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THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE

"COMFORT YE, COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE, SAITH YOUR GOD."

"ENDEAVOURING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE."

"JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TODAY, AND FOR EVER."

No. 1113
New Series

APRIL, 1961

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EDITORIAL

THE SERMON THAT BEGAN THE AWAKENING

- THE re-publication in 1960 of *George Whitefield's Journals* by THE BANNER OF TRUTH TRUST has been a timely and great event. It has drawn fresh attention to the great Scriptural truths preached and enforced by this great leader of the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century both in England and in America. In particular our attention has been fixed upon Whitefield's Sermon on "*The Nature and Necessity of our New Birth in Christ Jesus in order to Salvation*," which he preached from the text, "*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*" (2 Corinthians 5 : 17). It was this sermon, Whitefield wrote, "which under God began the awakening at London, Bristol, Gloucester, and Gloucestershire" (*Journals*, p. 86).

George Whitefield was then a young man of twenty-two. His conversion at Oxford came about June, 1735, when he was twenty years old. He had been ordained by Bishop Benson of Gloucester, in June, 1736, at the early age of twenty-one. The next year, 1737, was Whitefield's great year, when he was twenty-two and when he became known throughout England as a preacher of the NEW BIRTH IN CHRIST.

In this issue we give some account of Whitefield's early preaching and a summary of his SERMON ON THE NEW BIRTH, for which we ask close consideration. As John Berridge said, "No Salvation without a New Birth." "*Ye must be born again*" (John 3 : 7).

THE FAMILY PORTION

OR, WORDS OF SPIRITUAL CAUTION, COUNSEL, AND COMFORT

"Who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."—2 CORINTHIANS i. 4.

THE NEW BIRTH IN CHRIST

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

—John 3 : 7.

As we are giving in this issue "the Sermon which began the Awakening"—George Whitefield's Sermon on "THE NATURE AND NECESSITY OF OUR NEW BIRTH IN CHRIST JESUS"—we feel it essential to give, first of all, some account of the Lord's dealings with the soul of the young Whitefield. It will help us to see how he was brought into the light and joy of the Gospel of Regeneration and of Justification in Christ, which he delighted to preach through the whole of his Ministry of thirty-four years (1736-1770).

When he was nearly eighteen years of age, he had gone to Pembroke College, Oxford, in 1732. Then, in 1735, some weeks after Easter, "after having undergone innumerable buffetings of Satan," he had been delivered, and afterwards wrote: "But oh! with what joy—joy unspeakable—even joy that was full of, and big with glory, was my soul filled, when the weight of sin went off, and an abiding sense of the pardoning love of God, and a full assurance of faith, *broke in upon my disconsolate soul!*"

He had then returned to Gloucester to recover his strength, and was away from the University for a period of nine months. During that time God made him "instrumental to awaken several young persons." He began to read the Holy Scriptures upon his knees, praying over almost every line and word, and said later: "I got more true knowledge from reading the Book of God in one month, than I could *ever* have acquired from *all* the writings of men." At this time he wrote: "God was pleased to enlighten my soul, and bring me into the knowledge of His free grace, and the necessity of being justified in His sight *by faith only.*" It was to him "the good old doctrine of the Church of England." He did read other books—Burkitt's and Henry's *Expositions*, Alleine's *Alarm*, Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*, and Janeway's *Life*. As he had done at Oxford, so at Gloucester, he visited the prisoners in the gaol. The Bishop of Gloucester then sent for him and arranged for his ordination.

After ordination, in June 1736, he returned to Oxford and took his degree. At the University he at first found sufficient Christian

work, but in a short time he was called to London by a friend who was Curate at the Tower of London. Whitefield ministered there during August and September. Of this time he wrote: "God was pleased to give me favour in the eyes of the inhabitants of the Tower. The Chapel was crowded on Lord's Days. Religious friends from divers parts of the town attended the Word, and several young men came on Lord's Day morning, under serious impressions, to hear me discourse about the NEW BIRTH. . . ."

After returning to Oxford once more, he was called in November to temporary work at Dummer in Hampshire, where he learned much from visiting and teaching in a country parish. But he had received letters from the two Wesleys in Georgia and from their fellow-labourer, the Rev. Mr. Ingham, and these had fired his soul and made him long to go abroad. By the end of the year he had resolved to go to the missionary work in that newly founded colony, but was detained by circumstances for a whole year before he could sail.

That year, 1737—Whitefield's great year—marked the beginning of the Awakening. First, he went to Gloucester to hear the Bishop's view of the call to Georgia and to take leave of his mother and other relations. There he began to be a public figure. Congregations were very large, and the power of God accompanied the Word.

He then went on to Bristol to take leave of some of his relations there. Attending a Thursday service at ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, he was unexpectedly asked to give the sermon. Having his notes with him, he complied. The next day there was a lecture at St. Stephen's, and he was asked to preach. "The alarm given here was so general that, on the following Lord's Day, many of all denominations were obliged to return from the churches" where he preached, there being no more room. He was called to preach at the Lord Mayor's Chapel before the Lord Mayor and the Corporation. For some time following he preached all the lectures on weekdays and twice on Sundays, besides visiting the Religious Societies of the time.

"The Word, through the mighty Power of God, was sharper than a two-edged sword. The doctrine of the NEW BIRTH and JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST (though I was not so clear in it as afterwards) made its way like lightning into the hearers' consciences. The arrows of conviction stuck fast; and my whole time, between one lecture and another, except what was spent in necessary refreshment, was wholly occupied in talking with people under religious concern."

After preaching again in London, he went to supply the place of the minister at Stonehouse in Gloucestershire, taking his leave on Ascension Day. The people of Bristol having given him repeated invitations and pressed him to come again, he paid them, on May

23rd, 1737, a second visit. They gave him almost a royal welcome. Multitudes went on foot to meet him and many in coaches a mile outside the city. He preached, as usual, about five times a week. Congregations grew larger and larger. People hung upon the rails of the organ loft, climbed upon the leads of the church, making the church so hot with their breath that the steam fell from the pillars like drops of rain. It was with great difficulty that Whitefield got to the desk to read prayers or to preach. "Persons of all denominations flocked to hear. Persons of all ranks, not only attended my public ministry, but gave me private invitations to their houses." He visited Bath again, preaching three times in the Abbey Church. He received £160 for the poor of Georgia. When he finally took his leave of Bristol, on June 23rd, he was up at three in the morning to forestall a great company on horseback and in coaches who had intended to see him on his way to Gloucester. He eventually went to London, to give himself "wholly to prayer, the study of the Scriptures, and my own heart" before he embarked, with the soldiers then sailing, for Georgia.

This was the time, apparently, when his Sermon on the New Birth was printed. His journal records:

"About this time, through the importunity of friends, and aspersions of enemies, I was prevailed upon to print my sermon, *On the Nature and Necessity of our Regeneration or New Birth in Christ Jesus*, which under God began the awakening at London, Bristol, Gloucester, and Gloucestershire."

(Journals, 1960, p. 86).

A second impression was quickly printed, the sermon selling well to persons of all denominations at home and abroad. Whitefield remarked that the Dissenters "were surprised to see a sermon on such a subject from a clergyman of the Church of England" (as they often are today).

The chief reason which induced Whitefield to sanction the publication of the Sermon was, he declared in his Preface, "the great scarcity of Sermons upon this subject among the Divines of our own Church." As God had been pleased to give it "surprising success when delivered from the pulpit," Whitefield hoped that it would be blessed when printed.

He added that he heartily wished that his clerical brethren, the Ministers of the Church of England, "would more frequently entertain their people with Discourses of this nature" than they commonly did. They should not, from fear of displeasing some particular person, "fail to declare the whole will of God to their respective congregations," nor allow their people "to rest satisfied with the shell and shadow of Religion" without acquainting them with the nature and necessity of the NEW BIRTH.

W.D.S.

WHITEFIELD'S SERMON*

OF OUR NEW BIRTH IN CHRIST

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

—2 Corinthians 5 : 7.

"THE Doctrine of our REGENERATION, or NEW BIRTH in Christ Jesus," Whitefield declared in his opening sentence, though it was "one of the most fundamental Doctrines of our holy Religion," though "so plainly and often pressed upon us in Sacred Writ," though it was "the very hinge on which the Salvation of each of us turns," yet it was "so seldom considered."

Moreover, though it was a point "in which all *sincere* Christians of whatever denomination agreed," yet it was so little *experimentally* understood that, if we judged of its truth by the *experience* of most who called themselves Christians, we would think "that they had not so much as heard whether there be any such thing as *Regeneration* or no."

Men were generally orthodox in their creed—they believe that there is but one God and one Mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus—but "tell them, They must REGENERATE, they must be BORN AGAIN, they must be renewed in the very *spirit*, i.e., in the *inmost* faculties of their minds, e'er they can truly call Christ *Lord, Lord*, or have any share in the merits of His precious blood, and they are ready to cry out with Nicodemus, *How can these things be?* or, with the Athenians, *What will this babblers say?* *He seemeth to be a setter-forth of strange doctrines* because we preach unto them CHRIST and the New Birth."

So Whitefield wished to "contribute his mite" towards curing the fatal mistake of vainly expecting to be justified by Christ unless they had their natures changed.

I.—WHAT IS MEANT BY BEING IN CHRIST?

A person may be said to be in Christ in two ways.

First, he may be so only by an outward profession. In this sense every one that is called a Christian, or has been baptized into Christ's Church, may be said to be in Christ. But it is evident that this is not the sole meaning of the apostle's phrase, because every such one would be a *new creature*, which is notoriously false. It is too plain, beyond all contradiction, that comparatively few of those that are *born of water* are *born of the Spirit* likewise. Many are

* This Sermon is here summarised (largely in Whitefield's own words) from the Sermon as preached in St. Mary Redcliffe Church, Bristol. It should be remembered that, at this time, Whitefield was but twenty-two years old and was at the beginning of his ministry.

baptized with water who were never, effectually at least, baptized with the Holy Ghost.

To be *in Christ*, in the full import of the word, must certainly mean something more than a bare outward profession. The same apostle tells us, *All are not Israelites that are of Israel*, i.e., when applied to Christianity, All are not *real* Christians that are *nominally* such. Our blessed Lord Himself informs us that many who have prophesied in His name, and in His name cast out devils, and done many wonderful works, shall notwithstanding be dismissed at the last Day with a *Depart from Me, I know you not, ye workers of iniquity*.

Secondly, a person may be said to be in Christ in a second and closer signification. It is "to be *in Him* so as to partake of the benefits of His sufferings; to be *in Him* not only by an outward profession, but by an inward change and purity of heart and co-habitation of His Holy Spirit." It is "to be in Him so as to be mystically united to Him by a true and lively faith, and thereby to receive spiritual virtue from Him, as the members of the natural body do from the head, or the branches from the vine."

Whitefield asserted that this was undoubtedly the full purport of the apostle's expression "*If any man be in Christ.*" What the apostle said in the Epistle to the Romans about circumcision might very well be applied to this subject—namely, that he is not a *real* Christian who is only one outwardly; nor is that true baptism which is only outward in the *flesh*. But he is a true Christian who is one *inwardly*, whose baptism is that of the *heart*, in the *Spirit*. Or, as the apostle said in another passage, "*Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything of itself, but a new creature.*"

II.—WHAT WE ARE TO UNDERSTAND BY BEING A NEW CREATURE

This expression is not to be explained as though there was a physical change.

"It only means that we must be so altered as to the qualities and tempers of our minds, that we must entirely forget what manner of persons we once were. It may be said of a piece of gold that was in the ore, after it has been cleansed, purified and polished, that it is a new piece of gold. It may be said of a bright glass that has been covered over with filth, when it is wiped, and so become transparent and clear, that it is a new glass. It might be said of Naaman, when he recovered of his leprosy, and his flesh returned to him like the flesh of a young child, that he was a new man. So our souls, though still the same as to essence, yet are so purged, purified, and cleansed from their natural dross, filth, and leprosy by the blessed influences of the Holy Spirit, that they may properly be said to be *made anew*."

"How this glorious change is wrought in the soul cannot easily be explained; for no one knows the ways of the Spirit, save the Spirit of God Himself." Our Lord, when discoursing on this very subject, said, "*The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth.*" If we are told of natural things and do not understand them, how much less should we wonder if we cannot immediately account for the invisible workings of the Holy Spirit? The truth of the matter is that the doctrine of our Regeneration or New Birth is *dark and hard to be understood* by the natural man. But there is really such a thing, and each of us must be spiritually born again before we can enter the kingdom of God or must be *new creatures* before we can be in Christ. This Whitefield endeavoured to shew under his third heading.

III.—SOME ARGUMENTS WHY WE MUST BE NEW CREATURES IN ORDER TO QUALIFY US FOR BEING SAVINGLY IN CHRIST

Four arguments were advanced by Whitefield to prove *Why* we must be *New Creatures* in order to qualify us for being savingly in Christ.

GOD HAS TOLD US SO IN HIS WORD

1. *God Himself, in His Holy Word, has told us so.* One would think that this argument would be sufficient.

"One would wonder how Nicodemus, who was a *Teacher* in Israel . . . should be so ignorant of this grand article, as we find he really was, by his asking our blessed Lord, when He was pressing him on this topic, *How can these things be?* Surely he could not forget how often the Psalmist had begged of God to make him a *new heart* and *renew a right spirit* within him?"

"This doctrine is so plainly and often repeated in the New Testament. For what says the great Prophet and Instructor of the world Himself? *Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* And lest we should be apt to slight this assertion, and, Nicodemus-like, reject the doctrine, because we cannot immediately explain, How this thing can be, our blessed Master therefore affirms it, as it were by an oath, *Verily, verily, I say unto you,* or, as it may be read, *I the Amen,* I who am the Truth itself, say unto you, that it is the unalterable appointment of My heavenly Father, that *unless a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*"

Agreeable to this are those many passages in the Epistles, in which different terms are used, *Be renewed in the spirit*, put off the *old man*, put on the *new man*, the *washing of regeneration* and the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*, a *new creature*.

"Now what can be understood by all these different terms . . . but that our Christianity requires a *thorough, real, in-*

ward change of heart? Do we think these, and such like forms of speaking, are mere metaphors, words of a bare sound, without any solid signification? Indeed it is to be feared some men would have them interpreted so; but alas! unhappy men! they are not to be envied their metaphorical interpretation. It might be well, if they do not interpret themselves out of their salvation."

2. *A second argument is taken from the Purity of God and the present corrupt and polluted state of man.*

God is described in Holy Scripture as a Being of such infinite sanctity as to be of *purser eyes* than to *behold* iniquity, as to be so transcendently *holy* that the *very heavens are not clean in His sight*.

"On the other hand, man is described (and every regenerate person will find it true by his own experience) as a creature altogether *conceived* and *born in sin*, as having no *good thing* dwelling in him, as being *carnal, sold under sin*, nay, as having a mind which is *enmity with God*, and such like. And since there is such an infinite disparity, can anyone conceive, how such a filthy, corrupted, polluted wretch can dwell with an infinitely pure and holy God before he is changed and rendered, in some measure, like Him?"

3. *A third argument is founded on the consideration of the nature of that happiness God has prepared for those that unfeignedly love Him.* As God is a *Spirit*, the happiness laid up for His people is *spiritual* likewise. Unless our carnal minds are *changed* and become *spiritualised*, we can never be made meet to partake of that inheritance of the saints in light. We could never relish heaven. Without *holiness*, without the image of God re-instamped upon the soul, *no man living* shall see the Lord. Unless we have suitable dispositions wrought in us we could take no satisfaction in heavenly pleasures. If we are pleased with the communion of saints on earth, we will enjoy the communion and society of heaven. But if the opposite of all this be true, we could not be happy.

4. *The fourth argument advanced by Whitefield was that Christ's redemption would not be complete without the new birth.*

"If we reflect on the first and chief end of our Blessed Lord's coming, we shall find it was to save us from our sins, to be a propitiation for our sins, to give His life a ransom for many. But then, if the benefits of our dear Redeemer's death were to extend no further than barely to procure forgiveness of our sins, we should have as little reason to rejoice in it, as a poor condemned criminal that is ready to perish by some fatal disease would have in receiving a *pardon* from his judge."

There is not only a legal hindrance to our happiness, as we are breakers of God's law, but also a moral impurity in our natures

which renders us incapable of enjoying heaven till some mighty change has been wrought in us. We need a grant of God's Holy Spirit to change our natures and so prepare us for the enjoyment of that happiness our Saviour has purchased by His precious blood. Whom Christ justifies, those He also sanctifies.

INFERENCES

Finally, Whitefield drew SOME INFERENCES from what he had advanced.

1. *If he that is IN Christ must be a new creature, this may serve as a reproof for those who rested in a bare performance of OUTWARD duties without perceiving any real INWARD change of heart.* A great many persons were punctual in the regular returns of public and private prayer, of receiving the Holy Communion, and perhaps now and then in keeping a fast. So far, he said, they did well; but the misfortune was that *they rested barely in the use of means*, which were part, but not the whole of religion.

"For, if so, who more religious than the *Pharisee*? who fasted twice in the week, and gave tithes of all that he possessed, and yet was not justified, as our Saviour Himself informs us, in the sight of God."

If they continued vain and trifling, immoral or worldly-minded in their conversations, and differed only from the rest of their neighbours barely in going to church or in complying with some outward performances, were they better than they?

2. *If he that is IN Christ must be a new creature, this might check the groundless presumption of those who rested in the attainment of some moral virtues*, those who imagined that they were *good Christians* if they were just in their dealings, or temperate in their diet, and did hurt or violence to no man. If this was all that was required to make us good Christians, then the heathens of old who were remarkable for such virtues might be *good Christians*. Or St. Paul, before his conversion, was as touching the Law blameless; yet, after his conversion, he renounces all dependence on works of this kind and desires only to be found *in Christ*, and to know the power of His resurrection, i.e., to have an experimental proof of having received the Holy Ghost, purchased for him by the death and applied to him by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christianity includes Morality; yet, if we are not *inwardly* changed by the powerful operations of the Holy Spirit and our moral actions proceed from a principle of a *new nature*, *we shall* be found at the Great Day among those who vainly depend on their own righteousness and not on the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

3. *Similarly, this doctrine of the New Birth will not less condemn those who rest in a partial amendment of themselves without experiencing a thorough, real, inward change of heart.* Many people who perhaps were openly profane, seeing its ill consequences and

worldly inconveniences, grow civilised, and flatter themselves that they are very religious; but at the same time they have some secret sin with which they will not part. "Nothing short of a *thorough, sound* conversion will avail for the salvation of thy soul." One must be not only an *almost*, but *altogether* a new creature.

4. Finally, if he that is in Christ must be a new creature then this may be prescribed as an infallible rule for every person of whatever denomination, age, degree or quality, to judge himself by. This is the only solid foundation whereon we can build a well-grounded assurance of pardon, peace and happiness.

APPLICATION

"Let each of us, therefore, seriously put this question to our hearts: Have we received the Holy Ghost since we believed? Are we new creatures in Christ, or no?"

Whitefield urged a constant and conscientious use of all the means of grace. On the other hand, he said, if we have only *heard*, and not know *experimentally*, whether there be any Holy Ghost, if we are strangers to spiritual exercises of devotion, if we are content to go in the broad way with most people, if we are enemies to the cross of Christ by leading lives of softness, worldly-mindedness, and sensual pleasure, "then Christ is as yet dead in vain as to us, we are yet under the guilt of our sins, we are unacquainted with that true and thorough conversion, which alone can entitle us to the salvation of our souls."

But he was persuaded better things of them, and hoped that they were heartily convinced that nothing but the wedding garment of a *new nature* could gain them admission at the marriage feast of the supper of the Lamb; that he who has not the Spirit of Christ is none of His; that unless the Spirit which raised Jesus from the dead dwelt in them here, neither would their mortal bodies be quickened by the same Spirit to dwell with Him hereafter.

He exhorted them, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to act suitably to these convictions, to live as Christians who in Holy Writ are commanded "to put off their former conversation concerning the *Old Man* and to put on the *New Man*, which is created after God is righteousness and true holiness."

He owned that this is a difficult work, but not impossible—"many thousands of happy souls have been assisted by a Divine Power to bring it about, and why should we despair of success? Is God's hand shortened that it cannot save?"

It was a task that would put us to some pain, obliging us to part with some lust, to break with some friend, to mortify some beloved passion exceedingly dear to us and as hard to leave as to cut off a right hand or pluck out a right eye.

Finally, it "may, nay assuredly will, expose us to the ridicule of the unthinking part of mankind who will wonder that we run not

into the same excess of riot with themselves." But the being numbered among the saints and shining as the stars for ever would be a more than sufficient recompense for all the ridicule, calumny, or reproach we can possibly meet with here !

Indeed were there no other reward than that peace of God which attends a thorough conversion, we would have great reason to rejoice. But that was the least of the mercies that God had prepared for those who are new creatures in Christ—it was but the beginning of an eternal succession of pleasures. Those who are regenerate and born again "have a real title to all the glorious promises of the Gospel, and are infallibly certain of being as happy, both here and hereafter, as an all-wise, all-gracious, all-powerful God can make them."

Whitefield concluded that, if we remembered all this :

"Methinks, every one that has but the least concern for the salvation of his precious, his immortal soul, having such promises, such a hope, such an eternity of happiness set before him, should never cease watching, praying, and striving, till he find a real, inward, saving change wrought in his heart, and thereby know of a truth that he dwells in Christ and Christ in him, that he is a new creature in Christ, that he is therefore a child of God, that he is already an inheritor, and will ere long, if he endure to the end, be an actual possessor of the kingdom of heaven. Which God of His infinite mercy may grant through Jesus Christ our Lord."

[THIS SERMON by the Rev. George Whitefield, A.B., was first printed on August 5th, 1737. The copy which we have used is in his "SERMONS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS," London, 1739.]

W.D.S.

WHITEFIELD'S COMMENT

"When I was sixteen years of age, I began to fast twice a week for thirty-six hours together, prayed many times a day, received the sacrament every Lord's day, fasting myself almost to death all the forty days of Lent, during which I made it a point of duty never to go less than three times a day to public worship, besides seven times a day to my private prayers, yet I knew no more that I was to be born again in God, born a new creature in Christ Jesus, than if I were never born at all."

—George Whitefield, Sermon on "All men's place."

SERMONS & NOTES OF SERMONS

CHOSEN IN CHRIST

SERMON BY THE REV. HERBERT M. CARSON,
VICAR OF ST. PAUL'S, CAMBRIDGE.

"According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."—EPHESIANS 1 : 4.

IN order to put this verse in its context, I am going to read verses 3 and 5 as well :

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ : according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love ; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."

And leaving verse 5 for further consideration, let us this morning think together about this fourth verse. He hath chosen us in Him, that is, in Christ, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

I believe that one of the merits of a consecutive study of Scripture such as we are attempting to do, is that you are forced to face all the truths in God's Word, not just those that you consider palatable, not just those you would like to consider ; but as you go through a chapter you have to face the whole content of God's Word. And I am afraid that the truth that we have to consider this morning in this verse, is a truth that people would so often like to avoid, because of course it is not an easy truth.

PUT OFF BY A CATCHWORD?

One of the things that concerns me is that so often people fail to consider this truth because they are put off by a 'catch cry.' We are familiar, for example, today, with those who will not listen to the presentation of the gospel because that swear-word 'fundamentalism' is used ; and at once they feel it is not even respectable to consider this issue. And what do we do ? We say, "Don't be put off by a catchword. Come with me, and let us study together." And I believe, when people begin to consider the truth of this verse, so often the catchword is 'Calvinism,' and immediately people begin to feel this is thorough unrespectable, this is not the thing to consider ; and they do not even apply their minds to see what the Bible really does say on the subject.

Perhaps it might be a good thing if I suggested that this does not belong exclusively to Calvinism. In fact it is rather interesting to note that Martin Luther wrote his great work, *"The Bondage of the Will,"* eleven years before John Calvin produced the *"Institutes of the Christian Religion."* John Calvin was a lad of about 16 when Luther delivered his great reply to Erasmus in which he emphasised this very doctrine. So apparently, if you are going to give this doctrine a title, you might as well call it Lutheranism as Calvinism. But of course it was a long time before Luther that Augustine had declared the same truths in the fifth century.

But, what matters is, not that Luther or Calvin or Augustine declared it, not that the Puritans declared it, or the Anglican Evangelicals of the 18th century, or Bishop Ryle, or Charles Haddon Spurgeon, or one might go down the list. What really matters is this: Is this doctrine of God's election in Scripture? After all you may produce a list of very venerable names, but, of course, it is possible they might be wrong, and you could produce, obviously, saintly men on the other side who differed from them. So let us, as far as we can, seek to understand what this verse says.

A DIFFICULT QUESTION

There are some, of course, who would say, "Yes, but it is a difficult question, this. It is a thorny question. I think there are so many things to be considered in Scripture that I do not think we ought to take time considering something that is so surrounded with difficulties and problems." Is that to be the test whereby we study the Scriptures? Do you find the doctrine of the Trinity easy? I most certainly don't. But I do not believe, therefore, that we should bypass it merely because it is difficult and brings problems with it. Scripture declares it. Let us study it.

Yes, there are those too who say, "Well, I believe this truth is in Scripture, but I do not think it is expedient really to declare it publicly and openly," and so it becomes a sort of "skeleton in the cupboard," a truth of which we are half-ashamed. We believe it, but we do not really like to let other people know we believe it, and so we push it quietly into the background. Are we, therefore, to make ourselves wiser than the Holy Spirit? Who was it who led Paul to write this letter? I believe it was the Spirit of God.

To whom was this letter written? To some little group quietly in the corner considering esoteric theological truths? Not at all, it was written to the church at large. This was a word for all the people of God. This letter was to be read publicly. These truths were to be declared in the face of the congregation. And so let us not take that line that suggests that this is something that we quietly keep in the background for discussion, when we are hopeful that no-one from outside can possibly be listening. If the Spirit of God has put it here in a position of prominence—and I suggest to you, if you read

his chapter, it is indeed in a position of prominence—then let us seek not to fail to emphasise that which the Spirit of God has emphasised. Let us avoid the extremes in other words; avoid the extreme, on the one hand, of ignoring this truth, and avoid the extreme, on the other hand, of over emphasising it. I have no time for the man who just bypasses it because he finds it difficult, but I have no time likewise for the man who seems to think there is no other doctrine in Scripture but the doctrine of election.

PRACTICAL OUTCOME

One other important point to notice in general as we approach this verse is this, the *practical* outcome which Paul sees through the statement of this doctrine. Paul is not interested merely in declaring truths in order that you might have a nice neat system which satisfies your mind. Doctrine, for Paul, essentially is a statement of truth which should evoke a response in the minds and hearts of those to whom he gives it. The statement of Christian doctrine should always deepen our love for God and our love for men. It should lead to holiness of life, as Paul says here. If anyone claims that they hold some truth of Scripture, and that truth does not promote holiness of life, I would suggest it is not the truth of Scripture at all, or else that they have seriously misunderstood it. Any truth of God's Word should fall into the pattern of that body of truth which promotes holiness and righteousness.

GOD CHOSE US IN CHRIST

So let us come more closely to the text itself, this very clear statement—*God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world*. Who were the "us" to whom he refers? Well, quite clearly, the Christians to whom he writes and himself: Christians in general. He says, God has chosen us before the foundation of the world. Now, choice quite clearly *involves a selection* from which you make a choice. Some of you are quite accustomed to sitting and looking at an examination paper. On some papers you get the caption at the top "Only five questions need be attempted," which means that there is a choice available. You can accept some and attempt to do them. You can neglect others. Or you go into an expensive hotel, if you are accustomed to doing such things. You find a menu there in which there is a selection of dishes: you have a choice. But you possibly recall school meals where bread pudding was all that was available! Or you take a small boy into a toy shop and you say, "Choose whatever you like." You do not mean that he can clear the shelf. You mean that he should make a choice from all that is available. And choice, by its very essence, involves the fact that there are different things available and you select. Now, says Paul, God chose us. He selected us Christians. There was a possible selection, and He made a particular choice. What was the possible selection? Surely Paul would say, the whole of humanity, and

from that mass of humanity God has chosen those whom He has saved through Christ.

Now, of course, this is a hard saying. It is one that is difficult as we begin to seek to understand it. It is certainly not a truth that man would have invented, because it does not pander to man's pride. But because it is in the Word of God, I believe that, as Christians, we must accept it. Oh, what's more, because I have come to trust in my God, because I know Him as my Father, I am prepared gladly to accept that which even now I do not fully understand. In the family circle, children do not always understand the decisions you make on their behalf. Sometimes, indeed, they may think you are unreasonable; later on, I trust, they will see that you were not quite so unreasonable as they imagined. And as children of God, as those who have been made His sons and daughters by adoption and grace, there are some of His statements that seem difficult to us to understand. In fact some of them, at first sight, may seem to us to be unreasonable; but because it is our God and our Father, we are prepared to trust Him. Listen to Luther. He said, "If I could understand, there would be no need of faith, but the impossibility of understanding makes room for the exercise of faith." Because I trust Him, because I love Him, because I know that He is the Truth, therefore even when I am not able to understand Him fully, I am still prepared to trust, because as a child I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.

But isn't the problem of this choice which God makes, this choice which is not according to our works but according to His own free will, isn't the problem of it, that at first sight it seems to us to be unjust and unfair? "It seems to us" yes, isn't that the word? "It seems to us." Not whether it is true to God's revelation, but what *we consider*. And who are we, who thus consider God's dealings? Creatures of the dust before our Creator, how can we begin to understand the greatness of His mind, or His purposes? Who are we? Sinful creatures, whose minds have been darkened by sin; how can we hope to begin to understand the depths of the wisdom of the God? It seems to us unjust? Surely what matters is, not what it seems to us, but whether God says it or not.

WE HAVE NO CLAIM ON GOD

Furthermore, to say that something is unjust, to say that God's choice of some to salvation is unjust, is to suggest that men have some claims on Him. But it ignores the fact that men in general have absolutely *no claim* on God because of their sin. God is free to choose without any accusation of injustice being levelled against Him. You doubtless have your friends, you have your particular friends, but if I were to come to you and say it is completely unfair that you should be friendly with A and B and not with X and Y. Well, you would be quite entitled to say "Don't be ridiculous, this

is entirely my affair whom I choose as my friends." And are we to suggest that Almighty God is to be brought down to the bar of our judgment, and we are to force Him to give account of His actions, and to give us reasons why He does this and that? We would let men have freedom, yet we are not prepared to let God have freedom.

But to take the illustration further. Suppose there are some, let's take an individual. He hasn't shown himself at all friendly disposed towards you. In fact he has taken every opportunity to injure you, whether by word or deed. He has slandered you behind your back, he has misrepresented you to others. You have tried to be generous towards him, but he has spurned every advance. Indeed his whole attitude is to cut you completely. Wouldn't it be utterly absurd to say "It is unfair that you haven't made a friend of that man. It is unfair that you should chase this person and not that one." What claim has he on you? Absolutely none! And we see humanity, "*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God*" (Romans 3 : 23). We see men in a state of rebellion. We see them shaking their fist, as it were, in the face of the Almighty. What utter absurdity then, to say that they have any claims upon God : they have none! If God chooses to take from this rebellious mass, those whom He shall woo to faith in Christ, surely those who are not so brought, cannot level any accusation at God, because they themselves in their sin have rebelled against Him. Let us be very clear at this point, because I believe this is where there is so often a misunderstanding. There is never any statement in Scripture that a man is damned because he is not chosen. A man is damned because of his sin and for no other reason. Why God, in His mercy, should yet from this rebellious humanity, choose some unto life, that is a mystery where I am not prepared to probe further into the dealings of God. Indeed, as Paul considers it in Romans, that is the point he reaches—"*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!*" (Romans 11 : 33).

"IN CHRIST"

"He hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world," and here is the means whereby He makes His choice. He chose us, says Paul, *in Christ*. It was through Christ that God the Father made His choice effective. In the New Testament you get the idea of two humanities. There is the old humanity, man in sin, man in rebellion, man in his hopeless, lost condition. You get the picture of this new humanity, those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, those who are new men and new women in Christ Jesus, those who have their faces set towards God and set towards heaven. The head of the old humanity is Adam. The head of the new humanity is Christ, the second Adam. And in both cases the head of the race is pictured as the representative. Adam is the representative

of the human race, apart from the grace of God. Christ is the head of the new race, those who have been redeemed. *"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."*

Now, where a representative acts on your behalf, you are involved. Those of us who are over 21 have just sent representatives to Parliament. Should it happen, which we trust it won't, that they declared war, they would represent us; they would be acting in our name, and we would be involved in what they do. So, says the Bible, we are involved in Adam's sin and, if we are Christians, we were involved in Christ's death for us. We were involved, in other words, in the action of our representative. Involved in Adam, yes, but praise God, involved in what Christ did for us when He died for us on Calvary, and rose again for our justification. Now that was something which happened at Calvary: our experience of that is something which happens at some point in our life. We are knit to Christ, we share His very life. We are, as Paul says, *in Him*, knit to Him in organic living union.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Who is it who effects that union? Is it we who do it? Surely the answer of the New Testament is that it is the Spirit of God who does it. We are born again of the Holy Ghost. He effects this miracle whereby we are made new creatures. It is He who plants within us the very life of Christ. But because it is the Holy Spirit who does it, that means there is no accident about it. It is absolutely sure, and so from all eternity, God viewed that which was going to happen later as an accomplished fact. Now don't let us mix things at this point. Sometimes people talk as if God looked forward to the faith which we would exercise, and because we were going to exercise faith, then He chose us. But of course, that would rob choice of any meaning. If it was because of our faith, then of course, we were really in control of the situation. In no sense could you say that God had chosen us; God had merely acceded to what was going to happen. But because it is the Holy Spirit who does this, because He brings us to Christ, therefore it is God's action throughout. And when we speak of God's foreknowing that which is to be accomplished later, we are not saying that God depends on what we do. We are simply saying that God will accomplish His purposes and therefore from all eternity He sees that which He is going to accomplish.

THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION

And so Paul puts it here, He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. We were chosen, not because of anything in us. We were chosen for Christ's sake. It takes us back to that which we were considering recently, the covenant of redemption, that great compact between the Father and the Son, whereby in eternity God promised to the Son a people, and the Son offered that obedience

whereby He should win His people for Himself. And it is from that, that there stems God's eternal choice of those who are in Christ before the foundation of the world. So you see this mystery. Yes, it is a mystery to us, we can only begin to understand, but the secret is known within the Godhead. The Father knows whom He chose. The Son knows the reason why the Father has thus chosen them. The Father knows. The Son knows. It is enough for us—it should be, if we are Christians.

A HUMBLING WORD

He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Here is an even more humbling word. Paul says, He didn't just choose us before we believed; He didn't even choose us merely before we were born. He makes it as firm as he possibly can, He says, "He chose us before the foundation of the world." Before creation came into being, God had laid His choice upon His elect, those whom in time, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, He would call to faith in Christ. But doesn't that mean that God's choice of us is utterly independent of our goodness or badness? If it's before the foundation of the world, if it's before our birth, how can it have anything to do with any supposed merit of ours? He chose us of His own free grace and favour. So Paul could say in Ephesians 2, continuing his argument, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." And in Romans 9 he can say likewise, "It is not of him that runneth or of him that willeth, but of God that showeth mercy." "By the grace of God alone, I am what I am"—that is the consistent testimony of New Testament Christianity. Oh, I say this is a humbling word. To realise that my salvation is utterly of God, to realise that all I am and all I have, is due to His grace and mercy alone. Here is a truth that strips my accursed pride from me, that pride which is the root of all my trouble. When I am brought to this point of realising that I am chosen, not for good in me, wakened up from wrath to flee, what a humbling word it is. And it is intended to be a humbling word, in order to beget in us a sense of awe and reverence, as we bow before God Almighty. This is not the cheap Deity of some people's imagination. This is the sovereign Lord before whom we do well to have a godly fear.

AN ENCOURAGING WORD

But it is not only a humbling word. It is not only a word that breaks pride and humbles us in the dust. What an encouraging word it is; what a comforting word! Chosen—when? Before the foundation of the world. So that means that God's choice was not made amidst the cross currents of time. God's choice was made completely independently of time. And that means, surely, that the carrying out of that choice to its final triumphant conclusion, is not dependent on the circumstances of the moment, or of the uncertain

future, because God chose me before time came into being. It is an eternal choice, and I believe, therefore, it is an abiding, unalterable choice. And so Paul in Romans 8, traces the links as it were, right from eternity to eternity, "Those whom He did predestinate, them He also called: whom He called, them He also justified" and, looking forward to that glorious climax, "whom He justified, them He also glorified." What an encouraging word. Here is a word that gives strength and conviction. This was a word that enabled the Covenanters to face all the persecution that the world could offer. What did it matter what men might do to your body, if you were in the hands of this sovereign God. You could stand secure because He who had begun a good work in you would assuredly perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

SET APART

"Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world." But lest there should be complacency, lest there should come the feeling, "well, I'm all right now, I'm one of the elect," Paul would remind you that such a choice by God, such a choice in Christ, involves holiness of life. He chose us, yes, chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, *that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love*. In fact, I would say, that if a man has drifted into the state of imagining he is one of God's chosen ones, and does not exhibit any holiness of life, he should realise that he is utterly mistaken. Indeed, I would say this is one of the tests. You are called in Scripture "to give diligence to make your calling and election sure." Test yourself, to show if you really measure up to those who are thus chosen. Here is one of the tests. Is there in your heart a hatred of sin? Is there in your heart a desire for holy living, a desire to approximate more and more to that which you see in Christ who saved you, that you might be holy? The word, as we have already seen, means "*set apart*": set apart from sin: set apart from the world: set apart for God and for His glory. That, says Paul, is God's purpose in His choice of you. He chose you that you might be apart from the world.

There is a shallow kind of teaching that is going around today that suggests that if we are going to reach the world we must be like them. "Let's not have this difference. Let's be much more like the world around. Let's lower the barriers that seem to be between the church and the world"; and it seems to be a very specious argument. But the whole answer of Scripture is: Don't be like the world; be different! God has marked you as different, therefore realise that difference by holy living. Of course it is not the apartness of the Pharisee, smug in his self-righteousness; it is rather, being apart because God has set me apart for His glory.

"Holy and without blame." Blameless—the word that is used in the Old Testament to describe the sacrificial victims that were

brought, brought without blemish, brought in order that they might be acceptable to God because they were without blemish. Paul says this is His purpose. He chose you that you might be without blemish, that there might be that cleansing away of sin, that there might be a removal of every stain and defilement, a taking away of anything that would make you displeasing to Him. So, your concern as God's chosen ones, is to go forward in this life of holiness, to deal constantly with this matter of sin, to seek constantly for cleansing, to seek constantly for the power of the Holy Spirit to fight with this, to deal with it.

IN LOVE

But Paul reaches the climax—"that you might be holy and unblameable *in love*." Here is the climax of God's purpose for His people, for His elect. Holiness and blamelessness are not cold duties to be carried out, for they are *suffused with the warmth of true love*, a fervent love for God and for men. But I believe Paul would say that this love emerges as you understand the wonder of God's election, God's choice, God's electing grace. Once I look at my sin, once I see my utter uncleanness before God: once I see, as God sees me, how unutterably vile I am, once I see that I am lost and helpless apart from His grace, then surely I begin to marvel at that grace which chose me in Christ before the foundation of the world. How can I but love this God against whom I've rebelled, whom I've affronted and offended, and yet in love and mercy He saved me? How can I do ought else but love Him with all my heart?

THROUGH THE PREACHING OF THE WORD

Yes, and once I begin to see, in some measure, God's mighty purposes: He has purposed to take out from rebellious humanity a people for His Name, and He will do that; but how will He do it? The answer of the Scripture is, that He will do it through the preaching of the Word, through the faithful ministry of His people, through the witnessing of their lives and of their lips. God does not work without means. He purposes the end, which is the calling out of His chosen ones: He also purposes the means which is the preaching of the gospel.

Once in some measure I have understood that, how can I but go out in love, with this gospel, to those whom God is going to reach with this gospel? Yes, and I no longer go out hesitantly and with doubt in my mind, I go out with assurance. This is the Word of the eternal God. This is the word through which He will accomplish His purposes. That which He calls me to be, is to be faithful in my living and in my declaration of this truth, "God hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and unblameable before Him in love."

CONCLUSION

Here is *a word to humble us*, and how deeply and constantly we need to be humbled. How often we are glib in the presence of God. We talk all too easily before Him. We treat His holiness all too lightly. How we need to be humbled, to know something of this godly fear, this reverence, this sense of awe in the presence of the majesty of God Almighty. And here is a truth which certainly humbles us, as it shows us completely dependent on His grace and mercy.

But, it is also *a word to strengthen and encourage*. It is a word to take us out to our living and our witnessing with new confidence. We are not going out, to see, to depend on what we can do, on our eloquence, on our ability or our gifts. We are going out in the name of our God, with His commission. We go out therefore, encouraged and assured, and we go out to face all the changes that may come, knowing that not even death itself can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It is *a word also that calls to holiness of life*. This is a word that searches our hearts, and shows the sin. This is a word that calls us afresh to seek His face for cleansing. This is a word that challenges us to live lives that are righteous and holy before the God, to whom this morning we give our praise, because He has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unblameable before Him in love. And to Him be praise and glory for ever. Amen.

Cambridge.

H. M. CARSON.

Now may the Lord reveal His face,
And teach our stammering tongues
To make His sovereign, reigning grace,
The subject of our songs.

No sweeter subject can invite
A sinner's heart to sing,
Or more display the glorious right
Of our exalted King.

PROTESTANT BEACON

THE ADVANCE OF POPERY IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD

FOR the first time in history, the year 1961 has introduced a Romanist as the President of the United States of America. Politics, as such, are no feature of these pages; but in consideration of the advance of Popery in this twentieth century, if deterred by these difficulties we omit all account of the advance of Rome as a political power, we shall be compelled to omit all consideration of the very way whereby, if she ever attain it, she will win her anticipated victory. It might as a *religious* system increase and multiply very much beyond its present extent; but it could not gain thereby that national and thorough supremacy which is its ultimate aim and object. To obtain this coveted end it must possess *political* power.

The perils which beset this country, from both east and west, are such as should constrain the Lord's people to cry out for help and deliverance of the living God of Israel.

- I. "BUT THE END OF ALL THINGS IS AT HAND : BE YE THEREFORE SOBER, AND WATCH UNTO PRAYER."—1 Peter 4 : 7.

1 Peter 4, verse 7, is the text quoted on the front page of *The Baptist Examiner*, 3rd December (an American religious weekly).

"Now that the Protestants" (reads the article following the text), "and many of the Baptists (?) have elected, for themselves and a few million innocent people, a Roman Catholic leader, the above scripture is in the process of being fulfilled. Had it not been for the Protestant and Baptist votes that Mr. Kennedy received he would not have been elected. His slim margin, in the popular vote, does not prove that he was the most popular of the two candidates; in fact, it proves the opposite. Had Mr. Nixon been a Roman Catholic and the choice been between two Roman Catholic candidates, Mr. Nixon would probably have had a landslide; therefore it was not Mr. Kennedy's popularity among the American people that elected him, but rather it was his religion, which controls perhaps 33 or 34 per cent of the American votes, plus about 25 per cent of folk who turned traitor to the truth and allied with him and the Roman Catholic Church. Many Americans have sold their birthrights for a mess of pottage, and have no respect unto the recompense of reward, but esteem the treasures of Egypt (this world) greater than the reproach of (or for) Christ, choosing rather to enjoy the pleasures of sin than to suffer affliction with the people of God."

So far as the American election campaign was concerned, as announced in this country, the name Kennedy was continually spoken of and his doings publicised; and one would hardly have

known who the other candidate was, without making enquiry. This again reflects popish influence in our British press and broadcasting programmes. The impression given was that only one man, Kennedy, was in the running, and yet ultimate figures revealed a mere hair's breadth majority.

II. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IN THE UNITED STATES

According to the 1961 Yearbook of American Churches, membership of churches and synagogues in the United States last year increased by 2,669,164. Among Protestants, the Baptists claim the highest membership figure of 20,879,220. Methodists come next with 12,358,861. Romanists claim a population of over 40 millions, and there are 5,500,000 Jews. It is important to point out that, whereas the Protestant figures represent actual communicant members, the Roman statistics include all christened infants.

In his Essay on "The Papacy," 1851, J. A. Wylie wrote that

"a glance over the American register, in Battersby's Registry for the whole world, shows how fast new cathedrals, convents, and schools are rising up in many parts of the United States. This body had, in 1850, four archbishops, thirty bishops, 1,073 churches, 1,081 priests, and a population of one and a half million, according to the Roman Catholic Almanac." Evangelical Alliance 1851; American Statistics, by Dr. Baird.

"In British America," continues Dr. Wylie,

"they foment divisions, to obtain concessions and grants from government. Their grand maxim, both in Ireland and in Canada, is, agitate! agitate! and such will be their practice wherever and whenever they become sufficiently numerous. They have sisters of mercy, who offer their services to emigrants, and thus enlist them in the support of Popery the moment they arrive on the shores of the New World. . . . The chief increase of Papists in America is owing to hordes of Irish continually pouring into Canada and the States. Ireland, in fact, is a vast popish propaganda for both the western and southern hemispheres. The Romanists are vigorously working the press in America. In the United States they have one Quarterly Review, one Monthly Review, and twelve weekly newspapers, almost all of which are edited by priests."

Yes! agitate! agitate! We have read that the recently elected President is of Irish extraction, and it would not surprise the present writer at increased agitation for the subjugation and absorption of Protestant Ulster into Rome-ruled Eire. Any puppet state, whether a puppet of Popery or a puppet of Communism, can voice her vociferous views at the so-called "United Nations" gatherings.

III. WARNING OF THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

Mr. William McGavin, the editor of *The Protestant*, "Speaking of the United States of America" in No. CLXXV, 1821, of that publication, continues:

"I am reminded of the only thing that remains to be mentioned on the subject of making Papists eligible to places of power in a Protestant country. It is argued that there are no political distinctions on account of religion in that country; that a Papist or a Deist is as eligible to the highest office in the State as a Protestant, and that no evil whatever has resulted from the arrangement. I admit the fact that such is the law in the United States; but then I maintain that it is not a Protestant country in the proper sense of the words. . . .

"If it be admitted that no evil has arisen from the admission of Papists to places of power, it ought also to be admitted that the Americans have not yet had time for a fair trial. It was many centuries before Rome was able to enslave England and Scotland, especially the latter; and she may at this time be working her way to dominion in the continent of America, without the enlightened citizens of those States being able to perceive it; though very probably their children shall see it, and feel it too. . . .

"In short, unless the real Protestants of America bestir themselves and undertake the work of evangelising their countrymen with the zeal and fidelity of apostles and evangelists, the Pope will get the better of them; and a thick darkness will settle down upon their country, like that which enveloped Europe for a thousand years.

"It is not necessary to suppose Popery to have arrived at this state of advancement in order to perceive its probable influence upon the political institutions of America. When the Jesuits have got the education of youth, were it only the youth of their own communion, into their hands, they will soon make learned and accomplished politicians and statesmen. The road to honour and power lies open before them. They will soon get into both branches of the legislature; and there is nothing to prevent a Papist from being President; and it is possible that persons lately come into the world may live to see this.

"Popery is essentially and incurably an arbitrary, slavish and intolerant system; and where it possesses power, it will establish itself to the exclusion of every other. The Americans will find it so when they have a sufficient number of Papists in Congress or in the executive of their government; and then they will be able to judge whether or not their fathers acted wisely in leaving the door open to them. I know that by making this suggestion I shall incur the charge of intolerance and what not—but this gives me no concern, seeing the accusation proceeds from a mistake. I do not think the Americans were called upon, when framing their constitution, to ordain any restrictions with regard to liberty of worship; but I think they might have ordained that no man should hold an office of power and authority in their

republic, who owed spiritual or temporal allegiance to a foreign power. This would have shut out Papists, without so much as naming Popery; and it would have been doing no more than what every state has a right to do, and ought to do, if it pays any regard to its own preservation."

Our Protestant forefathers and legislators could act from experience in regard to "The Bill of Rights and Act of Settlement," when there was placed upon our Statute Book: "And whereas *it hath been found by experience* that it is inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant Kingdom to be governed by a Popish Prince or by any King or Queen marrying a Papist . . ." (Act 1, William and Mary, cap. 2, sec. 8 & 9, 1689). May that legislation long remain on the Statute Book of our beloved land, which requires that the occupant of the throne, and the office of Lord Chancellor, be Protestant.

IV. INSTANCE OF JESUITICAL TEACHING IN IRISH IMMIGRANTS TO U.S.A.

Some interesting conversations are recorded in a volume, "A Pastor's Sketches," 1861, by Dr. I. S. Spencer, a New York pastor of a century ago. In conversation with a young dying Irishman, then an avowed infidel, the Irishman said:

" . . . I wanted to tell you how my unbelief became blended with my blood. I am an Irishman. Early in life my country's wrongs lay on my heart like a burden. My blood burns at this moment to think of the oppressions of England! *Before the suns of a dozen summers had shone upon me*, I had learned to say, 'The English are tyrants and hypocrites. They profess to be a Christian people; but they wrong my country.' . . . I can respect Mohammedanism—it acts according to its principles; I can respect Popery and her Inquisition, for the same reason; but Protestant England, as she calls herself, I despise for her mean hypocrisy! Her religion is described in three words—pride, avarice, and oppression. All this became stamped into my heart as I was growing up towards manhood. I knew that the Established Church of England was nothing but a part of her governmental hypocrisy; I knew that her Protestantism was only a political pretence. . . ." (pp. 44, 46).

Happily, the pastor's sketch concludes with reason to hope that the poor Irishman died in peace, consequent upon several visits paid by the pastor. However, the narrative illustrates the influence of Jesuitical training, with its ensuring enmity towards Britain and Protestantism. We also know of instances, where God is pleased to effect salvation, where there are subjects of such saving grace that former enmity is transformed to conspicuous loyalty.

As Protestant Britain, upon whom can we count as friends? As was the case with Israel in the days of Joshua, there are enemies without, and Achans within, and the Achans within become increas-

ingly emboldened. "When a man's way please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Prov. 16:7). We fear that our ways are most displeasing to the Most High God, and provoke His righteous displeasure upon us. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place" (Jer. 7:3).

"Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me. Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah. But Thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of my head. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill. Selah. I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about. Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God; for Thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek-bone; Thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: Thy blessing is upon Thy people. Selah." (Psalm 3.)

Obituary

MISS ADA PEACOCK

MISS ADA PEACOCK, lifelong reader of *The Gospel Magazine*, passed away on February 24th, at the age of 90 years.

Miss Peacock was the elder daughter of the late Mr. Walter Peacock, who was for many years Deacon of Grove Chapel Camberwell, and was one of those who, with the late Mr. Henry Atherton, revived in 1913 the Sovereign Grace Union.

Her grandfather, the late Mr. William Peacock, donated the freehold land and was a contributor towards the Aged Pilgrims' Home, Sedgemoor Place, Camberwell, opened in 1834. There are portraits of her grandparents in the Board Room. There is a table tomb to her grandparents in the centre of the quadrangle.

Miss Peacock was a lifelong worshipper, until her health failed, at Grove Chapel, Camberwell, and was admitted as a member by the late Mr. Thomas Bradbury in 1896. She delighted in the doctrines of free and sovereign grace, and took a close interest in the causes with which her father and brother, the late Mr. E. J. Peacock, were associated, such as *The Gospel Magazine*, the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society, Trinitarian Bible Society, *The Gospel Advocate*, which for many years provided a link between Calvinistic Independent Chapels, and Grove Chapel, Camberwell.

A service was taken at Croydon on March 1st, conducted by the Rev. Cyril Carter, Vicar of St. Stephen's, Clapham Park. Amongst those present were Mr. Stanley Peacock (brother), Mrs. Tom Jones (niece), Mr. T. Jones, and Mr. P. E. H. Wakeley.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS' PAGE

THE TENPENNY BIBLE

JESSIE FORD was one among the crowds of Manchester girls employed in the cotton-mills of that great city. The year was 1845, when cotton was still the biggest industry. Many of the girls, rude and rough and quite uneducated, came from the poorest parts. Jessie's home was poor too; but she was different from the general crowd, for she was a child of God, with her hopes and affections set on things above. In the factory where she worked, Jessie was much respected. She was kind and gentle and content, always ready to listen to other people's troubles.

At this time a wind of blessing was passing over Manchester. Nobody knew how it came about, but an unusual demand for Bibles arose. In response the Bible Society printed a good cheap edition with gilt edges, and thousands of copies were sold. Sunday-school superintendents ordered many of these Bibles, putting them into the hands of the teachers, who took them away to sell to their fellow-workers. Jessie was one of these teachers; she was delighted to take some of the specimen Bibles and New Testaments to the mill. As she had opportunity she showed them to the other girls in her room, and was able to sell many copies.

One Friday evening after work, Jessie went out to visit the home of a child who had been absent from her Sunday class. As she was coming back, she had to pass a shouting, excited crowd of men, women, and children; two drunken men were fighting. Jessie, sick at heart, got by as quickly as she could; but not before she had recognised one of the two. It was James Arnold, the husband of a girl at the mill called Martha.

Martha had nothing special to recommend her, but Jessie had always been interested in her concerns, and this sidelight on Martha's home life disturbed her greatly. When she had a chance next day, she got hold of Martha and told her how sorry she had been to see her husband in such a state. I fancy that Martha was a little surprised at Jessie's being so upset; she was proud of her husband, but on Fridays and Saturdays he was always drunk, and then of course he got fighting. Martha was used to that.

Jessie did not get very far with Martha at first, but she did give the girl a glimpse of a better sort of life, and after that she was at least ready to listen sometimes. Meanwhile Jessie had begun displaying her specimen Bibles and Testaments, and she thought how wonderful it would be if she could get Martha to subscribe

for a Bible. For nobody bought a copy outright; the plan was to get one's name down on the list, and then pay Jessie a penny a week until the sum was complete.

It took many talks with Martha before she could be induced to subscribe, but she began to have a dim idea that it was the Bible that had made Jessie what she was, and at last she agreed to let her name go on the list. Then every Saturday she paid in her penny, and began to look forward to the day when the book would be hers.

At last the tenth Saturday arrived, and having paid her ten pennies, Martha received the Bible from Jessie. Other girls came round to admire the volume, and Martha felt all the pride of possession. But she was distinctly nervous on the way home; for whatever would James say? He knew well enough that Martha could not read, and she was afraid he would be angry at the waste of tenpence.

The only "home" for Martha to go to was a dark, miserable cellar, with hardly any furniture. There was a bed and a table; but there was no chair or stool to sit upon. Her husband's job was peddling sheep's trotters and tripe and faggots outside public houses; his earnings and Martha's paid the rent of their wretched room and covered the cost of food. Whatever was left all went in his drinking.

That Saturday when Martha came in and put the Bible on the table, to her great surprise, James immediately welcomed it as an old friend! When he was a small boy his parents had made him go to Sunday-school for a short time. He had never been to a day-school, but on Sundays he learned to read, and the only text-book was the Bible. The teacher did his best to teach the way of life to the boys in his class, all ragged and barefoot; but not much impression was made on James, who left as soon as he could to run the streets with the rest of the gang. Before long he could lie and swear and steal as readily as any of them; and his teacher's wise counsels were completely forgotten.

But now as he took up the new volume, and heard Martha's story, James was quite excited. Instead of rushing off to the public-house as usual, he turned over the pages, reading out bits to Martha here and there. I expect he had nearly forgoeten how to read, but he stumbled on, and the words began to come more easily. Sunday was regularly spent in the public-house; but not this Sunday! All day James stuck to his reading, his wife listening entranced. That afternoon she remembered that Jessie, in handing her the Bible, had said, "Get your husband to read the story of Joseph." So now she told James of this, and they settled down all day to read of Joseph, sending out for a halfpenny candle when darkness came on.

When Martha reached the mill next day, she was bubbling over with excitement, and soon all the girls were listening spellbound,

as she described the extraordinary Sunday she had spent. One of the girls, a Roman Catholic, exclaimed, "Well, that must be a good book to do that to your Jim!" This girl would have dearly liked to buy a New Testament herself—"only I'd have to tell the priest about it," she said wistfully.

Of course Jessie was not long before she had told her Sunday-school superintendent about Martha's Bible, and he made a point of visiting the couple in the dark cellar. James was just as keenly interested as at first. Shortly afterwards he was struck down by illness, and the Sunday-school friends who visited him were able to direct him to the Lord Jesus Christ, revealed in the Scriptures as the Saviour of sinners.

James, still only a young man, was fully restored to health, and it was soon obvious that he was a changed man. It was not long before he had settled down to regular work. His craving for drink was gone, and before long the miserable cellar was left behind for a snug little cottage. He began to attend church regularly on Sundays, and came to the Lord's Table.

A few months after this wonderful change, a second colporteur for the Bible Society was needed in Manchester. Jessie's Sunday-school superintendent at once recommended James Arnold, and he was given the post.

For the next seven years James put all his energies into selling the Scriptures. He had a regular stall in one of the markets, he visited hundreds of houses, and often went to wakes and fairs and races in the places around. He loved his work, for as he said, the Book had done *everything* for him. How he delighted in the Scriptures, hiding God's Word in his heart, and finding such joy in his Saviour! Acute illness finally brought his work to an end, and he died in happy confidence in the Lord from Whom he had obtained mercy. But during the seven years since his conversion James Arnold sold nearly thirty thousand Bibles or Testaments!

I cannot discover whether Martha was brought to know the Lord at the same time as James; but as the story unfolds itself it is obvious that she was fully in sympathy with her husband. DAMARIS.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA No. 86

The whole : The mother of Moses.

1. A centurion of Augustus' band.
2. Brought back to Noah by the dove.
3. Used by a woman to find one of her ten silver pieces.
4. Loved by King Uzziah.
5. How James says that Elijah prayed.
6. On this day Pharaoh made a feast for his servants.
7. A vehement one beat upon Jonah's head.
8. Wife of Felix.

SOLUTION OF No. 85

The whole : Long-suffering (Galatians 5 : 22).

1. Lystra (Acts 14 : 8-12).
 2. Ophir (1 Kings 10 : 11).
 3. Nineveh (Gen. 10 : 11).
 4. Gaza (Acts 8 : 26, 27).
 5. Salem (Gen. 14 : 18).
 6. Ur (Gen. 11 : 28).
 7. Fair Havens (Acts 27 : 8).
 8. Foursquare (Rev. 21 : 16).
 9. Ekron (1 Sam. 5 : 10).
 10. Ramoth (1 Kings 22 : 3, 4).
 11. Iconium (Acts 13 : 51).
 12. Nazareth (Matt. 3 : 23).
 13. Gath (1 Sam. 17 : 4).
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Rejoice, believer, in the Lord,
 Who makes your cause His own :
 The hope that's built upon His word
 Can ne'er be overthrown !

Though many foes beset your road,
 And feeble is your arm,
 Your life is hid with Christ in God,
 Beyond the reach of harm.

Weak as you are, you shall not faint,
 Or, fainting, shall not die;
 Jesus, the strength of every saint,
 Will aid you from on high !

Though sometimes unperceived by sense,
 Faith sees Him always near,
 A Guide, a Glory, a Defence :
 Then what have you to fear ?

As surely as He overcame,
 And triumphed once for you :
 So surely you that love His name,
 Shall triumph in Him too.

BIBLE EXPOSITION

EXAMPLES OF FAITH

By the REV. WILLIAM PARKS (Openshaw)

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible.

"Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest He that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

"By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

"By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace."

—Heb. 11 : 24-31.

THERE is one characteristic about faith, whether it be a false faith or a true faith, whether it be natural faith or divine, that is invariably apparent, and that is *determined action*.

A man may hold an opinion or have an idea, he may strongly lean towards a thing, or openly favour a sentiment, but, when it comes to the maintaining any of them at self-sacrifice, or at serious loss, it will be evident he has no faith. Ah, no, he will hesitate and waver, and begin to compromise, but suffer loss he will not; and simply because he has no faith.

But, on the other hand, let a man once thoroughly believe in a doctrine or in a theory, and he will maintain it though he make a very fool of himself, or suffer the loss of all things. We see this illustrated every day of our lives; we see it in the poor blind Roman Catholics; we see it in the ignorant Ranters; we see it in the sturdy High Churchman; we see it in the high Calvinist; we see it in the sincere of all classes, either human or divine—i.e., something more than an opinion or a theory or an idea, and the consequence is *determined action at personal risk*.

But I will tell you who has no faith, either human or divine. The compromising, wheedling, palavering universalist, who tries to

be friends with all parties, and will not speak the truth though he knows it, lest he might offend and thus involve himself in difficulty.

Well, I say, give me a thousand times a poor ignorant fanatic who is ready to bear ridicule and loss for his belief, in preference to such a one. It is this faith, my hearers, that makes the difference between us, for instance, and those who profess to hold the same views as we, but who keep them back. We believe, therefore have we spoken; they do not believe, and therefore they have not spoken.

The narratives of my text, the entire chapter, have suggested these thoughts. What thorough belief must those parties have had in God and His word, who could have done such things as are here recorded! Let us briefly touch upon these incidents, and make some use of them as we go along.

MOSES

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had no respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible" (ver. 24-27).

Moses is one of the most extraordinary instances of faith in the Scriptures. Just think of his position and his prospects. Why, he might have been Pharaoh's successor; he might have ascended the throne of Egypt. He had everything that a monarch's protégé could command. No want, no desire ungratified, servants at his call, great men at his bidding, chariots and horses and money without stint or limit. Oh, if ever a child of God had worldly temptations strewed around him, Moses had. But he spurned them all, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God," etc. (ver. 25, 26).

What can account for this self-denial? What but faith? Ay, the man strongly believed in God. Tell me not of his affection for his kinsmen, or his natural shrewdness, or any extraordinary mental capacity being sufficient to account for this. Nothing short of faith, thorough belief in God, could have done it.

How Moses came instrumentally by this faith we are not told. But, doubtless, he would often leave the regal palace, and visit his kinsfolk and sympathise with them in their afflictions. From them, most likely, he learnt by traditions what God had done for them of old, and what had been foretold about them. But even this could not have produced faith in Moses, no more than what is told you about the Church can produce faith in you. God miraculously wrought upon Moses through this instrumentality. Hence his faith, hence your and my faith. It is the gift of God wherever it is.

Now, the question is, Have *we* faith? When we get amongst unbelieving, wicked company, what does our faith do for us? When

there is any likelihood of our suffering for Christ, what does our faith do for us? When scorn, loss of business, inconvenience of any kind threatens us, what does our faith do for us? Are we ready to say, "Let God be magnified. We will cling to the Scriptures. Come what may, we will wait God's time to make all straight?" If not, we may have no opinion, we may have idea, we may have suspicion, but we have no faith. Oh, no. Faith, the gift of God, or even faith the result of natural conviction, would lead us to self-sacrifice. I do not mean to convey that any of us has faith like Moses, in like measure or quantity, but I do assert, that if we have faith of the like quality in never so small a measure, the consequence will be decided action at personal risk. Oh, how few, how very few, are ready or willing to risk anything for God! But we who are conscious of our infirmities, and are praying and striving against them, saying continually, "Lord, we believe, oh, help our unbelief," have faith.

"He endured as seeing Him who is invisible" (ver. 27). That is a remarkable saying; it means this, viz., God was invisible in a way of *reason* to Moses, but He was seen in a way of *faith*. It is so to a greater or less extent with all God's manifested people. God's ways are mysterious; they cannot be traced back or forward, or traced out; but God's faithful people endure "as seeing Him who is invisible."

THE SPRINKLING OF BLOOD

You are all familiar with the plagues of Egypt, and remember that the last of them was the destruction of the firstborn of all the Egyptians. That was an awful night, and some, I dare say, are ready to charge God with cruelty and injustice in that affair, just as they are in the matter of His sovereignty in election; but let men beware of meddling with God: God cannot do wrong, though we cannot always see the whys and the wherefores of His doings. Moses, on that memorable night, had taken care to be strict in his obedience to God's orders. He had caused the blood of the lambs to be sprinkled upon the doorposts of the Jewish dwellings, and the flesh of the animals to be eaten according to God's command. Here was faith! Moses did not reason with God, and ask what could be the use of such a ceremony, but he did as he was bid.

Oh that all religious professors could do likewise! The day for the observance of external rites and ceremonies is past; but the day for believing in things that we cannot understand is not past. And are all professors of religion ready to do as they are bid? Are they ready to receive the doctrines of the cross with unquestioning submission? Surely not. Professors now cavil and wrangle and argue against every doctrine and dogma that is not made plain to their reason. Surely they have no faith, no implicit reliance upon

God; and yet they persuade themselves they are following Moses, and the faithful of old. Miserable delusion!

THE RED SEA

That all the Israelites had not faith is certain. How, then, can it be said that "by faith *they* passed through the Red Sea?" A part is here put for the whole by a figure of speech common in Scripture. It was by faith that the manifested children of God amongst that mass of people passed through the Red Sea, and the unbelieving portion participated in the privileges of the believing portion. Thus it is said, "By faith they passed," etc.

I cannot here dilate upon the horrors or the wonders of that passage of the Red Sea. Suffice it to say to you, tried children of God, that the same God who brought His people out of those depths of waters, and overthrew their enemies, can do the same for you in all difficulties.

THE WALLS OF JERICHO

By faith in God that He would be true to His word, the walls of the strong city of Jericho fell down. Joshua's instructions were these. He was to get a company of priests, and they were to march round the city for seven days, the people of Israel following them, and those priests were to keep blowing rams' horns. What a strange and unlikely process! How the people upon the walls must have laughed and mocked and jeered! And how Joshua and the people of Israel's faith must have been tried! But they went bravely through with their orders, and at the end of the seven days down tumbled the walls!

Now, what do we learn from this? Why this: namely, that means may be apparently inadequate to accomplish what God has promised, but let us use them, depending upon God, and God alone, for the result. What can, apparently, be so unlikely to produce great results as the foolishness of *preaching*? To reason it seems absurd. Reason say, "Educate the people, civilize the people, reform the people." But faith says, "*Preach the word; and that word shall not return void to its Author; it must accomplish the thing whereto He sent it!*" It is this simple word that is to bring down the strongholds of pride and passion and enmity that are in men's hearts; not reason's weapons. I know that men laugh at and mock us for blowing the Gospel trumpet; they look upon us as enthusiasts or fools. But so, no doubt, did the men on the walls of Jericho; but history has told us who were the fools.

RAHAB

The story of this woman you will find in Joshua 6. She is honourably mentioned by James in his epistle, and, what is more wonderful than all, she appears in the genealogical tree of Matthew as a progenitor of the Messiah! This poor woman was saved when her monarch and all her fellow-citizens were destroyed! Who can

account for this? It was a sovereign God who gave her faith to believe in His word. To this hour it is true, the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God, when self-righteous pharisees are shut out. Oh, for more faith! faith that can take God at His word—faith that results in determined action at all personal risk! For then we may be assured we have been operated upon by the Spirit, as well as Moses or Joshua or Rahab of old.

Notes of Sermons, 1868, No. 20.

WILLIAM PARKS.

PILGRIM PAPERS

SPIRITUAL LIFE

By the REV. DR. D. A. DOUDNEY

I.—ITS NATURE AND EFFECTS

WE would contemplate the important distinction, as relating to the Church of God, between the words *implantation* and *impartation*; and we are persuaded that to the want of a proper distinctive view of this subject may be attributed very much of the disquietude of the children of God.

That in the new birth there is the *implantation* of new principles, new desires, new tastes, wishes, and inclinations, we are quite ready to admit; the word of God confirms this (Jer. 31 : 33), "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." "A new heart will I give you, and a right spirit will I put within you." "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh." "I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

But great as are these privileges, and blessed as is the position into which by these covenant mercies the Church of God is brought, there is yet a higher ground of consolation, and a vastly greater amount of stability and more firmly-rooted establishment, in the consideration of that union—Divine relationship—blessed bond of inseparable oneness with Christ, which by regeneration is made manifest. *Implantation* is very blessed, but *impartation* is much more blessed.

In *implanting* a man may give off or away from himself, in *imparting* he must give what more closely approximates to himself. By *implantation* we receive *from*, by *impartation* we receive *of*. The one implies abstractedness—the other unitedness. As the fruit and effect of *implantation*, we may act; by *impartation*, Christ

acts, but in us and with us. By *implantation*, or the reception of certain gifts or principles within, we may be subject to enlargements and contractions—ebbing and flowing; by *impartation*, we enter into a oneness with the object, and in a certain measure become what that object is, and share what he has: for, “As He is, so are we in this world.”

Now, beloved, see you not the blessedness of this as respects the union of the Church to Jesus? Here she takes up the highest ground she can take; and, though it is humbling, and not very palatable to the vast mass of professors, inasmuch as it reduces the creature down to a state of perfect nothingness, neutralising both his wisdom and strength, yet to a soul dissatisfied with himself, and long seeking after a refuge, the subject is fraught with unbounded comfort and satisfaction.

By a comparison of Jer. 23 : 6 with Jer. 33 : 16, if the Lord the Spirit condescend graciously to unfold it, the subject will open very gloriously. The former of these passages reads thus: “In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His name HE shall be called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS”; then, in the latter, as the sweet echo or response, it reads: “In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith SHE shall be called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” So that as the woman, in marrying, changes her name, for ever lays aside—drops—discards, that by which she was formerly known, so the Church, by virtue of her marriage union, for ever loses her natural or first Adam-name; and, by being betrothed to Jesus, married to Him, and becoming one with Him, she takes His name, yea, His very righteousness; so that what He is she is. They are one—regarded as one—dealt with as one; nor can the one live without the other; and, so to speak, neither could the other die without the other; for saith the Lord, “Because I live you shall live also.”

And how blessedly the Holy Ghost, by the Apostle, dwells upon this sweet mystery of the marriage union in various parts of His Word—in what striking characters he sets it forth; and how frequently does He appeal to all the sensitiveness and sensibility of the man as touching his tenderness towards the weaker vessel, to exhibit the love and sympathy of Jesus towards the beloved of His soul. Why, the softest, tenderest, most loveable emotions of the kindest, most amiable of men, bear not the tiniest comparison with that sympathy and that compassion which Jesus has towards even those of His family who have not yet heard the sweet accents of His voice. If they are as yet not quickened, and think upon Him at all, they are apprehensive of Him, lest He should speak in anger; little do they imagine with what soothing sweetness He will ere long speak to them: His words dropping sweeter than honey, or the

honeycomb, when He shall draw nigh to them, and say, "My love, my dove, my undefiled one."

And, since the Lord hath so kindly used a figure at once so familiar and generally interesting to the natural mind, we hesitate not to enlarge upon it in reference to those who, as just hinted at, are yet waiting for the consolation of Israel. Does the natural lover wait—watch—scrupulously consider, not merely the character, the disposition of the object of his affections, but the fittest moment for the declaration of that affection? He does; and may not Jesus, the Heavenly Lover, do the same? Oh yes; and He never trifles—He cannot deceive. He is as constant as the sun in its daily rising. If He has given but the smallest indication of His choice, it is the surest earnest—the most undoubted evidence—that He will return to celebrate the nuptial tie.

Reader, if thou hast any desire after Jesus—any looking and longing for Jesus—He hath been beforehand with thee, and He will as surely come and see thee again, and cause the heart to rejoice in Him, as that He now sits upon the throne. His faithfulness and thy heart-breathings will not admit of a doubt about it.

II.—ITS PERPETUITY

Perpetuity! when Christ dies, then the Church shall become extinct; not before. Why, how can it die? Christ as a Mediator—Christ as taking our nature into union with Himself, *hath shared His life with the Church, and how can it die? Can the life in the Church die, and the life in Christ live?* Talk of final perseverance! the Church must persevere; else heaven will be in confusion, and all hell in an uproar.

Hath not Christ engaged to bring many sons unto glory? He says, "*I lay down My life for the sheep*"; hath He laid it down in vain? Would you make Christ a liar? He hath given Himself to His Church; will He withdraw Himself again? Such were monstrous theories, unworthy of false and fickle man, much less the immutable Jehovah!

The Church, struggling as she may be in the wilderness, is as safe as Christ is; and Christ, as the Omniscient I AM, hath His eye as much upon His Church even now as He will have to all eternity. It matters not how many nor how powerful her enemies; they are all but as so many grasshoppers in His hands who holdeth the winds in His fists—measureth the waters in the hollow of His hand—and taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

Talk of fear! With all her fears, what has the Church, in point of fact, to fear? The Lord says, "*No weapon formed against thee shall prosper,*" and "*Father, I will that all those whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am.*" Is there not ground, then, for hope—yea, for undoubted assurance, that the Lord's prayer shall be

answered? He says, "*I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish! neither shall any man pluck them out of My hands.*"

And this is what we call *perpetuity* of life.

"The Saviour lives, no more to die—
He lives as Head enthroned on high—
He lives triumphant o'er the grave—
He lives eternally to save.

"He lives to still His people's fears—
He lives to wipe away their tears—
He lives, their mansion to prepare—
He lives to bring them safely there.

"The chief of sinners He receives;
His saints He loves and never leaves;
He'll guard them safe from every ill,
And all His promises fulfil.

"Abundant grace will He afford
Till they are present with their Lord;
And prove what they have sung before,
That Jesus lives for evermore."

St. Luke's, Bedford (1862).

D. A. DOUDNEY.

THE BIBLE

The Bible is a book for every age,
And what it said in centuries ago
It speaks today from every hallowed page;
It is a fount whose living waters flow
In ceaseless stream with rich perennial power,
With freshness as the sun or as the Spring;
Its force is not abated at this hour
To those who will a humble spirit bring;
It has been read and pondered in the days
Of bygone generations of our race,
And if we would return to wisdom's ways
We must apply it to our present case,
For sin, and man, and God are still the same,
And there is only healing in His Name.

Rodden Rectory, Frome.

T. PITTAWAY.

THEOLOGY

NATURE OF GOD'S WORK IN US

CALVIN'S STATEMENT

It will be worth our while to consider, on the other hand, the character of that remedy of divine grace by which the corruption of our nature is rectified and healed. For since the Lord helps us by supplying that of which we are destitute, when we perceive *the nature of His work in us*, we shall at once understand the depth of our own poverty.

GOD BEGINS THE GOOD WORK IN US

The apostle Paul writes to the Philippians :

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you . . . being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

By the beginning of a good work it is clear that he means the beginning of conversion, which beginning lies in a change of will. Thus God begins a good work in us by bending, moulding and directing our hearts into the love of righteousness : He performs or completes it by so strengthening us that we persevere unto the end.

It may be objected that God merely assists our will, and that our will is not really averse to righteousness, but weak. I answer that the Spirit tells us elsewhere what our will is worth if left to itself. He says :

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you : and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them."

Who can say that God merely strengthens the weakness of the will, when He tells us that it needs to be entirely transformed and renewed? If there is any softness in stone, which by assistance can be increased till the stone becomes perfectly flexible, then I will admit that the heart of man is inclined to the obedience of righteousness if the grace of God shall merely supply its defects. But if the Lord by such a figure designed to show us that no good can be wrung out of our heart until it is entirely changed, *let us not share between God and us what He claims as exclusively His own*. If when God converts us to righteousness stone is transformed into flesh, that which belongs to our own will is abolished, and that which replaces it is entirely of God.

When I say that the will is abolished I do not mean that its essence is destroyed; for in conversion that which is essential to our original

nature remains. The will is created anew, not by beginning to be a will, but by being changed from evil to good; and I assert that *this belongs entirely to God*. Indeed the same apostle testifies that we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything (2 Cor. 3 : 5). And again he tells us that God not merely aids the weakness of our will, or rectifies its perversity, but works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Phil. 2 : 13).

GOOD WORKS AFTER CONVERSION

Some readers, perhaps, will admit that the will of man, being naturally averse to what is good, is converted solely by the power of God; but they will contend that after its conversion it has its own independent share in the performance of good works. In support of this they may quote Augustine's words: "Grace precedes all good works, having the will as its attendant, not its leader, as its handmaid, not its guide."

In this the man of God said well; but it is absurd to wrest his words to the support of such an opinion. Inasmuch as the will to good is preceded by grace, it may rightly be called the handmaid or attendant of grace: but since the renewal of the will is the work of God, *it is wrong to ascribe to man the merit of yielding obedience to grace by the power of his own will*. We have learned from Paul that the will itself, if it be a will to good, is the work of grace.

Nor was it Augustine's design to attribute to the human will a share in the production of good works: he merely intended to refute the evil doctrine of Pelagius, that human merit is the primary cause of man's salvation. Elsewhere he attributes good works entirely to the Lord by saying: "When we are unwilling, God makes us willing; and having made us willing, He sees to it that we do not will in vain."

TESTIMONIES OF SCRIPTURE

Since this is a point of cardinal importance, I will prove it by the clearest testimonies of Scripture; and having done so I will show that Augustine bears testimony to the same truths; for I consider it not unimportant to point out that I am in agreement with a man whom all godly people justly regard as an authority.

When God saith, "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36 : 26), He plainly testifies that, if we are to be converted to righteousness, that which is our own must be abolished, and that which takes its place is from Himself. Nor does He say this once only. In Jeremiah (32 : 39, 40) He saith: "I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me for ever": "I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me." And earlier in the prophecy of Ezekiel (11 : 19): "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh." God calls our conversion the

creation of a new spirit and a new heart : how could He more clearly claim for Himself everything that is good and right in the will of man?

With this agree the prayers of the saints. Solomon said, "The Lord our God be with us, that He may incline our hearts unto Him, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments." Again, in Psalm 119 we find the prayer : "Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness" (verse 36). David asks God to create in him a clean heart, and to renew a right spirit within him, acknowledging that his heart is filled with impurity and his spirit with perverseness, and recognising that the purity for which he prays is created by God.

The testimony of Christ to this point is clear to all who do not willfully close their eyes : "I am the Vine; ye are the branches; My Father is the husbandman. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me." If we can no more bear fruit by ourselves than a vine-branch torn from the earth and deprived of moisture, we need not go further in search of our natural fitness for good. Equally decisive is Christ's conclusion : "Without Me ye can do nothing."

IT IS NOT LEFT TO THE SINNER'S CHOICE

The apostle Paul, in a passage which I have already quoted, ascribes to God all good works : "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." The first part of a good work is the will to do it; the second is an effective effort to accomplish it : *the author of both is God*. Therefore we steal from God whatever we arrogate to ourselves either of will or of deed. God begins and God finishes. It is of Him that the will conceives the love of right, is inclined to desire it, and is stirred up to the pursuit of it; that our choice, desire, and endeavour do not fail, but are carried into effect; that we continue in good works, and persevere in them unto the end.

God moves man's will, in conversion, effectually, *not leaving it to the sinner's choice whether he shall obey or disobey*. We must therefore reject an oft-repeated saying of Chrysostom : "He who is drawn by God is willingly drawn"; but which he implies that God waits with outstretched hand to see whether we care to receive His help or not. The apostle does not say that the grace of a renewed will is offered to us on condition that we accept it, but that the will itself is wrought by God in us; that is to say, that the Lord by His Spirit directs, bends, regulates our heart, and reigns in it as in His own kingdom.

PERSEVERANCE IS OF GOD

It would have been equally certain that perseverance is to be regarded as the free gift of God, but for the prevalence of the serious error that perseverance is the reward of human merit and is given to those who have been duly thankful for grace received. But since

this error sprang out of one which I have already refuted, namely that it rests with man to accept or to reject the offered grace of God, the parent error being refuted, the second falls to the ground.

And now let us listen to Augustine. His words will show that we are not, as our adversaries allege, contradicted by the unanimous voice of the ancient fathers. I will briefly outline Augustine's opinion, using his own words.

"It was given to Adam to stand if he had willed to do so; to us it is given to will, and to overcome evil by the will. He had the power, if he had had the will: God gives us both will and power. His freedom was this, to be able not to sin: ours is greater, namely, not to be able to sin (1 John 3:9). If in that weakness, wherein God's power is made perfect, the saints were left to the exercise of their own will, and if God did not work in them to will and to do, their will would fail by its own weakness amid their many temptations, and they would be unable to persevere. God draws men by their own wills, but He Himself works those wills."

In another place Augustine says that grace does not deprive man of his will, but changes it from a bad will to a good one, and afterwards assists it; by which he means that man is not driven as it were, by some external impulse, but is so affected within that he obeys from the heart. He also says in one of his letters: "We know that the grace of God is not given to all men; and that where it is given, it is not given on the ground of the merits of man's works or man's will, but by free favour: and we know that where it is not given, it is withheld by the just judgment of God." And in one place he admirably sums up the whole matter thus: *Humana voluntas non libertate gratiam, sed gratia consequitur libertatem*: "The will of man obtaineth not grace by freedom, but freedom by grace."

—J. P. WILES, *Instruction in Christianity*, by John Calvin, pp. 87-90.

GROVE CHAPEL, CAMBERWELL

NEW PASTOR

Readers of the *Gospel Magazine* and friends of Grove Chapel will be interested to hear that the Rev. Iain H. Murray, B.A., has been offered and has accepted the Pastorate.

His ministry will commence, God willing, on Sunday, 9th April, 1961, the Induction Services being planned for Saturday, 8th April, and the speakers including the Rev. Professor R. A. Finlayson and the Rev. John B. E. Thomas, of Port Talbot.

It is hoped that there will be a good gathering of friends to welcome Mr. Murray—they are assured of a warm welcome!

Poetry

THE HAND OF GOD

Tune : *C.M.*

That mighty hand which holds the sea
Within its open palm,
Controls the tempest when it roars,
And brings a settled calm.

It is the hand which spreads above
The curtains of the sky,
And brings the healing grace of God
For those about to die.

That hand by cruel men was nailed
Unto the bitter cross,
That we might have our sins forgiven
And grace in place of loss.

That hand caught Peter on the wave
When he was full of fear,
And to the humble soul today
That hand is ever near.

Lightly it lay upon the heads
Of children frail and weak,
And still it is outstretched to bless
All who its blessings seek.

That hand will help all pilgrim souls
The devil to withstand,
And nought there is on earth or sky
To pluck thee from that hand.

Rodden Rectory, Frome.

T. PITTAWAY.

SECURITY

Tune : *St. Bees.*

Founded on the riven Rock,
Safe from every earthquake shock,
Never by a tempest stirred
Is the life built on Christ's word.

Heaven and earth shall pass away,
In this world there is no stay;
Yet the souls who know Christ's love
Have a home with Him above.

Merit of our own is none,
 We were bought by God's own Son;
 Chosen ere the world had birth
 For a lot beyond this earth.

We will give to God the praise
 That throughout our earthly days,
 We by Him are still preserved
 For inheritance reserved.

We will sing a glad new song,
 Echoed by the angel-throng,
 Who above rejoice to see
 Mortal folk from sin set free.

Rodden Rectory, Frome.

T. PITTAWAY.

PROTECTION

Tune : Regent Square.

Loving sympathy of Jesus
 Is the joy of all His sheep;
 Tenderly within His shelter
 He will always safely keep,
 For His love bestowed upon them
 Is so strong and true and deep.

At a glance He knows their station
 And the trial of each day;
 When the foe is pressing sorely
 Angel help is on the way;
 All who trust His timely succour
 Find He is their Strength and Stay.

We will lift our hearts unto Him,
 Ever seeking His sweet will;
 Those who dread the snares of Satan
 Have His shield upon them still;
 Over all they are triumphant,
 Trusting in His boundless skill.

Glory then we give to Jesus,
 He is ever with His own,
 And we will not fear the future,
 For His mercy we have known;
 Glory to our loving Saviour,
 To our King upon His throne.

Rodden Rectory, Frome.

T. PITTAWAY.

THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATERS

For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.—Jeremiah 2 : 13.

What great mistake to miss the lucid fount
 And hew out broken cisterns of despair!
 Yet Judah, more than other folk, proved false,
 Though search were made from Chittim in the west
 To Kedar's tents upon the distant east.
 Had other nations changed their gods, though none
 Were truly gods? Yet Judah's Lord had cause
 To charge His people with forsaking Him,
 As maid might lay aside her ornaments,
 Or bride her rich attire. This was to hew
 The broken cisterns which would fail their need.
 Should they forget their past?—the love of youth,
 Their holiness to God, and that glad song
 Wherewith they celebrated, in their joy,
 The great deliverance which for them was wrought
 Upon the Red Sea's shores? Now God will plead—
 "What measure of unrighteousness in Me
 Have any of your fathers ever found?
 Why should ye go from Me and wander far
 In walking after vanity and shame?
 Have I been as a wilderness to you?
 Or as a land of thick encircling dark?
 Why do ye say ye will not come to Me?"
 In human hearts how sad it is to feel
 The ebb of love and be compelled to sit
 Upon the beach and watch the waves recede
 As they drop down from their high water mark
 Which with the dancing wavelets they had reached!
 This dulls the light in human eyes with those
 Who know that life can never be again
 Quite as it was. Love has received a check;
 For there remains the thought of that sad day
 Of ebb, and fear of some still further ebb.
 Is it not true that this is like the pain
 Felt by Jehovah when His Israel,
 On whom was lavished all His tender love,
 Had turned from Him to strange and unknown gods?
 Let no man e'er attempt the thankless task
 Of satisfying thirst for God and love
 With worldly goods and transitory hopes!

JOHN THE BAPTIST

Tune : *Helmsley*.

Hark! A sound is in the desert,
 John the Baptist cries "Repent!"
 He has come to be Christ's herald,
 By divine appointment sent;
 Listen to him,
 Let your garments now be rent.

Camel's hair he has for raiment
 To protect from desert dust;
 Hear the words of his commission—
 "I have come because I must
 Turn the children
 To the wisdom of the just."

"One of Whom I am not worthy
 Now is coming after me,
 And to those who think me Saviour
 I now say, I am not He,
 But I warn you
 From the wrath of God to flee."

"He Who is preferred before me
 Is the Lamb of God Most High,
 And He will go on increasing,
 For He is much more than I;
 He will save you,
 For He comes on earth to die."

Rodden Rectory, Frome.

T. PITTAWAY.

LOOKING (OFF) UNTO JESUS (Heb. 12 : 3)

Being a Christian does not consist only in knowing the joy and happiness of sins forgiven. It means having real fellowship with the Lord, being conscious of His Presence, and by faith turning to Him in all things, not only in our troubles and sorrows, but also in our joys and in our thankfulness, walking with Him throughout our pilgrimage journey.

"For He has said : I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13 : 5).

The child of God is enabled to say, "I can do all things through Christ, Who strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4 : 13).

God's Word assures us that : "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound : they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance" (Psa. 89 : 15).

A.D.R.

CURRENT TOPICS

FROM ROME TO CHRIST

The following is a brief Testimony by the Rev. Hugh Farrell, who has been visiting the British Isles:

"I was born in Denver, Colorado, on April 2nd, 1911, of Roman Catholic parents. From early boyhood I wanted to be a priest, and so, after completing my preparatory schooling, I entered the seminary. However, after some years in the seminary I decided that I was called to a higher state than that of the secular priesthood and I became a monk.

"I became a member of the Discalced (barefooted) Carmelite Fathers, one of the strictest monastic orders in the Roman Catholic Church. After a year's novitiate I made my first profession of the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and then on May 26th, 1938, I made my final and solemn profession of vows *usque ad mortem* (even until death).

DOUBTS

"Within a year, after I had received Minor Orders and the first of the Major Orders, the subdiaconate, from the hands of Bishop Francis C. Kelley of Oklahoma City, I ceased to believe in many of the doctrines of the Roman Church. These doctrines, I came to learn from my studies in dogmatic and moral theology, were man-made. They dated from the Middle Ages. However, since I had been reared in the Roman Church and knew nothing about the real claims of Christianity, it never occurred to me that I might find Christ outside of the Roman Church.

"Finally, in 1940, I became so upset over my lack of faith in the Roman Church I escaped from the monastery. Since I had made my solemn profession of vows I could not simply walk out, and had they suspected that I intended to leave they would have prevented me from doing so. I well realised that the moment I crossed the threshold of the monastery that I would automatically incur one of the most grave of the excommunications, the absolution of which is reserved to the Pope himself.

"A month later I entered the Protestant ministry, and for the next fifteen years served in various pulpits throughout the United States. I was not truly converted, and those years were unhappy ones. My unhappiness was so evident that my friends in the Roman Church persuaded me to return to the Roman Catholic Church. I spent a month at the Trappist Monastery in Lafayette, Oregon, and that firmly convinced me that I no longer believed in the Roman Church.

NEW BIRTH

"At length, after all of those years, during which I studied many doctrines, a zealous Christian layman led me to the Lord (Romans 3 : 23-24). My life changed (2 Cor. 5 : 17). Since that day I have preached Christ crucified, risen and coming again, throughout the U.S.A., Canada and in many parts of Europe, and teaching others how to witness to Roman Catholics and win them for Christ (John 1 : 12--13)."

HUGH FARRELL.

THE NEW ARCHBISHOPS

The following, from the pen of Sir Douglas Savory, M.A. (Oxon.), appeared in *The Christian Irishman*, reprinted by permission from *The Belfast News Letter*:

As we know that Dr. Coggan was invited to preach very recently at Sandringham, it would appear that Queen Elizabeth II is following the example of Queen Victoria in desiring to make the acquaintance of the bishops whom she appoints, and refusing to rely solely on the advice of the Prime Minister, or even of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

It may be hoped that a layman will not be though impertinent if he ventures to suggest that when Dr. Ramsey is translated to Canterbury he will not forget the promise which he made "to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's Word; and both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others to do the same."

A few Sundays ago we had the opportunity of seeing on television the Holy Communion Service in one of the principal Churches of the Archbishop's diocese. When we saw the constant use of incense and heard all the strange prayers which were introduced into the service, and saw the various activities of the acolytes, we could scarcely believe that we were beholding a Service in the Church of England.

On the other hand, Dr. Coggan, when invited to take "mass" in a church of his diocese, wrote a very polite letter in reply saying that he would be very glad to take the Holy Communion Service on a certain Sunday in accordance with the Prayer Book of the Church of England. The clergyman went out of his way to eliminate the incense and cut out all extraneous prayers, and in fact transformed the whole Service in accordance with the letter of his Bishop.