorant of something we need to know. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:44-45). Again He said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).

#### OUR NEED FOR THE BIBLE

Charles M. Crowe tells us:

"The men who gave us the King James Version of the Bible met for that purpose originally at Hampton Court, outside London along the Thames. This former royal residence is noted for its beautiful gardens. One of the features of these gardens is a complicated maze made of high boxwood hedge. The path through the maze twists and turns in a baffling manner. There are many dead ends, and

it is easy to get hopelessly lost. It is considered the most famous maze in the world.

“Many visitors become so involved in the intricate paths that they cannot find their way out. However, there is a simple key to the maze by means of which no one need take a wrong turn. This key is found in Baedeker’s guide book. The secret is ‘to turn to the right the first and second time that we have an option, and thereafter to the left.’ It is as simple as that!

“Most of us do not have to go to Hampton Court to get lost in a maze. For life itself is a path with many twists and turns. Dead ends are familiar to all of us. There are times when we do not know which way to go. We need help in the baffling questions of existence and destiny. We need help in meeting the puzzling aspects of living with people in home and office and society.

“There is a key to the maze of life and living. It is the Bible. It shows us the way to take. It warns us against the wrong turns. It gives direction, purpose, meaning, and strength to life as nothing else can. Uncounted millions have found help in its pages.”<sup>3</sup>

How important it is to know God’s Word! Our salvation depends upon it, for the gospel “is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth” (Romans 1:16). Our eternal destiny depends upon it because it “is able to save your souls” (James 1:21). When the great day of judgment comes after the return of our Lord, the books shall be opened (Revelation 20:12) and all men shall be judged by the word which Jesus spake (John 12:48).

## HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

To know God's Word requires study. A quick reading of the Bible is helpful in giving us a panoramic view—an over-all picture of its contents. "Rightly dividing the word of truth" is imperative to understanding it. This includes making a distinction between the Old Testament which was written for the Jews and the New Testament which was written for us today. This includes asking such questions as: *Who is writing? To whom is he writing? And, what is the purpose of the passage under consideration?* And there are many other good and valuable rules that could be considered. But in the scope of our study, let us consider some approaches that are particularly helpful in the devotional use of the Bible:

1. Begin with a book of the Bible, and continue to read in installments in that book until you have completed it.
2. Keep on reading until you come to a verse that you can feel is God's "marching orders" for you for the day. Don't be afraid to mark your Bible. Underline that verse, and let it search every area of your life.
3. Mark the place where you have finished reading, and begin with the next verse the following day.
4. Always preface your reading by a brief prayer that God will bring the truth of His word to bear upon your heart. Ask: "What is your message for *me* today?"
5. When you have allowed God's message for the day to search your heart, a prayer of thanksgiving for an accession of spiritual strength or a prayer of penitence for your mistakes and failures will well up within you.
6. Be sure to keep inviolate this period for daily reading of the Bible.<sup>4</sup>

## OUR NEED FOR DEVOTIONAL READING

Our need for such daily devotional periods is attested by every honest soul. Strength and high resolve quickly dim without daily renewal. A business man told a minister: "Sometimes after waking in the morning I am almost appalled by the thought of all the duties and appointments that await me in the next eight or ten hours. Then I repeat to myself these texts of the Bible: 'In quietness and confidence shall be my strength.' 'Thou wilt keep me in perfect peace, for my mind is stayed on Thee.'" "It is astonishing," he said, "how quickly the load is lifted when once I become aware of God's presence and God's help. The strain and the tension go out of the day, and there wells up within me a feeling of serenity and peace."<sup>5</sup>

What changes have been wrought in people by a simple reading from the Bible of an appropriate verse! A down-and-out man by the name of English had reached the end of the way. He planned to drown himself in the Willamette River in Portland, Oregon. On his way to the river, he happened to discover a fifty-cent piece that he had forgotten in his pocket. He said to himself: "That's perfectly good money. That fifty cents will get me a bed for tonight, and it will be easier to take my life when the sun is shining." He found a cheap hotel and on the table beside the bed he found a Bible. He picked it up and opened it to the first chapter of Isaiah. He could scarcely believe what he read: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." "Reason?" he said to himself, "why that's all I've been doing practically all my life. I used to reason with my schoolteachers, and my dad and mother, but this speaks about reasoning with the Lord. I never did that." This was the beginning of a new life.<sup>6</sup>

What value there can be to a person deeply troubled over illness or the death of a loved one to read that grand story of Job! This book treats the problem of suffering as does no other portion of God's Word. From it we learn the practical values of adversity: 1) we learn that though Job's friends tell him that suffering is always the punishment for sin, this is not the whole story: 2) we learn that innocent people must suffer lest people be righteous merely to avoid suffering; 3) we learn that suffering has disciplinary value, strengthening us; and 4) we learn that sorrows and adversity can reveal God's love to us.<sup>7</sup>

What beauty can be seen in the wonderful love of Ruth for her mother-in-law, Naomi! What lessons can be learned by us moderns from the gullibility of Samson as he trusted Delilah! What strength we can find from the faithfulness of Daniel in the face of the lions' den! What courage we can find as we imagine ourselves with the imprisoned Paul as he says: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith..." Yes, we need the strengthening that comes from the devotional use of the Bible.

### "EAT THE BOOK"

E. Stanley Jones tells how that in Assam in Northern India there is a legend that God gave the people a book. When the flood came, the people ate the book so it would not be lost. So the book became a part of them—got into their blood.<sup>8</sup> As Christians, we need to *eat the book*, the Bible! Our Lord described Himself while He was here on the earth as the bread of life and the water of life. He wanted His disciples to allow Him to become a part of them just as

bread or water could be assimilated into the human body. Through the New Testament we are told that Christ's message is to be eaten as spiritual food. In Hebrews 5:12, the writer describes undeveloped Christians as those who "need milk, not solid food." Peter admonishes: "Desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Peter 2:2). We must hunger and thirst after spiritual food just the same as we do for physical food. How often do we need to be fed spiritually? Just as we need daily meals, so we need daily devotional use of God's Word.

#### NAMES BY WHICH BIBLE IS CALLED

Our need of God's Word in daily devotions is suggested to us in some of the terms by which the Bible is called:

1. As we have already suggested, the Word of God is spoken of as food, which is to be eaten in order that we may grow to spiritual maturity.
2. The psalmist says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). Without this light, we walk in darkness and are in danger of falling into the abyss.
3. James tells us the Bible serves as a mirror, showing us ourselves as God sees us (James 1:22-25). This is accomplished, of course, by our seeing ourselves in both the good and the bad characters of the Bible.
4. In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus speaks of how "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11), calling our attention to how God's Word will grow in our hearts just as will seed in fertile soil.

## HELP WE GET FROM THE BIBLE

Charles M. Crowe vividly calls to our minds some of the wonderful helps we can get from God's Word. Note some of the subjects dealt with in his book, *GETTING HELP FROM THE BIBLE*:

1. He talks about getting help from the Bible *when we wonder where God is*. Let us remember Paul's assurance, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).
2. He speaks of getting help from God's Word *when life becomes ordinary*. And life certainly does become ordinary. Even the shepherds, after they had that mountain top experience of visiting with Jesus in the Bethlehem manger, the Bible tells us had to return to commonplace things. The scripture says: "the shepherds returned." This is exactly what happens to all of us. We have momentous experiences from time to time in our lives, but in between such experiences we return to just ordinary living. But Paul does tell us of a way in which we can be "transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2). This renewing can be accomplished through prayer and daily reading of God's Word.
3. Another chapter in Mr. Crowe's book deals with getting help from the Bible *when fear haunts our days*. Paul affirms that "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind"

- (II Timothy 1:7). Over and again Jesus tells us "Do not be afraid" and John assures us that "perfect love casteth out fear" (I John 4:18). So we boldly proclaim with the writer of Hebrews, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Hebrews 13:6).
4. Then he talks about getting help from the Bible *when we need to get rid of the devil*. Paul tells us in Ephesians 6:10-20 that we need to fight against the "wiles of the devil" by putting on the whole armour of God. He describes our "shield of faith" with which we can "quench all the flaming darts of the evil one" and he tells of our one offensive weapon, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." As our Lord Himself answered Satan by quoting to him the Scriptures, so we need to be prepared to answer in our hours of temptation.
  5. Again he tells us of how we can get help from the Bible *when the years go swiftly by*. God's Word advises us to keep our minds alive and growing. It assures us that life is of the spirit and not of the flesh. "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" Matthew 6:25. "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (II Corinthians 4:16). "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).
  6. His list of uses includes getting help from the Bible *when we are sick in mind and body*. Long ago Peter said to Aeneas in Lydda, "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole." There is wonderful power available to us in the healing of both our minds and our bodies through our faith in the Great Physician.

And here are some of the other times Mr. Crowe suggests

we get help from the Bible: *when we need inner quietness, when we lose faith in ourselves, when we wonder what God is like, when the odds seem stacked against us, when we find it hard to get along with people, and when we wonder what only one person can do.*

Truly the devotional reading of the Bible can do wonderful things for us. It shows us God. It shows us ourselves. It shows us Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It tells us how to be saved. It reveals origins and endings; showing us whence we came and where we go. It teaches moral standards. It informs of the past. It strengthens the will, stimulates devotion, encourages brotherly love. It can help us set our lives aright with God. It acquaints us with the movement and meaning of history. It introduces us to deep springs of power, joy, and strength. It is the only book which records the life and teachings of the supreme personality—Jesus Christ. In an age of defeatism, it restores our confidence in moral order. In an age of scientific advancement as never before known to mankind, the Bible restores our belief in spiritual causation and our faith in the ultimate values. In an age of feverish haste, it restores to us peace and serenity of spirit.<sup>9</sup>

James Denny once said that the New Testament was the most astonishing outburst of intellectual and spiritual energy the world has ever known. That is why contact with it, and the great writings of the Old Testament which prepared for the New, vitalizes the mind. Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." "Did not our heart burn within us," said the disciples, "while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:32). Their emotions were aroused and there flooded into their minds a swarm of new ideas. The Bible, if used in a devotional way, will give a healthy emo-

tional tone to our lives. Cigarettes, liquor, risque movies and books, speeding automobiles, and even narcotics reflect the attempts of people to bring a little thrill into their lives. The reading of the Bible, on the other hand, will bring to man an inward glow. "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart" (Psalm 19:8). The psalmist was speaking from such experience when he said, "Thy words are sweeter than honey, yea, and the honey-comb."<sup>10</sup>

### WHO NEEDS THE DEVOTIONAL READING OF THE BIBLE?

Within the lives of college students there come frequently periods of frustration over inability to decide the course to take. There come anxieties over popularity and fear of failure. There is disillusionment as many previous concepts are shaken. In such times, what need there is to read and reread of how Jesus points us to the way, saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me." And we are reminded by the psalmist that "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." And as anxieties mount, we need again the words of Jesus as He spoke from the mount: "And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith. Therefore do not be anxious..." Jesus says (Matthew 6:27-31). And as we experience disillusionment, let us read anew the words of Paul: "When I was a child, I

spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (I Corinthians 13:11).

A few years back a lady told me that in the congregation where she was a member the Bible was seldom read publicly. In service after service, sermons would be preached with only an occasional reference to the Bible or to a Bible illustration. In all too many congregations, little reading of the Bible is done. We have instituted a practice of beginning each period of worship in our congregation at home with a few moments of Bible reading. I believe this is proving very rewarding. How better can we impress upon one and all that we are a people who believe in the Bible and who love it?

All of us within our family circles need the strength and guidance that comes from family devotions—that quiet time either at the beginning or the end of the day when we take a few moments to pray, and to read from God's Word, and perhaps to sing. Within our congregation at home our elders are making a concerted effort to encourage each family to engage in such devotions together. When a father travels a great deal, they have suggested that he have his devotional at the same time each day that he knows his family is engaged in theirs. Here is a communion not only with God but a sweet communion of family even when separated by miles.

Brother and Sister Norvel Young have done a great service to Christians for several years now by editing the excellent daily devotional guide—POWER FOR TODAY. How appropriate is its name! Literally thousands are receiving

power each day by following the devotional program suggested in this publication. Let me encourage you to use it. It would be wonderful if throughout the brotherhood there were a resurgence of family devotions and daily reading of the Bible in family circles. How better, dad, for you to let your child know that you respect and reverence God than for him to hear you read to the family daily from God's Word?

We wonder why we lack the strength to live the Christian life. We wonder why we lack in faith. We wonder why there is not more dedication of life. We wonder why the church is not accomplishing more for Christ. Does it not involve the fact that we simply don't pray enough and that we don't read God's Word enough? "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

We are making a great mistake in this 20th century when we leave all the reading and studying of the Bible to the Sunday Bible School, the worship services, and the Wednesday evening service. Religion becomes associated only with such occasions and places. It needs to be associated with our everyday lives. The home needs to be an even greater center of spiritual learning than is the church building. But this cannot be unless we take time for periods of devotion and Bible reading at our breakfast tables or in the family circle at bedtime!

#### FOOTNOTES

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2. Ibid.
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7. William B. Ward, OUT OF THE WHIRLWIND, (John Knox Press, Richmond, Va.), Pages 88-92.
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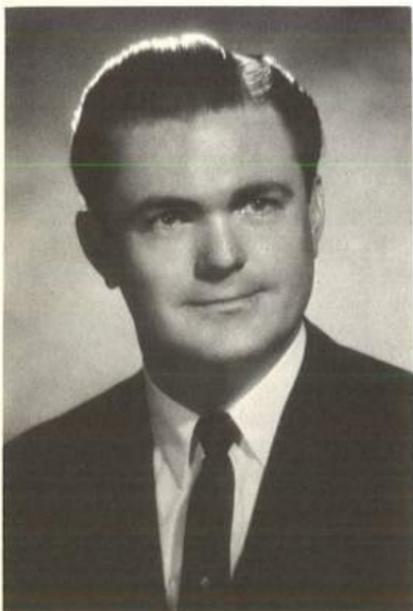
## THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE

### CLARENCE C. DAILEY

Clarence C. Dailey is a native of Clarksville, Tennessee, having been born on January 24, 1923, to Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Dailey.

He is a graduate of David Lipscomb College, Nashville, Tennessee, (1948) and has done graduate work at the University of Florida and the Harding Graduate School of Bible and Religion.

Brother Dailey preached for the Tenth Avenue church in Bradenton, Florida from 1943 to 1946; Eleventh Street (Nashville), 1946 to 1948; High Springs, Florida, 1948 to 1951; Druid Hills (Atlanta), 1951 to 1958; and has worked with the Union Avenue church in Memphis since 1958. During his ministry, the Union Avenue church has expanded her facilities at a cost of more than one-half million dollars. The annual budget has been increased from \$109,200.00 to \$200,200.00. During this same period, the mission budget has been more than doubled.



In addition to his local work he preaches in several gospel meetings each year. He has appeared on the lectureships at David Lipscomb College, Freed-Hardeman College, Harding College, Pepperdine College, and Alabama Christian College. He participated in planning the World's Fair Evangelistic Program and served in the exhibit in September, 1965.

Brother Dailey is a staffwriter for *Power for Today* and has written articles for the *Gospel Advocate*, the *Firm Foundation*, *20th Century Christian*, and the *Christian Chronicle*.

He is married to the former Mary Ann Hickerson. The Daileys have three children: Clarence, Jr., 17, Rebecca, 14, and Suzanne, 10.

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When Sir Walter Scott was dying, he said to his friend Lockhart, "Bring me the book." When Lockhart said, "What book?", Sir Walter said, "*The Book*—the Bible; there is only one!"

The Bible has frequently been referred to as THE BOOK OF BOOKS. Of all books, it is the best known and the most revered. It has had a more interesting history than any other book, and it excels all in its importance to, and influence upon, mankind.

It is remarkable that the Bible occupies the position that it does in the hearts and minds of all civilized people, when one considers the persistent attacks that have been made upon it. Yet today it stands supreme—the Book of Books. When men list the best books in the world, the Bible is always included and usually assigned first place. Millions of copies have been sold in nearly every country of the world. It has been printed in several hundred languages and dialects, and translated into almost every spoken tongue. Its influence has reached, at least to some degree, the most remote portions of the world. Reginald Heber has expressed it beautifully in his missionary hymn:

"From Greenland's icy mountains, from India's coral strand,  
Where Africa's sunny fountains roll down their golden sand;  
From many an ancient river, from many a palmy plain,  
They call us to deliver their land from error's chain.

What tho' the spicy breezes blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,  
Tho' every prospect pleases, and only man is vile,  
In vain with lavish kindness the gifts of God are strown;  
The heathen in their blindness bow down to wood and stone.

Shall we, whose souls are lighted with wisdom from on high,  
Shall we to man benighted the lamp of life deny?  
Salvation! O salvation! The joyful sound proclaim,  
Till earth's remotest nation has heard Messiah's Name."

Its survival against the attacks of its enemies has been assured by the providence of our Heavenly Father. H. L. Hastings said: "Infidels for eighteen hundred years have been refuting and over-throwing this book, and yet it stands today as solid as a rock. Its circulation increases, and it is more loved and cherished and read today than ever before. Infidels, with all their assaults, make about as much impression on this book as a man with a tack hammer would on the pyramids of Egypt. When the French monarch proposed the persecution of the Christians in his dominion, an old statesman and warrior said to him, 'Sir, the church of God is an anvil that has worn out many hammers.' So the hammers of infidels have been pecking away at this book for ages, but the hammers are worn out, and the anvil still endures. If this book had not been the book of God, men would have destroyed it long ago. Emperors and popes, kings and priests, princes and rulers have all tried their hand at it; they die, and the book still lives."

The Bible has been and continues to be the "Book of Civilization." It has not produced the only civilization, but it has produced the best. It has not been the only contributing factor to advanced civilization, but it has been the most consistent. It has not been responsible for a perfect society in any country at any time, but it has counteracted

the immoralities of paganism, inspired goodness, revealed the ways of God, and resulted in more righteous ways of living which we have called civilization.

### In the Second and Third Centuries

The teachings of the New Covenant met the low social and moral standards of the Roman world in head-on collision. It is difficult for us to realize the significance of the fact that a great percentage of the population of the Roman Empire were slaves. The method of Jesus in meeting and bringing about a solution to this problem was a teaching method. As His teachings on the brotherhood of man passed from man to man, there was the eventual and inevitable crumbling of the slave system.

The new standard of moral purity stood in bold contrast with the immorality of the times. The appalling conditions of the day were implied by the apostle Paul when he said in Romans 1:24-25: "Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves: for that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever." There was a striking contrast between the chastity of the Christians, and the immorality of pagan Rome. Thus, as the fragrance of the flower sticks to the heel that crushed it, so the teachings of the New Covenant modified the moral climate of the empire that persecuted it.

### The Next Five Centuries

The Bible began to be far more widely used after Chris-

tianity was made the official religion under Constantine. It began to be read more widely than ever before and hence its influence was vastly more widespread. Its impact was seen more and more as the low moral and spiritual standards continued to be raised. Before and during this period of time there was a very low estimate of the value of human life. This attitude was seen in the serious injury and slaughter of human beings during gladiatorial shows. It also found expression in the inhumane treatment of slaves, infanticide, and the general approval of abortion in an effort to hide the immorality of the day.

Into a society characterized by this philosophy came the Bible concept. Man was taught to look upon his fellow man as a sacred being and was given a higher regard for the sanctity of human life. While there is no doubt that some humanitarian impulses originated in other sources, many of the principles and precepts upon which society was governed found their background in Biblical teaching. Many pagan practices, including gladiatorial combat were stopped. Greater emphasis was placed upon the sanctity of the home and divorces were not granted so freely. Many of the laws pertaining to the trial of criminals necessitated more humane treatment when punishment was required. A whole new spirit pervaded the laws of the empire.

### The Next Four Centuries

How wonderful it would be to be able to say that the Bible continued to wield such influence through all of the succeeding centuries. It must be noted, however, that during that period to which we refer as the Middle Ages, its influence was restricted. During this period of time the

Bible was not only figuratively but often literally chained to the pulpits of the land. The common people were told they could not understand the Bible except through the interpretation of the clergy. This interpretation was often mixed with the doctrines, commandments, traditions, and dogmas of men.

In the year 1080, Gregory VII ruled against the reading of the Bible by the people. "When asked by the bishop of Metz what he ought to do with regard to the associations of Bible readers in his diocese, Pope Innocent II replied (1199) that of course the study of the Bible is to be encouraged among the clergy, but that all laymen are to be kept from it, the Bible being so profound in its mysteries that even scholars sometimes get beyond their depth and are drowned." (Dobschutz, "The Influence of the Bible on Civilisation," page 105) The Pope declared that if a layman touched the Bible he was guilty of sacrilege and ought to be stoned or shot through. This amounted to a general prohibition of Bible reading for the laity. In the later centuries of the Middle Ages the prohibitions against Bible reading by the laity, against translating the Bible, and against selling the Bible became more frequent. The Synod of Toulouse in 1229 forbade the reading of the Bible by laymen, as did many a Council.

In addition, the teachings of the Bible were often obscured by the pagan practices that had crept into the church. It was a distorted concept of the Bible therefore that influenced the people during this period in history. In view of these distortions, it is remarkable that the Bible influenced lives as deeply as it did.

The art that has survived from that period reveals the in-

fluence of the Bible. Many of the paintings are Bible scenes or scenes inspired by Bible principles. The Book of Books also made its impact upon the drama of the day, when dramatic productions were for the most part the portrayal of Bible stories.

While the masses had only a superficial knowledge of the Bible, and while they misunderstood much of what it taught, yet, its great moral principles were inevitably getting to their lives and influencing their conduct.

### The Renaissance

The Renaissance was characterized by a revival of reading, and this reading included the Bible. This new access to the Word of God gave birth to the Reformation. As people read the Bible, they became increasingly unhappy with the defiled conditions resulting from the apostasy. The renewed study of the Bible that was taking place during these centuries brought about religious, educational, political, economic, and social changes. Many unscriptural practices of the apostate church were revealed and rejected by the protestant reformers.

Increased circulation of the Bible resulting from the development of the new printing art multiplied its influence. There came to the common people Biblical teaching of the high worth of man, regardless of his rank or station in life. The scriptural emphasis of brotherhood became familiar to the masses of people. It is not too much to say that the present emphasis of the dignity of the common man owes its beginning to the spread of the Bible in the language of the people. On one occasion, Queen Victoria explained to

an African chief the secret of England's greatness by showing him a copy of the Bible.

### The Influence of the Bible on Literature

If every Bible quotation, every Biblical allusion and reference were taken from all the books in our libraries; if all the ideas and ideals that originated from the Bible were eliminated, what worthless, decimated libraries would be the result! Many of the great writings of Milton, Dante, Browning, Goethe, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Whittier, Dickens, and Longfellow would be lost completely. Many of the great works of Shakespeare would be tragically deleted.

Books of law that contain the legal safeguards protecting our children, the poor, and the innocent, would lose their principles of mercy. The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States would be so diluted that their distinctive value would be lost.

All hymns would be banished from existence. Can you imagine what it would be like to lose from the world of music the great songs of the church?

In Pattison's History of the English Bible, the author asserts that if you could destroy the Bible you would destroy a third of the books, and render unintelligible another third.

### The Present Influence of the Bible

The Bible continues to be year after year "the best seller" among all books. Other books with Bible themes have in-

creased in popularity so that both directly and indirectly multitudes of people look to the Bible for authority and inspiration.

Thus the Bible continues to wield its influence upon civilization as it contributes to the building of character throughout the world.

You and I have been touched by hundreds of lives that were transformed completely by the implanted word. We have been impressed and enriched by the sterling qualities of their lives. They are faithful, honest, gentle, loving, pure, patient, kindly, and generous. It would be difficult to find an adjective of worth that does not apply to them. This is not the case because they are born with all of these virtues. The future life at infancy depends very much upon whether or not the influence of the teachings of the Bible is brought to bear either directly or indirectly. It is not books on Geology or Archaeology, or Psychology that contribute most to the formation of right character, but God's inspired word. Other books add to our knowledge and enrich our lives but they do not influence us to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God.

It is the Book of Books that supremely teaches the things that build sterling, stalwart lives. Many books have been written to help us in growing strong and brave and good; and many of them are extremely valuable. But practically all of these are but reflections of the principles set forth in the Word of God, and some of them are very feeble reflections. When life is built upon the foundation of those everlasting principles that are revealed in the Bible, the character that results cannot be swept away or overthrown by the floods of adversity or the other vicissitudes of life.

There has never been an age that needed such influence as much as this age of irreverence and materialism. What about the present influence of the Bible? Have we lost it? I am persuaded that the influence of the Bible still continues, and will increase, not primarily from the standpoint of outward form, but from inward motivation.

We cannot imagine what would have happened to civilization if there had been no Bible. The language we speak was modeled by it; proverbs are quoted that originated in the Bible, even though they are quoted by those who do not know it. Artists will continue to dip their brushes in the inexhaustible reservoir offered by the inspired Word of God. Authors and composers will continue to dip their pens in the Book of Books to produce their masterpieces of music and literature. Lawmakers will continue to aim at a greater degree of legal and social equality, and to instill a greater sense of responsibility and duty in the hearts of citizens.

“The Influence of the Bible in its present position as the book of devotion is of supreme importance for civilisation. Progress in civilisation is guaranteed not by constitution nor by law but only by the spirit which rules the individual and through the individual the community. We need strong characters who know the great truth of self-sacrifice. Such characters are formed by the inward inspiration given by devotional reading of the Bible. Making men devout, it makes them strong and influential in the common effort to promote civilisation by removing everything which is contrary to the welfare of others...that influence it (the Bible) still exerts and ever will exert on civilisation.” (from Dobschutz, *The Influence of the Bible on Civilisation*, p. 190)

When Goethe lay on his death bed he called out in a great voice, "more light, more light." This is the cry of the ages. Men always want "more light." There is an inner compulsion which presses us to go even deeper into the mysteries that surround us and ferret out the truths that are hidden from human sight.

We are not satisfied with imperfect answers; we want truth. What is the meaning of life? of death? of joy? of love? of hate? of beauty? These are the questions that plague us all. I admit that we do not ask them in quite this form. We say "Why did this fine man have to die?" "How was life breathed into this infant child?" "How could God let this poor creature suffer?" "Is right an inflexible standard or does it vary with the individual?" "Is moral faithfulness really worthwhile?" "Is there anything beyond the grave?"

"More light," you cry? There will be more light. The Psalmist said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). And then in verse 130 he declared, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

Ask that mother who sits by the bed of her child, so desperately ill, whether she has been taught some truth from the Bible that undergirds her in this desperate hour. "O, yes," she will say, "I have indeed. I have learned as never before what deep dependance upon God can mean. I have learned as never before that prayer availeth much. I have learned that He who gave me this child to tend and love will not take him from me unless it be to a place of greater happiness than earth can ever know."

Ask that Christian whose trembling hands and shadowed

eyes show an early life of debauchery and lust. "Has the Bible influenced your life?" And he will say, thoughtfully, "O, yes! It has taught me that sin pays in its own coin. It has taught me that the passions which flame within all men can never be satisfied by indulgence. They must be controlled with God's help. I know now that there is a moral order and that he who breaks it will suffer."

Ask the man reading quietly there in the fading twilight. "Pardon me, sir, how has your life been affected by the Bible?" He lifts the book tenderly—"When I was a much younger man, friend, my business ethics were bad. I made the sale first and then dealt with my conscience later. One night after beating out a rival firm by dishonest dealings I returned to my hotel room feeling, somehow restless. One of these books was on the table and I began to read the fifteenth chapter of Luke. It was the story of a young man who had wandered away from happiness and goodness. Then, said the story, 'He came to himself and said I will arise and go to my father.' Strange, but you know I had read the Bible often in spotty fashion. I knew that parable from childhood but suddenly it bore into my heart that I was the central character of the story. I knew that God was speaking to me that night through a very familiar story. I came to myself and said, 'I will order my life by the teachings of His word.' " And, as you walk away, his closing words burn deeply into your heart: "You know, there's no greater tranquility than that of a guided life!"

Perhaps some of the things that are happening to us, bringing frustration and indecision and heartbreak, are means through which we shall be awakened to our need of the influence of the Bible that brings to light their hidden mean-

ings. Difficulty brings discoveries. Desperate situations bring divine illuminations. The Bible is God's "public utility," light and power from heaven.

"And now, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (II Timothy 3:16, 17). "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing" (James 1:22-25). "Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and teaching" (II Timothy 4:2). "For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even unto the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently; having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth. For, all flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower falleth, but the word of the

Lord abideth forever. And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you" (I Peter 1:22-25). "Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21).

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## THE ENDURING WORD

FRED E. FRIEND

Fred E. Friend was born November 7, 1925, in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, where his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Jacob Friend still reside. In 1948 he was married to Miss Barbara Maynard, of Chattanooga, Tennessee. The Friends have three children: Melissa Ann (11), Fred Maynard (9), and Barbara Lee (4).

Having attended the public schools of his native city and having been graduated in 1944, Friend enrolled in Duke University and received the A. B. degree in 1947 and the A. M. degree in 1948. In 1949-1951 and in 1957 he pursued graduate studies in English literature and philosophy at Duke. In 1950-51 he also served as an instructor in English at Duke. In 1948-49 and 1954-58 he served as a member of the faculty of David Lipscomb College, teaching English and Bible.



Since beginning to preach in 1943, Friend has served churches including: Durham, N. C., 1944-46 and 1949-51; Twelfth Avenue, Nashville, 1955-58 and St. Elmo, Chattanooga, 1951-54 and 1959-64. He has appeared on lecture programs at David Lipscomb and Harding Colleges and frequently speaks at the Blue Ridge Encampment. Since 1961 he has served as co-chairman of the Greater Chattanooga Training for Christian Service Series. He is a trustee of the Greater Chattanooga Children's Home and a director of the Foundation for Christian Education and of the St. Elmo Church of Christ Educational Trust Fund.

A Chartered Life Underwriter, Friend is associated with Security First Life Insurance Company, which has its executive offices in Chattanooga.

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A remarkable story recently claimed space in our news media and in my favorite hometown newspaper was even accorded a splendid editorial treatment. It was a success story, the triumph of persistence and toil. It was the story of a struggling and obscure prospector named Richard Molefe who lives in Maseru, Basutoland, South Africa. After seven years of hardships and disappointments he finally found his fortune—a giant diamond weighing 527 carats, which he sold in its rough state for the very considerable sum of \$162,400.00.

But the really touching part of the story relates what Richard Molefe did with his new wealth. After depositing the bulk of it in savings accounts, he and his wife went out together to make a very important purchase: they bought two leather-bound Bibles! This highest priority purchase appears even more remarkable when we are told that Mr. Molefe cannot read; but his wife can read, and we trust that she is unlocking the Wonderful Words of Life to her less fortunate husband.<sup>1</sup>

Less dramatic testimony than the story of Richard Molefe is the perennial leadership of the Bible in the lists of best-selling books. So over-whelmingly does the Bible outsell all others that the statistics usually omit the number of Bibles sold from comparison with other books. When we consider the claims that "only one half of one per cent of all books

published survive seven years" and that "eight hundred out of every one thousand books are forgotten in one year,"<sup>2</sup> we marvel at the continuing popularity and circulation of the Word of God some nineteen centuries after its completion.

Again, we observe that the Bible is the one "world-wide book" and is continuously expanding its sphere of influence, even to the uttermost parts of the earth. Now published and available in some twelve hundred languages and dialects and being translated right now into an additional three hundred, the Eternal Word is blessing millions of new lives every year. Nations that once forbade the importing of the Scriptures are now begging for thousands of copies. For instance, just a century ago missionaries in Korea were clubbed to death for distributing Bibles to the people; today, the Koreans are imploring us to send them copies of the Word of Truth. In response to their pleas, "There was a notable increase in distribution of Scriptures in Korea for the first five months of this year—864,483 copies in 1965 as compared to 791,403 in 1964."<sup>3</sup> Since its beginning in 1816, the American Bible Society alone has issued approximately three-quarters of a billion volumes and yet every year faces a demand for Bibles that far exceeds its ability to supply.

The purchase of two leather-bound Bibles by a suddenly affluent prospector in South Africa, the perennial role of the Bible as the best seller among books, and the unchallenged status of the Bible as the one world-wide book for mankind—these forcibly testify to the truth of the ancient prophetic words repeated by the Apostle Peter:

"All flesh is as grass,  
And all the glory thereof as the flower of grass.

The grass withereth, and the flower falleth:  
But the word of the Lord endureth forever."

(I Peter 1:24-25)

That the Word of God endures is truly a grand miracle, extending over many, many centuries. The Old Testament was given to the Jews across a span of turbulent times; yet they preserved the Word in accurate texts despite migrations, civil wars, oppressions, captivities, the hostility of their world, and their own frequent defections from the loyal service of God. The New Testament was written in an alien environment and nurtured through its early years by the faithful few who would neither surrender it to the enemies without nor alter it to appease the false teachers within.

One of the most determined efforts to erase the Bible and its influence from the earth was launched by the Roman Emperor Diocletian in 303 A. D. He issued an edict ordering the destruction of church buildings and all copies of the Scriptures. As the persecution intensified all of those possessing the Word were searched out and put to death. It appeared for a time that the forces of Imperial Rome had won a complete victory: "After two years of this ruthless slaughter and destruction, a column of victory was erected over the embers of a Bible, with the inscription, *Extincto nomine Christianorum*—'Extinct is the name of Christians!'"<sup>4</sup> This celebration proved, however, to be premature. Within twenty years of this supposed extinction of the Bible, the Emperor Constantine, wanting to place the Sacred Scriptures in churches throughout the empire, offered a reward to anyone supplying a copy of the Bible. Within twenty-four hours fifty copies were brought out of hiding and presented to him.<sup>5</sup> Thus does the Word of the Lord endure forever.

The romance of the Abiding Word is a long and a thrilling story. From every page it breathes forth the providence of God. Thousands of manuscripts from the ancient world and uncounted millions of printed copies—from the first crude press of Gutenberg to the high-speed rotary presses that our twentieth-century technology has produced—witness convincingly to the truth of the words of our Lord who promised: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Mark 13:31).

Enduring not only in physical form, the Bible interfuses our entire heritage and our present culture alike. At her coronation, Queen Elizabeth II was handed a volume as the Archbishop of Canterbury said, "Your gracious Majesty, I present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords . . ." She received it, acknowledging with a nod of her crowned head that she agreed with the prelate's assessment of the volume . . ." The volume was, of course, a Bible.<sup>6</sup>

Well might the young queen agree, for even in a worldly and practical view, the wide distribution of the English translations of the Scriptures which began back in the reign of Elizabeth I has proved to be the transforming influence in the lives of Englishmen. The noted historian James Richard Green has written:

No greater moral change ever passed over a nation than passed over England during the years which parted the middle of the reign of Elizabeth from the Long Parliament. England became the people of a book, and that book was the Bible. It was read at churches and read at home, and everywhere its words, as they fell on ears which custom had not deadened, kindled a startling enthusiasm. As a mere literary movement, the English

version of the Bible remains the noblest example of the English tongue. But far greater was the effect of the Bible on the character of the people.... The whole temper of the nation felt the change. A new conception of life and of man superseded the old. A new moral and religious impulse spread through every class.

Since the English settlements in North America were products of the new enthusiasm and character to which Mr. Green refers, the culture of the United States has been molded by the Bible to an extent seldom realized as we busily go about our daily affairs. But of all the ways in which the Word has shaped our culture perhaps the most important is the influence it has exerted to give the individual a dignity, a worth and an identity—in short, to recognize in every human being a creature made in the image of God and possessing as the gifts of God certain inalienable rights.

Our heritage of culture in Western Civilization is so filled with the influence of the Bible that no earthly power could ever erase it. Can you even imagine our architecture, painting and sculpture, our poetry, music and drama, or our laws, customs and beliefs apart from the influence of the Bible? Mentioning *Pilgrim's Progress*, the *Divine Comedy* and *Paradise Lost*—” all of which have stood the test of time, of being neglected and reclaimed, of study and emulation”—Dr. Harold Bosley claims: “If some demonic act of subtraction could remove every trace of them from contemporary culture, leaving the Bible, they, or books like them, would soon be brought into existence by the fact of Biblical inspiration.”<sup>8</sup> At least we can be very sure that the Bible has continued to inspire the culture of each generation in the Western world, and will continue to do so.<sup>9</sup>

Although much more deserves to be pointed out in detail,

our cultural heritage in the Bible has been very excellently summarized by Professor Mary Ellen Chase, and with this statement we must be content:

The language of the Bible, now simple and direct in its homely vigour, now sonorous and stately in its richness, has placed its indelible stamp upon our best writers from Bacon to Lincoln and even to the present day. Without it there would be no *Paradise Lost*, no *Samson Agonistes*, no *Pilgrim's Progress*; no William Blake, or Whittier, or T. S. Eliot as we know them; no Emerson or Thoreau, no negro Spirituals, no address at Gettysburg. Without it the words of Burke and Washington, Patrick Henry and Winston Churchill would miss alike their eloquence and their meaning. Without a knowledge of it the best of our literature remains obscure, and many of the characteristic features and qualities of our spoken language are threatened with extinction.

The Bible belongs among the noblest and most indispensable of our humanistic and literary traditions. No liberal education is truly liberal without it . . .

To all English-speaking peoples the Bible is a national as well as a noble monument, for much of their history is securely rooted and anchored within it. In 17th Century England it nurtured the Puritan revolt and paved the way for the Bill of Rights. In 17th and 18th Century America it supplied not only the names of our ancestors but the stout precepts by which they lived. They walked by its guidance; their rough places were made plain by their trust in its compassionate promises. It was a lamp to their feet and a light to their path, a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. It was the source of the convictions that shaped the building of this country, of the faith that endured the first New-England winters and later opened up the Great West. It laid the foundations of our educational system, built the earliest colleges and dictated the training within our homes . . . it made better and more useful citizens to their country by reminding a man of his individ-

ual responsibility, his own dignity, and his equality with his fellow-man. The Bible is, indeed, so imbedded in our American heritage that not to recognize its place there becomes a kind of national apostasy, and not to know and understand it, in these days when we give all for its principles of human worth and human freedom, an act unworthy of us as a people. 10

At least some brief mention of the continuing interest of men in the Bible as material for academic study has a place in the discussion of the Enduring Word. Although most study of the Bible is for a more meaningful purpose, a great deal of intellectual attention is given to the Bible simply because it challenges the mind of man. Approached as any other academic discipline, the study of the Bible has yielded its satisfactions to many brilliant minds. Through this intellectual interest in the Word, a very significant amount of information has been made available to us. Accurate texts of the books of the Bible in their original languages, an understanding of these ancient tongues, an ever-increasing storehouse of knowledge concerning the peoples and the lands of the Bible, readable and reliable translations of the Word of God, and all varieties of aids to interpreting the Bible—these are our present blessings because, in part, both devout believers and sceptics find in the Bible the most interesting object of study within their experience. The published studies of the Bible are already innumerable, and of the making of such books there is no end. Nor should there be so long as men can only "know in part" upon this earth.

But, of course, the Word of God was not sent into the world merely to exist as a printed book, or to influence the cultures of succeeding generations, or to provide intellectual materials for the probing minds of men; the Word was sent

into the world, and it endures in the world, with a spiritual mission: that men might be led by the Word into the truly good life upon their God-given earth and into the eternal life of heaven. It is for this spiritual purpose that "no word of God shall be void of power" (Luke 1:37). It is for this spiritual purpose that Jesus Christ our Lord has proclaimed, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Mark 13:31). It is for this spiritual purpose that God gave these beautiful words through the prophet Isaiah:

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.  
(Isaiah 55:10-11)

The definition of this spiritual purpose may be further illustrated by the words of two great men of the Book who tested the Bible devoutly in their own lives. First we hear the testimony of Alexander Campbell:

The Bible is the book of God. God is not only its author, but its subject. It is also the book of man. He, too, is the subject and the object of the volume. "It has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter" (John Locke).

It spans the arch of time, which leans upon an eternity past and an eternity to come. It came to us through the ministry of angels, prophets and apostles, and is to be transmitted by us, in all languages, to nations and generations yet unborn. It contains treasures of wisdom and knowledge beyond all the learning of earth and all the

philosophy of man. It not only unveils to us the future of time, but lifts the curtain that separates the seen from the unseen, earth from heaven, time from eternity, and presents to the eye of faith and hope the ineffable glories of a blissful immortality. It is to us, indeed, the book of life; the charter of "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away." It has already measurably civilized many nations and empires. It has enlightened, moralized, sanctified and saved untold millions of our fallen and degraded race, and will continue to enlighten, sanctify and bless the world, until the last sentence of the eventful volumes of human history shall have been stereotyped forever.<sup>11</sup>

Then we call to witness David Lipscomb:

There can be no shadow of doubt but that we have the word of God as given by Christ and the Holy Spirit to the apostles and early church. We may safely go to it as to the inspired word of God, a record of the teachings of the Son of God, in the giving of which Jesus Christ promised that the Holy Spirit "shall guide you into all the truth," "shall bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you." To it we may safely come to find infallible guidance into the way of good here and good hereafter. Good here in this world—true and permanent good in this life—is found in the same path that leads to eternal good in the world to come. They are both found in the same pathway and are enjoyed on the same conditions. Guidance to this good can be found only in the word of God.<sup>12</sup>

Looking to a more recent author who has attempted to state the purpose and position of the Bible among the people of God, we find these thoughtful words:

When the Bible is read as the lifebook of the holy people of God, it raises all the points of the Church's proclamation in such a way that they can be made relevant for the

particular situation of each age in history as it comes. The Bible then provides man with God's word, and likewise with a mirror in which he can see himself, both as an individual and in his group life, as he is meant to be and as he is. The Bible proclaims God's goodness, God's righteous judgment on man's rebellion and apostasy, and God's forgiveness for those who really accept Christ as Lord in their hearts and in their relationship with each other.... The Bible gives the seekers and experimenters their deepest appreciation of the problem that confronts them and their most exalted vision of the task that lies before them.<sup>13</sup>

Finally we want to hear "the praise of the Holy Scriptures" which the translators of the Authorized Version of 1611 wrote to their readers:

But now what piety without truth? What truth, what saving truth, without the word of God? What word of God, whereof we may be sure, without the Scripture? The Scriptures we are commanded to search. *John* 5.39. *Isaiah* 8.20. They are commanded that searched and studied them. *Acts* 17.11. and 8.28.29. They are reproved that were unskillful in them, or slow to believe them. *Matth.* 22.29. *Luke* 24.25. They can make us wise unto salvation. *2 Tim.* 3.15. If we be ignorant, they will instruct us; if out of the way, they will bring us home; if out of order, they will reform us; if in heaviness, comfort us; if dull, quicken us; if cold, inflame us. *Tolle, lege; tolle, lege;* take up and read, take up and read the Scriptures....<sup>14</sup>

What all of these witnesses are supporting is the thesis that the Word of God endures among men both because it is the eternal will of God that it abide forever and because the Bible is so valuable to sincere men and women that they will not willingly let it die. Throughout the ages they have tested it in good times and in bad, and it has proved to be preeminently useful in their lives. For the Bible is self-

validating to the open heart. The story is told of a simple, Bible-believing woman who was reading her Bible when a cynic asked her, "What are you reading?" Quietly, she replied, "The Word of God." "The Word of God!" the man sneered, "Who told you that?" "He told me Himself," she answered. "Can you prove that?" the questioner challenged. Looking calmly into the sky, the humble woman asked, "Can you prove to me that there is a sun in the sky?" "Why, of course," he answered; "it gives warmth and light." "That's it!" she cried. "That's it! The best proof that this Book is the Word of God is that it warms and lights my soul."<sup>15</sup> Thus do those who abide in the Word know the truth which makes them free.

The Scriptures themselves make clear that their spiritual utility consists of two parts: preventive and curative (to borrow the language of medicine).

Meditating upon the preventive power of the Word, the psalmists have testified:

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my pathway. (Psalm 119:105).

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might no sin against thee. (Psalm 119:11).

The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide. (Psalm 37:31).

And in meeting the tempting onslaughts of the devil, Jesus used the preventive power of the Word with telling effect. His ready, "It is written," followed by an appropriate text of Scripture, drove the enemy from him (Matthew 4: 1-11). Perhaps remembering this event in the life of our

Lord, James writes: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). As is often pointed out, but not so often experienced, hearts that are filled with the Word of God cannot easily be moved to sin—they are like trees "planted by the rivers of water" (Psalm 1:3). So long as the Word of God endures we have a preventive power to bless our lives and enable us to live close to God. For this reason the Apostle Paul pronounced this benediction upon the elders of the Ephesian church: "And now I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

Because men do not consistently apply this preventive power of the Word to their lives, God has decreed that the curative power of His Word shall also stand forever to reclaim lost souls unto Himself. The psalmist asks:

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.

(Psalm 119:9).

Again and again through the great prophets God sent His Word to restore the wicked among his chosen people. In an impassioned plea, Jeremiah cries out: "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord!" (Jeremiah 22:29). Then in the fullness of time the Christ came to preach urgently to the lost: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death into life" (John 5:24). To His disciples He said, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3). And so He claims: "The

words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

The curative power of the Word is forcibly brought before Timothy in these familiar words from the aged Apostle Paul: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:16-17). What more than this catalogue of the spiritual functions of the Word could demonstrate to us the reasons why the abiding word is fundamentally essential to our eternal salvation? This convincing and convicting power of the Word is also graphically set forth in another favorite Scripture:

For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.  
(Hebrews 4:12)

Both, then, to prevent our falling and to cleanse our hearts when we have yielded to temptation, God has decreed that His Word shall abide forever, that it shall not return unto Him void but shall accomplish what He wills and prosper in the thing whereto He has sent it.

Century follows century—There it stands.  
Empires rise and fall and are forgotten—There it stands.  
Dynasty succeeds dynasty—There it stands.  
Kings are crowned and uncrowned—There it stands.  
Despised and torn to pieces—There it stands.  
Storms of hate swirl about it—There it stands.  
Atheists rail against it—There it stands.  
Agnostics smile cynically—There it stands.

Profane punsters caricature it—There it stands.  
 Unbelief abandons it—There it stands.  
 Higher critics deny its inspiration—There it stands.  
 Thunderbolts of wrath smite it—There it stands.  
 An anvil that has broken a million hammers—There it  
 stands.  
 The flames are kindled about it—There it stands.  
 The arrows of hate are discharged against it—There it  
 stands.  
 Radicalism rants and raves against it—There it stands.  
 Fogs of sophistry conceal it temporarily—There it stands.  
 The tooth of time gnaws but makes no dent in it—There  
 it stands.  
 Infidels predict its abandonment—There it stands.  
 Modernism tries to explain it away—THERE IT  
 STANDS!<sup>16</sup>

#### FOOTNOTES THE ENDURING WORD

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## THE BIBLE AND NEW MORALITY

CLIFTON L. GANUS, JR.

Clifton Loyd Ganus, Jr. was born in Hillsboro, Texas, April 7, 1922. After living a few years in Dallas, Texas, he moved to New Orleans, Louisiana, where his father established and operated a chain of restaurants and cafeterias. His elementary and secondary education was received at Beauregard School and Warren Easton High School. In 1943 he received a B.A. from Harding College, majoring in History and Bible. He then spent two years in Charleston, Mississippi, as minister of the Church of Christ, after which he completed his work on his M.A. at Tulane University in 1946. In 1953 he received his Ph.D. in History from Tulane University. In 1946 he began teaching in the Department of History and Social Sciences at Harding College. He also served as Chairman of the Department of History and Social Sciences and Dean of the School of American Studies. In 1956 he was made Vice President of the college,



and in June 1965 he became President of Harding College. For the past fifteen years he has been working with the National Education Program and has lectured on numerous occasions all over the United States.

In 1956 he received a Professional Diploma as "College Executive" from Teachers College, Columbia University in New York City. While there he was awarded a George Washington medal by the Freedoms Foundation for an address on "Basic Concepts of Government." In 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, and 1961 he received a similar award from the Foundation.

Harding College received the Freedoms Foundation award on February 22, 1958, for having the best campus program in the nation designed to develop a better understanding of the American economic, political and social system. The American Studies Program which he directed at Harding College was an integral part of this award.

He is a member of the Southern Historical Association, Arkansas Academy of Sciences, Arkansas Education Association, Alpha Chi, Phi Alpha Theta and other professional organizations. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Boy Scouts in Central Arkansas, and is also on the Board of Directors of Finest Foods, Inc. in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Dr. Ganus developed the Seminars on Americanism for Youth which included in the summer of 1964 some 2,000 outstanding high school students. These ten conferences were held in eight states.

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We live today in a wonderful, challenging, modern and complex age which we call the "space age." Science and technology have developed so rapidly and transportation, communication and production have been so streamlined that our life resembles but little that of our immediate forefathers. Nevertheless, man has not basically changed. He still has the same wants, inclinations and desires, the same needs—food, clothing, water, shelter—and commits the same sins, lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life.

The greatest fact in this modern life is still that God is, that He created the heavens and the earth and made man in His own image and breathed into him his breath of life and made him a living soul. We live in God's world, subduing and having dominion over it and unlocking the treasures He placed in it. Our lives, however, are but our marches

to the grave and death is inevitable. (Hebrews 9:27) After this cometh the day of judgment. While we live upon the face of the earth we must walk with Him that we might live with Him in eternity.

The question, however, is how to learn God's will for man. A study of the universe convinces one of His greatness, majesty, and beauty but does not inform us of our responsibility to Him and to our fellow men.

It is only in the Bible—the unfailing word of God—that man finds revealed his beginning, the purpose of his being and his eternal destiny. Only in God's word does man find that which can develop a proper relationship to God, to his fellow man and to himself. His word contains a code of conduct and morality for all time and Christ is the "perfect" example of this morality. God had often said, "Be ye pure even as I am pure, be ye holy even as I am holy." But He had given no perfect example of His purity and holiness until He sent Christ to the earth. Moses was a great man but he sinned. David was a "man after God's own heart" but he sinned. The same could be said of all God's creation for "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," but Christ, who was in the beginning with God and through whom were all things made, pictured to man a perfect example of morality.

In Hebrews 1:1 it is revealed that God spake in divers portions and in divers manners to the fathers and the prophets giving them laws, convincing them of sin and demanding morality of His people. Codification of this law was given at Mt. Sinai through Moses.

On the cross of Calvary Jesus fulfilled the law and the prophets and thus removed the binding force of the Mosaic dispensation. He by no means, however, abrogated the integrity, honor, and morality of God. To the contrary He replaced the law of Moses with His own law, a law of love and of the inward man. Often He said, "Moses said unto you, but I say unto you." His sermon on the mount, His parables, His teachings, and His very life are the foundation of the morality and integrity He desires in God's children.

The apostles, commissioned by Christ to carry the gospel to the world, both spoke and wrote in the same vein as Christ. In fact, Paul said, "Be ye imitators of me even as I imitate Christ Jesus the Lord." It is no wonder that Paul said, "Finally brethren whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians 4:8). He realized that to fill the mind with these characteristics would fill the life with righteousness and morality. God's word condemns evil and teaches men to produce the fruit of the spirit—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, patience, self-control, and brotherly kindness. If these admonitions were followed what a wonderful relationship man would have with his fellow man and with his God in heaven.

Along comes, however, a "new morality" which says that the Bible and the traditional concept of a personal God is for a pastoral society, is old fashioned and is wholly unfit for man in the modern space age. Rules of conduct based upon this Bible are outmoded and tend toward frustration and an unnecessary sense of guilt. Man should free

himself of all restraints except "love" and look unto himself rather than unto a heavenly being for his salvation.

This "new morality" has some basic principles and foundation stones upon which it is built. Foremost is its attitude toward God. Nineteenth Century modernists developed a new theology which sought to do away with God and supernaturalism but to hold on to the moral teachings of the Bible. They denied that God was a "self-existent subject of infinite goodness and power who enters into a relationship with us comparable to that of one human personality to another." God was to them simply a name which referred to their own being. Thus "the sole subject of theology is man." (J. I. Packer, *Keep Yourselves from Idols*, p. 6) Men, therefore could not call God their "father," and Jesus was not pre-existent, did not experience a virgin birth, and was not resurrected from the cross to ascend to His throne of glory. Therefore, He could not be called Savior, or Lord.

It naturally followed that the attitude toward man would also change. A new anthropology based upon the theory of evolution developed. Man was no longer created in the image of God because God was not but was simply a more highly developed animal that through the process of millions of years had reached his state of civilization and authority. He had no soul and no conscience. The accident of birth brought him into being and the accident of death removed him from the scene.

Of necessity the attitude of the "new morality" toward the scripture had to be changed. The new moralist denied that moral laws were given by God, who did not exist. To the contrary they looked upon them only as accumulated human and ethical wisdom of the past. They had outgrown Biblical

injunctions and denied that there were permanently binding Biblical moral laws and ethical principles. There are no Christian moral standards that are always valid. Eternal truths and absolutes would lead, they say, to legalism. The philosophy is well expressed in the statement that "A universally binding moral law is legalistically blind to the concrete, peculiar needs of a particular person in a particular situation. Love becomes blind obedience to a moral code." ("Love without Law" in *Christianity Today*, Oct. 8, 1965)

The greatest difference perhaps in the old and new morality is the teaching that no act whether it be murder, adultery, theft, denial of the faith or any other violation of Christian principle is always wrong. In his book *Christian Morals Today*, (p. 16), Bishop John A. T. Robinson says, "There is not a whole list of things which are 'sins *per se*.'" To him any act is morally right if the situation is "right." It is only natural that students in our colleges, who study with those who believe as does Bishop Robinson, should be instructed in the philosophy that none of the above "sins" are necessarily or always wrong. Professor Fletcher in a youth conference at Elmhurst College affirmed this and actually said that having another God could in a given situation be right. The individual is left wholly to himself to make a decision as to the rightness or wrongness of a given action. Love (agape) dictates man's deeds. There is, however, no defense and no protection from evil, for the lover may well become a tyrant and the object of his love the victim. Law has become meaningless and has lost all obligatory force and sense of responsibility. Adolf Hitler, in all of his evil, could be considered moral in the "right situation."

The real problem is that the "right situation" is left wholly undefined and man alone decides when it exists. G. B.

Chisholm argued that we needed to get rid of the concept of good and evil. He said, "For many generations we have bowed our necks to the yoke of the conviction of sin. We have swallowed all manner of poisonous certainties fed us by our parents, our Sunday and day school teachers, our politicians, our priests, our newspapers and others with a vested interest in controlling us." (*Congressional Record*, August 11, 1965, p. 19313) He suggested that we should stop teaching children morality and rights and wrongs and instead protect their original intellectual integrity. He stressed that "freedom from moralities means freedom to observe, to think and behave sensibly, to the advantage of the person and the group, free from outmoded types of loyalties and from the magic fears of our ancestors." (*Ibid.*, p. 19314)

The results of the new theology, the new anthropology and the new morality have been tremendous. A new generation, sons of modernists, have rejected the moral teachings of the scriptures. Bishop Robinson in his discussion of the new morality wrote, "And it is impossible to reassess one's doctrine of God, of how one understands the transcendent, without bringing one's view of morality into the same melting pot. Indeed the two are inseparable." (*Honest to God*, p. 105). He accused those rejectors of modernism of saying that "this is the end-term of the apostasy from Christianity: the fathers rejected the doctrine, the children have abandoned the morals." (*Ibid.*, p. 106). I am afraid that this statement is true.

One of the results of the new morality is that man has finally found "sanction for sin." This is not new. For there have always been conflicts in men and they have always rationalized to justify their actions. Isaiah said, "Woe unto

them that call evil good and good evil: that put darkness for light, and light for darkness: that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" (Isaiah 5:20-21). It is true that God has grace and mercy for those who stumble and fall but His grace should not be taken for license. Paul said, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" (Romans 6: 1-2)

When man removes the law of God from his heart, there remains no longer the possibility of sin, at least in his own sight, for sin is lawlessness. John said, "Everyone that doeth sin doeth also lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness." (I John 3:4). But, of course, there can be no sin when there is no moral law. The law of God has been removed and replaced by the reasoning of man. Bishop Robinson stated that "The sanctions of Sinai have lost their terrors, and people no longer accept the authority of Jesus even as a great moral teacher. Robbed of its supernatural supports, men find it difficult to take seriously a code of living that confessedly depended on them 'why shouldn't I' or 'what's wrong with it' or questions which in our generation press for an answer and supernaturalists' reasons—that God or Christ has pronounced it's a sin—have force, and even meaning, for none but a diminishing religious remnant." (*Honest to God*, pp. 109-110)

The authority of Christ on morality, thus, no longer exists. The only law is the law of love—not as revealed in scripture but in the desires and the experience of man. Since God does not exist He cannot speak or give laws. Thus, in seeking to avoid legalism the morality of God also is lost. Packard in his pamphlet *Keep Yourselves from Idols* (p. 9),

said, "The baby of law vanishes with the bath water of legalism; love is the moral plughole down which both go."

One result of the new morality has been a "sexual revolution" that has swept across the country. Multitudes have rejoiced that illicit relationship is no longer "fornication and adultery" but now "free love" and beautiful in the "right situation." William Graham Cole, in a pamphlet entitled *Call to Responsible Freedom: The Meaning of Sex in the Christian Life*, (pp 9-10) states that "Our culture declares that all sexual activity within marriage is legal, proper, and good, while any such activity outside marriage is illicit, sinful, and wrong. This is to ignore the personal dimension of life, to seek to force everyone under one massive legal umbrella. You and I know perfectly well that there are many marriages that are simply matters of convenience, that such sex as goes on within them is selfish, exploitative, and evil. We know further that there is sexual contact between unmarried couples that is motivated by love and which is pure and on occasions beautiful. This is why we get confused."

This so called new morality with reference to sex is expressed by Dr. Frederic C. Wood, Jr., who is Chaplain of Baltimore's Goucher College—a woman's college. According to *Newsweek* (12-21-64, p. 45) he said, "Sex is good—sex is fun—it is also funny—premarital intercourse is (not) "bad" or "dirty." Indeed, it can be very beautiful." He also said that "For a Christian that which makes us free is the love of God, which assures me that no matter how deviant my behavior may seem to be according to any given code, I myself am acceptable. I am loveable. I am okay." What he is saying is that the moral code in the Bible is not really binding and that one is loveable and acceptable no matter what he does. Contrast this with the statement of the Apostle Paul

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: Neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (I Corinthians 6:9-11).

An article by John McRay, Assistant Professor of Bible at Harding College, entitled, "The New Morality" (*Forethoughts*, April 1964) bears out the fact that morals with regard to premarital sexual experience have degenerated tremendously in the last few years. In the past fifteen years a Harvard psychiatrist estimates that such experience among college boys rose from fifty to sixty percent, among college girls from twenty-five to forty percent. A Purdue University sociologist estimates that one out of six brides is pregnant before marriage. The Kinsey reports from the University of Indiana say that the majority of American men and at least half the women have had premarital sex experience. Across the nation college campuses witness the cries of "no curfew on the girls" and "unrestricted permission to visit in the rooms of the opposite sex." It is no wonder that we experience in America over 200,000 unmarried mothers and illegitimate children each year, when it is a "perverted sense of love" that guides the morals of our youth instead of the truths of God.

Lawlessness and a very permissive attitude toward it are a result of the new morality. In one way or another it seeks to find sanction in the will of man, either as an individual or as a group, and, thus, followers of the new morality feel that they are above the law if they do not like the law. They

may not at all understand the underlying theory of the new morality but they certainly practice it. Almost every day we see examples of this spirit of man as a law unto himself. Louis F. Powell, Jr., President, American Bar Association, in an address on August 9, 1965, before the opening assembly session said: "Lawyers also are concerned about a different aspect of deteriorating law and order. This relates—not to crime as such—but to the growing lack of respect for law and for due process, and the unwillingness of many to resolve differences by established legal means. The public appears to be largely unaware of the scope and implications of this dangerous trend. There are many contemporary symptoms: the willful violation of law and court decisions, sometimes by officials sworn to observe them; the doctrine that only 'just' laws need be obeyed and that every man is free to determine for himself the question of 'justness'; and the growing use of coercion—in forms ranging from demonstrations to sit-ins and mobs in the streets—as a means of enforcing rights or asserting political views.

"Although there are wide variations in the employment of these methods, and many who use them do so sincerely and often in the name of morality and justice, there is one basic common denominator. This is a disregard of orderly means of exercising rights, attaining goals, or influencing decisions.

"The frightening aspect of these attitudes and techniques is that they tend to escalate. They spread geographically and numerically. The worthiness of causes becomes increasingly marginal—and sometimes is wholly indefensible. It also becomes increasingly difficult to maintain the distinction between genuine peaceful protest and legitimate demonstrations, on the one hand, and disorderly conduct and mob violence, on the other. Moreover, these techniques are made

to order for adoption or infiltration by subversive or lawless extremists." Mr Powell felt that these techniques of disobedience were in the long run self-defeating and would endanger freedom. An orderly society cannot exist if each man determines the laws that he obeys and the laws he disregards.

Criminal activity is increasing in America six times faster than the population is increasing and in many areas of our country law-abiding citizens are afraid to walk the streets at night lest they be robbed or attacked. Witnesses of crimes often refuse to assist the victim or call the police. Their plea is "I don't want to get involved." Denial of God, a disregard of His moral commandments and a philosophy of "might makes right" has opened a Pandora's box of evil in our nation that may lead to its downfall.

America is plagued today with over five million alcoholics and five million others who are on the brink of alcoholism. Some sixty-five million Americans drink alcoholic beverages and the number of those who are caught in the web of drunkenness increases daily. The Bible's condemnation of drunkenness no longer strikes any fear in the heart of the would-be alcoholic for the new morality says that drunkenness is proper in the "right situation" and who is to decide the right situation but the man who desires to drink.

Consider also the fact that one in four marriages in America ends in divorce, the cheating that goes on in our school rooms, our businesses, our government offices, and on our farms; the disregard for man and his personal and property rights and the improper management-labor relationships that often exist and you see again the results of the "new morality."

This evil disease has also given comfort to the international criminal conspiracy called "communism." I do not mean to imply that a great many of the advocates of the new morality in America are Communists, but it is a fact that Communists are perfectionists in its practice and are more consistent in following the new morality than are the other advocates of this philosophy. The fundamental principle of the new morality is that morality is not rooted in God's nature but in the will of man. Communists deny God, so they deny that morality is rooted in God's nature. They deny that eternal moral principles exist and maintain that all morality is relative. They emphasize class morality which is but the means by which a class protects, justifies, enlarges and perpetuates its class interest. For example, God's moral law says, "Thou shalt not steal." Communists say that this is the law of a property holding class whereby it protects its private property. Their law is "Steal if it helps the party." God's moral law says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." The Communists' moral law says, "Commit adultery if it helps the party." Our moral law says, "Honor thy father and mother," while their law says that the party is supreme and one must dishonor his father and mother when the good of the party demands it.

What Communists have said and what they have done throughout the decades more than adequately demonstrates what happens when man tries to direct his life without God. The repudiation of God and the repudiation of moral law leads to the degradation and destruction of man.

There is no such thing as a "new morality." It is simply a modern revival of old immoralities. The history of mankind has more than once demonstrated that apostasy from God involves, sooner or later, moral degeneration. Although the

first generation of apostates from God may not go all the way, yet they have started on the journey which many of those whom they teach will travel to its conclusion. There is nothing new in man's effort to find some sanction for his sins. He can only do this if he turns his back upon God as He is revealed in the Bible and as he repudiates the moral law which God has revealed. The Apostle Paul spoke of the wrath of God being revealed from heaven "against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness" (Romans 1:18).

He pictures the Gentiles as refusing to live according to the knowledge of God which they had received but rather became apostate in worship and morally corrupt. Paul said, "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who, knowing the judgment of God, that

they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them” (Romans 1:24-32).

The Apostle Peter showed that there would be additional false teachers who would rise up and bring destructive heresies and deny even the Master who bought them (II Peter 2:1). He went on to show how that although they promise liberty yet they themselves are the bond servants of corruption (II Peter 2:19).

Thus Paul wrote to Timothy: “I charge thee, therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (II Timothy 4:1-4).

This generation needs to be shown why they should believe in God and in His book, and to have emphasized the fact of coming judgment. “But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God: Who will render to

every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honor and peace, to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God" (Romans 2:2-11).

There is no new morality. If it is moral, it is taught in the Bible in precept and in principle. If it is not in the Bible, it is not a new morality, but a new revival of the old immorality. We must both preach and practice the old morality which is the manner of life required by the Lord of the new man in Christ Jesus.

## EXODUS—WITH THE BIBLE

DWAIN EVANS

Dwain Evans was born in Palmer, Texas, April 4, 1933. In 1953 he married Barbara Bass of Abilene, Texas, and they now have two daughters—Lisa 11, and Stephanie 7.

He received his education at Abilene Christian College and Texas Technological College.

Brother Evans has served as minister of the West Islip Church of Christ since its establishment in 1963 (formerly Bay Shore). He served as coordinator for the Exodus/Bay Shore project wherein more than eighty families moved to Bay Shore, N. Y. to plant the church. Prior to this he served three years doing mission work in Augusta, Maine, and also served churches in Coolidge, Sweetwater and Lubbock, Texas.



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Exodus . . . a word fraught with meaning. It denotes the separation, the singularity of a people, the marching out en masse of a large company.

In the Bible, the book of Exodus is a book of faith. Its role in the Old Testament is similar to that of the Gospels in the New Testament. It declares God's salvation for His people. It is a revelation of the power of God. It proclaims the historical actuality of the emancipation of Israel.

Exodus has been used in recent years to describe groups of Christ's disciples going out en masse to "sing their song of deliverance" to a world shackled with the bondage of sin. For most of those who have gone, the experience has utterly transformed their lives. For the first time many have begun to understand what it means to "count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus..."<sup>1</sup> These adventures have not been easy.

Christ's discipleship takes on a new perspective when a \$6000 loss in annual income is suffered in order that one may serve on His frontier. Paul's admonition to Timothy to "take your share of suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus"<sup>2</sup> is not at all outside the experience of some who have made the move. All of us understand better the words of Simon Peter that "though you do not now see him you believe in him and rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy."<sup>3</sup>

Our times are critical times. If there is any hope for our world, if there is any hope for us, we who claim membership in God's family will have to go back to the New Testament, re-examining the real content of the message and the claim that it makes on our lives. Is this strange—that I should ask a people who have made the most fervent plea for restoration of New Testament Christianity in our generation to go back to the New Testament? Strange it may be—yet this is precisely what we must do!

I love the church. If I know my heart, I would gladly die for her. But there are some areas in which radical surgery is demanded.

A sizable segment of our brethren is crying out for renewal. This concern is not confined to one geographical area. I have seen this concern during the past year in California, in Florida, in Texas and Oklahoma, in Michigan and Illinois. The amazing thing about this concern is that it has developed spontaneously. In many cases, spiritual leaders of such congregations are unaware of the inner fever, the growing restlessness. And it is young people who are the most militant in this search for renewal.

When we talk about renewal, many get an uneasy feeling. They are afraid. They are afraid something will happen to shatter some forms that have become very comfortable. But this thirst for renewal is not our enemy. It is not to be feared! It is our hope of salvation! The Psalmist cried, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."<sup>4</sup> The apostle Paul pled with the Ephesians, "Put off your old nature which belongs to your former manner of life . . . and be renewed in the spirit of your minds."<sup>5</sup>

"The church is loaded with nominal members—genial, friendly folk who are ignorant of the Bible and innocent of disciplined Christian commitment. They are sincerely but superficially Christian. This order of Christianity is drawn in pastel. Its faith is shallow; its people are without any spiritual history; they are not growing; they are spiritually asleep. The time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God."<sup>6</sup>

There are some forms that must be shattered if we survive spiritually. Robert Raines gives an accurate diagnosis of our illness:

Churches of Christ are brought into judgment by an unbelieving world. We cannot pass off our lack of dynamic witness with superficial platitudes and self-righteous verbosity. Our situation is far too critical for this. One writer has expressed it this way:

“There are many young ministers today who have inherited that which they feel they cannot perpetuate. They find an over-emphasis on organization, but do not know how to change it. Resentment and love are intermingled. They love the church which has given them what they most treasure. At the same time they resent the restrictions that keep them from expressing the leading of the Holy Spirit. Many of them are saying, ‘If I cannot find more meaning in the church, I will have to leave.’”<sup>7</sup>

The tragic fact is that many have left already. This search for renewal does not represent a departure from the authority of Christ as revealed in His revelation, the New Testament. It represents rather a continued search for His truth which has been revealed to us all along. It does not represent a repudiation of the preaching of our fathers. It does mean that every generation must honestly, objectively examine the New Testament in our effort to more perfectly restore the fellowship of Christ.

“Ecclesia semper reformanda!” cried Martin Luther. “The church must continually be reformed.” It is the tragedy of Christendom that Luther and his followers failed to heed that priceless admonition. Those who “hunger and thirst” after righteousness will be filled, not those who are satisfied. We who would restore true Christianity must take heed that we do not too readily presume to have already done so.

As Jesse P. Sewell has so succinctly stated, from an ACC Lectureship platform:

"Ours is a plea for progress in the discovery and practice of divine truth. The importance of our plea and our safety in making it do not consist in the particular truth we have accepted and which we now practice, but rather in our attitude toward all truth in Christ. If we ever allow ourselves to become satisfied with our achievements in the realm of spiritual knowledge and practice, our usefulness will be ended. It is not the truth we know and practice that is important, but all truth revealed in Christ Jesus. Our minds must ever be kept open and our hearts must warm as we continue to search the scriptures.'<sup>8</sup>

Plainly, a massive task confronts us. Listen soberly to a conversation that took place on Olivet outside the gates of Jerusalem. "So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord will you at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?' He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.'"<sup>9</sup> In this text, Jesus gave His apostles a warning, a promise and a command. Here we find a blueprint for renewal.

*The Warning.* Let us note first the warning: The times and the seasons are wholly within the authority of God. The kingdom is wholly God's. The time and the manner of its coming are wholly within His hands. In commenting on this text, J. W. McGarvey concludes that "he intended to indicate that the times and seasons of God's purposes are reserved more specially under his own sovereign control, and kept back more carefully from the knowledge of men, than the

purposes themselves.”<sup>10</sup> McGarvey adds that we can come to “no other conclusion than that the kingdom of Christ was inaugurated on earth on the first Pentecost after his ascension.”<sup>11</sup>

But the warning is clear. God alone knows the times and seasons. He knows the limits of this world’s history. “It is not for us to know the times and seasons...” continued to ring in the ears of these first century disciples, causing a note of pressing urgency in their message. “This is that” proclaimed Simon Peter on Pentecost, “which hath been spoken through the prophet.”<sup>12</sup> Here it is... we are living in it. The Kingdom of God has come in power even as Jesus promised. “He has delivered us,” Paul cried, “from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.”<sup>13</sup>

What a great hour this was! Jesus had engaged the devil in battle. He had fought and He had won. But the long campaign was continuing and the final victory was not yet in sight when He would deliver the kingdom to God. Men whose lives were wracked and ruined with sin were being redeemed. They were still clothed in the weakness of human flesh but victory was theirs through Jesus Christ. Here we see prophetic preaching at its finest. Peter, James, and John were not priests with vested interests to protect. They were proclaiming a Saviour who was more than just “someone who went about doing good.” In these good works of Jesus the foundations of Satan’s empire “began to crumble.” This was indeed something to make the morning stars sing together and the sons of God shout for joy. And these

preachers were not seeking the favor of men. Renewal cannot come to the church today through reticent witnesses. Our preaching must again possess the boldness of Peter and Paul.

It is so easy for myself and my fellow preachers to surrender the role of prophet and settle comfortably into the role of priest. Our silence is bought by all the creature comforts that our "flock" heaps upon us. We could not say to a modern-day David, "Thou art the man." There is too much of David in ourselves. Saul Alinsky, a man who has risked his life for the cause of social justice, describes his reaction after receiving a very lucrative offer to leave his work in the slums for a high-paying position and honors:

"I could see myself with a house in the beautiful Philadelphia suburbs and money in the bank. I also could see myself saying, 'I'd better not risk this job or this setup. After all, I can do more for the cause by stimulating my students than by taking chances myself. I can make speeches and write papers full of double-talk and put the real message between the lines or in the footnotes. Then I can flap my angelic wings and tell myself I'm really putting out dynamite.'

"Of course, this is so much jazz. Can you live your life between the lines or in the footnotes? It doesn't work that way. Once you're on top you want to stay there. You learn to eat in very good restaurants, to fly first class. The next thing you know these things are essential to you. You're imprisoned by them."<sup>14</sup>

Fearless, inspired preaching will play a tremendous role in the renewal of the church. Even while Soren Kierkegaard

lay dying in the hospital, Pastor Boesen tried to get him to modify his critique of the insipid state of Christendom in Denmark. Boesen said, "Would you have no change made in your utterances? They do not correspond to reality but are more severe." Kierkegaard replied, "It has to be thus, otherwise it is of no avail. When the bomb explodes, I know well enough, it must be thus! Do you think I should tone it down, first speak to awaken, and then to tranquilize? Why do you want to disturb me in this way?"<sup>15</sup> It is significant that when Peter and John were released from prison in Acts 4 they prayed not for deliverance from persecution but for boldness to "speak thy word."

*The Promise.* While Jesus gave a warning in the text, He also gave a promise. He said, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." If I were asked to cite the greatest blessing that the Exodus to Long Island was brought it would have to be this: a greater understanding of the power of the Holy Spirit. Time and time again there was confrontation with the challenge of the impossible. In each case the power of the Holy Spirit at work within enabled us to overcome. Although Jesus speaks of special Holy Spirit power which the apostles were to receive which we have not received, we must not conclude that His power is not available to us today. He works in different ways but He is fully as powerful today to accomplish His purpose as He was in the first century.

Carefully, but unequivocally, I say this: One of the greatest weaknesses in our fellowship has been our lack of understanding of the Holy Spirit. In the thinking of many there

has been a conflict between the authority of the Scriptures and the authority of the Holy Spirit. On one hand some have felt that the Holy Spirit cannot do anything that the Word (that is, the Bible) does not also do...that His ministry is confined strictly to the Word. On the other hand there are those who have tended to depreciate the Scriptures—even to saying they are not necessary at all.

It should be obvious that neither of these positions is in harmony with the teaching of the Bible. The Holy Spirit Himself inspired men to write the Scriptures.<sup>16</sup> Paul states that the Bible is His sword...it is His instrument through which He accomplishes His purpose.<sup>17</sup> But His ministry is not confined to the Bible. Paul said, "The Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words."<sup>18</sup> By no stretch of the imagination can we conclude that the Bible intercedes for us with "sighs too deep for words." In the American Standard Version this word is translated "groanings." After one preacher had stated very emphatically that the Holy Spirit "does not do anything that the Word does not do" he was met at the door by a young matron who devastated his argument with one question: "How does the Word groan?"

Our brother in first century Jerusalem took the presence and power of the Holy Spirit for granted. Not without good reason has the book of the Acts been referred to as "The Acts of the Holy Spirit." There is nothing in this book to cause us to go along with modern-day groups who would insist that the Holy Spirit must manifest Himself in a particular outward demonstration. Neither is there justification for

establishing our own rigid formula to prescribe the way in which the Holy Spirit must work today. There is one thing of which we can be absolutely certain: We cannot accomplish the mission of Christ without the power of the Holy Spirit.

In West Islip we have drawn up some neat little graphs depicting the number of souls to be won to Christ each year through the end of this century. It really looks very impressive by the standards of "successful" churches. Thus far we have met these "statistical goals" and achieved a certain amount of satisfaction (and, I'm afraid, pride) in reaching them. But we have recently come face to face with the fact that we cannot talk in terms of reaching four or five thousand souls by the year 2000. We cannot talk in terms of reaching the hundreds. We must reach millions. Between seven and eight million souls live on a lilliputian piece of real estate called New York City. Even if we had all the money we needed, which we don't, we couldn't build buildings fast enough to keep up with the population explosion. It has been our hypothesis in times past that church buildings are "essential to the task of evangelization." If this is true, there is no way to reach New York City. There just isn't enough time and money to build a building every 20 blocks in this seething metropolis.

The proven fact is that buildings in major metropolitan areas often become a stumbling block to evangelism rather than an effective tool.

We felt in West Islip that a building was essential to our task. Everything within our power was done to have an

attractive building waiting for us when we arrived. It was not possible. For one year, the church met in three store-front buildings. What a blessing it was to see that God is not limited in His power by such a meeting place. Home Bible classes grew from thirty per week to seventy-six in one week using these store fronts as headquarters. We need to get out of our buildings! We must see them as reconnoitering places from which we go out to conquer the world. These buildings must be no more than our "headquarters" as the "company of believers" goes out to win men to Christ.

We must come face to face with the "impossibility" of our challenge. We must recognize that our own poor powers are totally exhausted and incapable of the task. We must be willing to put ourselves in that position where all of our talent, strength, and ability are quite insufficient to meet the task. Only then will we see the miracle-working power of the Holy Spirit. This has been the philosophy of the Latin American Mission as they launched the program of Evangelism in Depth under the leadership of Dr. Kenneth Strachan. During the year 1964, 17,000 were brought to church membership in one Latin American City.<sup>19</sup> It is ironic that in this same city with a good man working and more than \$100,000 spent over a four-year period we have one faithful convert to show for our efforts today.

"Our sufficiency is from God" Paul asserts.<sup>20</sup> When will we see that without Him we are powerless? Perhaps this word of warning is in order. If we so open our lives to the leading of the Spirit of God many things that we have grown accustomed to may be drastically changed. We will seek new approaches in presenting Christ to an unbeliev-

ing world. We may even go back to the "cellular evangelism" of the first century.

We may not have as much time as we think. We must pray for boldness to speak for Christ. Real renewal cannot come to us without the power of the Holy Spirit.

*The Command:* Having given us a warning and a promise, Jesus now gives us a command: "You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth." It was in response to this command that 85 families moved to Long Island, New York in 1963. In response to this command, ten Faith Corps workers are now in the field in Brazil and Canada. In this statement Jesus gives us that task that is central to our lives, and it is here that the church has forfeited her right to the power and presence of Jesus.

If there is one thing that is predominantly characteristic of the church as we know it today, it is that it is not a witnessing group of believers. When it ceases to be a witnessing group of believers, it ceases to be the church of Jesus Christ. It becomes nothing more than just another sect without any real justification for existence. Elton Trueblood gives this accurate definition of the church:

"The Company of Jesus is not people streaming to a Shrine; and it is not people making up an audience for a speaker; it is laborers engaged in the harvesting task of reaching their perplexed and seeking brethren with

something so vital that, if it is received, it will change their lives.<sup>21</sup>

This calls for a kind of courageous witness that not many of us know today. "When Christ calls a man," said Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "he bids him come and die. It may be a death like that of the first disciples who had to leave home and work to follow him, or it may be a death like Luther's, who had to leave the monastery and go out into the world. But it is the same death every time—death in Jesus Christ, the death of the old man at his call."<sup>22</sup>

As we face the task of mission we must develop a "new" theology of death. It will be the same theology Paul embraced. The early Christians were not afraid to die for Jesus. Stephen made that dramatic choice in Acts 7. As he recounted the history of Israel, how easy it would have been to have said the things that the Sanhedrin wanted to hear. But the die was cast when in his closing remarks he said, "you stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it."<sup>23</sup>

Those words cost Stephen his life. So long as we are afraid for ourselves we will not do much for Jesus. Jesus said that the man who saves his life will lose it and the man that loses his life will save it. Saul Alinsky, who is not a Christian, has this word for us shy believers:

"Death has not been a stranger to me.

And I have learned one lesson, I learned it in my belly, the astonishing lesson that I wasn't going to live forever. Now this may sound like a very simple thing, but there are very few people who realize that they're going to die someday. Intellectually they know it, but they go on saving for their old age and so forth. After the full realization, on a gut basis, that I was going to die, my whole life changed. I was confronted with the question, 'What's the meaning of my life, since I'm here just so long a period of time?' I've never been able to answer that question. I don't ever expect to be able to answer it. But I know that once you reach that point of accepting your own death, you no longer care much whether you're important or not important. I've frequented the cemeteries too long—I know that that's it." <sup>24</sup>

Our hope for today lies in our taking the theme of this lectureship seriously. It is only as the Bible speaks to us today to reveal the Christ that we find direction and meaning in our lives. The beginning place is for us to take the New Testament seriously. It is God's Revelation. It speaks to us in this 20th century. Its message is eternally relevant. It will not do for us to give lip service to it. It will not do for us merely to accept it intellectually. We must either receive all of it by faith or not at all.

If we are determined to receive only that which appeals to us, then a proposal of Kierkegaard, spoken with bitter irony, is very appropriate:

"I might be tempted to make to Christendom a proposal different from that of the Bible Society. Let us collect

all the New Testaments we have, let us bring them out to an open square or up to the summit of a mountain, and while we all kneel let one man speak to God thus: 'Take this book back again; we men, such as we now are, are not fit to go in for this sort of thing, it only makes us unhappy.' This is my proposal, that like those inhabitants in Gerasa we beseech Christ to depart from our borders. This would be an honest and human way of talking—rather different from the disgusting hypocritical fudge about life having no value for us without this priceless blessing which is Christianity."<sup>25</sup>

Jesus commanded the apostles—and in commanding them commanded us—to be His witnesses. He demands world vision. But this world vision will not blind us to the Negro and Latin neighborhoods of our own communities. We will not substitute preaching to Negroes in Africa for preaching to Negroes who are our neighbors. This world vision will not keep us from a mission to the wealthy and influential whom we so easily ignore. We will be careful to speak boldly for Jesus in the office, factory, at the service station, in the supermarket. In short, wherever we are the message of Jesus will be proclaimed. We who are the redeemed of the Lord will not be ashamed to say so!

We must raise an army of dedicated revolutionaries, men and women who fearlessly attack injustice and corruption and sin because they are not afraid for their reputations. They will attack sin wherever it is found—even within the established church. We have a great big problem in churches of Christ today that we don't talk about. How can we ignore something so massive it is shaking the foundations of our nation?

Churches of Christ have been brought into judgment by the peoples of the world on the subject of race and we have been found wanting. We have sin in the camp and we have to get it out! How can we talk about sending missionaries to the black men of Africa if we do not greet black men as our social and spiritual equals in Arkansas? These Christian revolutionaries must be men and women who will not minimize this problem. They will stand up firmly in front of it instead of running away from it. They must apply rigorous standards of honesty to their daily living and boldly seek out the voice of God and obey it.

We have lost our sense of mission except for rare exceptions. In congregation after congregation there is a stultifying deadness which overwhelms each member. Preachers are preaching dead, listless, approval-oriented sermons.

There is no sense of urgency or excitement. There is no evangelistic fervor. The ministry of life insurance is far more exciting than this insipid state of affairs. Part-time preaching has become a curse to the church. When we return to the preaching of Paul and Stephen then we will give the life insurance companies a run for their money. Let us declare war for Christ. Let us knock on every door in every city in every year with a friendly, concerned inquiry for Christ. We will see a response so great that we will be hard pressed to meet it.

Let us preach again in the street, let us go into the back

alleys of the slums. Let us presume to present our message to the highest religious councils. Let us speak to the pope and the president. Come what may, let us speak!

I do not tell you it will be a comfortable road. I will not insult you by assuming you do not want to sacrifice. By the grace of God and moving strictly by the authority of His Word, *you* have to give us a new leadership!!

From some of the things I have said you may conclude that I am pessimistic concerning the future of the kingdom. Not at all! To the contrary I am extremely confident. How can one be other than confident when more than 1500 of our college young people are committed to mission work? How can one fail to be confident when 173 attend an early-morning meeting for the Faith Corps at the Harding World Evangelism Workshop when it had been explicitly stated they were not to come unless they were willing to give two years of their lives at subsistence support in the mission field? How can one be negative when Exodus/Rochester, Exodus/New Jersey, Exodus/Stamford have had such overwhelming success in recruiting families to move to these major metropolitan areas? Surely one must be optimistic when college men and women are breaking out of their "holy huddle" on the college campuses each determined to win one national student and one inter-national student during the academic year.

I am not afraid that the kingdom of Jesus Christ is going to go down in defeat. I believe with all my heart that with us or without us, if necessary even in opposition to us,

Jesus Christ is going to win. The one thing that I fear is that we may not get into the battle quickly enough to do something worthy of the blood-bought immortality He has given us. I fear that we may sit on the spectator's bench while the battle passes us by. God grant that when He comes we will be found in the thick of the battle!

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2. 2 Timothy 2:3, RSV
3. 1 Peter 1:8, RSV
4. Psalms 51:10, ASV
5. Ephesians 4:23, RSV
6. Robert A. Raines, *New Life In The Church*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1961) p. 77
7. Elizabeth O'Connor, *Call To Commitment*, (New York:Harper & Row, 1963) p. 25
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9. Acts 1:6-8
10. J. W. McGarvey, *A Commentary of Acts*, (B. C. Goodpasture, Nashville, Tennessee 1958), p. 16
11. *Ibid*, p. 14
12. Acts 2:16, ASV
13. Colossians 1:13, RSV
14. *Harpers Magazine*, June 1965, p. 44
15. Soren Kierkegaard, *Attack Upon Christendom*, (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1956) p. 90
16. 2 Peter 1:21
17. Ephesians 6:17
18. Romans 8:26
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20. 1 Corinthians 3:5, RSV
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22. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Cost of Discipleship*, (New York: MacMillan Co., 1949), p. 79
23. Acts 7:51-53
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25. *Ibid* Kierkegaard, p. 126



**MISSION  
SPEECHES**



## THE BLESSINGS OF MISSION WORK

### WILLIAM L. CARRELL

William L. Carrell was born April 9, 1925 of Raymond and Mary Carrell at Bloomington, Indiana. He grew up in Bloomington, and was baptized February 10, 1936 at the Lincoln Street Church of Christ of that city. After graduating from high school he attended Indiana University, majoring in chemistry until World War II. After about two and a half years in the Army Signal Corp, as the war was drawing to a close in 1945, his outfit was shipped overseas, and he had an opportunity to see Japan just after its defeat.

Returning to the States in 1946 Brother Carrell enrolled in A.C.C., changing his major to Bible. During that time, as head of the mission study class, he tried to persuade someone to go to Japan as a missionary. "Strangely, however, others thought, or took for granted, that I meant to go myself!"



After graduation in 1948, he and Norma Lee Church were married and moved to Martinsville, Indiana, where Brother Carrell began preaching. Preparations were made to go to Japan with the Edward Brown family, and shortly after their first child was born, and just as the Korean War was beginning, they were able to go.

The Skillman Avenue church of Christ of Dallas sponsored them, and in August of 1950 they arrived in Tokyo. The Carrells began working in Uenohara, a small town about 30 miles from Tokyo, where a congregation was established! Later they moved in to Tokyo to the town of Koganei, where they

lived most of the time they were in Japan.

In about 1956, while in charge of a radio program being broadcast in Tokyo, Carrell began writing a Bible correspondence course. This was translated into Japanese and it was advertised throughout Japan, first by radio, later by national magazines and newspapers. Enrollment has climbed to over 20,000 and a full time secretary is still working on the course. This course has since been translated into Chinese and Ilacano, and is being offered in the Philippines and in Formosa.

The Carrells established a congregation in Koganei, which for a time met in their home, but is now meeting in the church building of the Tachikawa American congregation, located near Tachikawa Air Base.

Having returned to the States in June of 1965, the Carrells are now working with the Fairlawn Church of Christ, 13th and Monroe, Muncie, Indiana 47302.

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"Blessings in mission work?" someone will ask. "Oh you mean something like the joy of service, the assurance of a reward in heaven, the love for lost souls." Well, these do have a part. But they partake of future rather than present reward. And I want to talk about some of the present benefits. We have failed to motivate very many people to become missionaries because the life seems too severe for ordinary people. Actually anything you do can become a grind if you let it. But I want to show that mission work offers more than enough reward—in the here and now—to the person and the church willing to go adventuring with God.

What stimulated Peter to go to the house of Cornelius? Was it stern duty? He had, of course, been commanded to go. But notice how the Lord played on Peter's natural curiosity to make him want to go. He had seen a strange

and mysterious vision on the housetop, in which a voice commanded him to kill and eat animals he had always regarded as unclean. And while he was still puzzling over this the Spirit said to him, "Three men are now inquiring for you. Rise, go down, and go with them without any misgivings; for it is I who have sent them to you." I am sure Peter wasted no time getting down and asking them why they had come.

Can you imagine the stir this must have caused in that household? What a bustle of preparation for the departure on the next day! Trusted brethren must be informed, and invited to go along. Questions must be answered concerning the presence of Gentiles in a Jewish home. Fears must be calmed. What excitement! Can't you imagine the children or young people rushing back and forth, one moment listening to the animated discussion of their elders, the next examining with wide eyes the weapons and armor of a Roman guard, and the strange dress of the other two foreigners, then rushing off on some errand? And how did their Gentile guests feel at being the center of such attention?

The next day the small party departed, and the day following arrived at the house of Cornelius, where a sizeable body of the kinsmen and near friends of Cornelius were gathered. Peter had seen many things through the years, both as a disciple of Christ and an apostle in the church. But I can't help believing that he was deeply moved by what was taking place. When he entered and saw the assembly he said, "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but *God hath shewed me* that I should not call any man common or unclean."

Now stop right there and you have one important reason

for this whole transaction. Did God send Peter only that Cornelius might hear the gospel? No. Peter himself, and the rest of the Jews, had an important lesson to learn. And God chose this way to do it. "God hath shewed me . . .," Peter said. Peter learned something, and had a wonderful, exciting time doing it.

Actually the whole of the Christian life can be regarded as an educational process by which God prepares us, not only for higher service, but for greater joy and zest in living. God does not take away anything without giving back much more in its place. "There is *no man* that hath left house, or brethren, . . . for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold *now in this time*, . . . and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 10:29f). When we neglect to carry out God's commandments, therefore, we do so at a loss to ourselves. For example, our obedience to the gospel in baptism is not for God's benefit, but for ours. The mind of man requires a definite and clearcut point at which the Christian life begins. The doctrine of "faith only" is lacking in this. And quite often, in spite of their confident manner, those who believe this have misgivings as to whether they "really believed."

Similarly regular attendance at worship and Bible study is not for God's benefit, but for ours. "If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he at thine hand?" (Job 35:7). "Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect? (Job 22:3). It is because He loves us that He takes pleasure in our obedience, not because it is of benefit to Him.

Even the suffering we endure is for our benefit. We do not suffer because God is unable to prevent it. He could, if He saw fit, hold us safely high above all the strife and heartache

of this life. But He knows it would be to our disadvantage. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? . . . Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way: but let it rather be healed" (Heb. 12:6, 7, 11-13).

Without the chastening, we would be the losers. And the same is true of mission work. It is not because God needs our help that He commands us to carry the gospel to others. He could surely get the job done much more efficiently and effectively by sending angels rather than men. But He endures our halting and stumbling efforts because He knows it is best *for us*. To fail to obey then is to reject God's provisions for our benefit.

But someone will say, "Oh, but we don't know how. And it is all we can do to keep up with our own local work." But as Isaac Erratt observed, it is not true that if we do less abroad we will do more at home. Rather we blunt our sympathies and sensibilities so that we actually tend to do less. It's not that we really can't do more, but that we haven't been moved to try. But you're the loser for not trying.

And isn't this the key to the whole thing—the matter of trying? The boy in school who doesn't go out for sports because he thinks he can't win has missed the whole point. It's not the winning or losing, but playing the game that is important. Of course we want to win. And we must put all we've got into it. But I'm talking about the *attitude* we take with us when we go into it, whether it be sports in school

or preaching the gospel in Japan. God has promised that His word will not return void of results. Quite often these results are not at all what we expect, or what we think desirable. For it may well be God's will that we be changed as well as the foreigner.

And right here is where we often jump the track in our mission programs. For in planning—and we should plan—we get in too big a hurry. We want to see results, and not just any results but a certain kind of results. If within a "reasonable" length of time—whatever that is—we do not have a congregation, a building, and a preacher, we feel we have failed. There is a tendency to forget the benefits that have come to churches in our own country which had to struggle for a place in the sun. And as we have learned many things, patience, steadfastness, courage, and a deepening of faith through facing up to frustrations and problems, so we must let our foreign brethren learn the same things. For if we fail to do this, if we, in our eagerness to help them, too hastily give in to the pressure of all too obvious needs, we may stunt the growth of the church in its very beginning. And for all our good intentions we may leave a sickly church, dependent on our guidance and aid.

When an egg hatches there is a strong temptation to assist the chick by cracking away the shell. But God has so designed things that the chick receives necessary exercise from the effort necessary to break out. If you help it, it cannot thereafter develop as it should. The same is true of churches. And surely we have enough weak and sickly churches around the world, seemingly unable to turn a hand without advice and assistance from America, for us to see that some changes are needed.

The difficulty is that a missionary faces an unusually trying situation. We come from a land of almost fabulous plenty.

Take for example the fact that in most of our cities bus service is a losing business because everyone has his own transportation. In Tokyo the bus, streetcar, and train is omnipresent. Automobiles, though increasing, are not owned by most families. Only the upper middle class can hope to own one, and that a very modest vehicle by our standards. And Japan is one of the richest, if not the richest nation in the Orient!

The same disproportion exists in housing, food, clothing, in fact, in every phase of life where material goods are concerned. The American missionary coming into such a society experiences a profound emotional reaction—"culture shock" we sometimes call it. Natural sympathy wells up within him and he wants to help. But here the rub comes in. All the wealth in America could not alleviate all the poverty we see. And even if it could, it would do little lasting good unless they are converted to Christ. While Christian sympathy demands that we help, wisdom requires that we not do so in a way that deprives them of the knowledge of God's help. It is all too easy for people just coming out of paganism with all its materialism to be satisfied with the material security which our gifts afford them, and never come to see the Christ who alone can give real security.

Jesus fed the multitude but He refused to become a bread king. He used His gifts to convince men of His divinity, and out of compassion for human suffering. But when His miracles are viewed from a materialistic point of view they can seem almost capricious. (I use that word not irreverently, but in order that we might see how He must have appeared to the materially-minded Sadducees and Pharisees.) In Nazareth He would do no miracles. And they raised the very natural question, "If you did it elsewhere, why not here?" The Jews logically concluded that since Jesus had unlimited

power and infinite sympathy for mankind, He could not refuse to heal all sickness. But Jesus knew that this was not the direction in which He wanted to lead men. He wanted to give a far greater gift, and in order to do that He had to withhold the lesser gift.

In our mission work too we must have wisdom enough to so organize our programs that our foreign brethren learn to trust in God, not just in us, and that they have the satisfaction of rejoicing in the fruit of their own labors. Let us keep in mind that it is our first duty to preach the gospel, and then let them share in the responsibility of establishing congregations of believers.

One result of mission work, the result of both our successes and our failures, is that it leads us to examine closer just what the Bible actually says about it. In a re-examination of the Great Commission, therefore, I would like to suggest four steps which it teaches: "Go...make disciples...baptize...teach." What does it mean first of all to go? There is, of course, the simple and obvious meaning of transporting a minister of the gospel to the foreign field. This in itself can be complicated enough, what with money-raising, passports, visas, shots, customs, immigration, and all the difficulties of setting up housekeeping in a foreign land. But in Japan we quickly found that even after doing all these things we had a long way to go before we had "arrived." We had to get to them not just physically, but spiritually. We had to get through to their hearts. I know wives of servicemen who have accompanied their husbands to Japan who never leave the American-style base, once they arrive. For all practical purposes they have never really left home, and know no more about Japan than you can learn from a geography book. And I heard of a rich couple who took a leisurely pleasure trip around the world. But at each

port where their ship stopped they stayed in their cabin and played cards! They too were impoverished rather than enriched by the experience.

The first and most obvious barrier we must cross, therefore, is language. You can hardly hope to deal effectively with people you can't talk to. But more is involved than this, as we soon found out. We must also understand their customs, taboos, traditions, and attitudes. All of these form a "silent language" one must know if he really wants to be "in." And the difficulty is that so often the people within a culture are unconscious of ninety percent of the little mannerisms and cues which make up what we consider "normal" behavior.

To bring this problem close to home consider the differences we feel between the country boy, the dyed-in-the-wool "hayseed," and the "city slicker." Each blends into the background of his own environment, and yet sticks out when he is in the other's environment. If we are in a tolerant mood we may take no more notice than to smile or joke at the difference. But again we tend to distrust a person—all unconsciously, of course—who is different. We are on guard around him, reserved, "on good behavior," or perhaps we just dismiss him as being odd. It may be no more than the way a person shakes hands, or the way he stands, but if it is different we tend to hold him at arm's length.

This makes it difficult for the preacher who wants to break down this reserve and talk heart to heart. Yet in a foreign country the differences are so much greater and in so many areas that it is extremely difficult sometimes to break through. In Thailand, for example, it is considered extremely rude to sit so that the sole of the foot is visible. Imagine a missionary who with all good intentions undertakes to teach

the gospel to a Thai, but is not careful to guard against offending in this way.

The missionary, therefore, must study mannerisms, attitudes, etc., and study how to blend into the culture. Have you ever watched a skilled actor assume the accent and mannerisms of another person, say a famous movie star or a public figure? It seems almost as if his very body stretches or shrinks to conform with the character he is playing. And we can almost see in him those things we habitually associate with the person he is imitating. So the missionary must learn and use the innumerable little silent signals which in a given country mean: "I am your friend." "I really want to help you." "You can trust me."

Of course you may say that a broadminded person will overlook these differences which rise from different cultural backgrounds. But the fact is that such mannerisms are so deeply ingrained in all of us, and are so commonly used as a sort of silent language that we can hardly expect people to ignore them.

But now what happens to the missionary when he finds himself unable to communicate in a meaningful way with the people he wants to teach? He may feel that it is because he has not demonstrated to them in a physical way that he is no fly-by-nighter. He reasons that he must put up a building and make a positive contribution to the community. In the crowded Orient especially it is often impossible to find a suitable meeting place which will be available on a regular basis. So the missionary buys land and builds. This solves his immediate problem, but it often proves a liability in the long run. It tends to isolate him from the people, make him less dependent upon them, and therefore less likely to learn their ways. He may well become imprisoned by his building

and his program. Since the local people did not plan it nor pay for it, they will not readily assume responsibility for it. The missionary will find it extremely difficult to draw around him the dependable, aggressive, imaginative leadership he needs.

Thus the first problem is how to get through to the people, to become, as Paul said, all things to all men. Until we have learned their ways well enough to become one of them, or at least one with them, there is little we can do to lead them. It is one thing to have a building, but quite another to fill it.

The "going" then, in the broader sense I have suggested, is an important part of the Great Commission, and is not without its blessings. For frustrating as it can be, learning to know another country and its ways will help immensely in understanding your own country and mankind in general. If you in your lifetime had seen only one dog, it would not be possible for you to understand fully just what the quality of "dogginess" really involves. For any characteristic of that dog you isolated might just happen to be peculiar to that one dog, and not to dogs in general. You must see more than one dog, and compare. Similarly the missionary who has the opportunity to live in two countries can learn—(not that he always does, unfortunately)—more of the real nature of mankind than he could by staying at home.

Now if this approach seems too slow, consider that even here in our own energetic America churches have existed for years, just plodding along, keeping house, until someone woke up and started doing things. What right do we have then for expecting people in countries steeped in hundreds of years of paganism to take hold of Christianity and within five or ten years develop the vision and leadership which *some* of our American churches are *beginning* to have?

Which brings me to the second part of the Great Commission, which is to "make disciples." Here we must place the emphasis on convicting men of sin, of their need for a Saviour, of the Sonship of Christ, the love and providence of God, and of the authority of God's word. This is easier said than done. One reason for the difficulty is that so many people already have an idea of what they want in religion, and of what Christianity is. On the one hand they impatiently reject any religion which does not offer what they want. On the other they tend to refuse to see in Christianity anything other than what they already thought of it.

To many Japanese, for example, religion is a necessary formality for funerals, marriage, and certain other social occasions. They may be drawn to Christianity if it fulfills these requirements and if it affords friendship, fellowship, warmth, peace of mind, and pleasure. They can be drawn into big, exciting movements, which give a sense of accomplishment without requiring much in the way of personal decision or responsibility.

In Japan some 600 new religious cults have started since the war, and some of them now number in the hundreds of thousands of members. Their leaders are energetic men, willing to adopt anything that promises to get and hold members. Doctrine is usually simple. The requirements of worship are few, and the promised benefits are great. There is much emphasis on fellowship, entertainment, and evangelistic fervor, with little emphasis on any moral change. They feature discussions, much counseling, testimonials, faith healing, and shouting. They show concrete interest in the affairs of their members, for example, showing women how to cook and sew, and farmers how to use better farming methods.

Such people approach Christianity with the attitude, 'What

more does Christianity offer than this?" The missionary may try to make the church building attractive, a place of quiet and rest, and of warm fellowship. However he may find it hard to get this same spirit into the homes of the members. Few indeed will open their homes to others and provide the same hospitality which they desire in the church. The reason is that they have looked at the church building as just another temple very much like those they already know, with the missionary as just another kind of "priest."

All this is still another reason why it is inadvisable to have a building before the native church itself feels the need strongly enough to provide it. If he starts with a building it is almost impossible for him to keep them from regarding it very much as they do their temples. Interpreting the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar is common to all men. If he concentrates on making disciples for the Lord, and lets them carry at least a part of the load of providing a meeting place, they will be less likely to think of the church as just a different kind of religion, very much like their own. The inconveniences may drive away the weak and faint-hearted. It may dishearten even the strong. It may bring down heavy criticism on the missionary's head. But one thing does seem certain. Most of the converts will most likely be converted to Christ, not to a man, or to a building, or to a fellowship. And this is important if the church is to grow.

But let me hurry on, for the whole picture will not be clear until we get to the last two parts of the Commission. The third step is to baptize them. I have been deeply impressed with the wisdom of God in commanding baptism as a qualification for discipleship. There is nothing which impresses the mind more clearly that one has definitely cast his lot with Christ than baptism. Its significance is not lost on the unbeliever, and tears of joy are shed by believers

when one so puts on his Lord. It is an act of commitment, and believers should be taught that they now are expected to be different, to meet regularly and to put Christ first in all things.

But we must follow up this act of commitment with the fourth step, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you." This command does not apply just to the select few, to the "Timothys" and "Marys," but to all members. And if anything it is even more important abroad than it is here, for those churches do not have the stabilizing influence which older and more mature Christians can exercise here to keep the church from straying.

Quite often, though, the missionary singles out a young man as his special helper and attempts to train him in the deeper things of the faith, trusting that he will be able to pass it on. This is partly because he needs a helper. But as paradoxical as it may seem, he may actually limit the usefulness of such a person as an independent member of the church. Unfair as it is, he tends to become regarded as the missionary's "boy," and as saying what the missionary wants him to say because that's how he makes his living. Too, he may become a sort of pastor over the church, because both he and the members assume that this is what he must be.

And so, while helpers are a necessity, the plan must be that the whole church be instructed in all things. This means converts' classes, taught first by the missionary, later by the local people. It means business meetings with the men, in which the missionary is just "one of the boys." A couple years ago in a business meeting where I tried to get this across I ran into opposition. They didn't want to assume responsibility. They wanted me to be the boss.

And this brings up another facet of this problem. Even

though the missionary holds business meetings, unless he is on to local ways he may actually be running the whole show without knowing it. The members find it easy to see what he wants, and then either agree with him or oppose him. They propose very little on their own.

The missionary can avoid this only by being aware of how they do things. For example, in Japan they do not like to come to decisions too quickly. Nor do they like face to face opposition. This seems wishy-washy and hypocritical to the uninitiated American, but is all right when you know how to read the signs. One suggests a plan. This is examined from several points of view in an unhurried way. A person expresses objection by a smile, a slight hesitation, a turn of the head. If we in our more direct American way continue to push, we will get our way most of the time, but only at the expense of breaking down the means of communication with which they are familiar. (That "silent language" again.) We will find ourselves way out in front with them trailing along reluctantly behind.

In Tokyo last year I began leadership training classes based somewhat on the Dale Carnegie course in human relations. The Carnegie method is to commend and encourage what is good, and to minimize what is bad. I adapted much of his material to the needs of the church. Brother Baxter's book, "Speaking for the Master" also provided much good material. We studied basic speech techniques, and the basics of outlining and presentation. We also studied a series of lessons on evidences, inspiration, canon of the Bible, interpretation, etc.

The results were almost electric. The men had been reluctant to speak in public before, but now they seemed to desire it. They had feared they didn't know enough. They didn't know how to talk. But with a little training we worked

an amazing transformation. They spent much time in preparation and produced some excellent talks. Some were quite profound. They encouraged each other and offered constructive criticisms. The whole congregation became more alive. On their own they organized children's classes, appointed teachers and a committee to coordinate the education program. They did not shun problems, but dealt with them in their own gentle way.

I noticed the difference when visitors came. In one class someone said something contrary to scripture. There was a silence for a moment, then a young man politely corrected the error. Another time a visitor referred to me as the leader of the church. The one in charge that day smiled tolerantly and continued to lead.

Since returning to the States we have heard that the work continues to grow. They have held at least two meetings and have had three baptisms and have a good number of new people attending. Anything could happen, of course, but they seem to be on their way up.

And so it is possible to establish healthy congregations in foreign lands if we will go about it in the right way. To summarize, let me suggest again that we regard the Great Commission as a four-point program: (1) "Go." Go to the country, but more than that, keep going until you get to the hearts of the people. Learn their language, their customs, their deepest hopes and desires. Strive to understand and appreciate that which is unfamiliar to you. Try to see their way as being just as right and natural for them as our way is for us.

(2) "Make disciples," not of yourself, not of the American church, but of Christ. Foreign churches may meet and solve some problems we have not faced, just as we here have

faced many problems and issues they will never face. But both they and we must learn to solve our own problems by the scriptures.

(3) "Baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." How important it is that men commit themselves publicly and openly! This is not easy where Christianity is not as firmly established as it is here. We must be patient and kind as we try to lead them to the light.

(4) "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you." Not just the "preacher boys" but all of them must learn. Often when we hit a snag it is because there is some unexpected area where they have not been taught. We can take nothing for granted. They can and will contend for the truth if we fully teach them how. We may have to adapt our approach to conform to their customs. But it can be done, without compromising the truth, and with results often beyond our fondest expectations.

"And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This is the promise that makes the whole thing well worth the effort. Christ is with us! He will let no honest effort be without fruit of some kind. Often it is not the fruit we expected. Often it will open up an area of blessings we had not even known existed, benefits in self-improvement, in deepened understanding and appreciation of other peoples, of the Bible, of our faith. Blessings in mission work? More than you've dreamed! If God be for us, who can be against us?

## AN EFFECTIVE MISSION PROGRAM

HANS B. NOWAK

Hans V. Nowak, minister, Collegieside Church of Christ, 9th and Jefferson, Cookeville, Tenn.

Born: November 4, 1928 in Aussig, Czechoslovakia.

In 1945 forced out of the country because of German parentage. After nine months in the Russian zone the move was made to Frankfurt. Converted in 1947 by Brother Gatewood in Frankfurt. "By pulling off his shoes and giving them to me when I had none, Brother Gatewood convinced me that his preaching was more than empty words; AND that the gospel is the power to change men."

Schooling: Graduated from College for Pol. Science & Economics in Frankfurt in 1948



1948-1950 learned a trade: oil business

1950-52 David Lipscomb College as a special student covering four years Bible work and related subjects in two years.

Married in 1952 to Peggy Martin, of Mobile, Alabama, whom I met in DLC.

Work: Began preaching around Nashville in 1950 serving various country congregations in the Nashville-Lebanon-Centerville area and filling in for 6 months in Memphis.

Mission Work: Stuttgart 1953, Kaiserslautern 1954-1965.

For 15 years under the oversight of the elders of the Central Church of Christ, 145—5th Ave. N. Nashville, Tenn.

Preached and worked in campaigns in: Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Belgium, and England.

Worked for eleven years alone with three congregations, two German and one American, conducting 5 services per Sunday.

Helped in the establishment of three additional servicemen congregations. Debated the Mormons twice.

The Nowaks have four boys: Martin 12, Clifton 10, John 7 and David 22 months.

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I am very grateful for the opportunity to speak to you this afternoon. After thirteen years of mission work in Germany we have returned to help, assist and encourage congregations toward an even greater work in the future. In the sharing of thoughts and experiences and the making of suggestions I do not desire to give the impression of being an "expert" on mission work. Neither do I know all the answers to the question: "How to be always successful in missionwork." I am indebted to a number of my fellow missionaries who have made valuable contributions to the subject to be discussed.

Our topic is: Philosophy of Missions. The dictionary defines philosophy as: "a search for the underlying causes"... "a critical examination of the grounds for fundamental beliefs and an analysis of the basic concepts employed in the expression of such beliefs."

The term missions is defined as: "organized mission work," "a specific task with which a person or group is charged," "a continued task or responsibility."

That this subject was chosen to be discussed at this lecture program shows the concern and wisdom on the part of those men who plan each year to have the most pertinent problems treated. In our mission efforts we have reached the point when thoughtful planning, council, advice and experience is needed due to the worldwide involvement of individual congregations in preaching the gospel. Books are being written, opinions and thoughts find their expressions, "experts" on mission work are being found in our brotherhood. These all have one aim only, to promote greater mission efforts among the congregations of the Lord's church. The manifold wisdom of God is to be proclaimed by the church as the sole agency who can do it. We ought to be greatly concerned as to the "How" of mission work.

When we talk about mission work today we include any work being done at home as well as abroad. We have come finally to the scriptural realization that the mission of every congregation is to preach the gospel near and far. God sent Christ into the world to bring back fallen man. More than 1900 years ago He came to the earth to "seek and save" the lost. In His teaching Christ emphasized this fact over and over again. He taught His disciples the need to reach out and save the lost. Many parables contain this teaching. The parable of the sower, the talents and the pounds, the good Samaritan, the lost coin, the lost sheep and the lost son show clearly Christ's and His followers' purpose on this earth. Before He left the world once more He emphasized the mission of His disciples giving them the "Great Commission," a marching order as the world has never heard before or thereafter imposing no limitation of time, nationality,

season, race or age. Christ did not intend to leave the church in the Upper Room but He sent her out into the world. After a period of hesitancy we see this small but powerful force march out into the world reaching with the gospel everywhere.

Members of the Lord's body need to come to the full realization that since the ascension Christ's place on earth has been taken by His body, the church. The church is the real presence of Christ. If the people of God in each generation come to this knowledge then the great commission will truly be carried out by all.

In our quest for ways and means to carry out Christ's will more successfully we must never forget to look upon those who went out under the guidance of the Holy Spirit when the church had her beginning. To rely upon our own logic and devices will bring failure. To think that we can find better ways and shortcuts toward the salvation of mankind than those set forth in the apostolic pattern is nothing but futility. To base our planning upon all the experiences made by denominationalism or upon hasty generalizations means building upon sand. Inasmuch as we demand in our preaching an adherence to the New Testament pattern, we must be willing to follow in our mission work the apostolic precedence.

Let us briefly review just what did happen after the apostles had received the Holy Spirit. In partial fulfilment of the commission preaching of the gospel began in Jerusalem. Some time elapsed until the disciples preached to others.. The first persecution brought about the first mission efforts (Acts 8:4) "for those who were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching." Philip preached in Samaria while Peter had to be convinced specifically of the meaning of the

Lord's command by being sent into the house of Cornelius, a Roman centurion. Even after that at recurring times questions arose among the converts from Judaism as to whether the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles too. The first greater effort of the early church is recorded in Acts 11, when Christians preached to the Greeks in Phenicia, Cyprus and Antioch.

Not until the 13th chapter of Acts are we introduced to worldwide efforts. Barnabas and Saul move about on their first journey. When the Jews of one city refuse to accept the gospel the preachers turn to the Gentiles. This happens in Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. Although Paul leaves the communities sometimes rather suddenly there are always such left who can carry on the work. No direct indication is given—with perhaps one or two exceptions—that Paul leaves because people do not accept the gospel. But rather in order to prevent the destruction of the young church Paul leaves in most instances removing with it the cause of persecution at that particular time. Acts 15 introduces us to the second journey. After Paul revisits former places of activity, strengthening the churches, he finds himself restricted. The well populated provinces of Asia Minor are closed to him. Bypassing Mysia and Bythinia he reaches Troas. God's purpose is unfolded, when accompanying the great preacher we reach Athens and Corinth, after brief intervals in Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea. Turning from the Jews in Corinth Paul does not leave the city saying: "they have had their opportunity" but he turns to another class of people, the heathen population. For one year and six months he continues a fruitful work. An uproar had to occur again to cause Paul to turn his back. And even that he did only after he had remained a good while longer there. On the third tour again all congregations established before were strengthened. In Ephesus—a new place—he speaks for three

months to the Jews and turning from them because of their non-acceptance of the gospel, he remains for two years among the Gentile population establishing a solid work in the city which later on would radiate out into the surrounding provinces. Only when Demetrius causes an uproar Paul leaves, knowing that his presence would only be to the disadvantage of the work. Important to us should be the following additional facts. The efforts made by Paul were group efforts. We have the record that as many as nine people went together. There was a training program carried on for those who would preach and teach. An extensive and continuing correspondence was carried on to strengthen and edify, to rebuke and counsel the young churches. And let us not overlook the important work of the Holy Spirit accompanying the preaching with miracles and wonders, and being imparted to selected men among the new converts to guide the young churches into full manhood.

### *Present Efforts*

In many respects we see the attitude of the early church repeated in our generations. While the church on the European continent lay dormant for centuries, decreasing actually in size from decade to decade due to the lack of any mission work done, we see the first efforts toward restoration of NT Christianity in England. Carried to the USA these develop into a sweeping movement engulfing literally thousands of people. Yet no mission work was done, although men like Alexander Campbell and others realized the necessity of it. Indeed in some respects "the child had to grow and learn to walk." But for 100 years growth was suppressed and the church remained in the childhood stage under the influence of isolationism. An effective Anti-mission-curtain surrounded the American continent. The result was division

over questions which perhaps would have never arisen if the church had been busy converting the world. For a comparison let me mention that the first edition of the Book of Mormon in German appeared not later, than 20 years after it had been published in English. A number of the new converts to Mormonism returned to their European homeland, carrying with them their new revelation.

Similar to the early church the saints remained in Zion. The Great War (1914-1918) did not change that situation. A few men went finally to the Northern States and some exceptional men and women crossed the seven seas to preach in Japan, China and Africa. The slow growth of the Lord's Church endangered by subsequent internal conflicts and strife was basically due to this attitude of neglect.

Emil Bruner in *The Word and the World* (p. 108) has made the following truthful observation:

"Mission work does not arise from any arrogance in the Christian Church; mission work is its cause and its life. The Church exists by mission, just as fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission, there is no Church; and where there is neither Church nor mission, there is no faith...Mission, Gospel preaching is the spreading out of the fire which Christ has thrown upon the earth. He who does not propagate this fire shows, that he is not burning. He who burns, propagates this fire."

Any lack of faith, diligence and perseverance, any excuses made for not seeing a work through, or reducing once efforts to areas only, where "dollar for dollar the highest yield of souls" may be expected, has its origin in the neglect of above stated fundamental truth. Just as after Pentecost the people had to be scattered, so it took the Second World War and its scattering of Christians to open the eyes of the members and leaders of the church so that once again the gospel would be carried over this earth.

## Unprecedented Growth

Little more than twenty-five years ago the first signs of the great change became evident. The skies were still filled with planes carrying their death-bringing load to distant shores, the Allied Forces had yet to launch the efforts to finally turn the tide and American men looked forward with trembling hearts to the day when they would set foot upon the European continent to liberate the nations. But more important indeed were the few who longed to come to Europe and Asia to liberate man from sin and condemnation, giving to people again the hope of heaven, the assurance of salvation and eternity.

We have come a long way since the day when men like Otis Gatewood, Roy Palmer and others came to work like Christ by doing good, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and preaching the gospel to the lost of Germany in 1947. The work accomplished during those twenty years brought about a revival of our efforts at home, in the strong, as well as in the weak states of the U. S. A. The growth of the church, the spreading of the gospel reached proportions envisioned only by a few great men of faith.

While in 1946 there were only 6 congregations and 4 preachers and around 100 members in the New England states, we find twenty years later 52 congregations, 12 preachers and 2500 members.

While we have no records of any substantial New Testament congregation in Europe prior to 1947 we can look today on about 100 congregations with 2500 members.

While until 1946 we had 13 missionaries only working

outside of the U. S. A., twenty years later we have 500 faithful men and women laboring among 100 nations on this earth.

The church in the United States experienced at the same time its largest expansion program. Churches doing mission work abroad have grown the most. Alone during the last ten years seven hundred and fifty million dollars were spent for the erection of new buildings and facilities. The gospel is being preached via radio and television throughout this country. The native people in several Asian and European countries hear the gospel preached in their native tongues and even the Iron Curtain is penetrated with the message of salvation.

All these and many more wonderful things have not been accomplished because of our wisdom and intelligence but simply because God blessed abundantly those few brethren and churches among us who were willing to launch out by faith and let themselves be led by God, often against common sense and sound reasoning. In spite of our smallness of thinking, our unwillingness to sacrifice, our lack of vision and our "shoestring-operations" God has shown us what can be accomplished if we "walk by faith." It is beyond our imagination what could have been done, how many millions would have been reached, if every eldership, and all members and preachers would have gained the vision and had the zeal as the few who spearheaded the restoration of New Testament Christianity into every part of this world.

Is it a real success?

The topic for this lesson was defined at the beginning as "a search for underlying causes" .. "a critical examination."

Our progress during the last 25 years would be wonderful indeed if there would be only 1000—1500 congregations in this country, and the world population would not have increased during the past 100 years to such a degree that we are forced to speak of a population explosion.

Even here in the U. S. A. we are not keeping abreast with the population growth in those cities where the church has been very strong in the past. Percentagewise we have today less members than we had 25 or 50 years ago. In regard to foreign mission work we are far behind the efforts made by denominations like the Seventh Day Adventists or the Mormons.

I would like to borrow an illustration from Wesley Reagan, a former missionary in Canada, and now a preacher in Dallas. Brother Reagan suggests we score ourselves on how well we have done in completing the Great Commission task of taking the gospel to every creature. First we can mark off over half (56%) of to-day's world. This is the Far East, and in truth our efforts are infinitesimal there . . . But let's pretend that Christ had said "Go ye into half the world and preach the gospel" and that he meant Europe, Russia, Africa, Australia, the islands and the Western Hemisphere. Here again we have to do some hedging. All of them are substantially untouched. These two vast sectors of the globe sustain 91% of the world's population. The rest—North America—contains only 9%. But surely, among this 9% we have carried out the Great Commission? Not so! Canada, notwithstanding some long-time congregations, is barely touched. The same with Mexico. Well then, at least there is the United States. What if Christ had said, "Go ye unto all the United States and preach to every citizen." Well, we have done relatively well in answering His commission in the U. S. That is

relatively well in all but 44 states. The only moderate success we have had with the Great Commission is among the middle class suburban southern Anglos with good moral reputations. I wonder how Christ feels about our successes.”

In our world today there are as many children born every four days as there are members of the churches of Christ. This same number of persons will die in six days. Think of it. If by some strange quirk of events no one should die but members of the church in the next six days around the world, we would be wiped out by this time next week! That's how small we are. The work we are doing within the limits of the U. S. A. is a key to the work done by us abroad. Encouraging it is that there is an increasing number of brethren seriously and diligently seeking out avenues we may use toward more effective mission work. Some realize that we are just not working as we should. We must strain our mental and material facilities to a much greater extent if we want to reach the two thousand million people who are still without Christ.

What are we doing here? According to the Alan Bryan survey conducted among 1000 congregations we have spent seven hundred and fifty million dollars for new buildings during the last ten years. Our motive for this was: “We will reach more people as soon as we have those buildings.” Is this true? Two facts speak against that. 1. While we enjoy our expensively furnished, air-conditioned facilities—which are often used twice a week only—we have denied often our brethren in the fields abroad simple functional buildings which would be used five out of seven days each week. We often force them to conduct services under conditions which would be entirely unacceptable to us here. We have not spent

1% of the above mentioned \$750,000,000.00 for our building programs abroad among a world population which is more than 10 times that of the USA. But to soothe our conscience we have twisted the "doctrine of the indigenous church" to a degree which releases us from most obligations toward Christians abroad.

2. In the USA the average congregation baptizes slightly less than 5% of the equivalent of their membership. After deducting the number of baptized children of members we actually baptize less than two people for every one hundred members we have in the congregation. Although we have fine buildings we do not draw additional people through them. It seems that in most cases we wanted these buildings for our own comfort and well being rather than for doing a better work.

We are beginning to see the need for a greater commitment to the cause of Christ. But unless every member in each congregation knows what the Lord expects of him and has been given some work to do, we will not experience any significant growth. Unless every elder realizes that he will stand before the Lord in judgment to give account for what was done, or not done by the people he shepherded, churches will not be moved to carry out the Lord's commission. Unless there is a complete restoration taking place within the Lord's church in our days—a separation from all those whose lives are lived in immorality, dishonest business-practises, covetousness, indifference, and unfaithfulness—the Lord will withdraw His spirit from us and the church will crumble.

*To be successful.*

Contrary to the play: "How to be successful without even

trying," we must try hard to find ways and means to reach the world with the gospel. We have to learn a lot, since we are new at this work. But we do have the advantage of having the inspired Word with its examples. The danger is that we may read something into it that is not there, or make certain passages fit our own idea as to how the work should be done. Success will be ours only if we overcome the obstacles in our way and remove dangerous trends. What are some of these?

#### Dollarconsciousness vs. Soulconsciousness.

Just as in politics and business the power of the almighty dollar has blinded the minds of many people, so in the church we have become in some places overly "dollar-minded" when it comes to the point of mission work. We have given the impression to many people whom we are trying to convert that we are conducting our mission program like a supermarket or even better, like a discount house in competition with others. We seem to be involved in a race in which the winner will be that congregation who has saved the most in the shortest time, having spent the least amount of money. If this is your goal, you will meet with disaster. The "Instant Christian" to whom just water needs to be added after having met him, has yet to be born. Observing seventeen years of mission work conducted in Europe by churches in this country has left the impression—a few exceptions granted—that mostly we have tried to do the work in the least expensive way, with the fewest workers possible, with no or small working funds only, and by sending or withdrawing missionaries in a most erratic pattern, indicating that there is no or only little planning behind our actions. And then we wonder why we have not done any better. Compared to the efforts made and the millions of dollars spent

by the Mormons and Adventists we have done the cheapest work indeed.

To-day a dangerous idea is arising by which we justify our neglect of going into so-called "difficult" fields." Let us go where dollar for dollar the largest number of souls can be saved," say the advocates of this doctrine. And to defend this idea the statement is added: "Go there, where the Lord has ripened the field." We should not go into some countries at all, and as even suggested pull out of others until God gives us some sign that the door is open. Even parts of the Lord's limited commission are cited in defense of this idea, although we know only too well that the Great and final Commission could not be used in such a way. These brethren mean well, believing that we can take one country at a time and so conquer the world. But there is no scriptural basis whatsoever for such an attitude based upon a simple mathematical formula: "for so much money, we must get so many souls." As in everything the Bible and God's principles must be kept before our eyes.

Before Jesus Christ came into the world He did not ask "will it be worthwhile?" and "how many will follow me?" He was rejected for every good deed. If one would try to estimate the monetary value of the good He did during those short three years we would arrive at a staggering sum. And yet, when He hung on the cross He did not see any results of the freely spent blessings. Even His closest followers remained far off. You may rest assured that if Christ had worked as missionary under the direction of most of our brethren He would have been called home within the first year of His mission. But He worked under God, the heavenly Father, and that means all the difference. His disciples who were inclined to wait, like some of us do, until God would mature a field, were told: "Say not ye yet four months

than cometh the harvest, lift up your eyes and look upon the fields (*plural*) that they are white unto harvest." Christ did not come and preach: "This field is ripe and therefore I have come," like the revolutionists of all ages do. Or as we say driven by political and economical reasonings: "Europe is ripe to unite." Christ never made guesses which could be true or false, and always are subjective and uncertain. Christ did not listen into time and circumstances to legitimate Himself and His actions by them. He listened to the voice of His Father, who told Him: "Go, preach and suffer, for the time is fulfilled." And ever since then the fields have been ripe and the time is fulfilled and God's demand is still: "Go and preach the gospel . . . to all nations" without any human limitations and restrictions involved.

The apostle Paul was forbidden to preach in certain areas of Asia Minor. Instead of it he was sent straight into Greece. This was not done because this field had not been matured by God, but because a special task had to be met. The most difficult field had not been touched. Greece with her centers of philosophy and thinking, the cradle of ideas which for centuries to come would influence the ways of man had to be confronted with the gospel of Christ. A strong blow had to be struck against the sources of the vilest forms of pagan religion and atheistic ideologies as harbored in Athens and Corinth. The less educated people of the provinces would be reached by the Christians from the great centers of civilization, like Ephesus and other places of this area. The best man was to be sent into the places which presented the greatest challenge to the spreading of the gospel. But it was not so either, that Paul left the building up of congregations begun by him to the "natives" while he himself would run away as soon as a certain number of converts had been added together. We must take into consideration that the early church was for 50 years under the guidance of the

apostles and those men selected by them. This second generation of church-leaders had not only been trained especially but often had been endowed with the Holy Spirit to a certain degree. In addition to it one has to take into consideration the re-visitation program carried on by the apostles and the extensive correspondence carried on.

Today the process of establishing churches, grounding them firmly and getting them self supporting is one which demands diligent efforts, perseverance, patience and above all a wise investment of manpower and means right from the beginning. The reasons given by some for cutting down the work among the highly educated people of Europe are not sound. One cannot say "that we are banging our heads against a wall" and "every person has more right to hear the gospel once than any one person has to hear it twice" in view of the fact that we have never given everyone in Europe the opportunity to hear the gospel once. We know that we are just not prepared enough to meet the challenges in those countries. The above slogans are good excuses for us to quit in some places and go to the "animistic people" of the world since "pure animism has great importance for church growth." We convert large numbers among the underdeveloped nations but at the same time we are worried that in a few decades these people will be led astray into unbelief and denominationalism as soon as they will become educated. If we do not make long range plans and preparations to counterattack the evergrowing host of native believers, the presently so promising works in Africa, India and the Far East may turn into spiritual disaster areas for us, as they have already done for the denominations who have been there for the past 400 years. How many of you who do work in Africa know about the Interafrican developments of pagan-Christian syncretism which has its roots in parts of Biblical

doctrines twisted to fit neo-nationalistic ideas? Much of this all too often escapes the missionary who has to work through an interpreter. The little Mentor Book: "The Religions of the Oppressed" by Vittorio Lanternari, should be studied carefully by all those doing work among the underdeveloped nations. I am mentioning this to you not to discourage you, but to do away once and for all with the idea that work in Africa and Asia will produce a greater harvest than anywhere else and that all that needs to be done there is send out people to immerse the natives. Temporarily we may have success, but never in the long run. A world wide restoration demands that we take the time and make the sacrifices to go to the centers of false religion and philosophy, into the countries which are of the greatest influence. There we will win the battle for Christ. From Europe our cultural heritage has come. In Europe liberalism and modernism had its origin. It is the European who goes into the underdeveloped countries to teach the natives the rudiments to a better material way of life. If those men and women, doctors, teachers and technicians would have been converted by us in the years gone by, what a missionary force would we have today. Germans for example have millions of relatives behind the Iron Courtain. Hundred thousands of them live in South America, others are scattered over Asia and other parts of the world. To-day many of them are going out telling the people whom they teach that the miraculous recovery of Germany after the war had nothing to-do with God and Christ. Our neglect will bear its fruits in a few decades.

*"Bandwagon-Efforts"*

In our search for the one and only answer as to how we may be most successful here and abroad we have gone

overboard at times emphasizing one way to the exclusion of all the others. At first we thought the answer was in new buildings—which we needed without doubt, but they did not bring about the desired results. Then came the gadgets. Some believed that all they needed were several sets of filmstrips and projectors and people would be converted automatically. Today thousands of dollars worth of material of this type is gathering dust in the closets of many congregations having been used never more than once. Then some thought by putting on a \$50,000.00 campaign with a well known preacher instant success would be met. We came down to earth when we were confronted with the fact that in some places never more than 20% of our membership came to those campaigns in spite of having 8,000 to 10,000 people there nightly. In the German mission work, with very little funds available to advertise a meeting, or campaign, but relying upon the small number of devoted converts we had an average of 80%-150% attendance record. Other ideas will come up in the future. But, brethren, when are we going to learn that none of these ideas will do the job by themselves? All our members have to be put to work and all these ideas need to be utilized in a well balanced way. Only then our investment will pay off. Otherwise the means used will be "gimmicks" merely.

The same thing happened to us in mission work. Right after the war Germany and Japan were the countries to go to. After a while when the work was not shedding the desired glory for some, we looked around and Italy with its trials came along. After things got quiet there and settled down to a mere routine work requiring patience, means and long-range-efforts, other places became more desirable. Fortunately some things developed for a while in Africa giving

us new opportunities there to concentrate on while we forgot the rest of the world. Australia and Korea followed next. What we are going to do after we have run out of spectacular places no one knows, but at least we will be faced again with the realities of that work.

### Field Surveys

A few years ago an elder of a state-side congregation spent eleven months in Germany overseeing their work there. As a result this congregation has planned for considerable time ahead to continue with the support of the work, setting a goal as to when they hope to have the mission work self supporting. Toward the end of his stay this elder met a young man who informed him that he was on a survey-tour for mission work. Noticing that he was in a hurry this elder asked him how long he had been in the different countries in order to make this survey-report. In Holland he had been barely two days. Naturally he had not been able to meet with all the missionaries or see the work personally, but after two days in that small country he had become an "expert," and knew all the facts about mission work in Holland. This young man was somewhat taken aback when the elder told him that he had been eleven months in Germany and even after that long a time he did not consider himself an "expert" on German mission work. We have today in our Brotherhood many such "experts" who either never left the shores of America, or spent a few days in different countries or at the longest had been for three or four years in a mission field. The longer a man has been in the mission field, the less he considers himself an "expert." After 13 years of work in Germany I may be able to give you some advice and a few answers but far be it from me to consider myself as

one who can tell everybody how to do successful mission work any place in the world. There needs to be a constant research carried on in order to find the best ways and methods for each particular area. What was good in China 50 years ago is possibly of little value in Europe etc. Elders, members and preachers of supporting congregations need to see with their own eyes the work being conducted overseas. The increased number of campaigns conducted abroad are a good beginning toward this goal. Above all, do not generalize. While in one part of the world a mudhut and some tinscraps for a meetinghouse will be sufficient, it will be necessary for us to supply the means to provide a decent meetingplace in other parts of the world. Otherwise we will reach only the dwellers of the slum districts.

*What can we do better?*

Your congregation in the States grows faster than the one you are trying to build up abroad. Why? Here you have a preacher, and educational director, elders, deacons and a devoted working-force of members. They invite other people conduct cottage meetings etc. Newspapers, radio, TV and other means are used by you to spread the gospel. Your whole environment in most cases is flavored with Christianity to some extent. The family you sent out has to learn the language, they have times of feeling very lonely and they must find a place, take care of it, make all decisions etc. The missionary is his own preacher-elder-deacon-secretary-janitor plus many other things. He is surrounded by people who have lost interest in religion and have never heard of New Testament Christianity. Now you are expecting of him to do at least half the work you are accomplishing here with

your well geared machinery. If he does not accomplish this, he is pulled out and the effort considered "money down the drain." Quit using a double standard for the work you are doing. Plan the work better, send out people in groups and make sure that they have prepared themselves spiritually, mentally and physically for the task ahead. Send them into the large cities. Outline the work roughly. Concentrate on children and teenagers when in the mission field. Naturally it means that material for this type of work is on hand. After 18 years of work in Germany we still do not have printed Sunday school and other training material. The supporting congregations desire to have numbers of conversions reported and therefore time could not be given to the preparation of teaching aids. For the first time last December a nationwide teacher training series was conducted in Germany. Under those circumstances mission work will always be a long drawn-out affair. After years of pleading one of our Christian Colleges (George Pepperdine College) has opened an extension in Heidelberg giving our native converts an opportunity to prepare themselves for service in the kingdom while remaining in their own country. Only 18 years ago a greater effort had been made by having a preacher training school in Frankfurt. After a short time this program was carried on in a rather half-hearted way producing little to nothing. Individual training programs in Wiesbaden, and recently in Kaiserslautern where we worked (4 boys in training) have met with success. The Florence Bible School in Italy and similar undertakings in Japan, Korea and Africa testify to the value of such efforts. Sometimes the losses among native preachers are overemphasized. Just as we are losing young and old men here in the USA we can expect to see some fall away from among those whom we have converted overseas. The Lord never gave us the guarantee that everyone would remain faithful. Like in the New

Testament times it is desirable to have the chaff separated from the wheat at an early stage. The effort should be always to keep the losses as low as possible, by discovering bad habits and undesirable traits in the young converts at an early stage. Most of the things working in the USA will work among the highly civilized people of the Western world. During the last few years some of the best and soundest works were started by conducting campaigns similar to those we had here in the USA. In England (Wimbley), Australia and New Zealand such efforts are bringing results because enough preparation has been made for follow up work and a continuance of the efforts over a longer period of time. Sizeable congregations were established in much shorter times than ever before. This type of work can be very fruitful if we are willing to invest into it just as much as we invest in campaigns conducted in the USA. As to the spending of money, it should be made clear that the churches in America are not a bottomless pit. Nevertheless each individual field will have to be carefully investigated as to its needs. Some will need more, some less, because of special circumstances existing there. The Bible rule, that whosoever soweth abundantly, shall reap abundantly and whosoever soweth sparingly will reap sparingly is the principal rule we need to follow. The success or lack of success of work conducted in any field can nearly always be traced back to the amount of money and manpower invested there.

What can be accomplished is seen by the following example. In Hamburg, Germany, 45,000 leaflets advertising a Bible correspondence course were distributed. Incidentally this is the same course as the one used at the World Fair. The German translation looks just as attractive as the Eng-

lish original. Up to date 100 people enrolled in the course. Formerly it would have taken us five years of gospel meetings to make that many contacts. Can you imagine what would have happened if Brother Alten would have had the money to advertise among all two million people living in Hamburg, or if we could have made that a Germanywide affair reaching out among 52,000,000 people. Thousands would have probably enrolled and the location of future works could be determined by the number of good contacts in one given area. For eighteen years the lack of money has hindered us in the European field to preach the gospel in such a way that the people would be really reached by it. From whatever angle you may look at this problem of successful missionwork you will always arrive at the same answer "To the extent we invest manpower, means, energy and talents our harvest will be meager or plentiful."

We are doing today many times the work done 20 or 50 years ago. There are many good signs for an even better work in the future around us. The "Exodus" movements seem to be an answer how we can reach many places in the USA hithertofore virgin fields of millions of people. The Faith Corps will give us another inroad into the teeming millions of lost people. There are many untapped reserves in the church still today. This is extremely costly. Dr. P. Stevens said recently in *The Beam* (August edition):

"Nothing is more expensive than unused capacity. And nothing seems to have more of that than the churches of America. Great congregations of talented laymen, women who run clubs and direct political campaigns and lead in medical and other community-wide crusades, hundreds of brilliant restless young people all going to waste. If not all, then an uncontrovertible large part."

Where I am working at present, the Collegese Church of Christ, Cookeville, Tenn., alongside the campus of Tennessee Technological University, 20% of the student body of 5000 are members of the church. One thousand future engineers, scientists, teachers etc., a tremendous untapped reserve for the Lord. Our attitude of the past has been; "Since these young people do not attend one of our Christian Colleges we have no usage for them." Let us instill into those people the spirit of the Great Commission and you will see something happen never witnessed before. Beginning this year we plan to take each summer one group alternately to a mission place on the North American continent and to Europe. In cooperation with others we hope to conduct four campaigns in England simultaneously in 1967. Efforts like these will not only help us to reach souls but they will give to the young people in the church the true meaning of life which is "to be something to the glory of God."

Instead of giving any particular field the preference we need—as Brother Gatewood pointed out—to "learn how to work in every field and then we will have everywhere good results." It is human to seek the "easy way out" of everything but it becomes dangerous for our souls and the souls of 2000 million lost people when this kind of thinking begins to influence our mission planning.

### Summary

As long as we realize that we are nothing but preachers in a wilderness calling people to Him who loved us so much that He was willing to die in our stead, we will do the right things. I do not fear that we are going the way of all of the earth. Many of us are seriously concerned with the Lord's business and this group is increasing steadily. Mistakes will be always made, although they should become

fewer as the time goes on. We will reap in due season, if we faint not, as Paul the apostle admonishes us. And if we really desire to save souls then we will be willing to learn how to work among the people in those fields which so far have been shunned by some of us for the lack of glory they will bring. But always we will have to make the decision whether to depend on our logic, experience and opinion, using highpressure sales tactics, imitating others to add merely numbers to our roll, or to walk by faith, relying and trusting in the Lord. As long as we will have the same love in our hearts as was in Christ and we are willing to go even after one lost sheep regardless of the costs involved—even if it must be to the very end of the world—we will change the lives of our fellowmen. Then we will save millions not touched by the gospel today and the kingdom of God will be spread to the farthest corners of the earth.

May the Lord grant us wisdom and courage, give us a greater amount of patience and perseverance and a faith that cannot be shaken. "Our own history is moving at a pace that perplexes all. If we neglect the opportunities, the impersonal process of history may take us to destinations that we shall regret." (Tangled World by R. L. Shinn).

In the limited time available I have tried, according to the definition given at the beginning, to point out "underlying causes" and make "a critical examination of the grounds" upon which our mission efforts are conducted. I do not know all the answers to this complex problem but it is my prayer and my hope—as one who has been brought to Christ by brethren you have sent out years ago—that I have said something which may cause you to think, and to do an even greater work in the future, than in the past.

May the Lord shed His richest blessings upon all of us, may He give us the vision needed that we may become a blessing to the world round about us. Amen.

## THE OPPORTUNITY THROUGH WORLD RADIO

ALTON HOWARD

Alton H. Howard is one of the bishops of the White's Ferry Road Church of Christ in West Monroe, Louisiana. Brother Howard's primary field of emphasis is World Radio, one of the mission efforts of the congregation, which he serves. Brother Howard had been an elder of the White's Ferry Road Congregation only a few months, when he was captivated with the idea of preaching the gospel to every soul on the earth by means of mass communications, particularly radio. Because of this zeal and vision, he was selected to act as Chairman of the World Radio Evangelism Committee.

Born near Monroe, at Farmerville, Louisiana, forty years ago, Howard was educated at the Farmerville Schools. During World War II, he served in the United States Air Force and flew several missions



over Germany as radio aerial gunner. Following service, he met and married the former Jean Meador. This marriage has produced one son, Johnny, aged fourteen, and two daughters, Mary Alane, eight, and Janice, six.

Brother Alton Howard has distinguished himself among Christians as an outstanding business man. He acts as Secretary and Treasurer of the Gibson Discount Chain, which operates stores in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee. He is also the Treasurer of the Mid-South Developing Company, a construction company that does work in many of the southern

states. He acts as Secretary and Treasurer of the Mid-South Leasing Company, which leases equipment to retail stores. Other business ventures find him acting as Secretary and Treasurer of the Kopper Kettle Restaurants, and Secretary-Treasurer of the Gibson Pharmacies.

Mr. Howard began his business career as one of the partners in the Howard Brothers' Jewelry Store, located in Monroe, Louisiana. From this modest beginning, God has prospered him until he is now recognized as one of the more successful young Christian businessmen in our brotherhood.

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Galatians, chapter 4, verse 4, expresses the concept that God as He works in history brings about a fulness of time in order to culminate in the history of man an action that is necessary for man's ultimate redemption. Another concept that I would like for you to consider today is found in Ephesians, chapter 3, verse 20; the Bible says that God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us. Taking these two concepts that God brings about in history a fullness of time, and that God is able to work through man to do exceedingly above all they ask or think, it then behooves each of us as God's children to be discerning of our times.

The task of the people of God is the same as it has ever been to proclaim the gospel to every creature on the face of this earth. No matter how difficult or how apparently impossible this task appears, it can be done. We must never forget that the task before us is not as great as the power behind us even in this age of crisis.

I hope you noticed that I mentioned an age of crisis. This is significant. Every great religious movement, it seems to me, has been founded during a time of extreme stress.

Crisis always produces the conditions necessary to activate a people. Compare for example the age in which Noah lived. The stress of an evil world against the small remaining remnant of good brought about a final crisis which led to the replenishing of the earth with a more pure seed. We find when the children of Israel had suffered for over 400 years the oppressive treatment of slaves, there finally arose an apex of crisis, and God raised up Moses who led the scattered, disorganized, disintegrated tribes out to become one of the most powerful nations on the earth, the mighty nation of Israel.

Notice again how during the times of the Prophets when the world was in dire need of true light, God spoke through the Prophets with ringing clearness the message He had for man. So strongly apparent was this time of stress that men even in foreign and pagan lands reflected their need for guidance. In this age such men as Buddha, Zoraster, and later the greater Greek philosophers such as Plato, Socrates and Aristotle came to the fore. Without doubt history does reflect a providence.

Observe how the fulness of time mentioned in Galatians, chapter 4, verse 4, not only affected the children of Israel but the time was right for men everywhere to receive the promised Christ. The whole world was searching, not just the Jews, for the coming of a Messiah, a Savior, a Great Leader. Out of this climate grew the mystery religions, the religion of Emperor worship, and many other strange and diverse means of worship as men in this age of stress reached for the great unseen. This was God's hour to send His Son.

Who can doubt that the Reformation, which also arose in

an age of extreme crisis, was a time that God had prepared for men to shake the shackles of religious bigotry from their shoulders and hands, a time in which men were fully determined to be free, to arise from the darkness of ignorance to seek out the true light of both religion and understanding in general. Who can doubt that the restoration movement, of which we are a part, was not itself a development of an age of stress in which men now shackled and tied down by the traditions of denominationalism arose to free themselves completely from this scourge.

It is my firm conviction that we are living in what may be the final God-directed crisis of this world. We can see this stress reflected in the stirring of God's people in this land and throughout the world. We can see the movement of the fulness of time in such brotherhood projects as the Herald of Truth, the Sixty-Eight Group, Exodus Bayshore, Exodus Rochester, Campaigns for Christ, The Sunset School for Preaching, and a general stirring among God's people for a greater foreign mission expansion. We stand on what is perhaps the threshold of the greatest triumphs of all ages, or else we are missing our opportunity and not discerning the times, the greatest tragedy of all time.

Obviously *the* challenge before us in this generation is World Evangelism. This factor, however, we must first recognize: God has never furnished His people with a task that was impossible for them to accomplish. Every movement of history in which God through His providence brought about a stress or crisis age, the people of that time were furnished by Him with instruments necessary to accomplish the purpose He had ordained! Noah, for example, was given instructions for the building of an Ark. Moses was given a staff to perform miracles. The prophets raised the

dead, cleansed the lepers, brought rain from heaven. The Messiah Himself was given to an age starving for the message of hope. His Apostles were sent out into a world that was prepared with a world language so that the masses were able to receive the message of life. Even the Middle Ages, the time of Martin Luther, God gave a rising nationalism to help shake that generation free from the oppression of Rome.

Our Task: Preach the gospel to every creature, go to every nation with a message of hope! Has God prepared for this age the necessary instruments to fulfill this task? I believe that He has. I believe that one of the means which He has given to us that is capable of altering the course of history is radio. I am convinced that World Radio is one of these instruments that God has ordained for the preaching of the gospel to the masses of this age.

## I. What Is World Radio?

### A. *A Two-Fold Concept*

In a very simplified and basic definition World Radio is a two fold concept of preaching the gospel to every creature on the face of this earth in his own language within our generation. The first aspect of this two-fold concept deals with the use of existing commercial and religious radio facilities. Our age has available tremendous mass communication means if we but seek them out and use them. World Radio intends to use, as much as humanly possible, these existing stations to begin immediately a world wide campaign to preach Christ to the blind and struggling masses of this world.

The second phase of the World Radio story is the plan

to build or purchase powerful intercontinental short wave stations through which the gospel can be beamed with even greater clarity and forcefulness to the world; Christian-owned stations where the gospel can be preached at the prime broadcasting hours and not just the left-over-time "crumbs" that commercial people give to religious broadcasters; Christian-owned and operated stations enabling us to preach Jesus Christ twenty-four hours a day; Christian-owned stations located strategically across the face of this earth so that every person can hear clearly the good news of the resurrected Messiah and His call for repentance and redemption.

### *B. World Radio Fast Approaching Reality*

World Radio is no longer just a dream, it is no longer just a mystical concept, it is no longer just a vision shared by a few men, but it is a determined goal which is fast developing into reality. Already World Radio is beaming into Germany, into Italy, into France, Vietnam, into South America, the Philippines, and covering most of the United States. Plans to go into other countries are on the immediate docket. God truly works in the history of men to bring about His purpose.

## II. World Radio A Tool For Mission Effort

### *A. World Radio, A Missionary's Friend*

Perhaps the major question in the minds of many at this time, is how did the elders of the White's Ferry Road congregation envision the part that World Radio is to play in our great brotherhood's over-all objective of world evangelism. Basically we see World Radio as a tool for the

missionary on the field. We see World Radio as a tool or an aid for the congregation that is supporting missionaries already on the field. We envision World Radio as a great aid in helping those congregations who are at this time preparing to put a preacher on foreign soil. World Radio will become an instrument that the whole brotherhood can use to advantage. Let me illustrate.

### *B. World Radio, A Type of Artillery*

We envision World Radio, first of all, as a type of artillery for the church. Most of us are familiar with warfare and know that prior to an army advancing toward a new enemy objective, some sort of softening up precedes the actual invasion. An illustration of this might be remembered from the Second World War when our marines were taking the islands in the Pacific. Before they were landed, the Navy heavily bombarded the beaches and inland areas. At the same time, the Air Force added its punch by dropping Napalm and high explosives behind the enemy lines. Only following such plans could the military ever hope to establish permanent beachheads.

The artillery concept can also be used by the Lord's Army, an artillery designed to send the message of Christ by way of radio behind the enemy lines of Satan. Then, when the missionaries or foot soldiers finally go in to preach, they find the people are aware of New Testament Christianity and prepared for the plea to return to first century Christianity.

### *C. World Radio and Its Portable Missionaries*

World Radio also will be of great aid to those working

among primitive people. In Zambia, for example, one finds that there are about a million and a half people scattered over an area at least the size of the State of Texas. Naturally with the limited missionary personnel available, it is impossible to take the gospel to these people adequately. And even more perplexing is the problem of proper follow-up.

However, World Radio can help relieve this situation by providing a pretuned radio receiver which can be left among the people thus freeing the missionary to continue on, after making the initial contact, to other villages. Those who have responded are then given a time to tune in on the little pretuned set, which can only receive World Radio signals. The missionary can then go on, feeling free to preach Christ to those as yet unreached, for behind him the portable missionary helps these young Christians already contacted to grow in the faith. Thus, the work of one man through World Radio can be expanded until he can do the work of ten or fifteen men. Truly, this is the fulness of time.

#### *D. World Radio Overcomes Language Barrier*

Another of the major problems in missionary work which World Radio can help to alleviate is the language barrier. In the first century the Apostles were blessed with a world language, which was the Koine Greek. No matter where they went there was a good nucleus of people to which they could speak through this medium. Our generation, however, does not find this to be the case. As a matter of fact, there are more than two thousand languages and dialects for us to deal with today. Few are available to speak in most of them. Yet, through World Radio we can take a long step toward overcoming this particular problem.

Here is how it can be done. We send a missionary to a selected country; he stays there until he has mastered the language. Ordinarily after this is done a missionary, through individual contact, is limited to just those people to which he can meet and speak. World Radio has changed this figure completely. After the man selected has mastered the language of the people with which we are to deal, he then by means of radio can speak to literally millions at one time. The sound of his voice can literally be heard to the uttermost parts of the earth. Therefore, with the help of World Radio one man can overcome the personal limitations of the individual and can literally preach to audiences so vast the mind staggers to consider it.

#### *E. World Radio Provides Contacts*

I almost tremble to think of the significance of these next few thoughts. I know that every missionary within the sound of my voice today will thrill with me over the prospects of World Radio in the area of contacts that can be provided. Too often our missionaries go into an area where they have no contacts, not one single person that understands anything about Christianity. Of course, he will by God's providence stumble across those with honest and ready hearts, but how much easier it would be if he could go with a number of such contacts already in his possession. This is exactly where World Radio can be of great help because it can furnish those leads.

Let's illustrate by picking a wise eldership who is looking for a mission field in which to send a man. These elders study the areas of the world that need the gospel preached. They select one. Then they meet with the elders of the White's Ferry Road congregation, tell them their plans

concerning the particular country they have chosen. Together we plan a three to six months broadcasting assault planned specifically to get leads from the particular area where they are going to send their man. A post office box number located within the country chosen is given on the air for mail to be sent. Then the mail begins to flow to this box. Shortly thereafter a large number of names are made available to the missionaries who are shortly to enter this country. However, this time they do not enter blindly. They go with literally hundreds of names of honest and sincere people who have already expressed a strong interest in New Testament Christianity. I can assure you that there is not a person that does not thrill over the very thought.

#### *F. World Radio, An Additional Teacher*

Another avenue of thought along the lines of leads which we should discuss is that of the located preacher already on the field. How often a missionary goes to a country and begins the work there and within the first year or two baptizes fifty to one hundred prospects. These young immature Christians demand a great deal of his time; therefore, his new contacts are extremely curtailed because his time is limited. His obligation to train and nurture is so oppressive that all additional growth proceeds at a very slow pace.

However, if planned programming was designed for his area and beamed daily to the masses of the people with which he is working, he would have a continual flow of leads, leads that would not demand a great deal of his time, but would bear rich fruit in Bible study. Therefore, he is free not only to teach more thoroughly those first few converts, but now his ministry proves to be even more fruitful for continued growth.

### *G. World Radio Augments the Field-Man's Teaching*

Perhaps no area of World Radio would be more welcomed by the field-man than the area of teaching. How often we find that the only contact that our people have with new Christians in the mission field is for one or two hours per week and sometimes less. This, of course, is not the best climate for steady growth. But on the other hand, regular planned programs designed for new Christians and for prospects would help to give a more regular and consistent exposure to the preaching of the Bible, this in turn would help develop maturity much quicker.

Certainly not to be overlooked in this area of increasing our teaching thrusts is the use of the correspondence course. All of us are aware of just how effective these can be. For example, one of the denominational groups, the Far Eastern Broadcasting Company, broadcasting from Manila, has over 700,000 people enrolled in Bible correspondence courses today. So here is yet another proven way to educate and to indoctrinate the masses, a way incidentally that we have not used to the degree that we should have. These correspondence courses can in turn be followed up with tracts and other written material and ultimately culminate in a personal contact. The educational program of our field man would be augmented to a degree unrealized today by the use of World Radio.

### *H. World Radio and Advertising*

Another avenue which World Radio should prove to be an asset as a tool to the missionary in the field of advertising, advertising designed to increase the effectiveness of the local work on the mission field. For example, in Gospel Meet-

ings or Lectureships this is a far greater problem to the missionary than we realize, the reason being that almost all means of mass communication in other lands are nationalized. Thus, about the only religious groups that can use these means are the nationalized religions or at least large denominational power groups. At any rate, seldom if ever are the churches of Christ welcome no matter what the situation.

However, World Radio can help solve this problem by the missionaries working closely with the elders of the White's Ferry Road congregation and planning several months and weeks in advance their programs. World Radio can beam the message to the masses of people in an attractive and appealing way in order to turn out the people for these gatherings. All of this, with other standardized means available, will make our promotion thrust far more effective.

### *I. World Radio and Field Selection*

In our mission work we have made many mistakes in our attempt to preach Christ to the world. Yet, learning from our past mistakes and improving in our future action and planning, we should move much more rapidly in our mission work at future dates. One often repeated error of judgment has been in the realm of selection; that is, where should we send the missionary? In this sphere World Radio can be of untold advantage to congregations. World Radio can serve as a locator of responsive areas in the world.

Let's not fool ourselves! There are those who are not ready for the preaching of Christ. Where are the places then that are receptive? Where are the fields that are white unto

harvest? The answer could be found in wholesale broadcasting of the gospel to the whole world. We then could conclude wisely that where the most people write asking about Christ, these people would be the more receptive to the preaching of the gospel. Therefore, plans could be laid to send missionaries into these particular areas where people are hungering and thirsting after the bread of life. So as a locator alone we find that World Radio would be of immeasurable value.

### *J. World Radio As A Detector and Supporter*

Perhaps the most promising area in which World Radio can more than fill the dream that we have for it, is in the area of detector and supporter. Look across the world at the number of little indigenous groups that have sprung up. Remember India? Look at Greece! Look almost everywhere that we have sent our brethren. There we have found groups which have at one time or another come either to restore New Testament Christianity or else to develop it from scratch through Bible study. Yet sadly, in most cases we have reached these groups only to find that they have been taken off into religious error by Protestant denominational groups, all because we were there too late with too little. In other words, we failed them in their time of crisis.

How many of these groups are in the world at this very hour of which we know nothing? Yet if we could preach the gospel by way of intercontinental transmitters across the entire world, many people listening to their radio could say, "We be brethren!" I wonder how many of these groups are slipping off into error this very moment, souls we could save if they were to receive the teaching and fellowship of kindred minds. Truly this is the fulness of time, an age of

crisis, a challenge from God to take the gospel to these people now!

K. *World Radio Overcomes Barriers*

Finally, insofar as this speech is concerned, we wish to talk about overcoming barriers. We live in an age of stress, an age of crisis and also an age of barriers. There are the Iron Curtain, the Bamboo Curtain. There is the barrier of religious bigotry. There is the barrier of ignorance. There is the barrier of social separation. On and on the list continues of the barriers which Satan has put around the hearts and minds of people, barriers that have in the past stopped us from preaching Christ. What is the answer to overcoming these barriers?

World Radio, by the providence of God, is just the instrument to crumble the barriers we have suggested. Iron curtains do not hinder the airways. Bamboo curtains do not stop the penetration of radio signals carrying the message of Christ. Social and religious barriers do not stop a man from listening to the preacher of the gospel in the quietness of his own home. No matter what the barrier is, World Radio can penetrate to the very heart of man to overcome and remove those hindrances that have stopped you and me in the past.

The Lord said to go and preach the Gospel to every creature. This is our challenge. This has been made possible in our age by such a marvelous and providential tool as radio. Who can but believe but that God brought it into existence for this very purpose. Yes, this is an age of crisis but God has given us the tool to crush the obstructions and barriers of our generation!

### III. Operation of the World Radio Stations

#### A. *Programming Is Done On the Mission Field*

I shall move more rapidly now to give you a little insight in some of the planning of World Radio. I believe that one area which is most often discussed and asked about is the area of programming. Programming is a broad term describing everything about a particular broadcast, whether it is pulpit type preaching or religious drama. Programming includes the hour a particular language is to be on the air. It includes all that is involved in preparing and sending a message to the people. Certainly the problems of programming are complex. But let me just briefly say that the programming is to be in the main designed by the missionary, for the missionary and the field in which he works. In every respect we shall make every effort to preach the gospel in such a way as to give the impression that the program originates locally no matter from where the message is sent, thus making our thrust much more effective.

#### B. *The Speakers To Be Natives*

In most cases we shall try to select for speakers on the World Radio programs natives of the land to which we are beaming. There will, of course, be occasions when we cannot follow this policy. Nevertheless this is the ideal situation and one that we shall always strive for. No matter how effective an American is in speaking the language of another people, he is always recognized as an American and considered a foreigner. A native will usually have a greater impact in his presentation.

## IV. Problems Yet To Be Faced

A. *Location of Station*

There are many and complex problems yet before us. Where to locate the giant intercontinental stations being one of the major ones. At this time we are not ourselves positive. We have feelers out through our missionaries in a number of countries: Central America, South America, South Korea and others. Selection of a location is again one of those great complex problems which demands technical advice, one which demands a great deal of prayer, one that I can assure you will not be made in too great haste! So much depends on properly and strategically locating stations that we must be as sure as humanly possible that the locations selected are the right ones.

B. *Personnel*

Another of the problems, of course, that we have is that of personnel; yet it is in this area as perhaps in no other that we see truly the fulness of time. Time and time again we have come to the point where we needed someone, either a technically trained person, one who could tell the story of World Radio or a secretary; but through the providence of God, we have been sent the very finest of people. One illustration of this, of course, is that of Dr. Lowell Perry, of whom all of you are aware, here in Abilene. He and his family have given their lives to the service of God by going to South America to work for world evangelism serving World Radio. God, we are sure, will continue to help us in selecting personnel.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, let me say that I am convinced that God has produced this age of crisis, this fulness of time, a time of stress to stir us up to preach Christ to the whole world. This is the time to take Christ to every creature! One of the great means that God has given us to help accomplish this goal is mass communications, radio and television. With the help of almighty God, it is the prayer and dream of those of us in West Monroe, La., along with all of you, that we live to see the fulfillment of this vision. Let us never forget that the task before us is not as great as the power behind us.



PANEL  
DISCUSSIONS



## WHY DIALOGUE HAS CEASED

WESLEY REAGAN

Wesley Reagan was born in El Paso, Texas on March 27, 1931. He was reared in Tucumcari, New Mexico. He is a graduate of Abilene Christian College and holds a B.D. degree from United College in Winnipeg, Canada.

On graduating from A.C.C. he preached for two and a half years at Knox City, Texas. The ten years since then have been spent working with new works in Lander, Wyoming and Winnipeg, Canada.

He is married to the former Mary Alice Miller and is the father of four children: Randy (11), Debbie (10), Brad (6), and Ward (4).

The Reagans moved last year to work with the Northside church in Dallas. This congregation supported them while they were in the North.



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A billion people profess some kind of a faith in some kind of a Christ. Our job today is to consider why we are not discussing the matters of truth and unity with them and why we should be. Of course we talk with individuals, and occasionally a brave soul talks to a leader or speaks to a group. Our customary practice, how-

ever, has been to be as aloof from other religious groups as the Jews were from the Samaritans. What has caused this isolation? Why can we not have more dialogue with other religious people?

### *Our Convictions*

We must begin with the awareness that even when communication is clear and diplomacy is evident there is a basic tension between churches of Christ and denominational bodies. In such a tension, the more conservative party is always less hospitable than the more liberal because his conscience becomes more quickly involved. Paul could be indulgent toward the Christian vegetarians of his day, because to him the issue was not a matter of conscience. The vegetarians, on the other hand, could not have indulged Paul's sense of freedom by eating meat with him because their conscience forbade it. We always will have some tensions between ourselves and other groups because we believe they have taken too many liberties with the word of God.

Further, we are unable to acknowledge them as Christians. Our conviction is that the denominational position is seriously in error even on such a basic matter as the plan of salvation. We fear for their souls. Therefore we feel responsible to try to convert them. This appears to them to be only a self-righteous effort to proselyte.

Not only do our convictions make them uncomfortable, but we are made uncomfortable by their assumptions. We consider the body of which we are members not as a sect, but as the body of Christ. We do not think of it as a denomination at all. Therefore we would have difficulty with

some of their feelings about ecumenical dialogue. For example Article IV of the constitution of the World Council of Churches states the following basic assumptions of ecumenical dialogue, "The member Churches recognize that the membership of the Church of Christ is more inclusive than the membership of their own church body... The member Churches of the World Council recognize in other Churches elements of the true Church."<sup>1</sup>

### *Our Image*

I don't know how in the past we could possibly have said all the things we are reputed to have said. Doing personal work through a few meetings would almost convince a person that we have full time men going around telling people's grandmothers they are going to hell. Regrettably, our image is not usually one of "conscientious truth-seekers who firmly but humbly insist that true Christianity is all important."

We have somehow projected the image that the man who does not get his water out of our well must die of thirst. People have the impression that we are saying that they must be just like us in most every detail, in order to be just like Christ. They have understood us to think that we have everything to teach and nothing to learn. If this comes as a shocking indictment, it is because of the difficulty of seeing ourselves as others see us. We have never intended to say this. We have intended to put the emphasis on Christ rather than on ourselves. However, others have understood us to want a monologue rather than a dialogue.

Most of our religious friends feel that we have been pre-occupied with a desire to "prove that we are right." We

have seen ourselves as a knight on a white charger going bravely forth in the defense of truth. Unfortunately, others have often seen us as opinionated defenders of what they regard as a sectarian position.

Have you ever known someone whose very presence made you feel defensive and ill at ease? I have a friend who can just walk into my office and I feel obligated to tell him what I am doing and why. I feel that I am under siege when he comes into my presence. I am sure that he has no awareness of creating this feeling. He would see himself as a firm, but loving, and, above all, objective person. I feel, however, that he does not have a real awareness of, nor sympathy with, my work. I feel that behind his smile there lurks a critical attitude toward me. I think we, as a religious body, have made many others feel like this man makes me feel.

We have also projected the image of being too quick and too harsh with our judgments. Perhaps in our zeal for the truth we have by comparison, done too much condemning. Many conclusions are valid but are yet not ours to draw. Jesus said, "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world."<sup>2</sup> We cannot avoid the clear teaching of the scriptures on the consequences of rejection and disobedience, but we have no Christian duty to tell anyone "his beloved mother is in hell."

Too many also think of us as having a smug and exclusive spirit. It does not help this matter to introduce friends by saying, "Brother Smith, meet Mister Jones." The wording of our public prayers could often express the same concerns without leaving the impression, "We are thankful that we are not as the rest of men."

We must not forfeit the definiteness of our convictions! The

moment that truth becomes less than a "life or death" matter we are dead. *Diplomacy does not mean compromise.* Yet we could well use more thoughtfulness and more humility. We do not have to compromise truth to try to avoid giving needless offense.

### *Our Fears*

Perhaps nothing has had as strong a part in discouraging members of the church from dialogue with other religious groups as fear. We have a strong fear of digression. It is wise to remember that digression is like an avalanche. It starts small but soon becomes uncontrollable.

Nevertheless, we should remember that conversation is not synonymous with digression. We must guard against digression, of course. However, it is not necessary for a football team to hide the ball in the locker room to keep the opposition from making a touchdown. We must compromise nothing. Our wholesome fear of digression should lead us to express our convictions, not to bottle them up.

Another fear which controls the actions of some is the fear of being branded. If a group of denominational leaders meets to discuss the basis for unity, do we dare attend? I think if Paul were living today he would be Program Chairman. He would seek a leading and formative part in such discussions. This would not be an indication that he was compromising his convictions, but rather that he had found an excellent opportunity for expressing them.

I expect that when Jesus talked with Nicodemus some of our brethren might have started the rumor that he was soft on Judaism. We need good, strong, respected men who will sit with denominational leaders and advocate unity on the

basis of truth. They need to be able to do so without the fear of being branded as being soft on sectarianism.

I heard of an airlines executive who is a member of the church flying into a city to attend a discussion on unity. He called a gospel preacher to learn the location of the meeting. The gospel preacher answered, "I know where it is, but I would rather not get involved myself. I'll give you a phone number where you can get further information."

One preacher was invited to speak to the Baptist Church, Methodist Church, and Pentecostal Church in his city on the subject, "What is the Church of Christ?" He met the first appointment, began to receive criticism on the second, and was asked by the elders to cancel the third because they were receiving too much criticism.

Are we not far too quick to brand people anyway? A good man who preaches the truth and is respected by the brotherhood can have a lifetime's influence crucified in an hour by an irresponsible charge or an unjust label. None of us is going to feel very comfortable about representing non-sectarian Christianity to other religious people if we fear that some brotherhood witch-hunter will cry, "Compromise." Especially is this true when brotherhood thinking is influenced as much by brands and labels as it is today.

#### *Our Lack of a Real World View*

Part of our problem is that we have seen ourselves as an isolated phenomenon in a religious vacuum. We have not felt deeply enough the responsibility to relate ourselves meaningfully to the world in which we live. We have contented ourselves with being a growing church and have not

thought enough in terms of being a world-shaping influence. We have been a light under a bushel. We have advocated obedience, morality, and spirituality largely to our own people. We have not felt strongly enough the responsibility to take this message to the world at large. This is dramatically evidenced by the fact that when someone even speaks to a denominational group he subjects himself to the suspicions of some brethren. Are we to be a light merely unto the church? Are the billion people who compose Christendom a part of the world? Do we have anything to say to them? If so, are we at liberty to say it?

Few groups have had more of a spirit of isolation than have we. Yet Jesus was anything but an isolationist. He had a deep sense of being a part of corporate humanity. He lived in the world but was not of the world. He did not compromise with the world but He witnessed to it. He was often branded as being a friend of sinners and as being "soft" on the law. He was on speaking terms not only with tax collectors and prostitutes but also with those who were in religious error. He taught the necessity of both truth and unity and worked in behalf of both.

Our responsibility is not merely to a few scattered individuals but to a world. One-third of the people in this world already have in common with us enough convictions that they consider themselves Christians. We recognize that there are great areas of disagreement. We do not deal with an easy problem but with an important one. May God help us to deal with it in a fully Christian way.

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1. Constitution, World Council of Churches, as quoted in G. K. A. Bell, *Documents on Christian Unity* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958) pp. 219-222.

2. John 12:47

## OUR OBLIGATION TOWARD CONTINUING DIALOGUE

EDWARD H. ROCKEY

Edward H. Rockey and his wife, the former Ruth Lois Whiteman, have three sons: John, Stephen, and Paul. The Rockeys live at 125 Kenilworth Place, Brooklyn, New York, one block from Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, where Mr. Rockey teaches in the Department of Speech and Theatre.

He received the B.A. from Washington Square College of New York University, with a major in English. His M.A. was awarded with honor by Brooklyn College. He was a full-time student at the Biblical Seminary in New York from 1952 to 1954. He is now working on a doctoral dissertation at N.Y.U., having completed all other requirements for the Ph.D. in Mass Communications.



He has presented papers on the ethics of rhetoric and on classical rhetoric at annual conventions of the Speech Association of the Eastern States. In May, 1965, he participated in a conference at the Ecumenical Institute in Switzerland. He has spoken for college lectureships and local church efforts in sixteen states, in the nation's capital, and in France and Spain.

He was a minister on Long Island for nine years (seven years with the East Meadow-Bethpage congregation). He was a deacon for the Manhattan Church of Christ last year, but he now preaches each Sunday for the Red Bank congregation in New Jersey.

If a person sought to determine the chief topics of interest in Western Civilization over the past two years, and he used magazines and newspapers as one of his guides, he would certainly have to put the Ecumenical Movement on the list. Few topics have received such *consistent* notice and analysis in the press and in radio and television current events programs in the United States during that period.

Do we have any obligations with regard to religious dialogue in this ecumenical age? An analysis of the situation reveals that we have nine reasons for maintaining dialogue with other religious groups.

### *1. We Are Misunderstood.*

Any person who has sought to talk with strangers about our plea for pure Christianity can testify to the fact that we are often misunderstood. Some typical responses to visitation are: "O, you are the group that teaches baptismal regeneration." "Are you the same as the Church of Christ, Scientist?" "You have a great deal of emotional display in your services, don't you?" This has hurt attendance at our meetings in mission areas; people are hesitant about coming because they are convinced that they will be embarrassed.

One of the reasons for these inaccurate pictures is the fact that we are isolated from other religious groups. Seminars and conferences with various groups would enable us to present what we really teach.

### *2. We Misunderstand Some Religious Groups*

Because we rarely take advantage of opportunities to

meet with other religious groups for dialogue, we often have false concepts of what they are like. This has tended to create suspicion, stereotyping, and prejudice among us. I have read articles in our papers which are biased and erroneous on such topics as church councils and modern translations of the Bible.

Many of us are out of touch with contemporary trends in religion. We think that we can use the Manual by Hiscox as a basis for discussion with Baptist preachers or the Westminster Confession of Faith for Presbyterians. Actually, these often have little bearing upon the beliefs and practices of many of those churches. It is only through face to face encounter that we can understand.

### *3. Sometimes We Are Overlooked.*

We spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on advertising and public relations, yet we sometimes neglect basic channels of communication. Last year the most prominent conservative Protestant magazine in America published an article about Christian colleges. The article and its accompanying table mentioned forty religious schools in the U. S. and Canada, some with only a few hundred students. Not one of our colleges was mentioned in the article. I wrote to the author about this reminding him, among other things, that Abilene Christian College has over three thousand students and is in a twenty-five million dollar expansion program. He wrote a courteous and prompt reply, indicating that there was no desire to "blacklist" our schools; it was simple: they didn't have any information about them.

### *4. Some of Us Have Received Great Opportunities in Dialogue.*

During this past year I have met several of our preach-

ers who have been invited to speak to Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, and Pentecostal churches in order to present the Restoration plea. Let me tell you of one. A minister of the Church of Christ in a mid-Western university town attended a conference of local ministers who were discussing mutual concerns about their ministry to the university community. He was invited by a Lutheran minister at the conference to come to his church and speak to his people about the Church of Christ. After the lesson there was a discussion session, and several asked questions. Then the Lutheran minister admonished the congregation to "go home and search the Scriptures as the Bereans did to see if these things are so."

Two years ago I was preparing a paper on the ecumenical movement, and I had interviews with two officials of the World Council of Churches. Because of my interest I was invited to participate in a conference conducted by the World Council of Churches in Switzerland on the nature of the church. I attended in May, 1965, and though I was not one of the major lecturers, I was the only person invited to describe "his church" to the assembled delegates.

##### *5. There Are Bible-Centered Ecumenical Sessions.*

One of the encouraging features of the conference I attended in Switzerland was the considerable amount of time spent in Bible study. Some ecumenical leaders believe that there is a trend toward having more of a Bible-centered emphasis at ecumenical conferences. See, for example, the Bible studies delivered at the Mexico meeting of the World Council of Churches Commission on World Mission and Evangelism entitled *Key Words of the Gospel*, by Hendrikus

Berkhof and Philip Potter. This tendency toward having Bible-centered conferences affords a greater opportunity for meaningful dialogue.

Recently Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, one of the most noted ecumenical leaders in the United States, preached a sermon on "Tolerance versus Faith." Taking as his text the profession of Peter in Acts 4:12, "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved," Dr. Blake went on to say that he was troubled by the tendency of some to believe that the key to the contemporary ecumenical movement was to be found in the substitution of tolerance for conviction.

This is the most common misunderstanding of the ecumenical movement, both among its friends and among its critics. I find to my horror that despite anything I say most Christians seem to suppose that I am preaching a watered down Gospel that almost any rational man of good will, with a Christian bias or prejudice, can accept.

While it is true that ecumenical leaders in the Churches are all urging their members to break out of the narrow limits of their denominational traditions and accept with joy the truth that other Christian traditions have cherished and preserved, it is a complete misunderstanding of the ecumenical movement to suppose that it would sacrifice Truth for Tolerance, or substitute some wishy-washy compromise for the apostolic faith in Jesus Christ of the one holy Catholic Church

The source of the power of the ecumenical movement in the church and in the world today rises out of its recapturing in purer and more pristine form that faith in Jesus of Nazareth that Peter proclaimed so boldly when under pressure from the government and culture of his

nation he said: "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

The ecumenical faith that is being pressed upon all Christian people during these revolutionary days is not any easy faith consisting of multi-cultural good will and tolerance. It is a faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world—a faith that is under all the cultural pressure it ever has been in the twenty centuries of its existence.

In such statements as this, we have a Biblical basis with which to begin dialogue.

#### 6. *The Apostles Engaged in Dialogue in the Synagogue*

Peter and John went to the temple at the hour of prayer (Acts 3:1). The earliest Christians attended the temple daily (Acts 2:46). When Paul came to Antioch of Pisidia, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day. After the law and the prophets had been read, an invitation was extended to speak. Paul's message is recorded in Acts 13:16-41. He made a great effort to find a basis for mutual understanding by appealing to his Jewish background and identifying with the audience. He spoke of "*our father*," when referring to the patriarchs, and he called the Jews "*Brethren, sons of the family of Abraham*" (Acts 13:17, 26). He attended synagogue meetings in other towns, such as Iconium (Acts 14:1) and Thessalonica (Acts 17:1). In bringing the gospel to Philippi, he attended a riverside prayermeeting of women (Acts 16:13).

#### 7. *We Have a Great Debt to Acknowledge*

This very lectureship is dependent heavily upon the re-

search and faithful labor of scholars from various religious groups. We ought to get to know some of them, and thank them, and engage in study with them. Let us take the field of archaeology, for instance. Who from our number has dedicated himself to ancient languages, history, geography, customs, and archaeological methods to the extent that he has gone on expeditions and pioneered to the extent that he has contributed to the elucidation of the Bible or to the verification of the historicity of the Bible? The answer is that we are dependent upon men from other groups to supply this valuable information.

Who from among us has contributed a great work on the canon, or on inspiration, or on hermeneutics? Virtually all the material we use has been written by men outside of our number. We have a great debt to acknowledge for the fine translations of the Bible, or of the New Testament, which have been produced in our century, beginning with the American Standard Version, for which men from nine different religious bodies labored faithfully, submerging their party loyalties.

Our hymnals are also testimonies to the debt we owe. In our services each week we blend our hearts and voices while repeating the words of Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, and Roman Catholics. Comparatively few of the hymns we sing came from our own number.

#### 8. *"What Do Ye More than Others?"*

Jesus asked the question, "What do ye more than others?" We need to know what others are doing. We need to be with them and to learn of their experiences and dedication.

In this connection, I have a foot-note to add to the story of Rachael Saint which I mentioned here last year. Her brother, a missionary, had been martyred by the fierce Auca Indians on the banks of the Curaray River in Ecuador. Later Rachael and the widow of a missionary who was murdered with Rachael's brother established an entree with the savage tribe and went to live in their village in the jungle. They went to bring Christ into the lives of those who had killed their loved ones. Recently I read that two Auca Indians were baptized in the Curaray River along with two children of one of the murdered missionaries, Kathy Saint, 16, and Steve Saint, 14. And who do you suppose performed the baptismal ceremony in the river that had washed away the blood of Nate Saint a few years ago? Kimu and Duwi, *two Auca Indians who had participated in the spear-slaying of the missionaries*, but who since have been converted. Talk about missionary work! "What do ye more than others?"

We need to talk with such people, admire their sincerity, and reap the fruits of their experience. While we are with them we can tell them of our plea for pure Christianity.

### 9. *The Channels of Communication Are Open NOW*

We are encouraged in the New Testament to "redeem the time." *This* is the ecumenical age. The decade we are in right now is uniquely ecumenical. Nothing like it existed before. How long it will last no one can say. Doors are open now. Many groups and individuals are anxious to exchange views and search for unity. Our obligation is to talk *now*.

## WEAKNESSES IN THE "19TH CENTURY" APOLOGETIC APPROACH

THOMAS H. OLBRICHT

Dr. Thomas H. Olbricht became a member of the faculty of The Pennsylvania State University in 1962.

He came to the University from Natick, Mass., where he had served as minister of the church of Christ. He had also served as chairman of the speech department at the University of Dubuque, Iowa, and director of debate at Harding College, Searcy, Ark.

A graduate of Northern Illinois University, where he received his bachelor of science degree in education, Dr. Olbricht received his master of arts and his doctor of philosophy degrees in speech from the State University of Iowa. He received his bachelor of sacred theology degree from Harvard University.



He is a member of Pi Kappa Delta, debate honorary, and Eta Sigma Phi, classics honorary.

The main inadequacy of nineteenth century apologetics for our time is that it was conceived in the nineteenth century. To say this is not necessarily to label such apologetics old fashioned. In fact, those of us who wish to drink from the Biblical faith as the source of life would find the nineteenth century more comfortable than the twentieth. But whether we like

it or not we live in the twentieth century. If we are to defend the Bible we must do it so that our answers are to the questions raised by twentieth century man. Our task is not to make the Biblical faith relevant. The Bible is relevant—for this age or any other! Our pressing need rather is to make the presentation of, or the apologetic for that faith relevant.

When we say that we intend to construct a defense for the Bible, which is applicable to twentieth century man, we are in trouble. Twentieth century man, unlike his counterparts from the past, has numerous conceptual molds from which he looks at the world. Time does not permit an examination of all such views so as to decide what is wrong with nineteenth century apologetics from the perspective of each. I have therefore decided to approach this critique from the standpoint of the twentieth century audience I know best—the typical college graduate. College graduates differ, of course, but in their attitude toward the Bible and religion they, unfortunately, tend to think much alike.

Before launching into the critique, it would be well to decide in a general way how the contemporary college graduate differs from his nineteenth century counterpart. Foremost, he shares little of the confidence that the Bible is the book of the ages, and that it provides both unique knowledge and guidance for moral decisions. He has spent four intensive years studying all types of documents other than the Bible, and he obviously thinks them more decisive for twentieth century man than the Bible. It is not so much that he heard the Bible ridiculed in classes, but simply ignored. Even if the student attended a private school with a religious heritage his attitude is little different: If he

studied the Bible, most likely it was viewed more as ancient history, and not always accurate at that, than as God's wisdom revealed to man. Such was not the case in the nineteenth century for the Bible had a vital place in the curriculum of religious schools if not the chief place.

A second difference is that because of course offerings in anthropology, sociology, and history of religions, college graduates increasingly view all religion as culturally relative. The nineteenth century student was not unaware of other religions, but he studied them primarily to learn in what manner Christianity was superior. Courses concerning religion in these days focus primarily on the descriptive task of finding out what a religion is all about and then determining how it reflects the culture of a people. Differences are noted, but no claims of superiority are made, since the standard assumption today is that a religion can be evaluated only against the culture in which it appears. An apology for the Bible which makes claims about its uniqueness or superiority loses thus much of its punch when presented to the contemporary college graduate.

A typical nineteenth century apologetic for the Bible is the book, *Reason and Revelation* by Robert Milligan, published in 1868. Milligan was president of Kentucky University, which later merged with Transylvania, and was a competent scholar in his time, having taught at Indiana University. His apologetic is particularly apropos to our present task since one hears much the same Biblical apologetic from some quarters today. Milligan presents eight arguments, four of which I should like to discuss: (1) The Unity and Harmony of the Bible, (2) Superior Morality of the Bible, (3) Fulfilled Prophecy, and (4) The Harmony of the Bible with Progress and Discoveries of Modern Science and Philosophy.

## I. The Unity and Harmony of the Bible.

In the nineteenth century the argument for the unity and harmony of the Bible had much appeal. The primary view of the universe shared by educated men was the Newtonian model in which order and harmony was stressed. Milligan argued that nature furnished grand harmony and since similar harmony is to be found in the Bible, God must be the author of both. If an argument for the unity of the Bible is to have power it must be directed to those who know the Bible. Because most nineteenth century college graduates had read the Bible, they were able on their own to ascertain its unity.

The difficulty with the harmony argument in the twentieth century is that the unity and harmony of nature no longer appears so obvious. In fact, scientists these days are suspicious of grand schemes for showing unity in the universe, as are many philosophers and other intellectuals. In our time the argument about the unity of the Bible wisely does not claim similar unity for nature. But regardless, the argument has little appeal to the average college graduate. More than likely he has studied the Bible so little as have a very inadequate set of reflections from which to judge the forcefulness of the argument. But if he has studied the Bible in college classes it is likely that an effort was made to show that different Biblical writers have differing theologies, for example, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, or Paul and James. And even if he accepts the apologete's word for it that the Bible exhibits unity and harmony, it is doubtful that he would agree to it as proof that the Bible is from God. In fact, he is not as dedicated to the proposition that knowledge must have unity and harmony as was his nineteenth

century counterpart. And if he holds some view which attempts such systematization of knowledge, more likely than not the Bible is not included as one of the valid sources of knowledge.

## II. Superiority Morality of the Bible.

The claim of superior morality for the Bible in the nineteenth century had considerable effect because educated men felt that training in morality was essential to well-being. In addition, little was known about people in other cultures so as to provide fuel for counter argument. The case for low morals was normally established from Greek and Roman mythology, and stories brought back from travelers who visited primitives in other parts of the world.

In the contemporary college, and especially in the state school, little emphasis is placed upon training in morality and ethics. Most of the discussion of these matters goes on, not in the classroom, but in the dormitory. The discussion centers not so much on whose morality is superior, but on the manner in which contemporary morals are outdated. With the "theologies of the new morality" appearing on the campuses of religious colleges, the discussions there are little different. The college graduate is likely, therefore, to be little impressed with the claim that Biblical morality is superior. He probably will say that each person must decide what is moral, and what is right for one is not necessarily right for another.

The graduate draws such a conclusion since he has been introduced to the claims of cultural moral relativism. He is aware of the approach of the anthropologist and sociologist that morality is to be evaluated in terms of the culture in

which it is found. Christian morality may therefore be superior for western man, but not necessarily for the Eskimo or Polynesian. If the graduate has read about other religions he may further argue that even if one takes Christian morality as the basis from which to judge, Christian morality does not emerge as superior. It may be that other peoples have not been as effective in enforcing morality, but they have often had high moral standards. Among the Greeks one might point to Aristotle, among the Romans to Cato, Virgil, and Lucretius, and among contemporary religions to the Buddhists, and Muslims. To this person the superior morality argument has little appeal as a defense for the inspiration of the Bible.

### III. Fulfilled Prophecy.

The argument which nineteenth century man considered most weighty was the argument from prophecy. In *Reason and Revelation* Milligan dwelled at length on the prophecy of Daniel, the favorite with apologetes of the time. The argument from fulfilment has continued among conservatives, but because of alleged difficulties with the historicity of Daniel, the focus rather has been on the prophecies concerning Christ. While such an apologetic does indeed have Biblical precedent, it had more appeal in the nineteenth century than it does now.

The average college graduate of today is little influenced by argument from prophecy because he has been drilled to be suspicious of claims about future prediction. He is aware that scientific knowledge aims at prediction, but he expects such prediction to be always accurate about as much as he expects the weatherman to always be right about the weather.

He is likely to respond that anyone with a degree of astuteness can predict events on the horizon. Furthermore, he has read little in the prophecies and because he has not examined the evidence for himself, is inclined to be suspicious. He has been led to believe that every man with fervor has a bill of goods to sell and is going to present what best establishes his case. Inasmuch as the religious man seems especially of this sort he is inclined to take his arguments with a grain of salt, especially when they fail to comply with his own prejudices. If he were to read the Bible himself so that he could form his own judgments he might well be persuaded. But it is difficult to get one, who is accustomed to finding his useful knowledge *anywhere but* in the Bible, to read it.

If one has studied the Bible in a liberal school the problem is of a different sort. It is not likely that much attention was given in his courses to prophecy and fulfillment. In fact, what was discussed probably undermined the power of the prophecy-fulfillment argument. He will have been presented with such views that prophecies are sometimes fulfilled in a general rather than a literal way (Isaiah 9:1, 2; Matthew 4:15). Some prophecies used in the New Testament were not really intended to predict, for example, "out of Egypt have I called my son." (Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:15). Other prophecies cited in the New Testament were fulfilled in an Old Testament setting, for example, Rachel weeping for her children (Jeremiah 31:15; Matthew 2:18). If a prophecy predicts events too far in the future then it must have been written at a later date, for example Isaiah 44, in which Cyrus is mentioned. And if a Hebrew prophet made a prediction which failed, it is unlikely that the prophecy would have been recorded. Regardless of what power we may attribute to the argument from prophecy and ful-

fillment, the typical college graduate these days, for one reason or another, is likely to be unimpressed.

#### IV. The Harmony of the Bible and Science.

Nineteenth century apologists constructed arguments based on a nineteenth century view of science. In particular, they claimed that the Bible was like science in that both proceeded from absolute propositions constructed or discovered inductively. It is true that scientists in the nineteenth century conceived their propositions or laws as absolute. All the data might not be in yet so as to make the law absolutely certain, but every law of science was to be absolute when all the facts were in. Biblical laws were considered by nineteenth century apologists as different in subject matter than natural laws, but nevertheless its laws were proclaimed as absolute. If science has absolute laws then one negative example can call the whole law into question. For example, if one shows that the Piltdown man was a hoax, then the whole law of evolution could be called into question. At the same time, one piece of evidence, if there is none to the contrary is adequate to establish an absolute truth. If evidence can be shown to the effect that the calendar does not account for every hour in known time, then the long day of Joshua must have happened. These lines of argument have force, if the laws of science are absolute, but what if they are not?

Unfortunately, at least for the older apologists, scientists no longer consider their enterprise as the construction of, or deduction from, absolute laws. Three major developments in science have broken down the absolute laws of Newtonian mechanics. The theory of relativity offered by Einstein has had appreciable effect on the older views. If laws are relative

to the place from which they are constructed as relativity would hold, then they cannot very well be absolute in the Newtonian sense. The second breakdown is represented by the Heisenberg indeterminacy principle. Heisenberg, considering the finding that electrons in an atom do not move in a perfectly predetermined orbit, proceeded to explain their movement according to statistical norms rather than according to absolute laws. The result has been that statistical laws have even been applied to the movement of larger bodies. The third influence is older, the theory of evolution, which has affected particularly the life sciences. If evolution characterizes all life, then life is in continual flux, regardless of how minute the changes might be. If this be the case biological laws cannot very well be absolute. If the laws of science are not absolute, then the citing of one exception to a particular law does little damage. All it does is to provide a case in point to the idea that scientific laws are statistical norms rather than absolutes.

An apologist who assumes that scientific laws are absolute cannot hope to influence the thinking of contemporary college graduates. In fact, he will likely be labeled an ignoramus. I remember well the experience of three years ago when I attended a service in one of our churches with a scientist friend. In his sermon the preacher proceeded to argue his case for Christianity as if the scientist considered his laws absolute. On our way home the friend remarked that every time the man talked about science he was wrong, and that he must have learned his science in the nineteenth century. In like manner it is doubtful that citing one case to destroy a scientific theory will affect the contemporary college graduate much. The graduate is not likely to worry too much about one exception, in view of laws being

norms. He is not so concerned with unique items or occurrences, but with general trends.

The person who learns his apologetics on a "quick and easy" basis may find what I have said disturbing. I hope it is clear that it is farthest from my intent to criticize the Biblical Faith. I firmly believe that we of the twentieth century have valid ways of affirming that the Bible is God's Word. But I am likewise persuaded that the apology many of us have carried over from the nineteenth century says little to the average twentieth century college graduate. When offered, it is as if one was speaking into a dead microphone.

## THE DEMANDS OF AN ADEQUATE 20TH CENTURY APOLOGETIC

NEIL R. LIGHTFOOT

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Brother Lightfoot has been preaching for eighteen years and has done local work for several churches in Texas and North Carolina. In addition to his teaching at Abilene Christian College, he is now preaching for the Eleventh and Willis Church of Christ in Abilene.

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“The promise of the Lord proves true” (Psalm

18:30). Here the Psalmist expresses his confidence in the Word of God. He believes that it is trustworthy and reliable and that it is able to stand the test. But every generation must find this out for itself. No amount of faith or breadth of scholarship can be imposed on the next generation. Each generation, although it profits from the learning of the past, is engaged in its own quest, with its own tools of research and in light of its own perspective.

An adequate apologetic for the Christian religion, then, must always be a *new* one. This does not mean that the Bible is out of date, or that it fails to supply the needs of contemporary man. The Bible is the same for all men, and all men need the same message. But this message must be directly related to men in their individual situations. At no point are we so apt to be out-moded as in the type of arguments we make in defense of our supernatural beliefs. Therefore, I would like to list in a few minutes some of the main points an adequate contemporary apologetic must be concerned with and must emphasize.

### The Conservative Position

The first task for the Christian apologist, which is actually a preliminary one, is to make clear the position that he intends to defend. If he is a theological "conservative," he must set the record straight as to what a conservative is and is not. A conservative is not necessarily a literalist. He does not maintain that every word of Scripture has to be understood in a literal sense. Surely we are to understand many of the statements of Jesus in a figurative way. The Gospel of John, for example, is filled with His enigmatic sayings: and these, of course, cannot be taken literally. The

same is true for the prophetic literature of the Old Testament. It abounds in figures and apocalyptic images. Likewise, everyone should know that a statement such as "the four corners of the earth" is figurative language. But several years ago I heard the late Professor Tillich disparage the inspiration of the Bible because of this statement. Bultmann is another example. He is fond of picturing the Bible world as a kind of three-storied universe. I have never found that this is the kind of cosmology taught in the Scriptures. Where is the Scripture that locates hell as down and describes the volcanoes as jaws of the earth? Whatever statements of up and down exist in Scripture are made from the *optical point of view*, not with the heliocentric view in mind. And the point is that the Bible believer does not have to defend an out-moded cosmology.

A conservative is not bound to a dictation theory of inspiration. Unfortunately, this is how he is usually pictured. This is what I found in graduate school—others were always trying to force me into a position of mechanical inspiration. "All Scripture is inspired by God . . ." (II Tim. 3:16). There are various possible interpretations of this verse; but the conservative believes that in a positive manner the Bible is God-breathed. At this point he wants to have a Scriptural view of Scripture, just as he wants to have a Scriptural view of any other subject. Although he believes in a full and complete inspiration, he is aware of certain human elements in Scripture. Each writer has his own vocabulary and uses the materials at his disposal in his own way; different New Testament writers quote the same Old Testament passage in slightly different forms; and so forth. These facts demand the conclusion that Scripture is both human and divine. It is something like the incarnation of

Jesus: Jesus as the God-man was fully human and fully divine. In the same way the human writers plus the Holy Spirit produced a work that is fully human and yet fully divine. No effective twentieth century apologetic can be presented without this clarification.

A conservative is not an obscurantist or an anti-intellectual. He is not a person who is unwilling to open his eyes. He is not opposed to a scientific study of the Bible. He takes delight in the wonderful world of Biblical manuscripts; he knows the principles of Old Testament and New Testament criticism; he is as much at home in the researches of Wadi Murabaat as he is in the church pew. He may not accept all the "critical" theories, but he does not oppose a minute study of the Biblical documents; and when he rejects a theory, it is only because he believes the theory is uncritical and unscientific.

### The Bible and Science

It goes without saying that the twentieth century apologist must come to grips with the problems of modern science. Our age is an age of science. This is unfortunate—not because science is wrong, but because it is materialistic. Science works with *things*; and *things* are what we come to value. Our school curriculums are largely determined by science; our lives are pampered by the gadgets of science; and more and more every day we are speaking the language of science. How unimaginably short-sighted that we should willfully remain ignorant of science!

There are some problems that exist between the Bible and science. Some of these problems are difficult, and we

would do well to understand the claims of science and use the best materials available in handling these problems. We have not always done this. A few years ago (and even now?) our standard approach was to quote from Harry Rimmer. Now I have nothing against Harry Rimmer's books so long as they are neither seen nor heard. The trouble with Rimmer is: (1) He is not a scientist; (2) He does not document what he says, which is especially necessary since he is not a scientist, and (3) He does not deal with the critical issues at stake. Take as an example his *Modern Science and the Genesis Record*. Chapter Five in this book is entitled "Geology and the Rock of Ages." One would expect that here Rimmer would discuss the relationship of Genesis and Geology. But what does he do? He completely by-passes the fundamental issue that has been discussed for 150 years, that of catastrophism and uniformitarianism. Instead he discusses such things as the "precious" stones, saying that they are specific creations made solely for the delight of man. I do not doubt but that there is much good in Rimmer's books, but what kind of an effect will a chapter like that have on the mind of a trained scientist?

I would strongly recommend that we become better acquainted with the concepts of modern science. Read carefully the textbooks that your children are studying. Check on the articles that appear in such journals as *Science*, *Scientific American*, the *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*, and the publications of the newly-formed *Creation Research Society*. In addition I would recommend the following: Bernard Ramm, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture*; Russell L. Mixter (ed.), *Evolution and Christian Thought Today*; American Scientific Affiliation, *Modern Science and Christian Faith*; Paul A. Zimmerman (ed.), *Darwin, Evolution, and*

*Creation*; Henry M. Morris and John C. Whitcomb Jr., *The Genesis Flood* ( a controversial book); and J. D. Thomas, *The Doctrine of Evolution*.

As the Christian apologist confronts the views of science, he must, for one thing, make sure that science gives him a fair hearing. Science in recent years, having piled up such an impressive record of gains, often has not been willing to do this. It may say, as one astronomer recently put it, that about five billion years ago our solar system came into being "with a big bang"; but, generally speaking, it has not been willing to allow for a "creation." It remains true that many scientists refuse to consider the possibility of a theological First Cause. Their attitude is similar to that of the eighteenth century philosopher, David Hume. One cannot read much of his *Essay on Human Understanding* without seeing how bitter he was in his opposition to all forms of religion. He boldly challenges the Christian to prove his position. Then he says that no matter what the nature of the proof, if in any way it is connected with the rise of a new religion, that proof should be dismissed without further examination. How can one prove anything to a person like this? And this is exactly like the utterly hopeless dilemma that the Christian is pressed into by dogmatic science.

In this connection there is another thing that a Christian apologist must do. Again and again he must insist that all realities are not material, that the procedures followed by the physical sciences such as chemistry and physics cannot cover all phases of human life. In short, he must emphatically deny the pan-applicability of the scientific method. And there are good reasons for his doing this. Science states things in terms of quantities, but quantities are not qualities. Science deals with measurable and observable things, but

are we to conclude that there are no immeasurable and inobservable realities? The Bible says, and many people believe, that God is love. Can the scientific method evaluate a statement like this, or pass upon it as true or false? Science has its own categories which are good for its purposes, but these categories cannot be stretched to extend to every experience in the whole universe.

### The Bible and History

Another important area where the contemporary apologist needs to stay in touch is that of history. Numerous discoveries have been made recently that throw light on the Bible as history, and these discoveries comprise a very solid argument for believing the Bible. A hundred years ago the trend of Biblical research was in the opposite direction; and at the end of the nineteenth century skepticism toward the Bible had grown to such an extent that many scholars regarded Biblical names and places as little more than the accumulation of pious legend. But how remarkably changed are the views of Bible scholars today! Within the last three or four decades the science of archaeology has uncovered an enormous wealth of material that illumines and confirms hundreds of details recorded in the Bible. A few years ago Dr. W. F. Albright of Johns Hopkins University wrote an article entitled "Return to Biblical Theology."<sup>1</sup> Under the title of the article stood the caption:

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<sup>1</sup> W. F. Albright, "Return to Biblical Theology," *Christian Century*, Vol. 75 (November 19, 1958), pp. 1328-31.

"ARCHAEOLOGY HAS SET THE BIBLE—THE WHOLE BIBLE—ONCE AGAIN AT THE CENTER OF HISTORY. LET CHRISTIANITY DRAW NEW STRENGTH FROM IT!" In the article Dr. Albright states concerning the Bible: "Thanks to modern research we now recognize its substantial historicity. The narratives of the patriarchs, of Moses and the exodus, of the conquest of Canaan, of the judges, the monarchy, exile and restoration, have all been confirmed and illustrated to an extent that I should have thought impossible forty years ago." And Dr. Albright adds, "In the center of history stands the Bible." It is not an exaggeration, then, to say that once again the Bible is being meticulously combed for every bit of historical information that it contains. Increasingly, it is being believed in our day that the Bible can be trusted as a reliable source on matters of history.

### The Only Son

The contemporary apologist, above all things, must direct attention to Jesus. There is much about science that we will never know. We might raise a hundred questions about the early chapters of Genesis or about any book in the Bible. But in the end the most important question is simply, "What do you think about Christ?" He is the Rock on which the church is built. No other question, even that of the inspiration of Scripture, is so vital.

History tells us that Jesus lived and died in the time of Pontius Pilate. There is no question about that. What kind of man was He? Liberal Protestants are ready to answer that Jesus was a good man, the greatest of good men, a religious genius who pointed to a good way, and lived and

died for it. But alas, this imaginary portrait is passing out of sight. The trouble is that there really is no *evidence* for this kind of Jesus. Alan Richardson is right when he says:

It is indisputable that all the historical evidence that we have goes to show that Jesus worked miracles of the kind described in the Gospel. There is no historical evidence to show that Jesus did not work miracles . . . The evidence that Jesus worked miracles is just as strong, and is of precisely the same quality and texture, as that He taught that God *is* Father and that His disciples should forgive one another. We cannot *on historical grounds alone* accept the evidence for the one and reject that for the other . . . If the Gospels do not give us a reliable picture of the Jesus of history, we can have no genuinely historical knowledge about Him. <sup>2</sup>

The only alternatives for the Jesus of the Bible is a reconstructed Jesus that is *unhistorical* or a Jesus that we know nothing about.

The Fourth Gospel describes Jesus as the only Son (John 1:14, 18; 3:16). The term used here is *monogenes* which means *only, single of its kind*. Jesus is the unique Son: there never was, nor will there ever be, another like Him. This is what we have been saying for years. Today it is as important as ever to make Him the subject of our preaching and teaching, and the central argument for Christianity.

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<sup>2</sup> Alan Richardson, *Christian Apologetics* (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1947), p. 170.

## THE NEED FOR NEW TRANSLATIONS

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Since the Old Testament was written in the Hebrew language, with some portions in Aramaic; and since the New Testament was written in Greek; and since the people of the earth were not of one language, it was natural that the problem of translations should arise. The story of translations through the centuries is indeed an interesting one.

The Old Testament was translated into Greek in the third century B.C. and this became the most-used Bible

of Greek-speaking Jews until the end of the first century A.D. It was also widely used by Greek-speaking Christians in the early years of the Christian era, and was the text most often quoted by the New Testament writers. It differs in some particulars from the Masoretic text and there are some mistakes of translation. However, it was widely used and had a great influence. Also, after the Jewish exile the Targums began to emerge; these were translations of the Old Testament into Aramaic. By the fifth century A.D. there were two official Targums, which illustrate translation tendencies.

The entire Bible was translated into many languages by the early Christians, and since these translations were made from an early Greek text, they form a very important tool for the Textual Critic. The Syriac Old Testament was begun as early as the middle of the second century A.D. The standard version is known as the *Peshitta* or "simple" version. Then the Bible in Old Latin appeared by 150 A.D. It was based on the Septuagint. Then there was the later Latin version of Jerome which was translated directly from Hebrew. Jerome spent the years 390-405 in completing this important work. Other versions were the Armenian, the Coptic, the Ethiopic, and Slavonic. Of course, as the centuries went by, translations have multiplied, and the Bible has come to be a Book of many, many tongues.

This particular study has to do more with English versions and we now turn to notice a brief history of the English Bible. Missionaries entered England with the message about Christ in the fourth century. However, since Latin was the dominant language of the time, the early Bibles of England were in that tongue. The history of the English Bible had its beginning with the arrival of the Germanic-speaking Angles and Saxons and Jutes in England in the fifth century

and their subsequent evangelization in the two following centuries. Some old English poems give parts of the Bible in metrical form; the venerable Bede arranged in metric form various portions of Scripture narrative. In the tenth century Alfred the Great played an important part in giving his people parts of the Bible in English. Later in the same century Abbot Aelfric translated portions of the Old Testament.

The Old English period ends soon after the Norman conquest of 1066. The language had undergone quite a change under the influence of the French and now becomes Middle English. The period of the Bible translation into Middle English begins about 1300. Traces of translations of the Psalms and parts of the New Testament appear even before Wycliffe. His work was in the fourteenth century. His English Bible, completed about 1382, was the first translation of the entire Bible into English. It was translated from the Latin. Wycliffe's first edition was later corrected and edited by one of his associates, John Purvey, and this translation held the field until the appearance of Tyndale's translation.

Tyndale's translation of the New Testament from the Greek appeared in 1525. The translation of Miles Coverdale appeared in 1535. Coverdale depended on the Latin and on the versions of Luther and Tyndale. In 1537 the version called "Matthew's Bible" was published; it was the work of John Rogers, a former associate of Tyndale, and was made up largely of portions from the works of Tyndale and Coverdale. In 1539 there appeared a revision of the work of Rogers which was produced by Richard Taverner. It was the same year that the "Great Bible" appeared, which was in reality a revision of Matthew's Bible carried out by Coverdale. In effect, the "Great Bible" was Tyndale's ver-

sion, having undergone several revisions. Cranmer's editions of this Bible were the first to bear on the title pages the words: "This is the Bible appointed to the use of the churches."

In 1560 the "Geneva Bible" was published in Geneva; it showed great scholarship, but aroused opposition because of the prevalence of the Reformed viewpoint in the marginal comments. So, the English bishops began a revision of the Great Bible; as a result, the Bishop's Bible appeared in 1568. It was an improvement over the versions of the first half of the sixteenth century, but lacked the precision of the Geneva Bible.

In the period between the appearance of the Bishops' Bible and the Authorized Version, the Catholic Version of the New Testament was made in the English college at Rheims in 1582; the Old Testament was produced in the English college at Douai in 1610. Both were made from the Vulgate. The entire work was later revised by Bishop Chaloner in 1749.

The Authorized or King James Version appeared in 1611. The purpose of the translators was to provide a translation for both private and public use—a translation which would meet with general favor. The king was somewhat of a scholar himself and took up the work with enthusiasm, insisting from the beginning that marginal notes be omitted. The work of the committee was essentially that of revising the Bishops' Bible of 1602. The first copies had on their title pages, "Appointed to be Read in Churches," and were dedicated to the king. The new version immediately displaced the Bishops' Bible in public services and in a few decades it became *the* version for the English-speaking people all over

the world. At first, it found strong competition in the Geneva Bible. It, however, attained a place of supremacy which it was to enjoy for the next three centuries or more.

The English Revised Version was completed in 1885, and the American Standard Version came out in 1901. Two committees had worked jointly on the project with the aim of revising the King James Version. In the English Version the preferences of the American committee were printed in an appendix. Fourteen years later the American committee issued the American edition which differed from the English mostly in matters of spelling, idioms, word order, etc.

The Revised Standard Version was completed in 1952. It was the purpose of the International Council of Religious Education, in this version, to revise the American Standard Version and yet retain as much of the literary qualities of the King James Version as possible.

The New English Bible appeared in 1961. It is not, like its predecessors, a revision. The committee which produced this version intended to give a sense rather than a word translation. It also differs from earlier versions in that its text is eclectic in nature, not being that of Westcott-Hort, Nestle, or any other particular text, but rather a combination of various sources.

In addition to the versions herein described, there have been many translations made by individuals such as that of Weymouth, Phillips, Goodspeed, etc. It has been estimated that about a hundred such works, mostly New Testaments, were published between the time of the publishing of the King James and the publishing of the Revised Versions. In this connection, mention should be made of *The Living*

*Oracles*, a translation edited by Alexander Campbell in 1826. It was a compilation of the works of MacKnight, Doddridge, and George Campbell. However, no translation made by an individual has ever been able to gain the stature which has been attained by those made by committees of scholars.

But the question which we now wish to raise and at least partially answer is: Why are new translations needed from time to time?

### Improvement of Greek Text

The continued and patient labors of the science of Textual Criticism has given to the world an improved Greek text, and this is one reason for new versions.

Textual Criticism is the process by which the original text of a document is determined. The work of the Textual Critic is to ascertain the true form of a literary work as originally composed by the author. The materials used by the textual critic are the uncial and cursive manuscripts, the ancient versions, and the patristic quotations.

Through the years, beginning especially with the Revival of Learning and the invention of the printing press, there has been much advance by Textual Criticism. About sixty-five years after the invention of printing a printed Greek New Testament was produced. This edition, published by Erasmus in 1516, went through four editions by 1535. The third edition, published in 1522, became the foundation of the *Textus Receptus* in England. The work of Erasmus became the standard for 300 years. One of the later editions of Elzevir, which was based on the earlier work of Bezae and

Stevens, became the standard text for the European continent. The period of the unlimited reign of the Textus Receptus was 1516-1750.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century there began a struggle toward a better text. In 1707, John Mill, an English scholar, published a New Testament upon which he had worked for years. Although there was no great improvement in the text, there was a textual apparatus and a prolegomena. Later in the same century J. A. Bengel laid down some sound principles which made him famous. He contended for weighing rather than dating or counting manuscripts. The work was continued by Wettstein and Semler. Griesbach, ushering in the modern method, laid the foundation which later scholars were to build upon. The text of Lachmann (1831) was the first thoroughly critical text of modern times to disregard wholly the Textus Receptus which had been the foundation for the King James Version. Among those who worked upon Lachmann's foundation four names are pre-eminent: Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort. It was Tischendorf who found the oldest known manuscript with all the New Testament books. In 1881 Westcott and Hort published a completely revised edition of the Greek text. They had given thirty years of painstaking labor to this monumental work. They gave great weight to the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts. The Westcott-Hort text dealt the final blow to the old type of text upon which the King James Version was based.

In more recent times there have been many other discoveries among which are the following: the Sinaitic Syriac manuscript, the Koridethi Gospels, the Chester Beatty Papyri, the John Ryland's Fragment, the Ferrar Group which is designated as "Family 13," and others. Additional studies

are constantly being made of the ancient versions and of the patristic quotations. So, the work of textual criticism goes on.

It can be seen that improvements in the basic Greek text is a factor entering into new translations. The vellum uncial manuscripts which are relied upon so heavily in constructing a Greek text have become accessible since the King James Version was made. These date back to 300-450 A.D. The Textus Receptus was based on inferior and much later manuscripts.

A passage such as John 7:53—8:11 has been shown to be an interpolation. The American Standard Version separates this passage from the rest of the text by brackets; the Revised Standard Version puts it in a footnote. Other passages as Acts 8:37 and I John 5:7 have been shown to be interpolations—not a part of the original text.

#### Advance in Understanding of Greek Language

Discoveries have been made which throw more light upon the language in which the New Testament was written. The textual critic now has at his disposal seventy-eight catalogued papyrus manuscripts, 247 capital letter uncial manuscripts, 2,623 cursive manuscripts, and 1,968 lectionary manuscripts. In his preface to the *Living Oracles* Alexander Campbell made this claim for his day. He said, "We are in possession of much better means of making an exact translation than they were at the time when the common version appeared. The original is much better understood now than it was then. The conflicts of so many critics have elicited a great deal of sound critical knowledge which was not in the possession of any translators before the last century."

Various sources have become available within the last two generations which have given scholars an improved knowledge of the Greek. Further study of old materials continues to yield new results. The principal body of new material has been the fragments of Greek papyrus from Egypt of which thousands have been published in the past sixty years. These documents are contemporary with the New Testament; they are the natural reflections of the ordinary speech of the common people. In subject matter and in idiomatic expressions they throw much light on the Koine Greek. The advance in the understanding of the language which Campbell claimed for his day can surely be claimed for our day.

#### Inaccuracies in Older Translations

It has often been said that no single translation is perfect. It would be expecting too much to hope for a perfect version. However, where improvement is possible, then improvement should be made. "Grandchildren" and not "nephews" is the correct rendering of I Timothy 5:4; in Matthew 23:24 "strain out" is correct, not "strain at." "Every form of evil" is correct in I Thessalonians 5:22, not "all appearance of evil." The King James Version was misleading in its use of the one word, "hell," to translate three different Greek words. Other instances of rendition of the same word by various English words are plentiful.

#### The Changing Nature of Language

Another thing which makes new translations necessary is the changing nature of the English language or of any living language. A living language is continually changing. Words and phrases, like customs in apparel, become obso-

lete. Some come to have an entirely different signification. Some come to the point that they convey ideas contrary to their former meaning.

"We do you to wit" is, to many, almost as unintelligible as the Greek. "Conversation" formerly meant what a person did; it now means what he says. "Let" means to hinder in the Authorized Version; to us it means the very opposite. "Carriages" no longer mean "baggage" as in the seventeenth century. "Before" makes much better sense to us than "or ever." "Meat" does not have the significance it once had—it once meant "food." "Sneezing" is more intelligible to us than "neeing." A "steersman" or a "pilot" of a ship means more to modern man than a "governor" of one. A "platter" now signifies what was once meant by "charger." Instances of words which have changed in meaning could be multiplied into the hundreds. More recent versions have made these terms more intelligible to a modern reader, especially a young person.

### Conclusion

Surely, no one who has an understanding of the history of our Bible will make light of the work of those who have gone before us. A Book that has had the influence of the King James Version and which has withstood the onslaughts of the centuries is not to be ridiculed. It comes of poor grace for one to speak disparagingly of so noble a Book. It is still a wonderful translation and its beauty is unsurpassed. There are features of this great Book which will likely never be surpassed, or even equaled, by any other translation.

More recent translations have corrected some mistakes of

the King James Version, but they are not perfect by any means. In fact, at times, they have fallen into serious blunders. But they are valuable. At times they throw much light on a passage. The serious student of the Bible will have several translations on his desk.

## EVALUATING CURRENT ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

J. W. ROBERTS

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He was born at Lexington, Tennessee, August 28, 1918, and lived most of his grade and high school life at Clarksburg, Tennessee. He graduated from high school at Burkesville, Kentucky, where his father, R. L. Roberts, Sr., had moved to preach. After attending Freed-Hardeman College, 1936-38, Brother Roberts preached two years at Iraan, Texas, and then finished his B.A. degree at Abilene Christian College (1942). He married Delno Wheeler of Pulaski, Tennessee, in 1942. They lived in Wichita, Kansas, from 1942-45 where their son, Jay, was born and where Brother Roberts received the M.A. degree from the University of Wichita. Following this they



lived at Indianapolis, Indiana, where their daughter, Kathy, was born. In 1946 they returned to Abilene to teach in ACC, where they have been since except for a leave of absence to work toward a doctorate at the University of Texas (1955). Mrs. Roberts has been secretary to President Morris since 1953.

Brother Roberts is a frequent speaker on lectureships and in gospel meetings. He has written for many of the papers of the brotherhood and is a staffwriter of the *Firm Foundation*. He has been editor of the *Restoration Quarterly*, a scholarly Biblical journal, since its founding in 1957. Articles by him have appeared not only in the *Restora-*

tion Quarterly but also in such journals as *The Bible Translator* and *The Expository Times*. He published *A Commentary on the New Testament Epistle of James* in 1963 (the R. B. Sweet Co.) and has written three of *The Living Word* adult Bible study series quarterlies.

Brother Roberts' major field of study is New Testament Greek. He has been interested in the problem of Biblical translation for several years, having conducted several graduate seminars in which the subject and its problems have been investigated.

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The answer to the question "What is the Best New Testament?" may perhaps be obtained by considering some of the problems facing any modern translator of a part or all of the New Testament and by evaluating some of the modern versions in the light of these problems.

A translator faces three basic problems:

1. What Text Will I Use to Translate From? He may translate from one principal MS (e.g., the Vatican or Codex B); he may translate from some known resultant text made by a man or group of men comparing various MSS and other evidences for the original text (e.g., the King James was made from the Beza edition of Erasmus' text of 1516); or, he may use either of these as a base and construct his own textual base, varying from his source or not as the evidence for various readings seems strong or weak.

2. Shall the Text be Translated Completely New or Shall I Revise Some Existing Version? In this respect the King James Version is almost totally the result of a slight revision of the Tyndale and Coverdale translations which had preceded it. The English Revised of 1880 is in turn a revision

of the King James, the American Standard Edition of the Revised is a revision of the English Revised; and the Revised Standard Version is a revision of the English and American Standard Revised (with the King James in mind also, of course). On the other hand, a translator might translate directly from the original source without paying attention to what has gone before. In this case, he may rightly argue that he is not "changing" any translation, for he is making an original translation and not revising one. There may be argument for keeping the continuity with the great tradition of the past in the English Bible, but no one can rightly deny that there may also be argument for a fresh, new translation in which, for example, the evidence does not have to overcome the disadvantage of needing a 2/3 majority to establish a correct translation or change a textual error.

3. What Style of Translation Shall I Adopt? Shall the translation be kept as literal, using word-for-word rendering, leaving the Greek idioms unexplained? Or shall the version be a "free" one, striving for a literary and/or vernacular quality, making sure that the reader clearly understands the rendering in the light of his own speech and circumstances? This means that money terms, time expressions, idioms, and all grammatical constructions and word meanings in their context will be rendered according to their meaning in the language of the translation. This involves rendering the "sense" or the "meaning" of the translation and often results in a decision having to be made on alternate possibilities, with the other possibility being put in the margin. A third alternative for a style is that of a paraphrase or expanded translation. Such paraphrases give the translator the opportunity of drawing out the connection and context and of bringing out the untranslatable nuances of the Greek. Anyone who knows Greek well knows that at some

points it is necessary to paraphrase to make Greek meanings intelligible in English. But how far should this be taken? Continued paraphrases of the New Testament have long been available to the English reader in such works as that of James McKnight *On the Epistles*, and of Phillip Doddridge's *The Family Companion*, in many volumes of the *International Critical Commentary*. A well known English scholar F. F. Bruce has printed in the last few years a paraphrase of several New Testament books in the *Evangelical Quarterly*.

In addition to these three problems, a modern translation must face the criticism of various evaluators as to the group which has sponsored the translation and the theological reputations of the translators. Such is the suspicion generated by denominational and theological differences that a version may be condemned by its association. Is it a fair question to ask if it is possible for a group which has a majority of theological liberals on the committee to make a fair and impartial decision as to text and meaning? If the critic's answer is "no," then it is in order to ask if this is a rational and reasonable answer.

### THREE MODERN VERSIONS

In the light of these problems it is proposed that we take three modern versions which illustrate respectively the three styles of translation mentioned and see by analyzing them if we can arrive at some answer to our question as to which is the best translation.

*THE NEW AMERICAN STANDARD NEW TESTAMENT*. We choose first the *New American Standard New Testament* (NAS), published in 1963 by the Lockman Founda-

tion and Press. This translation is a lineal descendant of the American Standard Edition of the Revised Version of 1901 and thus of the English Revision of 1880. Thus it is (like the Revised Standard Version of 1946-52, though in a more conservative fashion) a revision and not a "new" translation, thus preserving the traditional and familiar in the long history of the English Bible. As to text this family of English Revised Versions began in 1880 by adopting in a large measure the textual theory of Wescott and Hort, which rejected the text of Erasmus (the so-called *Textus Receptus*) as the primitive text type and reverted to that of the great uncial MSS of the 4th-5th centuries A.D. This meant that beginning in the 1880 translation many passages which had been added by medieval scribes for various reasons were dropped and still others changed to the more primitive and correct reading. This practice was continued in the ASV of 1901 and in the RSV of 1946, except that Nestle's modern editions (which still reflect for the most part the Westcott-Hort text) become the actual source. However the strict family-theory of MS is no longer followed, allowing a more eclectic choice—that is, the consideration of any given variant on its own merit. The NAS also follows the Nestle text over-all, though somewhat inconsistently, sentiment seems to have intervened to cause the inclusion of such late readings as the Doxology in the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:13) and those of John 5:2; 7:53-8:11; Luke 24:12.

The point is well taken that most all modern versions, even the conservative ASV and NAS, have abandoned the late and inaccurate text which lay behind the King James Version. Most people know enough about textual criticism today to understand and appreciate this. But in reality much of the criticism against modern versions stems out of the charge that in adopting the better reading the translator

sometimes has to choose an expression which the critic thinks "gives up the deity of Christ, etc."

But it is on the question of style that attention needs to be focused. The principal reason for the NAS was that the committee feared that the ASV, which "was a monumental product of applied scholarship, assiduous labor and thorough procedure," was about to die or pass from the scene. They thus undertook to "present to the modern reader a revision of the American Standard Version in clear and contemporary language" and in doing so to "adhere to the original languages of the Holy Scriptures as closely as possible and at the same time to obtain a fluent and readable style."

Undoubtedly this has played a major role. Since the days of the English revised the theory has existed that a literal or word-for-word translation is not the "best" kind of translation but in reality is the only acceptable one. Men like B. F. Westcott, F. A. J. Hort, and J. B. Lightfoot who held this theory prevailed in the methodology of the English Revised Committee. Dr. Westcott made this plain in his book *Some Lessons of the Revised Version*, which he published as a rationale of the translation. In it he said that the version had been made on the "fundamental principle of fidelity" (p. 171) and that "our duty was to place the English reader as nearly as possible in the position of the reader of the original text" (p. 167). This theory was continued in the ASV and becomes the real *raison d'être* for the NAS.

This principle is important, for it often becomes the one criterion by which critics evaluate new translations. Recently the following statement occurred in a popular journal:

A translation should convey as much of the original text in as few words as possible, yet preserve the original atmosphere and emphasis. The translator should strive for the nearest approximation in words, concepts, and cadence. He should scrupulously avoid adding words or ideas not demanded by the text. His job is not to expand or explain, but to translate and preserve the spirit and force of the original—even, if need be, at the expense of modern colloquialisms—so long as the resultant translation is intelligible.

This statement and this principle of translation which it upholds seem correct and plausible. But it is often misunderstood and can be misleading. Bishop Westcott in his book admits that the principle often fails: "perfect faithfulness is impossible." The principle leads to such nonsensical practices as casting English sentences in the word order of Greek rather than English, in printing in italics words which are implied in the Greek with its more compact syntax but for which there is no exact word in Greek standing over against the English. Word-for-word translation is not only often ambiguous, but often misleading, since the idea obtained by the English reader from the unEnglish phrasing is a different one from the original intention of the writers.

This then has long been a major criticism of the English Revised and the American Standard. Thus it is interesting that the NAS committee add to their declaration of adhering to the original languages their intention "at the same time to obtain a fluent and readable style according to current English usage." Using this principle they have reworked the entire translation and have indeed produced a much more readable version which I would call "one of the best, if not the best."

But it is interesting that to the extent to which they have increased the readability of the ER and ASV, to that extent they have usually abandoned the principle of "faithfulness" or "strictness" of translation. When the pilot edition came out and I was sent a copy, I made a careful collation of several portions of it with the ASV and my Nestle's Greek New Testament. What impressed me most was that in almost every place where they had "improved" the translation of the ASV they had done so by abandoning the "literal" Greek construction or idiom and the more etymological meaning for the "sense" or "meaning" of the original when put into English.

All of this leads us to call into question whether the strict, word-for-word translation is, in fact, the only legitimate translation or whether it is the "best" method of translating. If what one is after is a version for "close," that is, word-for-word study, rather than a translation for reading and inspirational study, then an interlinear, which exhibits the Greek word with the English printed directly over it, is a much better tool.

I do not disparage completely the strict method of translation. But I think this principle is overdone as a yardstick for measuring how "good" a translation is. The best translation is that which conveys the same meaning to the English reader that the original readers would have gotten from it. A literal translation will rarely do this.

Let us now look in a brief way at two other New Testament translations.

*THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE.* The New Testament section of the *New English Bible*, a translation by a group of

British scholars from various religious groups, appeared in 1963. It is not a revision of the English Revised, but a completely new translation. The translators proposed to translate as if the Bible had never been rendered into English. This is a principle which we have already explained and defended. Thus they cannot be charged with having "changed" a certain existing version, any more than could have John Wycliffe, the first man to translate the Bible into English. Yet they are often charged with doing this. Again the basis of their text is largely that of Nestle's, though independent decisions have been made on an eclectic principle. The committee thus felt no obligation to consult to see if they were changing or leaving out passages which were in previous English versions. Why, when one can deal with the earliest and best sources, should one be bound by a later and admittedly corrupt one? This method of evaluating the text of all later translations by the text of the King James Version ought to be abandoned. This does not mean that one would agree with every reading adopted by the modern translators, for evidence behind variant reading is often divided, necessitating that the rejected reading be placed in the margin.

As to style, the NEB does not pretend to be a word-for-word translation. It aims rather to be a "meaning" or "sense" translation. It is intended to lend itself to rapid and devotional reading, rather than to "close" study. This results in a transference of ideas rather than words. The translation often becomes a paraphrase (though not an expanded one) where the translators feel that the two idioms do not coincide. The translators feel no need of italics for words not directly represented in Greek as long as the idea is there. Explanatory words are inserted where this helps bring out the play on words apparent in Greek but not in a

literal English rendering. Customs, time references, weights, and measurements are stated in modern rather than ancient wording. Instead of the third watch of the night the hour of the night is given. Even idioms may be given a completely new twist, when they cannot be rendered literally. All this results in an overlying clearness and readability.

This type of translation runs into criticism on the grounds that the "meaning" or "interpretation" involved in the translators' method is human and may be wrong. And this is true. However it is offset by the fact that the word-for-word translation is also involved in "meaning" or "interpretation" process, but this fact is usually not recognized. Consider these points: 1. The word-for-word translation is largely an illusion. The occasional italics lead the non-Greek reading person into thinking that all other words besides the italicized words actually represent corresponding Gk. words. This is far from true. In almost any typical English paragraph fully 1/3 of the words have no Greek correspondents and hardly any two consecutive words in Greek have not in some way been changed or modified in the translation. In other words, the exactness is only superficial. 2. The "literal" connotation of the word-for-word arrangements is also misleading. Where there is one word set over against another, in few instances is the "etymological" or "proper=literal" meaning of the word retained. Since most Greek words have from 2 to 15 meanings beside the "literal" one, this means that "interpretation" has taken place in regard to practically every word when the translator decided which "literal" meaning to put down. Moreover in almost every case the over-all context of the passage has been interpreted by the translator, and the word and sentence meanings have been interpreted accordingly.

What we are saying is that since translators now recognize that every translation which is worthy of the name is really first of all an interpretation it is difficult to find fault with the translation procedures of the New English Bible.

There are points in it that one would differ over. Many of these have been pointed out, and many doubtless will be corrected or changed in later printings.

*THE NEW TESTAMENT IN MODERN ENGLISH.* J.B. Phillips' work will serve to illustrate the third type of translation. We have already spoken of the use that may be obtained from a paraphrase or expanded translation. Generations of people have profited in their study from the paraphrases of McKnight, Doddridge, etc. Too, from what has been said above it will be apparent that we must agree that some passages in Greek cannot be rendered into English without a paraphrase. Perhaps it is natural, therefore, for modern translations to appear which not only paraphrase where necessary for the sense, but also feel that it is permissible and helpful to recast the original completely and even bring in relevant materials or facts or explanations which when added to the more exact meaning of the original help the reader to understand it. *The Amplified Bible* (Zondervan, 1958-64) is one extreme of this type of translation. It utilizes completely foreign and even speculative commentary (in brackets, of course) to illuminate the text. A more conservative example is Phillips' translation (MacMillan, 1958). Phillips claims that while "the translator should feel free to expand or explain, while preserving the original meaning as nearly as can be ascertained," the fact remains, "the translator is not a commentator." In the main, therefore, Phillips recasts the sentence structure and expands the

language to bring out what he thinks is the meaning, but he tries to avoid what is strictly commentary material.

The result is undoubtedly one of the most interesting and readable translations of the Bible. But the main difficulty is that most students and reviewers of Phillips feel that he crosses over the rather thin line between the expansion to bring out the meaning and the extraneous commentary material. For instance in 2 Tim. 1:15 he translates "all those *here* in Asia," which indicates he thinks the book was written from Asia, whereas there is nothing in the letter to indicate this and much to indicate it was written from Rome. But those who will compare Phillips carefully with *The Amplified New Testament* will see that Phillips has a minimum of this type of addition. Over-all he is fairly successful in recasting the sentence into good English and expanding the wording to make clear what he considers the meaning of the original.

Phillips emphasizes that his aim is not to translate for the serious Bible student or for close Bible study. He is aiming, he says, at the one who does not regularly read the Bible and who does not understand why the Bible does not contain the same kind of language as his newspaper or mystery story. In his purpose, one must say that Phillips is quite successful.

Of the three versions which we have noted, we would say that the New English Bible stands midway between the American Standard and its modern representative, the NAS on the one hand, and the translation of Phillips on the other. The process of comparison has shown that there are really more than one legitimate kind of translation and that "strictness" or "literalness" is not necessarily the most

important yardstick for evaluating translations of the New Testament.

Finally let us say a word about the stigma which is often attached to the modern versions because of the presence of Modernist or Theological Liberals on the translation committees. First, it is inconsistent to extol the virtues of the English Revised or the American Standard Version and scorn the "new modernist versions" because of this factor. The English and American committees for the Revision both were predominated by 19th and early 20th century Liberals. The American committee which held itself together until after the turn of the century to shepherd the publication of the 1901 edition, became in fact the founders of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, a society which has been composed of the majority of the liberal Bible Scholars in America from its foundation.

There is (strangely enough to some) no real reason that a Liberal would desire to change the New Testament text or meaning so as to discredit the deity of Jesus Christ. Such men recognize the Bible as a record of THE BELIEF OF THE EARLY CHURCH, and they do not doubt that the early Christians believed the Jesus was divine. They disbelieve miracles and the incarnation not because they do not think the Bible teaches it, but because of their modern empirical or anti-supernatural attitude. Though there is a fear that they may delight to undermine the conservative's faith in the deity of Jesus Christ, I doubt that it is a serious factor in their effort to exhibit what the Bible *says* (as over against their own belief of what *actually* happened or was true). It would seem that this discordant note has been played too long.

As a whole what we need to understand is that all translations are human and tentative. Most of them have excellent points and weak points. The truth of God is apparent in all of them. One of the best methods of study of the Bible is the comparison of many of them.

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## THE GENERAL IMPACT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

B. J. HUMBLE

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Humble's special interests are American church history and, particularly, the history of the Restoration Movement in America, but he has also been interested in archaeology and has studied Biblical archaeology under Prof. William F. Albright.



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Archaeology may be defined as a study of ancient things. The archaeologist is one who excavates the ruins

of the ancient past and by studying the remains of cities, houses, and fortifications, implements of war and tools of peace, coins, pottery, and written materials, he reconstructs the story of the past. Within recent decades archaeology has become a valuable tool in Biblical studies. The reason lies in the nature of the Bible as a book of history. The Bible purports to tell of events that actually happened and can be located at a given time and place in history. At this point the Bible is unique among the world's great religious books. The *Koran* of Islam contains the sayings of one man, Mohammed, during a ten year period of his life. The *Vedas* of the Hindu faith are philosophical rather than historical. But the Bible is different, for it is a chronicle of *historical events* that occurred over a span of thousands of years. These real events described in the Bible fall into two classes. Some are unique and must be seen as the acts of God intruding into the stream of human history. The incarnation of our Lord, His virgin birth, and His bodily resurrection are examples of such unique events. On the other hand, there are thousands of events recorded in the Bible that are not unique and that fall into the usual pattern of human history.

Since the goal of archaeology is to reconstruct the ancient past, and since the Bible relates thousands of events from that past, it becomes obvious that archaeology can be of great value in helping us to understand the Bible. Sometimes, the light of archaeology is general and serves simply to illuminate the Biblical world and its cultures. As we understand the ancient world more fully, its customs and people, geography and civilizations, we can better understand every Biblical event, for they are all set in the framework of that ancient world. In this sense archaeology has added perspective and cultural background to our knowledge of all Biblical events, even those which seem unrelated to specific

archaeological discoveries. Harvard archaeologist G. Ernest Wright has emphasized that the primary purpose of archaeology is not to "prove" the Bible but to rediscover the Biblical world. But Wright has also stated that "in the sense that the Biblical languages, the life and customs of its people, its history, and its conceptions are illuminated in innumerable ways by the archaeological discoveries," archaeology certainly has "proved" the Bible.<sup>1</sup> At other times, the light of archaeology becomes far more specific and some discovery of archaeology—a fragment of a second century manuscript of John, or a reference to King Omrion the famed Moabite Stone—will verify or explain a specific Biblical event.

### *Hittites*

The recent rediscovery of the Hittite empire may be cited as one example of the contribution of archaeology to Biblical studies. The Hittites are a prominent race in the Old Testament story and are mentioned forty times in passages distributed from Genesis to Nehemiah. When the Lord promised Abraham that his seed would inherit Canaan, he listed the Hittites among the nationalities in the land (Gen. 15:20). When Abraham desired a burial place for his beloved Sarah, he bargained with Ephron the Hittite for the Cave of Machpelah (Gen. 23:10). Many centuries later, David fell into sin with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite (2 Sam. 11:3). Despite these Old Testament references, there were nineteenth century scholars who were skeptical of the Bible at this point for no reference to the Hittites had been preserved outside the Bible. There was no trace of such a race in Greek and Latin sources. Scholars wondered how the Hittites could have vanished so completely and without an extra-Biblical trace.

But today, thanks to archaeology, much is known about the Hittite empire. Late in the nineteenth century, Prof. A. H. Sayce found many references to a mysterious "Hatti" in Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions and theorized that these "Hatti" might be the Hittites. Sayce published a book, *The Hittites: The Story of a Forgotten Empire* (1892), but many remained unconvinced. Then in 1906 Hugo Winckler discovered the ancient capital of the Hittite empire at Bogazkoy in central Turkey.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, excavations were carried on by Kurt Bittel, a German archaeologist, and a vast number of clay tablets were discovered, some as early as 1700 B. C., the earliest written example of an Indo-European language.

The Hittite documents included a treaty of peace between the Hittite king, Hattusil, and the Egyptian pharaoh, Rameses II. The treaty was negotiated around 1270 B. C.<sup>3</sup> Other treaties unearthed at Boghazkoy are "suzerainty treaties" in which other kings are vassals to the Hittites. There are interesting parallels between these Hittite "suzerainty treaties" and the Old Testament covenant idea, and scholars like William F. Albright and George Mendenhall have argued that these parallels are proof that the Hebrew covenant concept must go back to the second millennium B. C.<sup>4</sup>

### *Nuzi Tablets*

The Nuzi tablets are another discovery that has contributed many valuable insights into the cultural background of the patriarchal age. Beginning in 1925, excavations were carried on at Nuzi, a site southeast of Ninevah, and thousands of clay tablets dating from the fifteenth century B. C. were unearthed. The people of Nuzi, Nuzians, are the same as

the Horites of the Bible. The customary laws that are revealed in the Nuzi tablets were widely accepted in the world of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and these laws show that many customs described in Genesis accurately reflect the culture of the period. For example, if a Nuzian couple was childless, it was customary for them to adopt a slave as their legal heir. He provided for them during their lifetime and inherited their estate at their death. However, if the couple later had a son, the adopted slave forfeited his place as the heir. This helps to explain the relationship between Abraham and Eliezer and the expectation before the birth of Isaac that Eliezer would become the possessor of Abraham's house (Gen. 15:1-4). Many ancient cultures regarded childless marriages as tragic, and marriage contracts at Nuzi sometimes stipulated that if the wife failed to bear her husband an heir, she must supply her husband with a handmaid who would bear him children. This provision helps us to understand Sarah's giving Hagar to Abraham and Rachel's giving Bilhah to Jacob. These barren women were simply following the customary law of their age. The Nuzi tablets also provided that if a young man had no dowry to exchange for his bride, he could work for a number of years for his prospective father-in-law. Thus, Jacob worked seven years to provide a dowry for Rachel, awakened to find himself tricked into marriage with the wrong girl, and worked another seven years for Rachel. There is another Genesis story that seemed very obscure before the Nuzi tablets were discovered—Laban's concern for the loss of his teraphim. When Jacob finally left Haran after twenty years with Laban, he took his four wives, eleven sons, a substantial part of Laban's property, and Laban's family gods, the teraphim, which Rachel had stolen from her father. When Laban overtook Jacob, he seemed far more incensed at the loss of his teraphim than anything else and asked Jacob, 'Why have

you stolen my gods?" Why should Leban have been so concerned about the loss of his teraphim? According to the Nuzi tablets, whenever there was a dispute about family property, the one who possessed the family gods was entitled to the family estate. Thus, it seemed to Leban that Jacob had done more than trick him out of his cattle; he had stolen the title to the family estate.<sup>5</sup>

The real significance of the Nuzi discoveries lies in their demonstrating the basic historicity of the patriarchal narratives. When nineteenth century liberalism had finished its reconstruction of the Old Testament, the disciples of Wellhausen argued that there was very little historical material in Genesis. The patriarchal stories were considered legendary, and there was real doubt about whether Abraham had ever lived. Now, the Nuzi discoveries have shown that there is no foundation for such skepticism and that the patriarchal stories reflect the culture of their age in a very accurate way.

#### *A Conservative Influence*

Throughout most of the nineteenth century a growing liberalism dominated Biblical and theological studies. Beginning in the universities of Germany, the liberalism of Graf, Wellhausen, Harnack, Troeltsch and many others spread to England and America. The heyday of liberalism came around the beginning of the twentieth century, but during the past fifty years Biblical studies have moved in a more conservative direction. Many factors have been responsible for this shift toward conservatism—the disillusionment of World War I, the realization that progress was not inevitable, and the Neo-orthodoxy of Karl Barth and Emil Bruner. But along with these, the work of Biblical archaeologists, particularly American archaeologists, has been a very important factor in the

rebirth of confidence in the historical accuracy of the Scripture.

Prof. William F. Albright is recognized everywhere as the greatest of these archaeologists, and the conservative thrust of his thought is well known. Reared in Chile, the son of missionary parents, Albright received a doctorate in Semitic languages from Johns Hopkins University in 1916. Three years later, he went to Palestine and soon became the Director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem. He participated in some way—as an excavator, director, or consultant—in every major excavation in Palestine between the first and second world wars, and this was the golden age of Palestinian archaeology. Albright's greatest contribution was made at Tell Beit Mirsim where he perfected a pottery dating method and showed that pottery found in a strata could be used to date the strata.

During these many years of archaeological work there has been a steady shift in Albright's attitude from very radical to much more conservative views. The discoveries of archaeology have convinced Albright that the Bible must be taken seriously as history. He has stated in *The Archaeology of Palestine*, "The writer was director or archaeological adviser of the expeditions which dug the last four towns which we have mentioned; [Shiloh, Gibeah, Bethel, Beth-zur]. The results of these excavations have naturally made an ineffaceable impression on his mind, an impression confirmed by innumerable finds of other archaeologists. Biblical historical data are accurate to an extent far surpassing the ideas of any modern critical students, who have consistently tended to err on the side of hypercriticism."<sup>6</sup> Thus, Albright disagrees completely with the nineteenth century liberals who doubted the historical accuracy of much of the Old Testament.

Albright's greatest work, *From Stone Age To Christianity*, was published in 1940 and later translated into German, French, and Hebrew. In 1956 Albright wrote a new introduction for an Anchor paperback edition. Reflecting on how his views had changed, he wrote, "I defend the substantial historicity of patriarchal tradition, without any appreciable change in my point of view, and insist, just as in 1940-46, on the primacy of oral tradition over written literature. I have not surrendered a single position with regard to early Israelite monotheism but, on the contrary, consider the Mosaic tradition as even more reliable than I did then.... in other words, I have grown more conservative in my attitude to Mosaic tradition."<sup>7</sup> Albright's attitude toward the authorship of the Pentateuch is also far more conservative than the liberals who followed Wellhausen. Albright believes that the language of our Hebrew text of the Pentateuch is from the period of the Hebrew monarchy, but he insists that the Pentateuch is "essentially Mosaic."

Nelson Glueck, President of Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, is another important American archaeologist. Glueck spent twenty-five years (1932-1959) in the exploration of countless sites in the Negev in southern Palestine, and he, too, has been impressed by the remarkable accuracy of the Bible's historical statements. Glueck has written, "It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible. And, by the same token, proper evaluation of Biblical descriptions has often led to amazing discoveries. They form tesserae in the vast mosaic of the Bible's almost incredibly accurate historical memory."<sup>8</sup> To illustrate how confidence in the Bible's accuracy has led to archaeological discoveries,

Glueck has cited his own famous work at Tell-el-Kheleifeh, the Biblical Ezion-Geber. According to Glueck, "The whereabouts of Solomon's long-lost city of Ezion-Geber was for centuries an unfathomable mystery, because no one paid attention to the Biblical statement that it was located 'beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom' (1 Kings 9:26)." And this was exactly where Glueck found it in 1938. Assuming, as Glueck did, that the statements of the Bible were accurate, he found that it was "not too difficult" to rediscover the long-sought Ezion-Geber. The Bible describes King Solomon as having great furnaces for smelting copper and a seaport at Ezion-Geber, and Glueck found evidence of this vast copper smelting industry. The discoveries include a great room with walls that had become glazed from the copper fumes, a series of holes in the wall which took advantage of the wind and served as a natural flue, and huge crucibles weighing hundreds of pounds.

The most important work of G. Ernest Wright of Harvard, who received his training in archaeology under Albright, is his book *Biblical Archaeology*. Commenting on the role of archaeology, Wright stated in this book, "For the most part archaeology has substantiated and illuminated the biblical story at so many crucial points that no one can seriously say that it is little but a congeries of myth and legend."<sup>9</sup>

The work of the three men who have been cited—William F. Albright, Nelson Glueck, and G. Ernest Wright—indicates that archaeological research has played an important role in producing a far more conservative climate in Biblical studies. Whereas nineteenth century liberals relegated vast parts of the Bible to the limbo of legend, archaeologists now respect "the incredibly accurate historical memory of the Bible." Even so, archaeologists state emphatically that their primary

purpose is not to "prove" the Bible but to recover as much data as possible about the Biblical world. Nelson Glueck has cautioned that the Bible "is primarily a theological document, which can never be 'proved,' because it is based on belief in God, whose Being can be scientifically suggested but never scientifically demonstrated."<sup>10</sup> The great truths of Biblical faith—the existence of God, the deity of Jesus Christ, and the inspiration of the Bible—all lie in the realm of faith and beyond archaeological verification. Still, the Bible is a book of history, describing real events that happened in time and space. As a result of the discoveries of modern archaeology, we can have far greater confidence in the accuracy of Bible history, and with this confidence we bow in faith before the Christ whose life gave meaning to all history.

FOOTNOTES

1. G. Ernest Wright, *Biblical Archaeology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1957), p. 27.
2. Jack Finegan, *Light From The Ancient Past* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), p. 165.
3. Wright, *Biblical Archaeology*, p. 60.
4. George E. Mendenhall, "Covenant Forms in Israelite Tradition," *Biblical Archaeologist*, XVII (September, 1954), pp. 50-76.
5. John Bright, *A History of Israel* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1959), p. 71. Also, Finegan, *Light From The Ancient Past*, pp. 54-55.
6. William F. Albright, *The Archaeology of Palestine* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1960), p. 229.
7. William F. Albright, *From The Stone Age To Christianity* (Garden City: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1957), p. 2.
8. Nelson Glueck, *Rivers In The Desert* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1959), p. 31.
9. Wright, *Biblical Archaeology*, p. 18.
10. Glueck, *Rivers In The Desert*, p. 31.

## THE CONTRIBUTION OF SPECIFIC SITES AND FINDS

CLYDE M. WOODS

Born January 10, 1936, Clyde M. Woods was reared by Christian parents and was baptized into Christ at about the age of fifteen by Brother Stoy Pate. Graduating from Central High School of Memphis in 1954, Clyde Woods entered Freed-Hardeman College that fall and studied there until June, 1957 when he transferred to Abilene Christian where he received the B.A. degree with honors in May, 1958. Woods next attended Harding Graduate School at Memphis for three years to earn the M.A., M.R.E. and Th.M. degrees. From Harding Graduate School Woods went on to do doctoral study at Hebrew Union College and in 1965 completed a Ph.D. program there, majoring in Palestinian Jewish literature of the Tannaic Period (approximately 100 B.C. to 200 A.D.) While at Harding Graduate School, Woods took in marriage the lovely Ann

Tatum whom he had met and courted at Freed-Hardeman. A preacher of eleven years experience, Brother Woods now serves on the Bible faculty of Freed-Hardeman College.



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One type of material found by archeological activity consists of written records and documents from the past. Among such materials four discoveries which stand out in my mind as highly significant for Bib-

lical study certainly deserve consideration. These are the Rosetta Stone, the Behistun Inscription, the Egyptian papyri, and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

*The Rosetta Stone.* This black granite monument about the size of a pulpit stand (45" high, 28½" wide, 11" thick) was uncovered in 1799 by an engineer in Napoleon's Egyptian expeditionary force. He and his men dug the foundation for a fort at the town of Rosetta, near the mouth of the westernmost branch of the Nile. Inscribed in Greek and two sets of then undecipherable language characters, the stone turned out to be a memorial set up by priests of Memphis about 195 B. C. in honor of their ruler. The two sets of language characters paralleling the Greek proved to be two types of Egyptian writing—the ancient, complicated hieroglyphic script and a later, less complicated, common Egyptian script. Thus, the memorial found at Rosetta offered the scholarly world a text recording the same information in three languages, two of which were unknown; such a text might possibly serve as the instrument by which the many mysterious writings of ancient Egypt could be translated. Largely through the patience, diligence and brilliance of the French scholar Jean Francois Champollion this possibility became a reality in 1822. From that time on, what the ancient Egyptians had recorded for posterity was no longer incomprehensible to modern scholars intensely interested in Egypt's past. Thus, the Rosetta Stone furnished the key to understanding ancient Egyptian language and literature.

*The Behistun Inscription.* What the Rosetta Stone was for the hieroglyphics of ancient Egypt, the Behistun Inscription was for the writings of ancient Mesopotamia. High on a rocky cliff near the village of Behistun on the ancient caravan route from Babylon to Persia is carved a giant

bas-relief panel containing the representation of several small human figures standing before a large human figure. Beneath the figures is an inscription 25 by 50 feet. Although travelers had long noted this ancient "highway sign" it was not until 1835 that Henry C. Rawlinson, an English officer working with the Persian Army, undertook the dangerous task of copying the inscription for purposes of study and translation. The task of copying alone required four years, at the conclusion of which Rawlinson came to realize he had before him a trilingual inscription containing 400 lines of old Persian and like amount of two other languages, all written in the mysterious cuneiform. Knowing Persian, Rawlinson first worked on the old Persian cuneiform. Taking a cue from the decipherment of the Rosetta Stone, Rawlinson focused attention at first on the proper names in the record. From this start six years of diligent study produced a translation of the Old Persian. Assuming all three accounts told the same story, Rawlinson then slowly but methodically worked from his translation of the Old Persian to crack the other languages, which turned out to be Elamite (the language of the Medes) and Babylonian.

Thus, the Behistun Inscription became the key that unlocked the door to translation of ancient Mesopotamian records and writings.

Due to the Rosetta Stone and the Behistun Inscription and the labor of the men who made these discoveries meaningful, information about ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia was immeasurably increased. Further, every new discovery of written materials in Egypt and Mesopotamia increases the importance of these keys to ancient languages.

*The Egyptian Papyri.* Of great help to New Testament studies has been the discovery of vast amounts of Egyptian papyrus materials dating from the New Testament period. [Papyrus (pl. papyri) is a swamp plant from which the Egyptians made a type of writing material. Our word "paper" stems originally from the word "papyrus."] ]

Although some papyri came to the attention of scholars earlier, the nineteenth century saw the greatest discoveries of papyri in the Fayum area of Egypt. Although the papyri contained numerous types of records such as personal and business letters, official documents, receipts, bills of sale, etc., the importance of these materials became apparent when scholars studying them realized that the Greek of the papyri, a Greek for everyday use, was similar to the Greek of the New Testament.

Prior to the discovery of the papyri the precise nature of the Greek used in the New Testament was in doubt because of the relative scarcity of Greek materials contemporary to the New Testament period. Since it was apparent that New Testament Greek showed striking differences from classical Greek, scholars speculated as to the kind of Greek represented in the New Testament. Some scholars felt the New Testament was written in a very literary Greek, whereas others even conjectured that New Testament Greek was a special "Holy Ghost language."

The papyri seem to demonstrate that the New Testament, far from being written in a very literary Greek, is written primarily in the language of the common people, a Greek which has been termed *koine*, "common." This realization that the New Testament was written in popular Greek, has

been a strong impetus for translating the Scriptures into modern, simple English. If God gave His word in the language of the people, should not His word remain in popular language?

Further, the papyri also shed light on New Testament language by giving examples of the usage of numerous specific words.

*The Dead Sea Scrolls.* Among the most recent and probably the best known of written archeological finds are the Dead Sea Scrolls. The first group of these manuscripts and fragments was accidentally discovered in 1947, it seems, by a Bedouin shepherd in a cave in one of the cliffs overlooking the Dead Sea. Subsequent investigation by archeologists and others has brought to light numerous materials from several caves. Further, an ancient ruin identifiable as the communal dwelling place of the people who seemingly hid the scrolls, has been excavated. This ruin, called Khirbet Qumran, was evidently occupied at three times, since silver coins found in the excavation dated from 110 to 37 B. C., from 4 B. C. to 68 A. D. and from 68 to 100 A. D. The people who built and first used the facilities seem to have been a Jewish sect called the Essenes. Roman soldiers used the site the last time.

The materials found near the Dead Sea and later elsewhere in the wilderness of Judea are certainly highly significant. The remainder of this presentation is devoted to considering the significance of these finds for various areas of Biblical study.

First one should notice what the Scrolls will not signify. Valuable and important as they are, they will not revolution-

ize our understanding of New Testament Christianity, nor will they affect the uniqueness of Jesus, as a few scholars have mistakenly claimed. Seeking to find the origins of distinctive Christian ideas in Essene concepts, such scholars have compared the two and stressed similarities, some of them imaginary, between Essene beliefs and New Testament teaching. In such comparisons, however, the differences are far more striking than the similarities, as the following list clearly shows.

Unlike Christians, the Essenes held the Law of Moses to be binding.

Unlike Christians, the Essenes required an oath of allegiance.

Unlike Christians, the Essenes had a hierarchy of seating for meals and for other conduct.

Unlike Christians, the Essenes purified their bodies before meals.

Unlike Christians, the Essenes discouraged marriage and withdrew from society.

Unlike Christians, the Essenes usually excluded women.

The Essenes anticipated one like Elijah to prepare the way for the Messiah; Christians proclaimed such a one had already come in the person of John the Baptist.

The Essenes awaited two messiahs, one of Aaron and one of Israel; Christians proclaimed the true Messiah had come already.

Essene "baptism" was a ritual purification, apparently obligatory twice daily; Christian baptism was the act inducting a penitent believer into the body of Christ.

The Essenes taught hatred of enemies; Christians strove to love their enemies.

The Essenes accepted few new members and those only after vigorous testing; Christians welcomed all who would accept Christ in faith and obedience.

As to the leadership figure of the Essenes, the Teacher of Righteousness, the following facts demonstrate he is not a "pre-Christian Jesus."

His message was a stricter legalism than that of Moses.

There is no evidence that he was crucified, arose, or ascended, or was expected to return.

He is nowhere called a Messiah.

He is nowhere called a Savior.

As a matter of fact, the allusions to the Teacher of Righteousness may refer to an office among the Essenes, which was filled in different times by various men. Thus the Dead Sea Scrolls will not revolutionize our understanding of New Testament Christianity.

What the scrolls will do is aid us in Old Testament studies and in the study of the New Testament world. Among the materials discovered are, for example, numerous Hebrew Old Testament manuscripts and fragments dating from the second century B. C. and representing every Old Testament book except Esther. Prior to this discovery our oldest Old Testament manuscript of any scope came from the ninth century A. D. Thus the Dead Sea Scrolls provide Hebrew materials 1000 years older than our oldest previously known manuscript.

The value of this truly astounding store of materials for Hebrew textual studies is tremendous and will only be appreciated fully after decades of scholarly study. Indicated already, however, are two general conclusions: (1) the scrolls confirm the basic accuracy of our standard Hebrew Bible, the Masoretic text; (2) the scrolls aid in making more accurate appraisal of the textual value of the Greek Septuagint translation of the Old Testament and suggest that in some of its readings the Septuagint must be regarded more highly than some have desired to do.<sup>1</sup>

In regard to the New Testament world the scrolls are primarily valuable for providing us information about a small but significant Jewish religious group contemporary with Jesus. This information can help us gain further insight into the beliefs, practices and life of Jewish people in the New Testament age.

An ancient memorial stone, a Persian King's cliffside record of his exploits, scraps of "paper" from Egyptian sands, scrolls hidden in caves—these are exciting chapters in the fascinating story of Biblical archeology. The search continues and the work goes on.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Space forbids full discussion of the impact of the scrolls. It should be noted also that the scrolls are of great significance in the study of Hebrew paleography since they provide a wide variety of scripts for comparative analysis; the scrolls will also aid in the study of the development of the Hebrew and Aramaic languages; finally they will act as a corrective in Old Testament criticism, as they will automatically eliminate some radical views.

