

The Journal
of
The Church of England
(Continuing)

*Jesus Christ the same
yesterday, and today,
and forever. Heb. 13:8*



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THE CONTINUING CHURCH

(The Association of the Continuing Church Trust: Charity No. 1055010)

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MATERIAL FOR DECEMBER ISSUE OF *THE JOURNAL* AND *INTERCESSIONS* BY NOVEMBER 20th 2001, PLEASE

We thank all those who sent the names and addresses of others requiring the Journal, or whose names needed deleting. We are very grateful to all who sent donations. Please note that all address details supplied to the Editor for mailing purposes are treated as confidential. We do not pass on addresses to anyone.

** We apologise to our readers for the word demon which we are obliged to use as it is the name of the internet provider (Demonstration), and has nothing to do with the occult.*

From the Presiding Bishop, Edward Malcolm

15, Bridge Street
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Dear Friends,

It is with great regret that the Committee agreed to Dr. David Samuel's desire to hand over his responsibilities on account of his age. I am conscious of the great privilege and trust it is to be his successor, and only agreed to do so on the grounds that he will continue both as Bishop, and as one to whom I can look for guidance and support. Please continue to give the Committee and Bishops the same prayerful support as you have given it to our founder and first leader.

At the time of writing we are looking forward to our Annual Assembly at Benson, and praying for all who travel, the weather, the organisation and the speakers. We are thankful that the Lord has restored the Rev. Brian Felce again after his serious illness. Also that we now have three more Presbyters ordained on Trinity Sunday 10th June, the Revs. Ian Budgen, Richard Mortimer and Andrew Price. We have only one Deacon at present, the Rev. Ed Powell in North Hollywood, USA. We report with sadness the passing into glory of the Rev. Willie Bridcut of the Irish Church and Superintendent of the Irish Church Missions in Dublin, whose funeral in Castleknock church was packed, with people standing.

We have just gone through an election which proved only that the moral vacuum in our nation is very deep, and the nation being lead into Europe, further permissiveness, and the judgment of God. The bottom sin of all is godlessness, all other ills stemming from that. We have had more spiritual light in Christ over long centuries than any other nation on earth, excepting the Jewish people and the Vaudois. The United States has had more over the last hundred years, but we have been given a vastly longer history of revivals. There is an interesting old book called 'The Lollards in the Tower', which fascinated me when I read it long ago, with its accounts of revivals far back in our history. We need to remind ourselves of these things, that we may pray and hope for God's help in the present gloom.

The Old Testament itself is an account of revivals. Scholars state that there is a growing revelation of God throughout it. The truth is they are technically correct, but have simply got it wrong. Revelation is a matter of sunlit peaks and dark, long valleys. God revealed Himself to certain chosen men such as Abram, Moses, Joshua, David, and Elijah, to take but a sample. They are like spiritual

peaks. Before them religion had sunk very low, and gross darkness covered the people. They each walked close with God in strict obedience, on mountain tops in the full sunlight of His presence, and diffused that spiritual light over the nation. As each went home to the Lord they so faithfully served and loved, gradually, indeed quickly, the nation sunk back again into its evil ways, and progressed into deepening wickedness and darkness. This cycle was repeated time after time. So the Old Testament ends with God refusing any further spiritual light to the Jews for the 400 years between the Testaments.

That is repeated exactly in the history of the Christian Church. God graciously intervenes and a generation is visited by the Spirit of God, through certain leaders. As long as they live the darkness around is unable to overcome the light, and a vast change comes over each nation and people to whom the light of Christ is given. All music, literature, inventiveness of all sorts flourishes, and churches fill whilst prisons empty, as men are freed from the evils that entangle their normal progress. Oh! The devil soon rouses a 'Northern Ireland' situation against them, but the truth is, we are pulled down by the enemy within us, not attacks from outside. No church has ever fallen by enemies without, only evil tolerated within. Sin is our enemy, our own corrupt natures. Once freed from those, we rise like corks in water.

However, once the revived generation is gone, an even deeper darkness visits the nation. This is partly because of the anger of God over the rejection of the light, so the punishment fits the enormity of the crime. That is why we are under greater judgment than nations immediately around us, who never enjoyed the great revival of the eighteenth and the several great revivals of the nineteenth century. Our name has sunk very low abroad, especially amongst true Christians worldwide.

Lord God, raise up amongst us great preachers who will touch the souls of believers, and set forth Christ Jesus in all His beauty before this nation! God purify our lives and give us to witness boldly! Make us willing to suffer for Thy Son's sake! Radiance, word of God the Bible, penetrate this Egyptian darkness suffocating us!

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Edward Malcolm". The letters are dark and fluid, with some ink bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.

Edward Malcolm.

“TAKE HEED UNTO THYSELF”

*A sermon preached at the ordination service on Trinity Sunday
at St. Mary's Castle Street, Reading*

by D N Samuel

Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee. (I Tim 4:16).

Timothy was a young man, a native of Lystra. His father was a Greek and his mother Eunice was a pious Jewess. He was converted to the Christian faith during Paul's first visit to Lystra. When Paul came the second time he selected Timothy as his companion, and ordained him in a solemn manner, as we have done with these young men here this morning.

Now as a young man and a minister, Timothy needed advice and instruction, which was the reason for Paul's writing this letter and the later one to him. Here we find the Apostle giving him wise counsel and guidance. *Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine.* Pay particular attention to these two things in this order. We all stand in need of counsel and advice. Where better can we find it than in the Word of God? And I hope therefore that what I have to say will have relevance not only for those who have been ordained here today, but for all present this morning.

First, attend to your personal life and conduct. *Take heed unto thyself.* That is where you must begin. Take care to live as becomes Christians, the followers of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Do not become lax and careless. How we live can either make or mar our witness. Somebody once said, "I cannot hear what you are saying, because your actions speak so loudly". So this advice of Paul's applies to all Christian people, but especially ministers of the Gospel. "Actions speak louder than words." If our words are not backed up by our lives, then our work and witness will fail. How then are we to live out such lives as shall be an ornament of our profession?

The answer is, that we must live closely with our Lord and Saviour. We must be daily in communion and fellowship with Him. When Moses came down from the mountain where he had been with God, his face shone. All could see where he had been, though he was not aware of it himself. Communion with the Lord transforms.

What did the members of the Council of the Jews think before whom Peter and John appeared? "They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus". They were regarded as "unlearned and ignorant men", but there was something wonderful about them. They commanded attention; they spoke with

authority and power. Where did they get this authority from? “They had been with Jesus.” So that is the first thing. If our manner of life and conduct is to be consistent and to support what we say, we must live closely with the Lord.

Now, how can we do that? Well, for one thing we must read the Scriptures daily. Do not neglect to do this, it is the food for the soul. “Man doth not live by bread only but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live”. If we do not feed regularly upon the Scriptures we shall not be healthy and strong spiritually.

There is a special danger here for the minister. He is always dealing with the Bible, he has to prepare sermons and addresses from it. He can fall into the way of thinking that that is enough, and so neglect his personal reading and study of it. But he must read the Scriptures for his own benefit, and for his own soul’s sake. If he does not, he will lack vitality and freshness.

And the same is true of prayer. Apart from his public duties, he must engage in personal prayer and communion with God. Without that he will be deficient in resilience and strength, and will not be able to face trials, which will inevitably come to him. “Commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be still”, Psalm 4:4. These are the words of David. He knew something about trials and tribulations, both in his own life and as the King of Israel as a public figure. And this was his answer, this was the secret of his strength. Take heed to yourself, then, in these matters or you will lack the strength and resilience that you need for your calling.

But there is another reason why you should take heed to yourself, for if you do not you will lack spiritual discernment. You will fail to see how the world is changing, and how you are in danger of changing with it. It is so easy for us to let standards slip and become like the world. I believe it is the besetting sin of the institutional churches and the Christian today. They are letting the world set the agenda, determine standards, and guide conduct. But the apostle says, “Be ye not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind”. Unless you take heed to yourself, you will not be able to speak prophetically, and address yourself to the needs of the church. You will, unknowingly, be moulded and fashioned by the world. Only personal communion with the Lord can prevent that happening.

What did the prophet Habakkuk say? “I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what the Lord will say unto me”. Standards are falling in our society, they have been for some time. But this does not happen all at once. It takes place gradually, imperceptibly, little by little, so that most people are unaware of what is happening. But little by little in time becomes much. If you walk into the BBC in Langham Place, London, you will see texts of Scripture in large letters engraved upon the walls. “Nation shall speak peace unto nation”; “Whatsoever things are true... honest... just... pure ... lovely ... of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think

on these things". But what has happened now to the BBC? It has become the medium for transmitting to the nation what is base, vulgar, trivial and immoral. How are the mighty fallen! But it has happened gradually, so that most people have been unaware of what was happening.

"Come ye yourselves apart ... and rest awhile", said our Lord to the disciples, "for there were many coming and going". Jesus knew what was good and necessary for his disciples. We need to spend time apart with our Lord, for only in that way shall we be able to discern the nature of the times in which we live, and to walk circumspectly. Ask God to enable you to keep close to Him and to cleanse your heart. "Take heed to yourself".

Secondly, pay particular attention to the teachings of Scripture, understand the doctrines of the faith. "*Take heed to the doctrine*". It is necessary for a young minister to lay a foundation in this respect in his early years. That is the time to do it, the mind is supple and the memory receptive and retentive. Make a systematic study of doctrine by going through *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* by John Calvin. This will give you a framework, and then you will be able to work out from there, and read other things, and evaluate them in the light of what you know. It is most important that you give attention to this.

But there are two caveats:

i) Do not treat your congregation as if they were theologians. Do not give them doctrine neat and undiluted. Congregations are sometimes made to suffer in this way. Read John Bunyan and see how he makes doctrine interesting. John Newton also made a good point on this subject. He said, "I treat doctrine like lumps of sugar; I do not eat them whole, I dissolve them in my tea". And, of course, follow the example of the greatest preacher of all. Our Lord spoke of everyday things, but he wove into them the things of eternity, of salvation and the kingdom of God. He said, the kingdom of heaven is like this and like that; like treasure hid in a field, like a mustard seed, like a net, and so on. An old preacher was asked once what he thought of a sermon. He thought for a while and then he said, "There were not enough 'likes' in it".

ii) Do not imagine theology comes mainly from books. They can be useful, but we do not learn the deepest things there. Martin Luther said that he learned his theology "where his temptations took him", that is, through the testings and trials and sufferings of life. It is there we get the deep insights. So, while books are good and useful, we must not be 'bookish'. Let our preaching be shot through with experience.

"This is the library where he keeps his books", said Wordsworth's maidservant to a visitor to his home in the Lake District, "but his study is out of doors". I think there is something in that for ministers to learn from. Do not let your preaching be stuffy, but experiential, down to earth; from heaven, yes, but down to earth.

“Take heed to the doctrine” then, it is very necessary in these times. Today the church is becoming decidedly non-doctrinal. The voice of the pulpit is tentative and hesitant. The trumpet gives an uncertain sound. There are basically two reasons for this. One is the triumph of liberal theology. Man has set himself over rather than under the Word of God. The scholar, supposedly tells us what we may or may not believe. But man is in no such position to tell us how to judge of the things of God. The answer to such presumption is in the Book of Job. “Canst thou by searching find out God?” No, man must sit humbly at the feet of God and hear his Word. Nothing else will avail. And it is your duty to declare that Word. “Is there a word from the Lord?” People come to you to know that, and you must declare it. Today hungry sheep look and are not fed.

But there is another reason also for uncertainty and confusion in the churches. Ours is an age which tends to set aside the Bible and to rely only upon experience. Experience they regard as self-authenticating, they do not need the Word. In all this there is nothing new. At the time of the Reformation Luther encountered the Zwickau prophets. They claimed the gifts of the Spirit, and said to Luther, “What is the use of clinging so closely to the Bible? The Bible: Always the Bible: ... It is by the Spirit alone we can be enlightened.” Luther, quite rightly, gave them short shrift. That spirit is abroad today, setting aside the Bible, claiming direct revelations, tongues and experiences. But it is your job to teach the Bible. Attend to doctrine. Faith and experience must be properly grounded upon Scripture. It is rather like food; we have digestive systems, but they need food. They cannot feed on air. We must feed upon the Word of God. The Spirit of God takes the Word and applies it to our souls’ need. That is the Scriptural doctrine of the Word and the Spirit. So, “take heed to the doctrine.”

Do not be afraid to preach a full-orbed gospel - all the doctrines of grace: predestination and election, the fall and the total depravity of man, sovereign grace, justification by faith alone, and the final perseverance of the saints. The many colours of the spectrum combined give pure light, so the many doctrines of grace give a pure gospel. Remember the testimony of Augustus Toplady. He confessed that when he began his ministry he confined his preaching to two main themes, justification and holiness. He was afraid to speak of the doctrines of grace. But later God freed him from the fear of men, and he preached the entire mystery of God. The result of the first course of action, he said, was that many were pleased, but few converted. The result of the latter was that many were angry, but many more converted. Pray for courage to declare the whole counsel of God.

Finally, Paul says to Timothy, “for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee”. There will be a double benefit; you will be doing good to yourself and to others at the same time. As you teach the Scriptures, they will have a beneficial and edifying effect upon you, as well as on these whom you teach. You will grow in grace and knowledge of Christ. You teach yourself by

teaching others. There is a principle at work here that is at work throughout society. The trader, the shopkeeper performs a service, he seeks to satisfy people's needs, and in so doing he promotes his own good and prospers. And so the minister of the gospel, in seeking to teach others and to disseminate the saving truths of the gospel, becomes ever more firmly established and grounded in the truth. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." May that be your experience. May the Lord bless you in your work and service for him. "Take heed to thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

DAVID ALFRED DOUDNEY

An Unsung Hero of the Christian Church (cont...)

by **J E North**

Ireland, that troublesome country, a country which has been a thorn in the side of the English nation every since one of the two English popes gave that land to the English King. There have only been two English Popes. One taking the title of Pope John XIII, was in reality a woman, also known as Pope Joan who was trampled to death in the streets of Rome by the crowd in a riot which was caused by her giving birth to an illegitimate child. The other English Pope was Nicholas Breakspere who took the name Adrian IV. He it was who issued a Papal Bull to King Henry II in 1155 for him to subdue that "barbarian nation to the cross of Christ." Since that time successive governments and monarchs have endeavoured to 'subdue' that nation, with very little success. Come with me, then, in your imagination, to the west coast of Ireland.

1846 is the year when David Doudney takes his journey to Ireland to commence a ministry which was to last until his death in 1893 some 47 years later. 1846 in Ireland is the time of the great potato famine. Come with me in your imagination and view the scenes of starvation and deprivation.

We are in a small garrison town called Templemore in the county of Tipperary. The population is 80% Roman Catholic. The potato crop has failed for the second year running and this, notwithstanding the blessing of the crops by the local priests. Doudney is here, he is a missionary to the Irish people involved in the relief of those who are starving. He goes from cabin to cabin, or

should I say, from hovel to hovel, distributing to the inhabitants a bag of meal or a pint of soup. He now has access to homes that had been barred to him and along with providing relief from starvation, he takes the opportunity of preaching the gospel to the people.

With graphic pen he sketched out the poignant scenes he daily witnessed. "Man a sinner, Christ a Saviour is the one theme of our mission," he writes, "Salvation without money and without price and irrespective of the intercession of Mary, Peter or the saints." The people gathered round the doors, listening with eager attention. One old Romanist dying in a dark hovel said that nothing weighed with him, neither food nor comforts, as did the thought of how his soul could be prepared to meet God. He listened closely while the way of salvation was declared. Two weeks later he entered the hovel to find Moriarty lying dead. Moriarty's last words were "Mercy! Mercy!" "I went in," he says, "gazed on his face and talked to the family about his happy condition if indeed he had found mercy."

His charge at Templemore included, besides the famine relief work in the cabins of the town, preaching at the barracks once a week, visiting and speaking at the two hospitals, going into the mountains two or three times a week to visit and teach the Protestant children in the tiny unendowed school: he also had to preach at one or another of the scattered farmhouse, during the week. (One day he found that about forty poor Romanists were crowded into an adjoining room at one of the farms, listening to all he said, but secretly for fear). The country was wildly beautiful and he drew much refreshment from his long walks from place to place, meditating on the subjects for his "lectures" as he calls them.

At his very first week-day lecture at a farmhouse he tells us that he had decided, on considering the distressed state of the country, to take the text about the barrel of meal and cruse of oil not failing for God's people, when he had another text brought powerfully to his mind, "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." This text seemed so specially spoken to him that he resolved to speak on it. When he reached the place he found them all in great trouble: two nights before their little farm stock of six sheep had been stolen.

"Time after time the farmer used to leave his bed at midnight to go down the meadow and see that they were safe, but now they were gone and for two days the police and they themselves had searched for them in vain. This circumstance bore forcibly on my subject and whilst led to dwell upon the sovereignty of the Good Shepherd's choice and the effectiveness of His call I found it delightful to comment upon the security of His hold of the sheep (in contrast to the poor man's) and their safety within the fold of the Good Shepherd. Then begging the Lord to sanctify the loss or restore the sheep I left

them. But alas! in the unbelief of my heart I secretly felt it was nearly an absurdity to ask the Lord to restore the sheep, for such were the ravages of starvation upon the poor peasantry that both sheep and cattle were constantly stolen, killed and carried away, the skins only being left behind. Even the meal being brought to feed the people had to have an escort of soldiers or the dray would be seized and robbed. It therefore seemed hypocrisy or mockery to have prayed for the restoration of these sheep. But, reader, never shall I forget the salutation with which I was met on the following Sunday on approaching another farmhouse where I was to speak. People came running across the field to meet me, shouting, 'O, sir, David's sheep are all restored!' It seemed the thief had been overtaken by daylight and though quite a distance away had been seized with fear of discovery and had himself driven them into a pound and left them! O how great was the contrast as I spoke that Sabbath afternoon as compared with what I had felt in the midst of the little weeping company at the other farm! What a testimony had I in proof that the Lord God Almighty was still, and ever would be, the hearer and answerer of prayer, even when Satan and unbelief are pressing a stifling burden of impossibilities upon the heart. This marvellous act of the Lord was the pivot upon which the whole of my future turned. With what intense pleasure I used in the days following, to look upon these six sheep, grazing on that mountainside."

He was ordained in June, 1847 and appointed to the curacy of Bonmahon. On coming to this village on the sea coast of the county of Waterford he wrote,

"One's heart perfectly sickened at beholding the filth that presented itself on every hand. It seemed unendurable. The people are, for the most part, cradled in ignorance, superstition, and the most inveterate hatred of everything English or Protestant. The difficulty of combating the deep-seated prejudices of the Roman Catholic peasantry of Ireland none can imagine."

Time moves on, it is now 1848. No longer by himself, his wife and children having joined him in Ireland. It is the year of the rebellion. The Protestant population are to be massacred. It is no secret that this will happen, the only thing that is not known is when the uprising is to happen. Naturally precautions are taken. He tells us that rumour has it that the massacre is to take place on a Sabbath evening.

"All the Protestants in the village were in a state of great alarm," he writes, "the four coastguards were patrolling the place and it was arranged that at the first alarm all were to fly to the curate's cottage."

.... I cannot tell you how sickening a sight it was to see these armed men, the coastguards, and their store of weapons in our peaceful cottage. Then evening came, and just before eleven in rushed the servant shrieking, 'They're coming! they're coming!' Snatching the baby from the cradle my dear wife flew upstairs to the other three children. .. Oh the anguish of that moment, and yet how many of the Lord's own children have encountered such in all its disastrous consequences! But how shall I tell you my relief when that agonizing suspense was broken some hours later by the information that the party seen in the distance were police and not the expected assassins. Oh the interposing goodness of a gracious God! Never, never shall I forget it."

The crisis was averted by the suspension of Habeas Corpus which at that time struck terror into the minds of those who were to rise up in rebellion and the insurrection petered out. He writes, "We knew that nothing like ample succour could be afforded. We could do nothing but stand still and see his salvation ... it (the suspension of Habeas Corpus) struck terror into their hearts and the rebellion died away."

I have already referred to a little of his ministry at Templemore. He speaks at length, both in the pages of the *Gospel Magazine* and in his journal of the scenes of abject poverty and degradation that were in that land in those days, and the awful influence of the Church of Rome upon the superstitious Irish.

1848 was the year of the rebellion, but notwithstanding all those things inflicted upon the Protestant population by the Roman Catholic peasantry and the RC priesthood, Doudney felt that he wanted to do something to help alleviate the intense poverty suffered by the people. After four years in the parish he had the idea of setting up a printing school for the benefit of the boys of the parish. There was an ordinary day school but there was no employment for the boys after they had finished their education and, as Doudney knew about the printing industry he conceived the idea of setting up a press in Bonmahon. But a printing school on the west coast of Ireland was somewhat different to setting up a school in London or in Bristol, where he was to repeat the same experiment some few years later.

The presses and the type had to be purchased, the boys who were by and large illiterate, had in the first place to be taught how to read, then how to set type. After this they had to be taught to proof read, then they had to be taught the art of letterpress printing, and then book binding. The paper had to be imported and then the finished books had to be sold and distributed.

Notwithstanding all these difficulties, he went ahead and in 1851 through the medium of the *Gospel Magazine* he invited and obtained subscriptions for the reprinting of John Gill's *Commentary on the Bible*. The whole project was completed in six volumes in 1853. To see those volumes one can understand that

it was no mean achievement to undertake this reprint. Doudney tells us that the commentary contains “nearly 47 million letters” and the two thousand two hundred and fifty sets printed required twenty-five tons of paper, comprising eight hundred thousand separate sheets of paper. But Doudney’s watchword was “Forward” and he continued with the work, printing, not only the *Gospel Magazine* and *Old Jonathan* which had a monthly circulation of 15,000 but the printing school reprinted Rutherford’s *Letters*, Gill’s *Sermons on the Song of Solomon*, Gill’s *Cause of God and Truth*, Keach’s *Scripture Metaphors* and his *Exposition of the Parables &c.* It is interesting to note that most of these books have been reprinted by photolithography in recent years.

Doudney’s ministry in Ireland came to an end in 1857. Through his ministrations in the village a prominent Irish Roman Catholic was converted to Christ. When this was found out, the man said that he dared not stay in Ireland for fear of his life, so he left Ireland and he went to London and found work there. The blame for all this, naturally fell on Doudney. Anathemas were pronounced by the RC priests, an effigy of him was carried through the streets and publicly burnt, with one young man firing a blunderbuss at the effigy. He received a number of anonymous death threats and after the long months of persecution through which he was wonderfully helped and sustained, he considered that he was unable to continue in this situation any longer. In addition to the Roman Catholic persecution, the work at the printing schools could not be maintained. Printing work was difficult to obtain and costs exceeded income. Reluctantly Doudney closed the printing schools and concluded that his ministry at Bonmahon was ended.

“He that watches providence will never want a providence to watch.”

Doudney was led to Bristol where he was invited to undertake the work of the ministry in the newly established parish of Bedminster. This was a poor area, and whilst not agrarian, it was as much bounded by poverty as his previous parish at Bonmahon. From 1859 to 1890 Doudney was to continue his ministry in this parish. Continuing the same pattern as at Bonmahon, he set up schools for the children and industrial schools for the young men and women of the parish. He set about relieving the poverty. Sunday Schools were formed. Soup kitchens were opened. All the while he maintained a gospel ministry. He raised the funds for the building of St Luke’s Parish Church at Bedminster. He did not water down his preaching. His Calvinism was ‘sixteen ounces to the pound.’ He preached covenant verities. One verse of a hymn which was continually on his mind was that by Cennick:

*Then will I tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I have found;
I’ll point to the atoning blood,
And say, Behold the way to God.*

It was here at Bedminster that Doudney was to commence the larger part of his writing ministry. As a result of his parochial visitations he felt the need of good simple literature to give to his parishioners. From his pen came a wonderful little book, *Walks and Talks with Jesus*. First published in 1875 or 1876, it went through many editions.

The book which is considered to be the classic on conversion is Alleine's *Alarm to the Unconverted or A sure Guide to Heaven*. It was first published in 1671. Iain Murray in his introduction to the Banner of Truth Trust edition of that book quotes Dr Calamy who wrote in 1702 "Multitudes will have cause for ever to be thankful for it. ... there have been twenty thousand sold under the title of 'the Call' or 'Alarm', and fifty thousand of the same under the title of the 'Sure Guide to Heaven'." That is a total of 70,000 copies in thirty one years.

Compare that with Doudney's little book. Between 1875 and 1893, the year of the author's death, only eighteen years, some 209,000 copies of *Walks and Talks with Jesus* had been printed and distributed.

This book was followed up with other parochial visitation books, *Mornings with Jesus; Evenings with Jesus, Conversations by the Way, Sympathy, For Ever with Jesus* and others. Here was a man desirous of winning the lost for his Lord, and used all the means at his disposal.

He retired from pastoral ministry in 1890, when he was 79 years old. The reason he gave was that he was getting rather deaf and could therefore no longer undertake visitation. He retired to Southsea and died on the 21st April, 1893 whilst he was still undertaking his writing ministry through the pages of the *Gospel Magazine*. One who was by his side when he died wrote,

"His great wish was that he might testify to the last of the loving-kindness and tender mercy of his covenant God. He especially desired that the readers of the Gospel Magazine might be told that the Lord had manifested himself in such an especial manner, and so sweetly filled him with his own presence, peace and love, that from the first moment of his illness he had not the least dread of death; he feared it no more than putting on his night things. He also many times wished them particularly to note Zechariah 3:1-5 (A brand plucked from the fire).

He said, 'I love to have my dear Lord with me here, but I long more to go to him up there. I put no trust for salvation in anything I have done in my humble way, or that I can do; it is all of God's free and sovereign grace'.

Pointing to his venerable mother's portrait, he often said, 'Her words were, "It is a warfare, but God has promised complete victory through the blood of the Lamb."' "

On Sunday, April 2nd, he had the following verse written out:

*Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are;
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there.*

He dated it himself, and signed it as his dying experience. He kept praying to be taken, 'Do, dear Lord, take me;' but said he would on no account dictate to the Lord. Whenever he awoke, he was much disappointed to find himself still in the body. With what joy he spoke of going home! home to him! His countenance and voice quite changed when he uttered those words."

The funeral service was conducted by Rev J C Martin at St Silas Church, Southsea and he was buried in Southsea Cemetery. It would appear that the tomb stone was removed some years ago, probably because it was in a dangerous state of repair. A picture of the tombstone appears as the frontispiece to the December 1895 issue of the *Gospel Magazine*. The stone reads,

"In ever-loving memory of the Rev. David Alfred Doudney, D.D., formerly Vicar of St. Luke's, Bedminster, Bristol, and for fifty-three years the beloved Editor of the *Gospel Magazine*. He died at Southsea, April 21st, 1893, aged 82. Amongst his last words were these: 'I shall be satisfied - satisfied - when I awake after thy likeness.' This monument is erected by some of his friends and readers. Also in memory of Eliza, his second wife, who died in 1868, aged 57."

What can we learn today from this man?

1. Firstly I want us to note the experimental nature of his Christianity and his Calvinism. Time forbids us from quoting his many editorials in the *Gospel Magazine*, but there is one thing he emphasised throughout his writings and ministry and that is that the grace of God is to be experienced. Christianity, the doctrines of grace, Calvinism, are not an intellectual exercise. There has to be the experience of these things in the heart. Today, Evangelicalism with its abundance of Reformed literature and Reformed preaching appears to me to be little more than an arid intellectualism more in sympathy with Robert Sandeman than John Calvin and his true successors. When we preach the great doctrines of the faith, or study them we need to know the experimental application of them. Take, for example, the doctrine of the new birth. It is not sufficient to state the doctrine and give intellectual assent to it, but there has to be the tracing out of it in the life of the believer. How do I know that I am born again? How do I know the Spirit's work in my life? How do I know that my experience is a genuine work of God in the soul? By tracing our experience out in line with the

Scriptures of Truth. Do we feel a welling up of a desire for the things of God? Do we feel the burden of sin and a corrupt nature? Do we desire to know the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth? These are the evidences of the new birth. Belief in election does not depend on our intellectual ascent to that particular doctrine. Well did Joseph Hart write:

*Election is a precious Truth
But Lord, I wish to be
Assured by thy own Spirit's mouth
That thou hast chosen me.*

We need a return to Experimental, heart warming religion. Again, an experimental religion is not one that makes us morbid, nor does it make us introspective. Isaac Watts writes in his hymn, 'Come ye that love the Lord',

*The sorrows of the mind
Be banished from the place!
Religion never was designed
To make our pleasures less.*

Or, to quote Toplady,

*Happiness, thou lovely name,
Where's thy seat, oh, tell me where?
Learning, pleasure, wealth and fame,
All cry out, 'It is not here!'
Not the wisdom of the wise
Can inform me where it lies,
Not the grandeur of the great
Can the bliss I seek create*

*Object of my first desire
Jesus, crucified for me!
All to happiness aspire,
Only to be found in thee.*

2. Secondly, high doctrine does not quell evangelistic zeal. Consider the life and ministry of Doudney. He was a high Calvinist. He preached, he visited, he distributed his writings. Why? To win sinners to Christ. He continued in the ministry until he could continue no longer and then he continued to write. Oh that we might emulate the zeal of such men as Doudney and others. "He that winneth souls is wise" (Prov. 11:30). Are we not pygmies when compared to these giants?

3. Thirdly, note his Protestantism. He knew full well and at first hand the

mischievous workings of the Church of Rome. He experienced the hatred of the Church of Rome to the Gospel of Christ at the hands of her priests. He was constantly denounced from RC pulpits. He challenged the popish priests to substantiate their doctrines and dogmas but they refused to do so. He contended for true religion and opposed false doctrine within the Church of England and through the pages of the *Gospel Magazine*. The Church of Rome has not changed. There may be outward cosmetic changes to give the appearance of change but inwardly she is still the same ravaging wolf that she ever was, ever hateful of the gospel of Christ. The Anglo-Catholic movement is no different. Just a couple of years ago I was told by an Anglo-Catholic pilgrim at the Marian shrine at Walsingham that if they were in the ascendancy, Protestants (that is Bible-believing Protestants) would be done away with.

4. Fourthly, note his catholic spirit. We have not had time to look at the contents of the *Gospel Magazine* which he edited for 53 years. But a glance of the pages will reveal that here was a man who would speak highly of those whose Calvinism was not as high as his own. Today one group of Calvinistic Evangelicals (sic) will have no dealings with another group. Epithets are heaped upon those whom they call 'Hyper-Calvinists' and 'Antinomians'. They are regarded as the off-scourings of society. Pulpits are closed to them. They are not regarded as *bona fide* evangelicals, and our opposers in engaging in this name-calling are, in truth, the one who betray a lack of Christian grace and are the ones who are practical antinomians. The same appears to apply in the realm of church order and in other areas.

5. Fifthly, notice his social concern. Today Reformed Evangelical Christians have abandoned social activity to the papists, humanists and others. And this to our detriment.

We could go on, but space being limited many things have to be omitted. However, I can recommend the reading of Doudney's autobiographical books, *Retracings and Renewings*, *The Claims and Credentials of the Christian Ministry*, *Led and Fed*, *An Aged Pastor's Testimony*, and the other volumes which he wrote. The bound volumes of *The Gospel Magazine* for the years 1840 to 1893 are excellent reading and contain much from his pen, including reviews of important theological books which appeared during that period. The biography written by his son and daughter, whilst giving an outline of his life, gives the impression of being hurriedly written (it was published in 1893, shortly after Doudney's death), and is more akin to a Hagiography. There is an interesting outline of his life in *The Dictionary of National Biography* and a *Times* Obituary Notice which appeared 24th & 25th April, 1893. There are also a few articles on the life and ministry of Doudney in the *Friendly Companion*.

THE PEACE OF GOD KEEPING THE HEART

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7.

by C Bradley*

We all feel that we need something to keep our hearts. We are living in a changing world, and its changes are often deeply affecting us; and that not merely in our affairs, and homes, and outward comforts, but within, in our inmost souls. The world itself too is exercising over us an almost unceasing influence. It is crowded with objects congenial to our earth-born nature, so adapted to its desires and wants, that we might as well attempt to live beyond the reach of the summer's heat and the winter's cold, of light and darkness, as to live among them and never feel their power. And more than this, these hearts of ours are naturally restless hearts. There is a self-disturbing energy within them, a principle of disquietude, which we can neither root out nor subdue.

The result is, that even in a calm, in a state of outward ease and quiet, our thoughts, and feelings, and purposes, are continually shifting; but when the storm comes, when bereavements, and sorrows, and temptations, and conflicts, assail him, what is feeble man then? "A reed shaken with the wind;" a bark at the mercy of the gale, yielding to every gust and disquieted with every wave; "afflicted, tossed with tempest," and but little comforted.

It is plain then that we must have something to steady us. We require to be brought under some influence that, without hardening the heart, will govern the heart; that, while it allows troubles to grieve and sins to weary us, will defy any of the changes of life to sway us, or any of the world's temptations to unsettle us, or any of our own corruptions to lead us captive. And where shall we find this? Plainly not in the world; as well might we look to the hurricane itself for repose. And as plainly not in ourselves; for what have we ever looked for there, save helplessness, misery, and sin, and not looked in vain? The apostle shews us in this text the very thing that we need. He points out to us, first, its nature - it is "peace;" secondly, its Author - it is "the peace of God;" thirdly, one of its properties - it "passeth all understanding;" fourthly, one of its effects - it "shall keep your hearts and minds;" and then lastly, the source whence we receive it, and the instrumentality by which it works - "through Christ Jesus."

I. We begin with the nature of this defending principle. And how much mercy is there, what comfort too for the troubled soul, in the very term which the Holy Spirit employs to describe this! It is not self-denial, not fear, not painful exertion

or watchfulness, that is here said to keep the heart; no, it is peace. It is enjoyment, and repose in that enjoyment. It is a calm spread over the soul, which not only refreshes it after the tumult of the storm, but keeps it quiet, saying to the winds as they would again arise, "Be still," and compelling the winds to obey its voice.

But what peace, it may be asked, can there be to a being such as man? a child at variance with his Parent, a creature at war with his Creator? In his natural condition, none, brethren. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest." This peace is the result of a change in man's state and character; it is the effect of a reconciliation between him and heaven. Its foundation is laid in that transaction which takes place between God and the soul, when the soul feels itself guilty, and vile, and desolate, and casts itself in all its pollution and wretchedness on the free mercy of its Lord. The hour of its birth is the hour when a man sees his baseness, when he feels his misery, and folly, and madness, and cries aloud with all the energy of a humbled, broken heart, "God be merciful to me, a sinner" In that hour, the Lord has mercy on him. He reveals to him the treasures of grace he has stored up for sinners in Christ Jesus; he enables him to embrace by faith his offers of pardon; he unites him to the Saviour appointed for him; and then where are all his transgressions and sins? They are buried in "the depths of the sea." An act of oblivion has cancelled them. There is peace between the man and his God; and the consequence is, now, for the first time, peace springs up in the man's own heart. It flows from this reconciliation with heaven. It consists mainly in a sense of reconciliation, in a discovery to the soul of its own special interest in the divine forgiveness. The sinner feels himself pardoned; and his fears go where his iniquities are gone before, far away from him; he sees himself ransomed, and adopted, and loved, and he is comforted. He now looks on his God as his friend. As such, he trusts him and hopes in him. He regards the promises of his word as his own. In temptation, he expects a victory; in perils, a refuge; in weakness, strength; in affliction, comfort; in death, safety; in eternity, heaven; and in heaven, God, the presence of God, the enjoyment of God, the very likeness of God.

But this is not all. His faith and his hope purify, while they cheer him. He feels them perhaps only laying to rest his apprehensions, but they are secretly bringing about within him a great moral change; plucking up those roots of bitterness from which much of his former disquietude proceeded, and implanting those affections and tempers which are the elements of all real blessedness. "Being justified by faith," he has first "peace with God;" then he "joys in God by whom he has received the atonement;" and then he enters into that "great peace" which they have, "who love God's law." Taught to long, and pray, and labour, for conformity to its holy precepts, he finds that "the fruit of righteousness is peace, and the effect thereof quietness and assurance for ever."

And this is the Christian's peace. It has as its basis forgiving mercy; it is connected with a discovery of this mercy; it proceeds from a conviction of a real

and peculiar interest in it; it is established, and enlarged, and sweetened, by that purifying influence on the mind, of which this conviction is at once the spring and the effect.

We are not however to suppose that every pardoned sinner lives in the full enjoyment of this blessing, or that any pardoned sinner uniformly, constantly enjoys it. Ignorance, self-righteousness, unbelief, in some cases, keep it long out of the heart; and when there, a multitude of human infirmities are continually operating one after another to weaken or disturb it. But in spite of every obstacle, it is experienced, it is enjoyed. In some happy moments in some happy hearts, it flows as a river, making affliction light, duty easy, mercy sweet; turning the house of mourning into a house of praise, and filling the parched wilderness of life with wells of consolation. There is communion with heaven connected with it. It comes down from heaven. It is the overflowing, the running over, of the blessedness of heaven.

II. Consider, secondly, its Author.

It is “the peace of, God.” And it is called his peace, because that work of mercy on which it rests, is his work, entirely and only his. It had its origin in his own free, spontaneous love. The plan of it came out of his unsearchable wisdom; and not a part of it has been carried into effect, which his own right hand has not accomplished. He provided the Peacemaker; nay, he himself came down from the skies with his own offers of reconciliation. It was he who took on him the likeness of our sinful nature, obeyed in that likeness his own holy law without transgressing one of its precepts, and then endured its curse as though he had broken them all. It is he who still sits in the same form on the throne of the heavens, and still carries on there the same work. When sinners are brought to his feet, they come to him because he has drawn them. If they cry for mercy, he has first “poured out on them the Spirit of grace and of supplication.” Not a tear of contrition do they ever shed, which he does not cause to flow; and not one of them all has ever believed and embraced one of his promises, in whose heart he has not first lodged the gift of faith.

And not only this, he himself communicates that peace of mind, which flows from a sense of pardon and acceptance. It springs not from the creatures of earth, nor could all the angels of heaven impart one atom of it. It is not the mere result of self-examination, or reasoning, or effort, within our own minds. It is the gift of God; and it is called his peace, because it is his property and bestowed by his hand. He reveals to the soul in his own way and time, by his own Spirit, the love he bears towards it, the mercy he has prepared for it, perhaps the work he has wrought in it. He shews it in the blood of Christ, its freedom from condemnation; in the obedience of Christ, its “robe of righteousness;” in the purifying Spirit, the gifts and graces of Christ, its “garment of salvation;” and in the promises and life of Christ, its safety. He unfolds, as it were, the book of life; he shews to the

wondering sinner his own poor, despised name shining there; and the consequence is - and how can it be otherwise ? - he is "filled with all joy and peace in believing;" he "abounds in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost;" "the peace of God rules," presides and reigns, "in his heart."

III. A peace thus divine in its origin must partake in some degree of the lofty nature of its Author, and in that degree it must be incomprehensible to any earthly mind. The apostle accordingly goes on to describe, thirdly, this property of it. "It passeth," he says, "all understanding."

We may attach two meanings to this language.

1. This peace passes altogether the understanding of such as are strangers to it. They who have never experienced it, know nothing of its character, nor can they. It is above them; in its very nature, it is out of their reach. Not that there is in it any thing visionary or enthusiastic. No; it is real, it is solid, it is rational; so rational, so well founded, that the wonder is any pardoned sinner should be for one moment destitute of it; so rational, that no other peace will bear thought, and reflection, and examination, like it; there is no other peace that will bear serious reflection at all. But then it is not so much the intellect that is occupied about it, as the heart. It is a matter, not of science, but experience. It must be felt to be understood.

And this is not a peculiarity confined to this or any other spiritual blessing. It is common perhaps to every pleasure we know. The man of intellect, for instance, may talk of the delight he experiences in the workings of his mind, in his acquisition of knowledge, in his discoveries of truth, the soarings of his imagination, the conscious expanding of his soul; but his words convey no distinct idea of these things to his ignorant neighbour; they excite only his wonder. We may tell the deaf man again of the harmonies of music, or we may discourse to the blind man of the beauty of this heaven-built world; we may reason clearly and eloquently about them; but what has our reasoning done? It has done nothing. The blind man knows no more of the rainbow's splendour, or the landscape's richness, or the heaven's glory, than he knew before; the deaf man is as much a stranger to music and its powers. Just so is it with this peace of God. A knowledge of it is not to be gained by speculation. If we want to comprehend it, we must seek it, we must acquire it, we must enjoy it. In the strong language of the apostle, we must "taste of the heavenly gift;" we must "taste the good word of God and the powers of the world to come." Our religion must be more than a form or a creed; it must be a work in the heart.

2. And even then this peace will still "pass all understanding;" for they who enjoy it the most, cannot fully comprehend it. It is a mystery to the man who possesses it. He is sensible of its existence; he finds his heart quieted, and filled, and purified, by it; he sees and delights in its effects, and he can give us a plain, intelligible account of them; but how did it come into his heart? How is it kept

there? Why is it gladdening his soul, while the souls of others are fainting within them for the want of it? Why is it at times so unspeakably sweet, so amazingly strong? To what height of blessedness can it rise? These are questions to which he can give no distinct reply. All he can say is, "the peace of God passeth all understanding." And perhaps an inhabitant of heaven could say no more. The peace implanted in a pardoned sinner's heart may pass even an angel's comprehension. It is "the peace of God," it is "the joy of the Lord;" his own peace, his own joy, and none but his own infinite mind can fully understand its nature and extent. We may all however comprehend its effects.

IV. One of these effects is brought before us in the text. "It shall keep your hearts and minds."

By the "heart" we are to understand our affections and will ; by the "mind," our intellectual faculties, the understanding and judgment. The peace of God, we are told, keeps both these. Its influence extends to every part of the mind, to the whole soul. And thus our church explains this scripture. The well known benediction in which it is introduced, speaks of "the knowledge and love of God;" it prays that this peace may keep our hearts and minds in both, evidently referring "the knowledge" of him, to the mind; and "the love" of him, to the heart.

The word too which we render "keep," is peculiarly significant. It means to defend as in a garrison ; so to fortify and preserve that no invading enemies can come nigh to harm. It implies danger, but it promises us safety in the midst of danger. It assures us of security, not in a peaceful heaven, but in a world of conflict and foes.

But how, it may be asked, does the peace of God effect all this? In many ways.

In temptation, it secures the heart by satisfying the heart. It triumphs over the pleasures of sense by communicating higher pleasures. It purifies and elevates the taste. It destroys the love of the world by making us partakers of a blessedness which we could never wring out of earthly objects, and which we are now sure, promise what they may, these objects can never give. Will a man labour to fill himself with the husks of the earth, who is living on the bread of heaven? Will he sigh for the damps and twilight of a dungeon, who is warmed and gladdened by the mid-day sun?

And it keeps the heart in affliction. It is a pledge of the special love of God to the soul; and as such it begets confidence towards him, so that the soul can stay itself on his promises, can encourage itself in his faithfulness, and look to his care and power for a happy issue out of all its troubles. It both begets hope and strengthens hope; and he who is going full of hope to heaven, is not easily shaken or depressed. With a crown of life before him, he feels that he can afford to bear the light affliction of the way that leads to it. Besides, it leaves us something to fall back on, when other props, and refuges, and consolations, are

withdrawn. Let a worldly man lose his earthly comforts, and he has lost his all; he is desolate, for he has nothing left; but let a man of God lose what he may, his main support, his chief treasure, is yet safe. Put this peace into his heart, and then place him where you will, on the bed of sickness, in the house of mourning, by the grave of his best, and dearest, and only friend; strike him where you may and how you may, he can bear the blow. He grieves, grieves perhaps more than other men, for his religion has enlarged his powers of suffering, it has extended his view, it has deepened his feelings and refined his heart; but he is not moved; no practical, no abiding impression is made on him. He may weep for an hour, but he will soon take up the language of the destitute Paul, and say, "I have all and abound; I am full. None of these things move me; nay, in all these things, I am more than conqueror through him that loved me."

The peace of God keeps the mind also. It settles the judgment. Just as it raises the affections by imparting higher pleasures than the world can give, so it informs and elevates the understanding by shewing it, in the light of spiritual blessedness, the meagreness, the poverty, the emptiness, of all temporal good. It does not tell us how to acquire wealth, or consequence, or honour, but it does more; it teaches us how to do without them. It strips these things bare; it takes the gilded cloak off them; it enables us, if we have them, to hold them loosely; to esteem them unworthy of any eager pursuit, if we have them not. It shews us things that are more excellent, riches that are more durable, an honour that is more glorious, a happiness that is divine.

And it keeps the mind by keeping folly, all new and strange notions, all sceptical doubts, all error, out of the mind. The man who has this peace of God within him "has the witness in himself," a witness and evidence of the truth, which neither enthusiasts nor scoffers can silence. Tell him that his Bible is not true, that his beloved Saviour has no existence, that his religion is a fable and his hope a dream; while you are talking and reasoning, he is feeling the power of all these things, he is experiencing their truth, their reality, their blessedness. His religion has ceased to be a subject of speculation; it is become a matter of sense. You might as well tell him in the broad light of day, that there is no sun in the heavens to shine on him; or that he himself, living, and breathing, and acting, has no existence. A heart happy in its God is a safe heart. "The joy of the Lord will be its strength," its safeguard. It wants no new doctrines, no fresh revelations, no discoveries. It has found what it needs, and it enjoys what it has found, and is content.

V. One part more of the text still remains to be noticed. It points out to us the source whence we obtain this peace of God, and the instrumentality by which it works.

In the preceding verse of the chapter, the apostle had been inculcating on the Philippian converts a freedom from all anxious carefulness, and a constant referring of all their wants, with prayer and thanksgiving, to a gracious God. "Be

careful," he says, "for nothing, but in every thing, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God." And then, he adds, "the peace of God shall keep your hearts." But lest he should be understood as ascribing the efficacy of this peace to the prayer which precedes or attends it, lest that which is little more than its companion should be mistaken for its source, he turns away their thoughts in a moment from the duties he has been urging, and fixes them on the Lord Jesus Christ. "The peace of God," he tells them, "shall keep their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." And an experienced Christian can enter at once into his meaning. He knows that there can be no peace such as he is enjoying, in a heart corroded with worldly anxieties or destitute of a spirit of supplication: he feels that faith and prayer are as necessary to its existence, as inseparable from it, as though it owed to them alone its origin and blessedness; but then he knows also that these things have no more power in themselves to quiet a perturbed soul, than to calm a tempest. Our peace will ever on this side of the grave be connected with them, it will seem to rise out of them, its strength will generally be proportioned to their exercise; but if we want its source, if we would discover the secret spring whence its energy is derived, we must look higher; we must not stop short of the Saviour's throne.

The peace of God has God for its Author and its Giver; but it flows to us through the mediation of his dear Son. It is one of the blessed fruits of his obedience, and sufferings, and continued intercession. We should never have known what it is, never in this world of guilt have even heard of it, had he not made reconciliation for our iniquities, and opened a way first for grace and mercy, and then for peace, to flow down from a righteous God among wretched men. It dwells also in him as the great Head of his church, as the royal treasury in which all the precious gifts designed and prepared for sinners, are deposited. It is dispensed by him. Every portion of it we receive comes from his hand, and owes to him its sweetness. And when dispensed, it is through the agency of his Spirit on our souls, that it becomes our protection; that it keeps, and holds, and blesses us.

Contemplate the Christian's peace in its first rise, its origin - it springs out of the free love, and is the creation of the mighty power, of God. Look at it in its way down to this vile earth - it is brought here by a descending Saviour. View it as actually reigning in man's once troubled breast - it has been lodged there by his Redeemer's hand; it flows out of that prayer, and confidence, and hope, those holy dispositions and affections, which the same divine power has called into being, which the same blessed hand has implanted and keeps alive. Behold it perfected in heaven - it is "the peace of God" still, but flowing still from the exalted man Christ Jesus, and glorifying for ever his infinite perfections, while it fills his creatures with happiness and praise.

On these accounts it is that peace is so often connected with Christ in the scriptures. He is called "our peace;" he is said to "have made peace. Before he

entered our world, he was announced as “the Prince of peace.” When he was born, the song of “Peace on earth” filled the skies; when he died, peace was the legacy he left behind him; when he rose again, his first salutation to those he loved, was “Peace.”

And now at last, brethren, let us turn to ourselves. I may have spoken of this peace, and you may have heard of it, as though it were a matter in which we have little personal interest. But is it not grievous that such a blessing as this should have so little power to affect or attract us? With hearts actually aching for rest, eager in the pursuit of it, fastening themselves on every trifle that seems to offer even the chance of it, is it not sad that when the Bible speaks to us of rest and peace, we refuse it even a thought? If we listen to it at all, too often we listen as to a tale or a dream; just as though it told us not of a peace to be obtained and enjoyed by ourselves in this miserable world, but of a happiness situated out of our reach, in the sun or the stars.

Treat it however as we may, the concern we have in this thing is close and deep. There is more involved in it than a little temporary relief in our trials. It is mixed up with eternal joys and sorrows. It is “the peace of God;” it is the effect of reconciliation with him through the Son of his love; it is connected with that faith in his promises, which saves the soul alive;” it is the result of his sanctifying operations in man’s polluted heart. To be a stranger to it, and to have been always and entirely a stranger to it, is therefore nothing less than ruin. It is to be a stranger to that pardon, that holiness, that mercy and grace, on which the safety of every sinner that breathes, altogether depends.

O ask yourselves then, brethren, what you know of this peace of God; why you have so little of it; why perhaps you have none of it at all; why, it may be, you have never even sought or desired to have it. And then ask yourselves what those empty, harassing things are worth, which you prefer before it. And then look forward, and ask again what you will do without this peace when sickness enfeebles you, when death comes into your families, when that which you love the best, lies far away from you in coldness and darkness. And ask yourselves one question more. Enquire what substitute you can find for this peace of God in your own dying hour. I know that there are substitutes for it; thousands are creating and trusting in them every hour; but no matter what our dependence is, if God is not the author and Christ the sole foundation of it, we shall find it fail us. It fails us now. It keeps neither our hearts nor minds. It leaves the world in full possession of both. It does not bar the love of the world out of the one, nor the wretched principles and spirit of the world out of the other. It offers us no defence against the assaults of temptation; it abandons us to the power of sin. What then can we expect from it in trouble, in death, in judgment? And what is such a peace worth? a peace that can do nothing for us, that will not bear examination, that, brought to the test of God’s word, disappears? O value not so

delusive a thing. Seek something better. Seek that peace which flows from a confidence in pardoning mercy and redeeming love. You may assuredly obtain it. There is a fountain, a spring, of it in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a fountain standing as open to you, as to any happy spirit in heaven. And why should you seek it? That you may bear the troubles of life more patiently? that you may weep over your losses less bitterly? that the anguish of a wounded spirit may be felt by you no more? For a higher end. Heaven is connected with this thing. It is a peace which is an earnest of heaven, which preserves the soul for heaven, and makes it meet for it, and ends in its joys. Blessed as it is now, compared with what it will be, it is as nothing, no more than a drop to an ocean, midnight to noon.

* *The Rev. Charles Bradley, sometime Vicar of Glasbury, Brecknockshire, and Minister of St. James' Chapel, Clapham, published several volumes of sermons between 1818 and 1831, including two preached at the Parish Church of High Wycombe. (Hon. Ed.)*



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SCRIPTURE, CATECHISMS AND COMMENTARIES

by E J Malcolm

William Perkins (1558-1602) wrote a commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. This commentary arose out of his lectures delivered at St. Andrew's, Cambridge, where he was Lecturer between 1584 and his death in 1602. The following year a man by the name of Ralf (or Rafe) Cudworth was appointed to lecture on the same Epistle, in Cambridge. He was a great admirer of Perkins, and when the executors of Perkins' estate invited him to complete the commentary he did so willingly, though with some trepidation.

His willingness sprang from his admiration for Perkins, coupled with his love of the Gospel; his trepidation from the fact that he understood the enormous responsibility the commentator has in handling the sacred text. His Epistle Dedicatory, to Robert, Lord Rich, Baron of Leeze, &c., is somewhat longer than the usual dedication. However, it is not so much the length as the subject he takes that is of such interest.

For we live in a time when commentaries abound. New series are for ever being advertised, new individual works appear regularly, and old favourites are, we are pleased to say, made available to new generations. However, it has to be said that the expression 'not worth the paper they are printed on' applies to a fair proportion of that output. Commentaries have an ancient and honourable place in the ministry of the Church, but not all commentators have stood in the ancient and honourable line. Ralf Cudworth offers some obvious, but nonetheless telling, insights into the work of the commentator, and I believe that his comments are as applicable today as they were four hundred years ago.

Scripture

Cudworth makes plain his understanding of the Scriptures in the opening words of the Epistle Dedicatory. 'The holy Scriptures (Right Honourable) given by divine inspiration, and penned by the holy men of God, Prophets, Apostles, and Apostolike writers, not by private motion, but as they were guided by the holy Ghost...' He goes on to speak of their being commended by God, of their being left unto the Church 'as a pretious depositum carefully to be kept in their integritie,' of how they are to be defended by 'the sword of the Magistrate' against all heretics and schismatics, and above all of their being 'the pillar and foundation whereon to rest our faith.' Indeed they are

the touch-stone of truth; the shoppe of remedies for all spiritual maladies; an anker in the blasts of Temptation, and waves of affliction; a two-edged sword to foyle and put to flight our spiritual enemies; the onely Oracle to which we must

have recourse, and whereat we are to enquire the will of God: In a word, the bread and water of life, whereon our soules are to feed unto eternall life.

Because of this we must search the Scriptures. We must seek in them as for silver and hid treasure, we must meditate upon them day and night, they must be with us at all times, and our constant source of conversation, in whatever situation we find ourselves. To Cudworth the Scriptures are set, certain, and complete. They may not be added unto nor be taken away from. They are able to save our souls.

This being so he expresses great wonder that any calling, themselves Christians, should make lesse account of the booke of God, then the Romanes of old time did of their twelve Tables, and other Heathens of their Ritual books; or then the Jewes at this day doe of their Talmud, the Turks of their Alcoran, the Æthiopians of their Abetelis; ...

He singles out for particular comment those who call themselves Divines, yet who never trouble themselves to open the Scriptures, except in so far as they must in order to follow the arguments of the Schoolmen. Much 'comment' on the Word of God is nothing more than speculation, not upon the Rock, but upon the water that is Aquinas. He accuses such of thinking the 'Scriptures too simple and shallow for them to wade in, as not affording them sufficient matter for their wits to work upon.' He likens them to those who, looking beyond Scripture at the moon, fall blindly into the ditch, '...whilst they strive with the wings of their wit to soare above the cloudes of other mens conceyts, they sinke into a Sea of absurdities and errors.' Could not this be said of the liberals of our day?

Gerald T. Sheppard said this of commentaries from Perkins' era. 'Because these commentaries antedate the full impact of the Enlightenment and its modern critical approach to history, they remain among the few extant English works that sustain the biblical text as a literary and coherent whole.' Given that Cudworth condemns almost all attempts at commenting from after the Church Fathers right up to his own day, citing Luther's commentary on Galatians as the first truly great such work, are we not in much the same position now as the Church was for some one thousand years? The major difference being that, with modern printing methods, we are able to reproduce the silver and gold of the past, as well as the silver and gold of the present, among a great deal of dross.

Catechisms

Cudworth, having established his doctrine of Scripture, and having shown to what use the Word of God is to be put, now enters upon the main theme, that of the interpretation of the Scriptures. He sees the Bible as being made up of two parts, 'majestie joyned with simplicities, ... great difficultie mixed with plainesse and facility...' He sees the Scriptures as being a work of the wonderful wisdom

of God's Spirit, 'that they are both obscure and perspicuous.' On this basis he draws the conclusion that two sorts of works are needed. He begins with those which deal with the plain, the simple, the perspicuous. From such places of Scripture are to be drawn 'principles of religion, both articles of faith and rules of good life.' These are called Catechisms. Cudworth lists a number of such works from the Fathers of the Church, showing that this is always the way in which men of God have used these portions of God's Word. He shows that they stand in the line of the Apostle Paul who gave 'the forme of knowledge, Rom 2:20, and the forme of doctrine, Rom 6:17 and a paterne of wholesome words, 2 Tim 1:13.' Such Catechisms are aimed at 'the simple, who are to be fedde with milke, being but babes in Christ: and ... the learned who are strong men in Christ, that they may have some rule, whereby to trie the spirits...'

Cudworth, while condemning Roman practice and method of interpretation, sees one thing of note in that Church. He notes that the Church of Rome has a catechism approved by the Council of Trent, which all men follow. He goes on,

[I would] there were an uniforme Catechisme injoyed by publicke authority to be used in all Families, Schooles, and Churches in this land, that we might all with one mind and one mouth, judge and speake the same thing.

Commentaries

If Catechisms are to be taken from the clear and simple portions of God's Word, not being based upon controverted points but upon that which can be readily agreed, then commentaries are required to help interpret those places that are not so plain, nor so readily agreed upon.

Cudworth finds justification for the existence of commentaries in the practice of the Lord Jesus Christ. He shows that Christ expounded the law, Matt 5, that He unfolded the meaning of parables to the disciples in private, and that He preached Himself to the two on the road to Emmæus from all the Scriptures. Thus, concludes Cudworth, commenting upon the text and expounding the meaning is something the Church is to do. Only 'fanatical Anabaptists, who rely upon immediate revelations, and some prejudicate Papists, who hold the consent of all [Roman] Catholics to be the true Scripture, both the glosse, and the text; the written word [to be] but inky Divinity and a dead letter.'

Having established the justification for commentaries Cudworth faces up to the immensity of the task. 'But how Commentaries ought to be written, it is not so easie to define, there beeing such difference as well in regard of the manner of writing, as of the measure.' He lists the usual Romish practice and understanding, where the four-fold sense is taken for granted; Literal, Allegorical, Anagogical, and Tropological. He rejects all such manners of interpretation. He also rejects their practice of being too tedious, 'who upon every small occasion digresse from the text, or rather take occasion to enter into infinite frivolous questions, which breed strife rather than godly edifying which

is by faith.’ Commentaries written after this fashion become so large that they are impractical, and serve to ‘cast a mist before the eyes of the reader.’ Their very verbosity (which was how Luther described his own lectures on Galatians!) helps to hide the meaning of the Holy Ghost. Others, he says, are so brief that they say nothing worth saying. What is required is ‘the golden meane.’ If all readers were ‘strong men in Christ’ who had the intelligence to take up the thoughts of what Spurgeon called ‘suggestive commentaries’ then short works would suffice. All would read the words of the commentator, see his line of arguing, and follow that line to the spiritual conclusion. However, this is not reality. Instead the commentator must cater for ‘babes, who must have every thing minced, and cut smal unto them before they can receive it.’ Furthermore, not all readers have the skill of Ezra to rightly divide the word, but instead add their own opinions, which Cudworth likens to casting poison into the pot of the sons of the prophets instead of that which will cure.

On the manner of commenting, Cudworth advocates only the literal interpretation, which, he says, is Perkins’ manner. The literal is ‘the onely sense intended by the Spirit of God.’ Having established the literal sense the commentator must then ‘make collection of doctrine & application of uses; yet briefly, rather pointing at the chiefe, th[a]n dwelling long upon any point.’ These points are drawn out so that they may be applied ‘for confutation, correction, instruction, consolation.’ The skilful commentator will match together ‘two things, heretofore insociable, Brevity, and Perspicuity.’ This, says Cudworth, Perkins has done, and he declares that it has never been done so well before ‘by any Expositor upon this Epistle: which we may well call the key of the new Testament...’ He commends Luther’s work, but gives his opinion that he has ‘lost much of his strength, and taken winde by changing from language to language...’ Perkins, on the other hand, being an Englishman, will be able to speak to Englishmen with undiminished power through the printed word.

Conclusion

Cudworth is right in his understanding of the influence a commentator can exert. The same is true of a preacher. Whether the man is good or bad he will be listened to by at least some. Therefore Cudworth’s views are of value to us, in that if we have a correct doctrine of the inspiration and authority of Scripture we will desire to see it handled accordingly. Once we see that Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation it will become our constant conversation, and we shall draw from it those directions for life and faith which we find in it. And we shall also make use of the writings of the spiritual and learned who have taken in hand the great task of laying before the Church of Christ the milk and the meat of Holy Writ, so that all may be fed and strengthened, while treating with caution those attempts which are based upon a less than adequate doctrine of Scripture, and whose purpose is not to rightly divide the Word.

CONSTITUTION

- 1 **Doctrine:** The doctrine of the Continuing Church shall be that of the 39 Articles of Religion understood in their original, natural and intended sense.
- 2 **Worship:** The worship of the Continuing Church shall be generally according to the Book of Common Prayer (1662).

The Authorised Version of the Bible shall be the only version used in the lectern and the pulpit and in public readings and expositions at all meetings of the Continuing Church.

- 3 **Ministry:** The consecration and ordination of ministers shall be according to the Ordinal of the Book of Common Prayer (1662). The Continuing Church believes in the ministry of women according to Scripture which does not permit them to teach or exercise authority, particularly as bishops, priests, and deacons.
- 4 **Discipline:** The church shall be episcopally governed. A general assembly shall be held not less than once a year consisting of the bishop and the ministers of the church and representatives of the local congregations to transact the business of the denomination and for mutual encouragement and edification.
- 5 **Membership:** New churches may apply for membership of the Continuing Church on the basis of their agreement with the doctrine, worship and discipline of that body.

Membership of the local church shall be on the basis of baptism and confirmation and approval by the local presbyter.

Any matters incapable of resolution shall be referred to the Ordinary.

Please note that the Continuing Church publishes a prayer letter, "Intercessions." It is available free of charge to those who would like to receive news and to pray for the various needs.

Please write to
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Would contributors please note that they can send their news via email, to
edwardj@malcolm.co.uk

Contributions toward postage costs are gratefully received.

CHURCHES

St. Mary's, Castle Street, Reading. Sunday Services: 11.00 a.m. Morning Prayer (first Sunday Lord's Supper), 6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer (third Sunday Lord's Supper). Tuesday 8.00 pm Bible Study. *Enquiries* Rev. E.J. Malcolm 0118 959 5131.

Former Congregation of St. John the Baptist with St. Mary-le-Port, Chapel of the Three Kings, Foster's Almshouses, top of Christmas Steps, Colston Street, Bristol. Sunday Service: 11.00 a.m. Morning Prayer. *Enquiries* Dr. Napier Malcolm 01934 712520.

Nuffield Congregation meeting with Nuffield Parish Church, near Henley-on-Thames, the Rev. John F. Shearer. Sunday Services: 11.00 a.m. Morning Prayer, 6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer. Lord's Supper 8.00 a.m. first Sunday, 6.30 p.m. third Sunday. Bible Study Wednesday 8.00 p.m. *Enquiries* 01491 641305.

St. John's Church, South London Meeting at the Shaftesbury Home, Trellis House (Mill Road (off Merton High Street), Colliers Wood, SW19), for 11.00 a.m. Morning Prayer and 6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer. Midweek as intimated. *Enquiries* Rev. A.R. Price, 0208 642 7885 or 0208 742 0151

St. Silas Church, Wolverhampton, St Silas Church, Wolverhampton Rt Rev E. Malcolm Hon. Minister; Rev. I.R. Budgen, Hon. Curate. Bethany Chapel, (A-Z page 21 2E, junction Lower Prestwood Road/Blackwood Avenue) Wednesfield. Sundays 12.40 p.m. Morning Prayer (1st Sunday Holy Communion); 4.00 p.m. Evening Prayer (3rd Sunday Holy Communion). Tuesdays in term time 4.15 p.m. Children's Class; 7.00 p.m. Bible Study; 7.45 p.m. Prayer Meeting. *Enquiries* 01547 528815.

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