

The Gospel MAGAZINE

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THE
GOSPEL MAGAZINE

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

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

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

No. 1375
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APRIL, 1967

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EDITORIAL

There are many who claim that our present moral chaos is simply a commentary on the barrenness and utter failure of traditional Christian morality. The latter, they say, has had its day and though doubtless it played an important part when man generally accepted its basic dogmas and endorsed its patterns of conduct, now that the majority have abandoned its dogmas the traditional moral position has been so seriously eroded that it ceases to be relevant in this twentieth-century situation. Into this post-Christian void steps the humanist with his passionate conviction that he can supply what he believes the Christian message is incapable of supplying, namely, a rational basis for conduct.

There is undoubtedly the air of the crusader about many humanists. They feel passionately about moral issues, about apartheid, about hunger and want, about tyranny of all kinds. Not only do they feel but they also act. They are often involved in the movements for social betterment at home and for relieving the conditions of the wretched millions in under-developed countries overseas. No wonder they appear to many students as an obvious option in place of Christianity. No wonder, too, that with their positive aims and at times crusading zeal they put to shame those Christians whose inward-looking piety makes them unaware of the needs of men at large.

In discussing humanism we have not simply to consider the kind of person who, like Margaret Knight in her B.B.C. lectures, ardently advocates an ethic divorced from the Christian Gospel. Nor are we dealing only with those who at undergraduate level satirise and ridicule the activities of the average University Christian Union and

at a later stage press the B.B.C. to secularise its policy or the government to cease what is designated religious indoctrination in schools. This is the frank and open humanism which is increasingly a force in the universities. But we have to face the fact that some who claim to be Christians have virtually come to terms with the movement, so that humanism re-appears in ecclesiastical dress. The morality of the followers of 'Honest to God' is virtually the humanist code presented as if it was an acceptable Christian conception.

In criticising the humanist position—and indeed in rejecting it—it is perhaps necessary to emphasise that this is not an attack on the conduct or the motives of many humanists whose lives are of a high moral standard. In fact the Christian will readily concede that some of the aims for which the humanist is striving are perfectly legitimate and even laudable. But at the same time he still questions the basis on which humanism is reared, and asserts that in spite of its claims and achievements it is the path to an ultimate moral bankruptcy.

In order to understand the position of contemporary English humanism it is necessary to go back to its rise in the nineteenth century to discover the various factors which played their part in its emergence. There was, of course, the philosophical background inherited from the rationalism of the eighteenth century, which in turn, was accentuated by the scientific advance of the nineteenth. This movement of thought rejected the conception of the supernatural and asserted that this world is the only world. Science became the key to unlock the secrets of this world and so reason and science became two of the key concepts in the development of thought.

But a further potent factor entered. Darwin's *Origin of Species* introduced the theory of evolution which was soon widely accepted by biologists and by scientists generally. But the theory did not remain within the domain of pure science; it became a philosophical concept. So nineteenth-century thinkers were increasingly dominated by evolutionary concepts in every realm of thought. The key ideas of progress and development coloured the approach in many subjects, and ethics was no exception. Man's moral standards were alleged to be the product of his emergence from a less advanced condition. They were part of the evidence of his forward march. 'Forward' here is an important word, for nineteenth-century humanism was essentially optimistic. The inevitability of progress acquired virtually the status of a papal dogma and the optimistic dogma of the inherent goodness of man helped to round off the picture of *homo sapiens*, with his savage history behind him, striding forward to new conquests.

But there was one more factor in the nineteenth century which

the modern humanist tends to forget. The movement had its birth in the atmosphere of moral fervour which was a product of the profound impact the Christian message had made on the nation. The evangelical revival of the eighteenth century and the revival of 1859 not only affected the churches, but the nation at large. The mind of the man on the street and the climate of opinion of the House of Commons were both deeply influenced by the moral presupposition of the Christian Gospel.

This was accentuated by a further factor which has its roots back in the seventeenth century. The Puritan leaders, in spite of the misrepresentations of the ignorant, were cultured and learned men. Indeed, modern science had its origin in the Puritan era. As a result, the scientists and the theologians in this country did not diverge, as they did for example in eighteenth-century France, where the intellectual was almost inevitably an atheist. The French Revolution widened this gulf on the Continent, but in England there was not the same gulf between the scientists and writers on the one hand and Christianity on the other. Thus the English Romantic movement, with its call for the rejection of all absolute standards in favour of spontaneous and free self-expression, was considerably modified by the Victorian milieu in which it grew. It tended to accept the Christian moral position which was so generally acknowledged in the nation.

Now all these factors must be borne in mind as we discuss the humanism of today. The old key concepts of reason, science and evolution are still with us, although the optimism of the nineteenth century has been sadly shaken by the events of the twentieth. Yet even here it lingers on in the rather wistful attitude which suggests that if only we could educate men in the right ways, then all would be well—an 'if only' which is the inevitable rock on which every optimistic scheme founders. But the other factor is still present although many humanists might deny it, namely, the Christian standards and moral values which they repudiate. In spite of their vehement rejection of what they claim to be outmoded ideas, they yet in their own conduct and in their declared aims and aspirations show that they are heirs to the Christian tradition to a far greater extent than they are usually prepared to admit. It is because of these diverse elements in the humanist position that we will find a basic and continuing contradiction in their moral theories.

The humanist claims that man's proper study is man. Humanity and its welfare are his chief concerns. Confronted with the Christian message about God, he rejects it. The world of sense is the only one we know, he claims, and any idea of a god or of the supernatural

is simply an invention of the mind which has not reached a sufficient degree of maturity to think for itself. The whole approach is thus basically empirical, that is to say, along the avenue of experience. The only world he can accept is one which is verifiable by rational means. The only approach to reality which he can allow is the scientific method.

This rejection of God and of anything beyond the world of *sense* leads inevitably to a rejection of any absolute moral standard. Man must discover by experiment, as he goes along, the best way in which to behave. All one has is past experience, and this is either confirmed or corrected by subsequent experience. But man is essentially without a model or goal in the moral realm. We are in the area of free enquiry in which every moral decision is an open-ended one, subject to subsequent modification in the light of fresh experience and understanding. The result of this is pure moral relativism. There are no fixed points and indeed logically one is forced surely to admit that there are as many possible moralities as there are human beings.

This assertion of the relativity of any moral choice is reinforced by the analytic approach to the use of language. If you say 'This is good' you must be ready to analyse your statement. Superficially the proposition suggests that there is a criterion of goodness by which acts may be judged and by which you pronounce them to be good. But the humanist insists that there is no such absolute standard, so that the criterion you are invoking is purely the creation of your own mind. So what you are really saying is 'This is good for me' or 'This is good as far as I am concerned' or 'As far as I can judge.'

The consequence of all this is a total rejection of all moral judgments. They are not statements of objective fact. They do not declare what actually is. They simply express the reaction of the individual to a particular issue which he has encountered. Such moral judgments have therefore an authority only for the individual who expresses them. They are in no way binding upon anyone else.

The net result of this mode of thinking is surely the assertion of aimlessness and pointlessness of human life. The humanist is like a traveller who has demagnetised his compass. His journey through life may be eventful and may produce many interesting experiences, but he can never be sure whether he is going in the right direction. Nor can he be sure whether the human race as a whole is making moral progress or not. To venture an opinion on this would imply access to some standard by which to judge, and this possibility he has already rejected.

Such thinking brings us to an impasse. We are approaching the condition of the Greek philosopher Cratylus, who found himself so caught in the flux of events that he could not venture a comment and could only wave his arms! A consistent empiricism which restricts itself rigidly to the data furnished by sense is surely forced into speechlessness. Yet the humanist is far from being speechless. In fact he is extremely vocal, but it is in his passionate denunciations and challenging appeals that we discover the illogicality and contradictions of his own position.

While humanists may claim in theory that everything is fluid and all moral questions are open, they in fact behave and speak in such a way as to deny these basic assertions. They become indignant, for example, about apartheid. They insist that it is wrong. They try to bring other people to their point of view. But all this on their own premisses is completely illogical, for if there are no criteria by which to judge and every moral issue is open to question, then it is impossible to come to any decision about apartheid or about any other question. If the humanist says "apartheid is wrong," he must, if he is consistent, qualify this statement with the concession that the South African government official who says 'it is right' is equally entitled to make that assertion, for neither statement on humanist pre-suppositions does anything more than express a personal preference.

Yet our humanist friend still waxes eloquent about the iniquities of apartheid or of some other social evil. The Christian is not at all surprised. This is precisely how he expects a man to react. He believes that the law of God is written in the heart of man. He insists that such standards as truth and goodness and mercy are impressed by the Creator on man's moral nature. So unless men have, because of self-interest, suppressed their innate knowledge of these divinely given standards they will, of course, become indignant when they see injustice. But the indignant humanist calling for redress in face of some social injustice is a complete contradiction. His moral reaction is an implicit acknowledgment of the Christian position which he so vigorously rejects.

We find, in other words, that the humanist in spite of his devotion to the cause of moral relativism is compelled to smuggle into his system some standards which he then employs in coming to moral decisions. His humanity, in short, triumphs over his ethical theory. Because he is a man he cannot live and act consistently with a philosophy which denies any essential and objective moral value to an action, and which refuses to judge unworthy actions by the touchstone of justice or righteousness. To be consistent with his own

theories he should never say 'this is wrong' or 'this is unjust.' All he should say is that this or that action is inconvenient to the smooth working of society. Persistent cruelty to a child with such a theory takes on the same complexion as causing traffic congestion by parking a car in a main street—it is inconvenient and ought to be stopped, but one must view both inconveniences quite dispassionately for they are both the outcome of personal decisions which the humanist cannot condemn, for he has no point of reference by which to assess them. But once again his moral indignation in face of cruelty shows that his warm humanity triumphs over his emasculated philosophy.

The ultimate consequence of this moral relativism is that the word 'ought' must be banished from our vocabulary together with such reactionary words as "duty." What answer has the humanist to give to the man whom he challenges on the issue of cruelty to a child, and who replied "Why shouldn't I?" All the humanist can answer consistently with his own position is that he personally could not thus maltreat a child; but he could not go further and say that the other man should not assault the child. To say that is to suggest that there are standards by which cruelty can be assessed. But having denied such criteria, he must presumably conclude that the empirical approach leads men to different conclusions. In fact, if he is worthy of his manhood he either stops the bully or 'phones the police! But at that point he is behaving as Christian teaching would expect him to behave, but as a humanist he is being completely inconsistent.

Let us be quite clear about the situation. English humanism today in its moral achievements is essentially the product of the Christian moral tradition. The students who indignantly reject the Christian ethic are none the less governed by that ethic when they show their concern for men in need and when they crusade against social injustice. Their humanist creed by itself is incapable of producing the moral ideals which they in fact seek to realise. This becomes even more obvious when we see humanist principles in a different environment. Growing in the soil of the Christian tradition, the humanist plant in this country is both attractive and to some degree fruitful. But transplant it to another kind of soil and it is seen in its essential barrenness. Moral relativism in Nazi Germany produced the super-man and the master race who were capable of determining what was the supreme good—the happiness of the greatest number meant, of course, the extermination of millions of Jews; but moral relativism has no answer to this. In Russia the same theory has led to the notion of the Party as being

the arbiter of the good life, with the inevitable consequence that the remedial treatment of brain-washing must be used for those who because of inherited prejudice are not yet prepared to conform and to contribute to the common good. George Orwell's grim picture of 1984, when the brain-washed victim reaches the point of cheerful acceptance of 'big brother', is not only the warning of the way in which our society could easily drift, it is an indictment of the shifting sands on which the humanist structure is built. To change the metaphor—let the capital of the Christian moral tradition run out in this country and humanism will show its essential bankruptcy.

H.M.C.

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DAVID JONES OF LLANGAN

EIFION EVANS

The events of July 1736 displayed in embryo some of the most prominent features of the eighteenth-century evangelical awakening. George Whitefield had been converted for nearly a year, had recently been ordained and preached his first sermon, and graduated B.A. at Oxford. He would shortly prove in London that the doctrine of the new birth and justification by faith in Jesus Christ, which he preached plainly and powerfully, "made its way like lightning into the hearers' consciences." His whole time, apart from preaching and necessary refreshment, would be "wholly occupied in talking with people under religious concern".⁽¹⁾

For John Wesley it was a month of disillusionment. The full impact of its incidents were to come upon him only later: "I went to America, to convert the Indians; but oh, who shall convert me? who, what is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? I have a fair summer religion. I can talk well; nay, and believe myself, while no danger is near. But let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled." And on July 10, 1736, he had looked death in the face, the death of a young lady who had been full of promise. In the evening of that day there had been an unparalleled storm of thunder and lightning which John Wesley felt was the voice of God which, in his own words, "told me I was not fit to die, since I was afraid rather than desirous of it."⁽²⁾

His brother, Charles, was just as frustrated with missionary endeavour in the New World. Temperamentally he was not fitted for the secretarial duties of his employment, physically his body could not stand the pace, and spiritually he was disqualified for those very duties to which he most aspired, being then a stranger to the saving faith of the Gospel. It was no surprise, therefore, that July 1736 saw his resignation, and his departure from Savannah, never to return.

In Wales by that time both Daniel Rowland and Howel Harris, like Whitefield, had been converted for a year. By the end of July Harris had both sought ordination from the Bishop of St. David's and been refused it, on the ground of his activities in lay evangelism within his own parish and beyond it. Before the end of the

year, in spite of the Bishop's prejudice and censure, he was to preach in the open air, and group the young converts into 'societies' where they would find fellowship, encouragement and edification.

It was in this same month, on the tenth to be exact, that David Jones was born. He was to be in Glamorganshire what Rowland was in Cardiganshire and Howel Harris in Pembrokeshire, a key figure in the growing Methodist ranks, with his own parish church of Llangan the centre of tremendous spiritual activity. David Jones's father was a farmer at Aberceiliog, in the parish of Llanllwni, on the Carmarthenshire-Cardiganshire border. His grandfather on his mother's side had been vicar of Llandysul, and it is interesting to note that David Jones had Jewish blood in him, the vicar's wife being a rich Jewish lady.

Educated at Carmarthen Grammar School, he was ordained deacon in 1758 and priest in 1760 by the Bishop of St. David's. He served several curacies before his settlement at Llangan, near Bridgend, in Glamorganshire: in North Wales, Breconshire, Monmouthshire, near Bristol, and in Wiltshire. In this way God was preparing him for the extensive travel he would undertake in later years, preaching the Gospel of Christ. It was only when he removed to Trefethin and Caldicott, Monmouthshire, in 1761, that he came face to face with the doctrines of grace, and proved for himself the power of God in the Gospel. The instrument of his conversion was the reading of Flavel's works, loaned or given to him by a godly Methodist doctor, William Read, a close friend of William Williams, Pantycelyn. David Jones's life and ministry were transformed, and on his removal to a curacy near Bristol, and subsequently to Crudwell, Wiltshire, he came to the notice of the Countess of Huntingdon. It was through her influence that he was presented to the living of Llangan by the Patroness of the parish, Lady Charlotte Edwin, and duly instituted on April 16, 1767.

It was inevitable that the new vicar should soon give evidence of 'Methodist' tendencies. He had derived a great deal of benefit from their fellowship at Trefethin, and his contact with the Countess had firmly established in his mind the necessity for an uncompromising stand with regard to the preaching of Christ crucified. In any case, it is important to note that organised Methodism of the Wesleyan variety was at that time unrecognisable in South Wales, and evangelical clergymen unaligned with the Calvinistic Methodists were few in number and limited in influence. Things like extempore preaching, preaching itineraries, open-air preaching, which the Bishops cavilled at, were the very marrow of the evangelical clergy's ministries, and David Jones was no exception.

The quality of his personal faith, the Biblical emphasis of his preaching, and the vigour of his evangelical activities clearly marked his affinities with men like Rowland, Harris and Williams. Sufficient evidence of this is to be found in the Deeds of a chapel built for him at a nearby village called Pencoed in 1775, as a meeting place for the Methodists of the area. According to those Deeds, the Trustees "shall permit and suffer [the Chapel] for the use of the said Protestants called Methodists and wherein such Teachers or Ministers only are to be admitted as shall preach and embrace the Doctrine of Salvation contained in the 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17 and 18 Articles of the Church of England."⁽³⁾ These declare unequivocally the doctrines of original sin, the bondage of the will, justification by faith only; the place of good works, and of works before justification; Christ's atonement for sin, predestination and election, and that eternal salvation is to be obtained only by the Name of Christ. This was evidently considered to be a sufficient confession of faith for the regulation of the Methodist society, its members and leaders alike. It was also, by the same token, a summary of David Jones's personal beliefs.

In one of his last letters he says, "I am now endeavouring to reduce all my religion to *one* point—Christ is ALL, and in all my salvation. . . . Confidence in Jesus is the marrow of faith. We can never trust Him too much. He is able to save to the uttermost, and will not disappoint us."⁽⁴⁾ While Christ's sufficiency gave him a confident faith, Christ's love gave him the deepest joy in his heart and the strongest motive in his ministry:

"I hope you are all happy in the love and fulness of Jesus—and there you cannot be poor. Could we but live upon Him, then the important matter is settled. But my legality is my bane. Sometimes I think I am safe because I love Him, then I am surrounded with an army more numerous than the French, and I know not what to do: but when I can tell them *He loves me*, then they will vanish. O sweet Saviour, Thou art far more precious to me than all the treasures of Snowdon, and than all the Snowdons in the world. In Thee is my life and my all."⁽⁵⁾

It was this personal, living faith in Christ together with an almost overpowering sense of His love which constrained David Jones to 'fulfil his ministry' in the face of staggering difficulties and trials. For all that, indeed because of it, he gloried in the cross of Christ and in the tribulations which arose because of it: "Well may I, of all men, say, 'It is of the Lord's goodness that I am not consumed.' Tribulations are my lot; and I find they do me good. I am too much

wedded to *this* world, and it is a great work of divine grace to wean me from its allurements.”⁽⁶⁾

Reference to the chapel at Pencoed requires a little explanation. The Methodist policy with regard to the Established Church was one of accommodation and reformation. It was a supplementary and complementary task which the ‘societies’ performed, supplying a serious, but not in the Methodist view disqualifying, deficiency in the Church and in far too many of its clergy. Furthermore, Methodist societies were not Anglican societies, even though essentially orientated to the Anglican framework of Church order, ministry, and sacrament. Consequently many of the Dissenters enjoyed fellowship within the Methodist societies. For a sound ministry of the Word, and a disciplined administration of the Sacraments, the societies were dependent on the availability of Methodist clergymen and consecrated buildings.

During the early years of the awakening extensive use was made in Wales of ‘chapels of ease,’ buildings belonging to the Established Church which, because of an isolated position or sheer neglect, were sometimes dilapidated in condition, but generally available for use by those duly ordained. The gradual provision of separate buildings explicitly for the use of the Methodists could never be more than a stop-gap, and the more serious issues of separation from the Established Church were raised in several quarters from as early as the 1740’s. In any case their legal position was hard to define while they remained neither consecrated buildings of the Established Church nor yet independent of it as were the Dissenting Meeting Houses. In practice, however, they were referred to as ‘Ty Cwrdd’ or Meeting House, placing them in the eyes of the public on the same footing, if not for exactly the same purpose, as those of the Dissenters.

So far as the exposition of Scripture was concerned the societies were provided for by laymen showing aptitude in ‘rightly dividing the word of truth,’ called exhorters. Even though many of these were qualified by spiritual experience and ministerial gifts, increasingly as time went on they were being refused ordination through prejudice against their Methodism. By 1745 several of them were constrained to address the Welsh Methodist leaders on this issue, pressing the clergymen to take the decisive step of ordaining them, not merely on the considerations of expediency, but in the light of Scriptural precedent (quoting in particular Acts 6 : 6):

“We are of the opinion that you are too much attached to the Established Church. We think that if you received ordination in the Church of England, as also you expect, that would not

suffice to set at rest numerous brethren and sisters in the country; because what they require is a number of men to minister the Word and ordinances to them regularly; to undertake their oversight as shepherds over flocks; or remain as we are, and to this we cannot think of consenting. We have placed our case in God's hand, hoping that, if you fail in compassion for us, God will open for us a way to a better order . . . [then follows Acts 6: 6] Therefore we pray you to do what they did; by so doing, you cannot offend any man who takes God's Word as the guiding rule of his life; then we may expect the same effects, increasing our number, and strengthening such as are already called."

This request was not granted, Howel Harris being especially allergic to any talk of separation, while the clergymen (in spite of repeated rebuff and spasmodic persecution on the part of the bishops) likewise fought shy of becoming a distinct party outside Anglicanism. It is no surprise, therefore, that when the matter was discussed by the leaders at their 'Association.' Howel Harris was adamant and inflexible:

"In discoursing with the brethren I declared I differed with them in three things. (1) That I never looked on the Societies as Churches, but little branches of a Church. (2) The exhorters never as ministers to dispense ordinances, nor, many of them, even the Word, by way of preaching, but by way of exhorting. (3) On us never as a sect, but a people in the Church, called to reform till either we should be heard, or turned out; and that whoever is called to labour as a reformer must have strong love to bear much."⁽⁷⁾

His distinction between preaching (the activity usually associated with the word, exercised by ordained men) and exhorting (the term he used for a similar task performed by laymen), while useful as a diplomatic measure to avoid technical difficulties over his own early lay activity [he had written in 1736, "calling my work exhorting, not preaching, was a means of blinding the eyes of my opposers"⁽⁸⁾] had become so rigid in his mind as to pass from the realm of expediency to that of validity.

Furthermore, the recognition that discipline on the basis of Scripture truth was only possible in the context of a spiritual fellowship of the regenerate was not forthcoming while Harris looked on the episcopal system (or any other) with uncritical eyes. Neither he nor his contemporary Methodist clergymen had a doctrine of the Church developed solely along Scriptural lines. They accepted

without reservation the status quo of the Establishment. Their peculiarly Methodist organisation was conceived for spiritual ends, certainly, but on purely pragmatic considerations. Chapels such as Salem Pencoed, then, gave them a pulpit over which no bishop had any control whatsoever. It also provided them with a meeting house where they could exercise their own discipline—and David Jones regularly met the society for this purpose on a Saturday afternoon—a work which they saw to be necessary but impossible within the framework of Anglicanism.

In a reference to David Jones, William Williams of Pantycelyn speaks of him as a true and tender evangelist, one whose warm compassion moved the stiff-necked and indifferent alike. Another of his fellow-workers, Christopher Bassett (who had been curate to Romaine at Blackfriars) gave this testimony of him: "I consider his style of preaching as *peculiarly* evangelical. I have never seen one who appeared in the pulpit imbued to *such* a degree with the spirit of the gospel. His ministry seemed to me *singularly adapted* to conciliate enemies to the truth, to strengthen the weak, and to decide the wavering. He was *well* skilled in administering the 'Balm of Gilead' to the wounded conscience." A contemporary witness described the scene at Llangan church in this way: "The church was so crowded that to find a vacant seat was out of the question. . . . I see him now . . . in his gown, with his fine commanding countenance, and drops of perspiration, and sometimes the trickling tear, running down his face, commending most earnestly Jesus Christ to the chief of sinners, but telling them at the same time to go and sin no more. And with what reverence did he speak of the love and sufferings of Christ; and how sublime was his language! Oh, how dignified and noble was his countenance when bathed in tears, as was often the case with him in the pulpit."⁽⁹⁾

His preaching was both powerful and melting, having what could only be called the unction of the Holy Spirit in it, and as a result the effects were truly spiritual and lasting. One who experienced those powerful influences could not easily forget them:

"I well remember the precise spot on which I stood when such a thorough sense of my sinful, depraved, and lost state filled my soul, under his ministry, that I trembled in intense agony, lest the paving on which I stood should sink under the weight of my innumerable sins, and consign me to the bottomless pit, as unworthy of a place on earth. In this (terrified) state I looked wildly around, and happened to observe that a man of whose piety I had the best opinion, was standing on the same flag as

myself, which induced a hope in my despairing mind that I might thus be spared for his sake."⁽¹⁰⁾

Powerful influences of this kind continued unabated at Llangan for more than forty years, at times being intensified, so that it was said that during his ministry five revivals broke out at Llangan, the first in 1773 and the last in 1805. In 1790, for example, he could report: "There is a greater call for the gospel sound in this neighbourhood than I have known since I came to this part of the world. It is a blessed sowing time, and I verily believe there will be a glorious harvest of souls to the eternal glory of our dear Lord, when He appears to bring home His redeemed ones."⁽¹¹⁾

The year 1799 may well have been another of those seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, for he could write: "We had a shower of divine blessing within the last eight months. . . . God has discovered the wonders of His grace to multitudes of our poor fellow-creatures, particularly to young persons about fifteen years of age."⁽¹²⁾

Scenes similar to these had been witnessed at Llangeitho where Daniel Rowland ministered for over fifty years until his death in 1790. The crowds flocking in from all parts of the Principality to a communion Sunday at Llangeitho in Rowland's time would have been numbered in tens of thousands. What Llangeitho was to the Methodists of mid and North Wales, Llangan must have been for the South, especially Glamorganshire and Monmouthshire. There was no 'problem of communication' when the Spirit worked so mightily, and the eternal blessings received through the preaching of God's Word were publicity enough to attract men in such a way that no obstacle of distance or inclemency of weather could daunt their determination to attend the ministry of these men of God:

"The travellers increased all the way as we went until we arrived at Llangan, about eleven miles distant; and many coming from a greater distance overtook us on the road. Such was our desire for spiritual food, that we could not be prevented by any weather, however severe. I well remember that the roads were so slippery in the winter on account of the ice, that it was dangerous to go on horseback, and consequently we were frequently obliged to dismount and walk."⁽¹³⁾

That souls were satisfied under his ministry is no wonder since, according to William Williams, Christ the Bread of Life was so eminently set forth, "Christ the text, and Christ the sermon; Christ the end of the law, and Christ the object of faith."

A sermon in cold print can hardly do justice to the 'unction' of the preaching, but it does help to give an impression of the

emphases of the preacher. Something of the pathos of David Jones's preaching comes through in the sermon he delivered at the funeral of the countess of Huntingdon in 1791 on Genesis 50 : 24:

"You will say, we have lost a great mother in Israel; but the God of Israel lives. If He take away a Moses, He will give a Joshua; there is no loss at the hands of our God. . . . Indeed, were we to judge according to human wisdom, *that* was the greatest loss that ever happened under the sun, when the presence of *God in the flesh* upon earth was taken away. But was it so? He says, It is expedient for you that I go away. If so, all is for the best: for now God, *by His Spirit*, comes among His people. Let us always remember this truth, that God's Spirit will exalt Jesus Christ more in the Church than any instrument whatever; and this the blessed Spirit will do when priests and prophets are no more."⁽¹⁴⁾

Under the title 'Great Effects from Feeble Means,' he preached on Judges 7 : 2 before the London Missionary Society in 1796. Having in mind the great missionary task that lay ahead and the limited resources of the Society, he encouraged them to 'have faith in God':

"The Lord will take care of His own glory. God is sometimes ready to complain of too much help, but never of too little. . . . That ardour, and zeal, which at present seem to engage your hearts in the work, can hardly be sufficiently admired, yet it is a patient looking up to God, and waiting in the dust for His *blessing*, that must crown the work . . . you must have faith for the work. We ought not to be too much elevated by human probabilities; and, as Christians, we ought not to be dismayed at improbabilities. It is the work of faith to overcome all these as we go on. . . . There is never any danger in trusting God, with weak and improbable means. Here the danger lies, in the bias of the human heart to look more to great means than to the great God. . . . I must allow that at times the eye of faith hath its motes in the best of saints, and these intercept the light of the sun. . . . We read of a large mote in the eye of Elijah's faith—that wicked Jezebel, the fear of whom caused him to fly for his life. . . . Faith, when the eye is clear, will do wonders."⁽¹⁵⁾

Finally, extracts from two sermons which are preserved in manuscript, the one on 1 Peter 2 : 7 in English speaks of Christ's excellence, and the other, in Welsh, on Luke 14 : 22 deals with the gratuitous nature of the gospel offer. Here are the chief points of the former:

"Christ is precious: 1. In Himself, in the glory of His Person . . . in the glory of His qualification and endowments, and in the worth of His sufferings. 2. He is precious in the account of the Father. 3. In the esteem of angels. 4. In the esteem of the saints. . . . Let us try whether Christ be precious to us? 1. Are you willing to part with everything you have that you may enjoy Christ? 2. What desire have you of fellowship with Christ? He who esteems Christ precious indeed thinks he hath never enough of Christ. 3. Is everything of Christ precious to you? His holy life, promises, precepts, His death? 4. What opinion have you of those who follow Christ? Whatever hath reference to Christ let it be precious to us—precious faith, precious ordinances, precious blood, precious grace, precious glory."⁽¹⁶⁾

The latter sermon is an exposition of the parable of the great Supper:

"I. Where is there room? 1, There is yet room in God's mercy. 2. In Christ's merit for all who return to the Lord. 3. There is room by virtue of the power and efficacy of the Holy Spirit. 4. In the Covenant of grace, the gift of pardon and life through Christ to every one that repents and believes. 5. In the household of faith, that is, in God's Church for sinners to come and be saved. II. For whom is there room? For the chief of sinners and the most indifferent in the world—the poor, maimed, halt, blind, the afflicted. To those who have long opposed, neglected, and despised the invitation sent to them, if they but come now. Behold now is the accepted time. . . . There is room for those who have backslidden and have fallen shamefully . . . for the chief of sinners. There is yet room in the kingdom of grace and glory. But remember, there is room in the grave and in hell as well, and how many have descended to them while they put off their repentance and neglected their salvation. Be wise in time, and strive to enter the narrow gate, lest you should come at the last bitterly weeping after the door is closed."⁽¹⁷⁾

Both in manner and matter David Jones's preaching showed how indebted he was to the Puritans, and this was equally true of the other Welsh Methodists of his day. From Daniel Rowland's sermons, Howel Harris's reading matter, Williams Pantycelyn's hymns and poems, to Thomas Charles's *Scriptural Dictionary* and John Elias's contribution to the Calvinistic Methodist *Confession of Faith*, it is quite evident that their theology owed much to such men as Sibbes, Charnock, Owen, Goodwin and Manton. In this respect David Jones was a typical Welsh Methodist.

Apart from the two sermons noted above, David Jones also published a brief biography of Christopher Bassett on his death in 1784 and printed at Trevecca. Two years previously the Welsh Methodists had urged Jones and Danial Rowland's son, Nathaniel, to seek the printing of a 'small pocket Bible,' but nothing came of it. Nevertheless he was a supporter of the Bible Society, requesting in 1807 a supply of Welsh Testaments, and by October three hundred and seventy-five had been sent to him. He was also one of the London Missionary Society directors in 1797, 1799 and 1800.⁽¹⁸⁾ It was as a preacher of the Gospel, however, that he excelled, and the lasting monument of David Jones's ministry was to be found at Llangan.

It was axiomatic for Jones, as for the other Methodists, that preaching the Gospel could not be confined to one parish. So it was that he was "in journeyings oft" for his Master, facing not only the hazards of the weather, but also persecution, danger, and most threatening of all, the displeasure of his bishop. His travels took him from Monmouthshire to Anglesey, from Bristol to London. In the Metropolis he used often to supply the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel at Spa Fields for periods of several weeks, when many thousands would crowd to hear the Word of God. During these intervals away from Llangan his pulpit would be supplied by other Methodist clergymen. In addition to Llangan, Jones preached in nearby Coity, where a Methodist sympathiser, Thomas Davies, had obtained a living by the same means exactly as himself. In fact, David Jones and Thomas Davies supplied each other's pulpits in this way whenever occasion arose and in spite of the bishop's interference.⁽¹⁹⁾

From the time of his installation at Llangan to the year of his death the calls for his ministry were numerous and pressing, witness the following letters. "I have had a long journey in the North. I was out no less than six weeks. I met with many rough storms, but, blessed be our dear Lord and Master, I had some very bright and shining days indeed." That was in 1778; by 1800 he was itinerating for most of the summer months from May until November: "I hope to meet my brethren there [the Trecastle, Breconshire, Association], and to go from thence through Cardiganshire and Pembrokehire, and then back to this country till the end of June; and if I can, I will . . . pay you a short visit in Monmouthshire . . . early in June I shall . . . set out on my North Wales round, and go as far as Chester, Liverpool and Anglesea, before my return. And if I am able, I shall go to London for the month of October and November." There was still no sparing of his energies in 1804, even though

he was beyond 'retiring age'; "I cannot tell you how I am hurried from place to place . . . I am very seldom two days together at home"; and the pace was by no means retarded in 1810. When he had but a few months to live he wrote, "I am still hurried from place to place."⁽²⁰⁾

Although he had no financial difficulties, there were many trials in his home, his two sons particularly caused him much concern. That which grieved him more than all else, however, was the sight of sinners rejecting the Gospel of God's grace. The sense of sorrow and pain he experienced over such is evident in a letter written in his last year:

"In the latter end of last year, the Lord enabled me to travel many hundred miles, in endeavouring to exhibit my blessed Master's matchless treasures of love to the best advantage that I could. And although I told poor mortals that these vast treasures were all freely bestowed, yet after all my toil and labour, there were very few indeed that would stop and receive them. Many would come and offer some dunghill rags for pearls of more value than all the mines of India. But some poor, ruined, guilty creatures here and there in my round, would draw near and cry 'Oh the depth of infinite love! that I who have deserved nothing but Hell should be so freely and so fully enriched with such treasures.' . . . Had there been a penny to pay, such poor creatures added, we could have no hopes, for we are nothing but poverty itself. . . ."⁽²¹⁾

Even as Christ's righteousness was the central theme of his preaching, so it was the rock on which his hope was founded, and his supreme comfort in the face of death. Two days before he died he recorded in his diary, "Had a sweet promise this morning, that Jesus will be my righteousness."⁽²²⁾ With this note of lively hope his earthly life ended on August 12, 1810, almost exactly a year before the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists became a separated body by ordaining men for the first time into the ministry of the Gospel.

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I Know That My Redeemer Liveth

E. T. GURR

Little is known of Job or of the writing and history of the book which bears his name. Most Evangelical scholars are agreed that it could not have been written earlier than the time of Solomon. We do know, however, that, inspired by the Spirit of God, it was written by one of the greatest poets the world has ever known. It is a poem so rich in its thought, so wide in its sweep, that much in human experience and its mysteries has been found mirrored there. If you read it carefully you will discover that there is less allusion to Job's physical sufferings than is often supposed. Job is more concerned with the reaction of his friends, his family, and the mob, to his sufferings, than with the sufferings themselves. What seemed to bother him was the apparent ring of truth in their observations. What they were saying amounted to this—God had forsaken him, and his sufferings proved it. But, his problem passed when he came to see the greatness of God. The book does not set out to answer the perplexing difficulties of suffering, but to proclaim a God so great that no answer is needed, for it would transcend the finite mind if given. Now, here in the heart of this remarkable book is a Gospel text, so vibrant with New Testament doctrine that without apology we can take it and apply it to the Christian faith, a foreshadowing of which it most certainly was. We will work our way through it backwards.

(1) THE APPROACH TO CHRISTIANITY. Christianity is all about a living Redeemer.

(a) *Christianity is history not philosophy.* Christianity's roots, in so far as our human view of it is concerned, are firmly planted in something which happened in time. How much of the Old Testament is history. Indeed, both Testaments are full of historical reviews and repetitions, so much so that sometimes they seem unnecessary and even boring! Stephen's apology in Acts 7 is a classic example. But, these reviews and repetitions are there for a purpose. Among other things they serve to emphasise the importance of history to Christianity. Christianity is not a thought or vision or concept of man; it is something which happened. That which happened was God's self-revelation in history. Unless we grasp this we shall miss

much of what God is saying in His Word, and we shall often miss the point of what the preacher is saying. Someone has recently written, "When you come to think of it, the role of the preacher is unique in modern society. No one else tries to hold a monologue for some 20 (*sic* E.T.G.) minutes in a privileged position where there is no come-back from his hearers. It is not even, as any educationalist will agree, a good method of imparting information. Why then does the Church cling to this method of passing on its message in an age when radio, television, and most other types of mass communication have abandoned it? Why does the Church stick to monologue in an age where everyone else uses dialogue? Why indeed?" Well, the methods of the Church are not determined by society, nor by the spirit and wisdom and ideas of the age, but by God who determines and decrees them. It is by "the foolishness of preaching" that men are saved. The preacher is not in the pulpit to discuss or to chat or to put points of view from which the hearer may make his or her choice. He is a herald. He is there to declare that something has happened! On the occasion he is prepared to discuss, but not at the price of abandoning the pulpit. Christianity is both logical and reasonable, but this is not the right way to approach it. Because it is history and not philosophy, it is approached by acceptance! Hundreds of times in the Old Testament we read "God said." If we are seeking sincerely for truth, especially in view of the transforming influence the Bible has had, we must sit up and take notice of such a phenomenon and be willing to expose ourselves to it.

(b) *Christianity is a Person and not primarily an ethic.* Jesus drew attention to Himself rather than to His teaching, although His teaching was quite extraordinary and revolutionary and authoritative.

(c) *This Person is living and not dead!* Our Lord stooped and embraced a human nature. He covered the dazzling light of His unapproachable holiness with a veil of flesh. No artist can depict Him. Because He is two natures in one Person, the best artistic representation will be altogether unsatisfactory. His words were always authoritative and true. He never accommodated Himself to the thinking of His age. He often condemned it. There were things He didn't know, He said so! This was a part of His humiliation. He was, upon earth, dependent upon the Father for all His understanding and for His every utterance. "I have given them the words which Thou gavest Me." He stooped, and in stooping He tasted death. But, He robbed it of its sting and the grave of its victory. He stepped from the tomb! He is now enthroned at God's right hand, and all power is committed to Him. He is living now!

This is Easter! This is the genius of Christianity. Mohammed, the Buddha, Confucius and Karl Marx are all dead, but Jesus lives! Yes, as we approach Christianity let us remember that it is all about a living Redeemer!

(2) THE APPROPRIATION OF CHRISTIANITY. Continuing to work our way backwards through the text,

Christianity is a very personal thing. "MY Redeemer." Christianity has social implications, and some of us spend much of our time working at them and trying to apply them, but this is not the heart of the matter. There is a relationship which must be established first. I must be able to look upon into the Face of God and know that I belong to Him. This is made real to me through a personal encounter with the Christ of God. As He hung upon the Cross, the repentant thief cried, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom." Jesus replied, "Today shalt thou be with Me." "Thou with Me!" That is it. By the Grace of God and through the work of His Spirit I know my need of His dear Son. I begin to understand a little of what He did for me on the Cross and I cry to be remembered. Oh, what balm is Gilead it is when I hear Him whisper, "Thou with Me." Nothing between! MY Redeemer Redeemer? Yes, the basis of this personal encounter is redemption. The picture is that of a slave market. Because the Word of God has been graciously applied to my heart, I recognise that I am in bondage. I am in chains. I am not the master of my fate. I cannot determine my own destiny or shape my own future. Until I can say to Christ, "My Redeemer" I do not belong to Him at all. I belong to another. Satan is my master and I will share his doom and his fate. But, the cord which binds me tightest in my slavery is the cord of the law of God. It justly curses me. There on the Cross the Son of God paid the price of my redemption, and suffered all the curse of the law that I might be free. Blessed be His Name. My Redeemer! This is the appropriation of Christianity. Casting myself in all my need upon Him who is able to redeem me and set me free and bring me to God.

(3) THE ASSURANCE OF CHRISTIANITY. "I know." The New Testament is full of it.

(a) *Assurance comes as I rest on facts and not feelings.* Jesus said, John 6:37, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." If I have come to Him, knowing that apart from Him I have no hope of acceptance with God, knowing that He is able to save me, trusting in no other merit at all, then it is quite legitimate for me to claim the promise of this Scripture, and to be assured, whatever the past has been, and whatever my present feeling may be, that

He has not cast me out, but graciously received me.

(b) *Assurance comes by a recognition of the fruits of salvation.* Read the first Epistle of John. Several times we read, "Hereby we know that we know Him," or something very similar. Let us apply each one of these verses to our condition. We are called upon to test ourselves by the fruits of salvation, and accordingly to know that we belong to God, and to have sweet assurance.

(c) *Assurance sometimes comes by the direct operation of the Spirit of God.* The Spirit of God witnesses with my spirit that I am a child of His. This is joy unspeakable and full of glory. Oh to be able to exult with Job, to be able to glory in the Lord as He did, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

One thing I counsel thee, that thou forgettest not this name, Jesus, but think of it in thine heart, night and day, and as thy special and dear treasure. Love it more than thy life, and root it in thy mind. Love Jesus, for He made thee, and bought thee full dearly. Give thine heart to Him, for it is a debt to Him. Therefore set thy love on His name, Jesus, which is health. No evil thing can have dwelling in that heart where Jesus is truly kept in memory.

—RICHARD ROLLE OF HAMPOLE.

SERMON

WHEN SIN BEGAN

H. M. CARSON

*Preached in Westminster Chapel on
Sunday evening, 21st August, 1966.*

“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”

“And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

“But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

“And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

“For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”—GENESIS 3 : 1-6.

One of the problems facing many of our modern thinkers is the moral condition of this day and age in which we live. So many of the sociologists, and indeed the criminologists, discuss this matter and they fail to find an answer because they are not really probing and discovering man's real need. Why is it, for example, that in a country like this, where the standard of living is higher now than it has been for generations, where people generally have more money, where their environment, socially speaking, is so much pleasanter than it was, say, in the grim days of the Industrial Revolution; why is it that far from men being more contented and happy, they are if anything much more discontented? Why is it that we have a society which seems almost to be dissolving in crime and delinquency?

We have been told that if you improve man's environment you will make it possible for man to live the good life. We have been told that if you give man the knowledge which education brings, you will lift him up. We have been told that if you improve man's cultural situation, things will advance. And of course all these things have proved completely abortive. The advance in knowledge has

simply meant that our criminals today are a great deal more proficient than they were a generation ago. Organised crime is now a profession, with professional standards, and far from knowledge increasing man's ability to live the good life, it has proved a means of living at enmity with his fellows. Indeed, when you look beyond the narrower confines of our own society you find that advance in knowledge certainly does not bring with it moral growth. After all, it was a country which had advanced greatly as far as knowledge and education and scientific ability were concerned which produced the appalling concentration camps of Nazi Germany. We are living in a world where man's scientific ability has produced many things which make life a great deal easier for many people, but it has also produced the grim spectre of nuclear war, so that man with all his vaunted abilities and with his advance in knowledge, seems to be on the verge of a precipice with a possibility of destroying himself and all his fellows.

So when you turn and read what the psychologists have to say and listen to the philosophers' assessment of the situation, you find them strangely astray—strangely, that is, from *their* standpoint, but from the standpoint of the one who knows God's Word it is not strange at all. If a man tries with his own wisdom to assess this situation and to find an answer, he will inevitably flounder, because I believe the Bible has the only answer; it has the only explanation of the situation in which men find themselves today. That explanation is found in the Bible and it is found in the opening book of the Bible. This book has been dismissed as outdated, as something which belongs to a past from which we have now moved. But I believe that this book of Genesis, and particularly this chapter, has the only answer to explain the moral predicament of man in this twentieth century. The Bible speaks in realistic terms. It speaks of man as he really is; it speaks of man as a fallen creature; as a creature whose moral standards have declined; as a creature whose very nature has been tainted and corrupted; as one who has lost his way; a creature who is out of touch with God. As you read this chapter you can hear the comment of the great apostle of the New Testament, the apostle Paul, and he is saying, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned." You are listening to his commentary on this narrative in which God sets before us in His Word the way in which sin became an ugly reality, defacing not only man whom God had created in His image, but defacing the very creation in which God had set man.

Adam here in Genesis is presented to us as the representative

man, as a typical man. He is presented to us as the head of the human race so that in the thinking of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the thinking of the apostle Paul, humanity was involved in all that was happening in Eden. In Adam's fall it was not some merely individual occurrence, for Adam dragged down with him into misery all his posterity. Yet quite clearly it would be false to excuse men and picture them as innocents who are unfortunately involved in something that happened centuries ago because, let us face it quite plainly and honestly, every one of us without exception has endorsed again and again the action of Adam. We ourselves have taken up precisely the same attitude. We ourselves, in our thinking, in our speaking, in our acting, are doing precisely the kind of thing that is recorded in this chapter.

We talk about sin—well, what do we mean? We are not thinking about some restricted catalogue of particular things which are offensive. We are speaking of sin rather in terms of a whole attitude which shows itself of course in particular words, in particular actions; but sin in the Bible is thought of primarily in terms of a disruption of the relationship which should exist between man and God. That relationship is pictured in the opening chapters of Genesis. The first two chapters speak of God's work in creation. They speak of the God who brings the universe into being and works with such consummate divine skill that He can look at everything that He has made and pronounce that it is very good. Those chapters speak of man as being at the very apex of God's creative work. They speak of man as the one about whose creation God pondered. God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." So Adam and Eve appear as those who are in the image of the invisible God and in their thinking capacity, in their knowledge of right and wrong, in their ability to have communion with God, they reflect the One from whom they come, the One in whose likeness they have been made.

Now the relationship of Creator to creature should obviously beget certain consequences. The Creator as He is presented to us in the opening chapters of Genesis is the One who takes a delight in His creation. He is the God who is concerned with the wellbeing of the men whom He has made. He puts them in a favourable situation. He gives them every opportunity for fulness of life. His whole concern is that their life might be rich and full and developed. Now clearly that should call for a certain response from the creature. If my Creator has made me, if He has given me very life, if He has provided for my welfare, if He is concerned to load me with benefits—well, surely the only adequate response is one of praise and

thanksgiving. I should be ready to acknowledge the greatness and the goodness of the God who is my Creator and I should be ready to praise Him and thank Him constantly for all the tokens of His goodness to me. Every day is one new chapter which God writes in each of our lives and in each chapter He pens His faithfulness. The response of the creature should then be one of praise, thanksgiving and joyful obedience. To realise the significance of this relationship between the bountiful Creator and the creature who is dependent upon his God, is to speak of the glad response which should come from the creature, in which, not in some reluctant fashion but gladly and willingly, he obeys his Creator's will and word.

But when you turn to what the Bible has to say about sin, you find something completely different. Sin is diametrically opposed to this whole idea of the creature submitting himself to his Creator. It is poles apart from this attitude of thanksgiving. It is far removed from this whole position in which a man gives honour and glory to the God who has made him. Sin is essentially a disruption of the relationship as God intends it should be. Instead of a harmonious relationship between the creature and his Creator, there is discord, and the creature seeks to assert himself and to live for himself and to dethrone the Almighty. And here in this story, this very old story, we are seeing not only a record of how it happened, how this appalling moral catastrophe occurred, but we are also seeing how it constantly recurs in lives today. So this evening we are not merely surveying a particular point in Biblical history, we are seeing something that is reflected in the life of every one in this church tonight.

In the first part of the chapter there are two main participants: there is the serpent and there is Eve. Of course, the voice that comes to Eve with its specious suggestions is no mere natural phenomenon. This is the voice ultimately of the one who is described in the New Testament as "that old serpent the devil." I know that in this sophisticated twentieth century of ours, this whole idea is dismissed as hopelessly outmoded; so that many even within the churches no longer believe in a personal devil. I believe such a rejection of Satan is an utter failure to do justice to Scripture. It is also an utter failure to come to terms with the realities of experience. As far as the Bible is concerned there is indeed such a person as the devil, this malignant evil figure who is constantly in the background. In Genesis 3 we are reading about man's fall into sin and disobedience, but in the background, indeed at this point coming into the foreground, there is the spirit of evil. Satan is himself a rebel against God's authority; he has himself tried to storm the courts of heaven and to win a position which belongs to God alone; he has already

tasted defeat from the Most High; for him there is reserved the lake of fire which burns day and night for ever and ever. Yet here in this chapter, and indeed constantly down the years, he is endeavouring by all his powers to involve man in the ruin which is his own condition.

So we look at him as he comes to Eve and as he employs the method which he has used so successfully down the centuries. It is a very subtle method. It is the method of gradually edging a person towards unbelief and then imperceptibly bringing them to the point where they move beyond unbelief to open disobedience and ultimately to open defiance of God. You notice how he approaches her. He comes first of all with what you might call innuendo—you know what this is—when someone conveys something without clearly stating it. You can do it with a glance; you can do it with the tone of voice; you can do it by exaggerating slightly, or by altering slightly what someone else has said. You create an impression; you do not commit yourself explicitly to a statement but you just leave an impression in the other person's mind. Well now, this is precisely the way in which he is working here. God has said, "Of all the trees of the garden you may freely eat, they are there for you to enjoy, but of this one tree you may not eat." But when the devil comes he adjusts what God has said. At first he seems to accept the fact that God has spoken but he has really altered the wording somewhat. He asks, "Did God say you were not to eat of *any* trees of the garden?" Well, God had not said that. On the contrary, God had said they might eat of *all* the trees of the garden with this one exception. But the devil is adjusting it and he is leaving an impression in Eve's mind. Possibly she has not fully registered yet what he is doing, but he is leaving this underlying impression that God is trying to restrict her, He is trying to cramp her, He is trying to deprive her of something. And of course this is how he works. He endeavours to leave in the mind this general faint impression, which later he builds upon, that somehow our Creator desires to restrict and deprive and impoverish us.

I believe you see this happening in the development of a child's mind. The devil does not wait until people grow up before he begins his work; he is ready at the very dawn of consciousness, and how often he produces in the mind of a child the idea of God as someone repellent; a God who is always producing prohibitions and restrictions. The child who is alleged to have described God as "a person who is always waiting to see you enjoy yourself and then say, No"—well, that is a statement of the typical caricature which the devil produces. But he insinuates it into the mind of a child, so that at our

earliest stage of development and growth we have got this thought in the back of our consciousness (sometimes it is down in the sub-conscious) that God is always prohibiting and restricting and narrowing life down, and when the devil wins this point he is on the high road to ultimate success from his standpoint. He continues to do it as you can see from the reaction amongst young people. What is the kind of impression he implants in their minds? Why, it is that the gospel is something very narrow and cramping, something that is going to take the delight and the joy out of life, and something that is going to restrict them in so many ways. They think of Christianity as something drab and dull. Of course we say that this is a caricature; we say they have missed the point completely for they have not seen the great blessings which God has for His people. But you see this is how the devil works. All the time he is creating a background image of God as the One who restricts, the One who prohibits, the One who deprives, the One who tries to narrow and confine and cramp us. Well, this was his approach here.

You notice also the way he comes to Eve. He represents himself as the friend, the benevolent one, the one who is concerned with their welfare. And all the time by implication he is presenting God as the very opposite; as the One who is jealous for His own rights and as the One who will restrict men. Well, that is how the devil still comes. He is the one who is interested in men, who wants to see them enjoy themselves, who wants them to find fulness of life which he holds before them. No wonder the New Testament speaks of him as disguising himself as "an angel of light." The devil does not come in some crude fashion, but works with great subtlety, with practised skill, with diabolical cunning. He presents sin in a very attractive fashion. He makes sin seem not only palatable but he makes it seem thoroughly attractive. He does that in various ways. He has his own vocabulary that he uses. It depends on the particular person with whom he is dealing and in what particular constituency he is moving. But he always has the vocabulary appropriate for the situation. For one he uses such terms as "kicks" and "thrills" and "glamour" and so on, and for someone else he talks about "self-expression"; in fact he even abuses the precious word "freedom" and he speaks to men of being free, free to express themselves, not being cramped by God but living a fully orb'd and fully developed life. So he makes it all seem so attractive and so pleasant.

Yes, and he uses a superficial appeal in order to try and persuade men that sin is really attractive, and that living for yourself is the way to fulness of life. He does it by emphasising the importance as he sees

it (and alas as we come to see it) of physical satisfaction. Look at the way in which he uses modern advertising. Look at the hoardings which deface so many of our tube stations. Look at so much that is presented to you today. It is all in terms of what will gratify you physically, and the devil uses this whole approach to make sin seem very attractive. So too he represents the esteem and the acclaim of others as being the things to be desired, so that very many people are in bondage to current fashion, to current modes of thought, to the way in which other people behave and live. They are constantly trying to keep up with others, as the devil insists that to really enjoy life you should be in with the crowd.

But of course at the same time he is obscuring a great deal else. He magnifies the attraction of sin by minimising the consequences of sin. When he leads many a young person today, as he is leading thousands in this city, into immorality, he speaks about the physical satisfaction of the moment, and he does not speak to them about the diseased bodies which will follow. When he launches someone on the first steps of drug addiction, he speaks to them about the kick and the thrill; he does not speak to them about the miserable condition when they will find themselves slaves to an abominable passion that they cannot control. He does not speak about the physical and moral wreck which will be left at the end of the trail. When he finds young people taken up with pleasures, with the apparently bright things of life, he does not speak to them about the bitter disillusionment that is going to follow. He does not speak to them about the bitter and empty and lonely old age which some of them are going to encounter when their palates have become jaded and when the things that once appealed to them now pall upon their appetite. No, of course he obscures all that. He simply magnifies and emphasises the attractions of the moment and, poor fools that they are, dupes of the devil, they listen to him; they plunge into this and that pleasure, and shut their minds to what lies ahead.

Yes, and above all, he obscures the darkness of an eternal night which awaits those who live for themselves and not to God's glory. "What shall it profit a man," says Christ, "if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul." But of course that is the truth that the devil keeps in the background. The important thing is *now*, he says; to live for the present, to enjoy the moment. He obscures the fact that there is a day of reckoning, that every one of us shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ. He obscures this sombre truth to which the Lord Jesus Christ referred when He spoke of that "outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." Hell has no place in the devil's preaching and that is why it is fairly

clear that the devil is enthroned in many a pulpit in this country today, because hell has no place there either. No wonder the people can drift complacently through life when there is no realisation of coming judgment.

Then again he obscures from them the wonder of heaven. If a man's eyes were truly opened to see the glory which awaits the people of God, why, he would find the things that the devil produces for his delights sheer baubles, trivialities, things to be dismissed as of nothing worth. When a man has seen Christ in all His glory and when a man has the prospect of one day being with Christ to all eternity; when a man has had his eyes opened to see through the veil into heaven itself—well, he discovers what a fool he has been to have listened to the devil and to have looked at the devil's attractions as they have been presented to him. But of course when the devil is dealing with men he keeps that in the background. He is concerned with the immediate present and he gets men to be taken up with the present and with the pleasures of the moment. He seeks to deaden and to dull their minds concerning that which lies ahead.

There is a devilish cleverness about all this, isn't there? You notice how indirectly he comes; how devious and tortuous his approach is. When he speaks to Eve he seems to present a goal which is thoroughly to be desired. What does he say to her? He says, "God doth know that in the day that you eat thereof you shall be as gods knowing good and evil." Well now, surely this was something which she should desire. Here she is; God has made her; and God has made her with a knowledge of right and wrong, and now the devil presents this as the goal—if you do this, why, you will have this knowledge of good and evil. That is how he comes. To one man of course his approach is in terms of leading a man into gross sin, into the sins of the flesh, but with another, and especially with the typical churchgoer, he adopts a very different approach. He presents as the goal that which at first superficially seems to commend itself; a knowledge of good and evil, a moral standard, righteousness. And there are many men and women who have not been snared by the devil in terms of lust and adultery and theft, but they have been snared by self-righteousness and religious formalism. The devil is not at all concerned how he snares men. It matters not whether a man goes to hell as an adulterer or as a self-righteous hypocrite, as long as he succeeds in gaining a soul that is all that matters. And I say, very often he uses moral and religious weapons to accomplish his end.

"You shall be as gods," he says, "why, you will know good and evil; you will have a standard by which to live, a moral standard."

But she already had the standard. She already knew. God had already spoken to her. She did not need something to be given to her by the tempter. In actual fact, what he was doing was just this—he was presenting to her a moral standard which was not God's standard. He was trying to entice her towards the point where she would be attempting to live according to a pattern which God had not laid down. Has she any successors today? Yes, she has them on every hand. They are men and women who are trying very hard to live by a standard of their own creating; men and women who are very earnest, indeed they may be very religious, but they are really denying God's way and attempting to assert their own way. The devil traps them in this very cunning and subtle fashion, because they feel they are going in the right direction. Are they not upright, respectable, good living? Are they not indeed religious? And all the time what is happening is that this substitute standard is being presented to them, and being accepted by them, and the standard which is God's truth, the standard which is God's righteousness, is being rejected. The result is that when the devil succeeds in getting a man to substitute his own standard for God's standard, he has him on a downward path in which he begins to drift further and further away from God.

Take for example the condition of the Pharisees in the days of the Lord Jesus' earthly ministry. Now these were men who were concerned about the law of God. They wanted to be religious men, they wanted to serve God, but they wanted to serve Him in their way. They were not prepared to submit themselves to God's truth. They were setting up their own standard. They had listened you see to this kind of approach that we find in Genesis 3. And the result was not simply that they did not conform to God's standard but their lives deteriorated, because there is no hypocrite worse than a religious hypocrite. So here they were with their prayers and their Scripture reading and their attendance at worship, and alongside that there was covetousness, exploiting of others, lack of concern for others' rights and welfare and all the ugly fruits of a life which is lived out of touch with God. That is why surely you can find men and women who can sit in a church pew and come to church Sunday after Sunday but who can be more bitterly opposed to the preaching of the gospel than many a pagan outside. Why? It is because this all conflicts with their ideas. They have their standard, they have their ideas of the way to heaven, and woe betide anyone who suggests that their way is a false way; that it is a way that ends ultimately in disaster. Their very indignation at the preaching of the gospel, their irritation at the mention of judgment,

their rejection of this whole way of salvation, is simply an indication that they have given way to this temptation, and the standard which they have accepted and which they are trying to reach, is a standard which by its very nature rejects God's way.

Well, let us look at Eve as she gives way to the temptation of the devil. She was very much aware of what she was doing. You can see it in her very words. She speaks quite clearly about what God has done and what God has said. She acknowledges God's goodness; "Of all the trees of the garden we may eat; God has provided liberally for us and there is no restriction." She was quite clear about that one prohibition which God had made, that test of obedience which He had laid down. "He says we may not eat of that"; and indeed she went even further—she said, "We may not even touch it." It had certainly imprinted itself upon her mind what God had clearly laid down. So when Eve sinned, it was not sinning through ignorance but it was sinning in face of a clear understanding of the truth. Sin is always that. That is what the apostle Paul is talking about when he writes the epistle to the Romans. He considers men generally and maintains that if they but open their eyes and look around them at creation, they cannot but see in the visible creation the eternal power and godhead of the Creator. If men look within; if they look at the fact of their conscience, this voice within which speaks of right and wrong, this voice which brings with it a sense of guilt, this voice which brings, too, a sense of shame—if they look there, they will know very well what God has said to them. And if they are like those who are gathered in this church this evening, those who have a knowledge of the Word of God, that law is written even more clearly upon *their* hearts, even more clearly upon *their* conscience, so that when men sin they are without excuse. Not one of us will stand in the day of judgment and be able to claim that he did not know, because his very constitution, his very conscience, is God's constant witness to him.

Well then, if she had this knowledge, if she was so clear about the situation and about God's word, how did she go wrong? It was precisely in the same way that crowds have gone wrong down the centuries. In the first place she dallied with the temptation, she was prepared to listen. The moment the tempter reflected upon God, she ought to have rejected him out of hand. But she did not. She was prepared to continue the conversation; she was prepared to discuss the matter; she was prepared to listen to his further suggestions. And of course isn't that how we go wrong? The thought is presented—an impure thought, a lustful thought, a covetous thought, a bitter thought. It is just there as a germ as it were and we ought

at once to reject it. But what do we do? We leave it there, and then we return to it, and gradually the thing develops, and sometimes it develops in a very ugly fashion and produces disastrous consequences. Eve found that you cannot play with fire without being burnt. You cannot walk in the mud without being bespattered. You cannot trifle with sin without finding yourself inevitably defiled.

Why did she go wrong? Ultimately it was because she doubted God's word. I know there were different factors in her failure. There was the pride which is quite clearly here. There was the desire to reach a position of eminence, the desire to be as God; the desire to achieve this promised independence. But basically what went wrong was that she did not really believe what God had said. But you say, she had already claimed to have listened to what God has said. But in fact in her heart she did not believe it. If she had really believed God's word, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"; well, the last thing she would have contemplated would have been disobeying such a word. Had she realised in her heart what was involved in disobedience to such a God, how could she have given way? I say, quite clearly she did not believe. And the ultimate cause of sin and the ultimate reason for moral and spiritual failure is at this point. Men simply do not believe the word of God. They do not accept His word. They are constantly trying to adjust it. When God speaks about the ugliness of sin, they try to pare off the rough corners of the statement. When God speaks about judgment to come, they try and ease the message. When God says there is only one way of salvation, again they try to adjust it to their own thinking. And I say that basically a man goes astray and a man is eternally lost when he disbelieves the word. That is why there are such solemn warnings in the New Testament to those who have been given the knowledge of the gospel: "To whom much is given, of them shall much be required." Solemn warnings are given to those who know the gospel, who have heard of Christ and yet turn aside.

She disobeyed—look how it is described. "When she saw that the tree was good for food and that it was pleasant to the eyes and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof." She was drawn towards this disobedience by her whole nature. There was physical gratification in this. It was something that would be good for food. Her appreciation of beauty also drew her in this direction—it was pleasant to the eyes. And the desire for intellectual satisfaction was there as well; it was a tree to be desired to make one wise. The ghastly tragedy about it all was that all these things, this physical appetite, this desire for what is beautiful, this

desire for intellectual satisfaction, were all implanted in her by God. And God in His grace satisfies those very appetites and desires; but where she was going so disastrously wrong was that she was seeking to satisfy them in the wrong way. These physical appetites and instincts are God's gifts to His creatures and He delights to see us having them satisfied in His way. This reaction to that which is beautiful is again something which God has planted within us. The enjoyment of beauty in nature, the appreciation of good music, the response to painting in which we can revel—all this is from God and it is intended to be a means whereby we are stimulated to praise our Creator. The desire for intellectual satisfaction again is something which God has given. We see it in our very early days when a child's constant questioning "why?" shows his seeking mind. Man's tragedy is just this—in his disobedience he tries to satisfy God-given desires in the wrong way. The appetites which God has given, instead of being satisfied as God has destined, man attempts to satisfy them in a wrong way. So you get gluttony, lust, adultery, and all these ugly things, as men endeavour to satisfy themselves physically in a way that God has forbidden. Again the aesthetic, the desire for the beautiful, it can become an idol, so that a man can worship nature, he can worship music and he can substitute for his Creator that which his Creator has provided for him. And a man indeed can worship reason, worship the accomplishments of his own mind, but all the time he is doing precisely what Eve did—disobeying and rebelling against God.

Yes, it is a sombre picture, but it is a realistic picture. It gives the explanation of what man is and it also shows what man desperately needs. Here is creation in a state of confusion and discord. Here is a situation which demands nothing less than that of which the apostle Paul spoke when he said, "If any man is in Christ he is a new creation." The old has been defaced, corrupted and tainted; what is needed is something new. Last Sunday I was on holiday and I was driving past Corfe Castle in Dorset—a glorious ruin. It recalls its greatness, when it was one of Edward I's fortresses to keep down a turbulent kingdom, but now it is just a ruin on a Dorset hill. But the very ruin and the outline recall its former glory and greatness. The Bible sees man, as he is today, as a glorious ruin. Yes, there are traces still of his former greatness, of what man was when he came fresh minted from the hand of God, but alas it is now a ruin, a moral and spiritual ruin. Man pathetically tries to patch up the ruin; adjusting here, reforming there, and modifying his living at that other point, but it remains a ruin. It remains beyond repair until there comes this transforming power of the

Spirit of God, until the Lord Jesus Christ comes seeking and saving, and the man who is morally and spiritually ruined becomes nothing less than a new creation.

When God looked at His handiwork, He said, "Very good," and when God looks at the man whom He remakes, again that is His verdict. If there is anyone in this church tonight and you have felt that this story in Genesis speaks to your situation; if you recognise here, not simply what happened to one person at the dawn of history, but what has happened in your own life; I want to leave you, not with a message of hopelessness, that life is a ruin when man plunges into disobedience, but I want to leave you rather tonight with a message of hope. I want to point you to the second Adam, the One who came to repair our fallen humanity, to find us in our sin and in our need; condescending to us that He might lift us up, wash us from our sin, cleanse us, make us righteous, present us to God, and one day take us to be with Himself for ever. May God grant that tonight our eyes may be open to see, not humanity in its ruined condition, but Jesus Christ the new Man and to see what He and He alone can do when He takes a man, a moral disaster, a spiritual failure, and makes him anew. And to His Name, to this great Saviour, we shall give praise.

The Lord not only places Himself between us and our sins, but also between us and our circumstances. By doing the former He gives us peace of conscience; by doing the latter He gives us peace of heart.—C. H. MACKINTOSH.

Abiding is that continuous act whereby we lay aside all that which we might derive from ourselves to draw all from Christ by faith.
—GODET.

Doctrinal Definitions

THE PERSON OF CHRIST

HIS REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTER

PAUL TUCKER

There are two Adams mentioned in Holy Scripture. They are brought together in 1 Cor. 15 : 45. In the sight of God there are just two representative men. There is the first Adam and there is the Last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ. In a sense, we cannot fully appreciate our Gospel, we cannot fully understand what happens to us when we are converted, unless we are acquainted with the doctrine of the two Adams. The whole system of redemption is identified with and linked with the first Adam as a literal human being, and the Last Adam who is our Lord from Heaven. In Rom. 5 : 14, "Who is the figure of Him who was to come." The word figure there is "typos," the word from which we get our word "type." What the Apostle Paul tells us here is this, that the first Adam was a type of the Last Adam.

I. POINTS OF PARALLEL BETWEEN THE TWO ADAMS.

1. *Each of them arose in circumstances other than those relating to the ordinary course of nature.* We know that the first Adam was not born into this world to human parentage, but that he was the progenitor of the human race. He was created and brought into this world in a unique way and his creation was intimately associated with the ministry of the Holy Spirit, because when we read that God breathed into man the breath of life, God's breath is just another name for His Spirit. It is true that our Lord came via natural birth, but we know also that His entrance into the human family was unique. We know that the Holy Spirit was uniquely associated in His conception (Luke 1 : 35). Adam is called the son of God and the Lord Jesus Christ is called the Son of God. And they have this in common, that the Holy Spirit in a unique way was associated in their human origin.

2. *The next similarity is a moral similarity, because it is that both these Adams were made in the image of God.* Gen. 1 : 26, 27. Adam was not physically like God, because God is Spirit, but he was made in the image of God in that he had spiritual qualities that related him with the Creator. He had a capacity

for fellowship with God. He had a spirit that could commune with God. He had holy aspirations and desires after God, and in this way he was stamped with the divine image. That image was marred by sin, but before man fell into sin, he was the image of his Creator's glory. So with the Last Adam, the Lord Jesus, He is the image of the invisible God. That image that was defaced through the fall has been revealed in the Last Adam and is imparted through the New Birth to men and women who are lost by reason of their sin.

3. *In the third place there was a racial similarity. Both of these Adams were uniquely related to the human race.* They were both the divinely appointed heads and representatives of a race of men. We all have one thing in common: we all are initially related to Adam. See Acts 17 : 26. I believe this, that the human race has sprung originally and initially from this first Adam. He was the divinely constituted federal head of the entire race of humanity. We know from the teaching of Scripture that Adam is the father of us all after the flesh. But you see, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Last Adam, is also the Head of a race of men. He is the Source and Progenitor of a race of new men, a race of redeemed men, a race of regenerated men. As God looks down from heaven He sees unconverted, natural men, who are in the first Adam, and He sees redeemed and regenerated men, who have been taken out of the first Adam, and have been grafted into the Last Adam and who are in Christ. It is a tremendous thing to be "in Christ." That is the most outstanding phrase the Apostle Paul uses in the New Testament. "For if any man be in Christ there is a new creation." Something remarkable has taken place. He has been brought out of Adam. He has been recreated in Christ Jesus. To be in Adam means that I am a partaker of Adam's guilt, of Adam's condemnation, of Adam's doom, of Adam's destiny. But to be in Christ means that I am to be a partaker of Christ's grace, of Christ's nature, of Christ's glory and of Christ's destiny.

4. *Another similarity is that of a regal nature. Each Adam is associated with kingship and with dominion.* See Gen. 1 : 28. Then again in chapter 2 : 19. Adam exercised the prerogative of a king. He was king over creation. He was answerable to no one except God. Man was made to reign, man was made to have authority, because he is made in the likeness and image of God, who is the eternal King. One writer has suggested that the ruthless lust for power among men in the world today is perhaps a distorted relic in man's nature of God's original endowment. The Last Adam, too, is to have dominion, and it is to be both temporal and eternal. See Psalm 2 : 8. "For He must reign until He hath put all enemies under

His feet," and the great wonder of the Last Adam is this, that not only is He going to reign but He will so restore redeemed man to His own likeness and image, that man will also share with Him in His reign (see 1 Cor. 6 : 2, 3). And do we not read in the Revelation of the saints living and reigning with Him a thousand years?

5. *The first Adam is the type of Him that was to come in a mystical sense.* Although man was given this dominion over all creatures, yet there was some deficiency, man himself had no helpmeet. And God gave to him from his side, a wife, and so there was conjugal union. "They shall be one flesh." Gen. 2 : 24. The Apostle Paul lifts all that higher. He speaks of the Last Adam to whom was given a bride. Eph. 5 : 25-32.

II. POINTS OF CONTRAST BETWEEN THE TWO ADAMS.

1. *The Last Adam had a sublimer connection with God than did the first Adam.* 1 Cor. 15 : 47. You see, the first Adam was entirely human. The first Adam was entirely earthy. He had no actual connection in the sense of belonging to heaven, for he was created on earth. But the Last Adam had a sublimer connection with heaven than the first Adam. We read of "the Lord from heaven." The Apostle Paul is here emphasising the supernatural origin of the Last Adam. He can mean no other than that His humanity was produced by a divine operation. The Lord from heaven, the Second Person of the blessed Holy Trinity, was, through the Virgin Birth, in the womb of Mary, joined to the human Jesus and we have the God-Man. See John 8 : 23. In John 6, our Lord speaks of Himself as the Bread of Life, and seven times over, emphasises that He came down from heaven (vv. 33, 38, 41, 42, 50, 51 and 58).

2. *The first Adam, by his disobedience, brought an entail of woe upon all mankind. The Last Adam, by His obedience, brought immeasurable blessing to redeemed men.* See Rom. 5 : 19. Because humanity was in Adam when Adam fell into sin, then the whole human race was identified with him in that calamity. Adam begat a son in his own likeness and in his own image. Adam was made in the image of God, but then when he fell into sin he had a son and his son partook of his fallen nature. This entail of woe, this depravity, this sin in our nature has been transmitted from our first parents right through the human race and all are implicated. All die because all are sinners, and all are sinners because of our father's disobedience. In Rom. 5, you will find that there are three words that stand out, "Sin," "Condemnation," "Death." That is what Adam has done for the race. The Last Adam has come to rectify and counteract all that the first Adam did by his disobedience. The Last Adam has come to obey, so that we read that by His obedience

many were made righteous. The words that are used in this chapter, of the Lord Jesus, are these: that He brings grace, that He offers a gift, that He procures righteousness, that He bestows everlasting life. We can stand in Him and in His perfection. We can be accepted before the Father.

3. *The first Adam was made a living soul and the Last Adam was made a quickening spirit.* 1 Cor. 15 : 45. The first Adam was the prototype of natural humanity. He was able by natural generation to give to his posterity human nature and a rational understanding. He was a living soul and all men have sprung from him. The first Adam can give physical life. The Last Adam can do something far more wonderful than that. The Last Adam was made a life-giving spirit. The Lord Jesus had vested in Him all the prerogatives of the Father and He can give life in the sense that no one else can give life. See John 5 : 21, 24. The Lord Jesus, the Last Adam, can quicken whom He will, He can impart spiritual life, He can give a new birth, He can give regeneration. He can also impart the Holy Spirit in power. See John 20 : 21. He can give the power of the Holy Spirit to His servants for work that He will have them do. There is one other way in which He is a life-imparting Spirit and that is brought out in 1 Cor. 15 : 45, 48, 51, 52. The guarantee that we shall have a resurrection body is this: He already has a resurrection body. He is the first fruits from them that are asleep, and when He comes for His own, He, by the generation of His incorruptible body, will bring from the dust the bodies of those that sleep in Jesus. And the glorified spirit and the ransomed body will be joined together and there will be that amazing transformation to the very likeness, morally, of the Lord Jesus Christ. He can do what the first Adam cannot do because He is the life-imparting Spirit. No wonder Isaac Watts has said:

“Where He displays His healing power,
Death and the curse are known no more;
In Him the tribes of Adam boast
More blessings than their father lost.”

BOOK REVIEWS

"WHAT THE SCRIPTURES TEACH," by E. F. Kevan. 79 pages. Published by the Evangelical Press, costing 3/6d.

Dr. E. F. Kevan, the late Principal of the London Bible College, gives us a valuable short survey of some important Christian doctrines in his book "What the Scriptures Teach." Selecting the following subjects, God, Sin, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Atonement, Redemption, Salvation, the Holy Spirit, Christian Behaviour, he sets out clearly the teaching of Scripture on each of them.

In the introduction, however, Dr. Kevan points out that this series of studies in great Bible doctrines is only to assist others to study the Bible for themselves. He says, "Merely to read the chapters is to miss their purpose; they are intended for your thoughtful examination with the Scriptures." Here is the great value of the book. It could be given to a young Christian to help him study the Bible and understand some of the great Christian doctrines. Also it could be used for teaching purposes and the thirty questions on each chapter makes it an ideal book for discussion groups.

There will always be a need for simple, attractive and popular books on evangelical doctrine. Dr E. F. Kevan has given us one.

D. ARMSTRONG.

AROUND THE WICKET GATE, or A friendly talk with seekers concerning faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. C. H. Spurgeon. Sovereign Grace Union, 1966. 66 pp. 3/6d.

This slender work belongs to the latter part of the ministry of C. H. Spurgeon. It first appeared during 1889 and in the "Notices of Books" which formed a monthly feature of Spurgeon's magazine, the *Sword and Trowel*, the author himself summed up its purpose in the following words:

"It came into the author's heart to write a shilling book to help souls over the threshold, that they might really enter by the gate at the head of the way. To win eyes that look for pictures, a number of woodcuts have been interwoven with the simple, homely, earnest talk. In this way, the author, while away from his pulpit, hopes to keep on preaching. He begs his friends to scatter this little book in all directions."

The reprint corresponds exactly with the original edition except that the woodcuts (which are after the style of those found in the famous "John Ploughman's talks") are omitted, for the sufficient

reason that illustrations soon become terribly old-fashioned and, if reproduced, create the impression (except for folk of antiquarian interests) that the subject matter of a volume is likewise completely out-moded.

The content of the new edition is well adapted to the needs of a type of person who re-appears in every generation. He may be the product of a ministry of the Gospel which begets in its hearers a deeply-exercised state of mind and soul and a salutary tenderness of conscience, and which draws them to the threshold of the life which is eternal, but fails to bring about their translation from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of God's dear Son. At worst, such souls, if saved at the last, may spend the greater part of their earthly lives as seekers when, by right, they should early be delivered from the bondage of sin and unbelief and brought into such a measure of the "glorious liberty of the children of God" as the Spirit of God is pleased oftentimes to work in human hearts this side of glory.

Spurgeon is skilled in his approach to seeking souls, and especially in the art of illustrating divine principles of purpose and action by analogies drawn from everyday life. The work abounds with such; every chapter provides illustrations, all calculated to make the halted seeker realise his own folly in spending untold days, if not years, in the chill winds outside the gate of life when (as Scripture and sanity view the matter) he should be walking in the cheery sunshine of the Sun of Righteousness enjoyed by those whose knocking has brought the porter, Good Will, to the gate.

Spurgeon's own title of "Around the Wicket Gate" suggests strongly that he has much in common, both in nature and in grace, with John Bunyan. Indeed he has, The two were alike men of genius, gifted by God with minds amazingly alert and observant; alike, too, in respect of the facile use of their native tongue. Each of them both spoke and wrote in the idiom of his day. In the one case ignorant of the niceties of the penman's art, in the other spurning the pedantries and affectation of the mere "bookful block-head," they were, under God, the means of bringing multitudes of their contemporaries to the touchstone of truth, and still "their works do follow them." Thanks be to God, there are yet ears and eyes attent to that which fell from their lips and pens, "jewels . . . that on the stretch'd forefinger of all Time, sparkle for ever."

The present edition is tastefully produced, with a pleasing front cover. It would have been well if Roman numerals had been eliminated from textual references. Punctuation needs a little amendment here and there. There are misprints on pages 36 and 41.

S. M. HOUGHTON.

INSTRUCTION IN CHRISTIANITY. A Summary of Calvin's Institutes, by J. P. Wiles. Sovereign Grace Union. 196 pp. Cloth 18/6d., Paper 12/6d.

How many Christians who rejoice to call themselves Calvinists have ever read Calvin's "Institutes"? If you are one, and have used as your excuse either the length of the work or the stiffness of the English translations, here is the book for you! It is subtitled "An abbreviated edition of 'The Institutes of the Christian Religion' translated from the Latin into simple modern English," and this is a true description. The first three Books of the Institutes are abridged in a masterly way, and presented in smooth, readable English. Although the work was first published in 1920, it retains its freshness and is a delight to read.

To attempt to extol the merits of the Institutes is to try to hold a candle to the sun, and the best advice one can give is that quoted from Augustine by Dr. J. I. Packer in his Introduction: "Take and read."

R. E. DAVIES.

SHORT NOTICES

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE FAITH, 2. The Triune God, by G. E. Lane. Sovereign Grace Union. 15 pp. Paper 1/-.

The Sovereign Grace Union is publishing a series of booklets dealing with the main doctrines of the Christian Faith from a Reformed point of view. This, the second published so far, deals in a simple, straightforward way with the nature and character of God.

R.E.D.

WE BELIEVE—STRICT BAPTIST AFFIRMATION OF FAITH 1966. Obtainable from Pastor J. K. Thorpe, 63 Bristol Road. Pp. 33. 2/-.

In this present ecumenical age with its distrust of propositional theology it is refreshing to find the Strict Baptists putting their hands to the task of formulating the reformed faith in a contemporary statement. The lineage of the present affirmation of faith can be traced through the eighteenth-century Philadelphia Confession to the Baptist Confession of 1689, which itself drew its main inspiration from the Savoy Declaration of Faith and the Westminster Confession.

EVANGELICAL RESPONSIBILITY AND THE STRUGGLE FOR FAITH. T. G. Mohan Fellowship of Evangelical Churchmen. Pp. 13. 2/-.

This, the Latimer day lecture for 1966, will have an appeal mainly for Anglicans. Canon Mohan faces the challenge of the present

ecumenical situation and points the direction where he believes renewal lies. He is of course committed to the older evangelical Anglicanism, but it would only be fair to say that his position would not be shared by many younger clergy who are being taught (to the regret of men like Canon Mohan) that a little compromise—presented in terms of adjustment—may be necessary to win strategic positions.

THE MORAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN. T. Hewitt Fellowship of Evangelical Churchmen. Pp. 19. 2/9d.

Here is a vigorous statement of the doctrine of total depravity. The appeal is to Scripture. Original sin is a reality to which both Scripture and experience testify. Adam was free to choose and chose the wrong course, but ever since we do justice to the realities of human experience when we claim for human nature not "free will" but what Luther attributed, namely the bondage of the will.

H.M.C.

Young People's Page

THE JUNK SHOP

The shop that Mrs. Cash kept was filled to overflowing with a medley of second-hand goods; furniture and china and old clothes mingled with pots and pans, pictures and books. It was all a muddle, and how the owner could know what she had to sell was a wonder. The shop, in a narrow dirty street, was in a seaport town, and many of the customers were seamen, English and foreign. Mrs. Cash did a thriving trade; her one idea being to make money, she had no scruples how she gained her end.

Mrs. Cash had long been a widow. Of her three daughters, Sarah and Matilda helped in the business, having learnt all the tricks of the trade. Even their mother had much admiration for their ability to drive a hard bargain. All three united in despising the youngest girl, Marian; she had no turn for business, and was good for nothing but the household work, all of which she was expected to do. Quiet and retiring, she had a way of escaping on Sunday evening to the service at St. John's, whose spire could be seen at the end of the street.

One day, as Mrs. Cash stood as usual blocking the doorway of the shop, she was surprised to be accosted by Mrs. Young, from St. John's Vicarage. Mrs. Cash knew the lady by sight, but had no wish to extend her knowledge, for she had heard that Mrs. Young always tried to "convert" people. When she asked, innocently enough, for a flat-iron, Mrs. Cash backed into the shop, calling for Marian, the other girls being out. The price of the iron was chalked on it, but Mrs. Cash watched furtively to see that Marian asked the full price. As Mrs. Young opened her purse, she smiled kindly at Marian, and said, "Haven't I seen you at church sometimes?" "Yes, ma'am," said the girl shyly. "And were you interested? could you understand?" "Well no, not really, ma'am!" said Marian blushing. "No indeed," said her mother, "how could she understand them difficult things when she can't do nothing right in the shop? She's got no sense at all, only to do the housework." "Then perhaps she might come to my Bible-class on Thursday afternoons, so that she could learn about these important things?" Mrs. Cash was most unwilling, arguing very unpleasantly against all such things as Bible-classes; but at length she relented, and said Marian could go.

For months Mrs. Young had been noticing Marian at church,

but she could never catch the girl to speak to her. Somebody said she was Mrs. Cash's daughter, but the shop was hardly the kind to supply Mrs. Young's wants. Seeing the flat-irons displayed gave her the excuse she was waiting for. It was with great pleasure that she welcomed Marian the next Thursday evening. The subject was the first chapter of John; the new member listened with great attention, and eagerly accepted an invitation to come again.

Marian had the poorest opinion of her own abilities; she fully believed her mother and sisters when they told her what a stupid thing she was! Now on her way back from the class, she thought how very simply Mrs. Young must have spoken, for even she could understand.

Sneering remarks at home were often made about Marian's fondness for church and Bible-class, but as long as she did all the work at home, nobody cared where she went. Realizing this, the girl took the greatest care never to neglect anything, and the Bible-class was the one enjoyment of the week.

But after about a year, to Marian's great distress, Mrs. Young had to leave her work, her husband having been appointed to another parish. It was a blow for poor Marian, who sobbed out to Mrs. Young that now she could never learn any more! But Mrs. Young had a Bible ready, in which she had marked many passages; and she gave it to the girl, urging her to study it constantly, a few verses every day.

Marian's heart was heavy, but she took her friend's advice, and never omitted her daily reading. It was wonderful how the Lord opened her heart to understand the Scriptures. But now a change took place in her circumstances. Mrs. Cash, having made plenty of money, decided to leave the shop to Sarah and Matilda, and retire herself to a smart little villa. Much to the annoyance of the elder girls, she took her youngest daughter with her, to be her maid-of-all-work. Marian was not consulted, and a dispute went on over her head, for both parties wanted her services. The girl greatly feared being left to her sisters; saying nothing at all, she prayed earnestly that God would arrange otherwise. Mrs. Cash refused to give in, and took Marian to the new house.

It was a very busy time, but when the girl managed to get a few minutes to herself, she gave thanks with a full heart for this answer to her prayer. Reading the first few verses of Psalm 103, marked by Mrs. Young, she thanked the Lord for "all His benefits", and realized that she could go on to thank Him too for "forgiving all her iniquities". What a strange new joy this was! She had been walking in darkness, groping for the knowledge of God, and now

He Who is Himself the Light of life had flooded her soul with sunshine.

Mrs. Cash took a long time getting everything settled to her satisfaction, but at last it was all done, and very proud she was of her new home, glittering with smartness. She began to plan to give a large tea-party, to show off her possessions to all her acquaintances. At the height of these plans, she suddenly heard that the company in which she had put all her savings had failed—everything was lost! The shock was so great that the poor woman was stricken with paralysis down one side.

Now indeed Marian's character shone out. Her sisters refused utterly to do anything whatever to help. Marian took two little rooms, made them as comfortable as she could, and went out bravely to work to support her mother. For a long time Mrs. Cash did nothing but complain of her hard fate; but the patience and kindness that her youngest daughter showed was such a contrast to the callous cruelty of Sarah and Matilda, that at last the mother began to see that it was Marian's despised religion that made the difference. To the girl's thankful joy she one day suggested that the time being so long, she wouldn't mind if Marian read out a bit from the Bible sometimes. This led to much conversation about the things of God. Little by little, the hard crust of self-righteousness was broken down, and after many months, Marian had the joy of seeing her mother brought low at the feet of the Saviour.

Mrs. Cash lingered on a few years, proving the reality of her repentance by the complete change in her attitude to spiritual things. She liked to trace it all back to Mrs. Young's visit to the shop; and one day she made Marian hang up a little flat-iron on the wall so that she could be always reminded how good the Lord had been to them both, all because the lady bought an iron!

DAMARIS.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMAS No. 157

The whole: One of the last of the Minor Prophets
(All references in the same book)

1. Before him "the mountain shall become a plain".
2. Its sceptre shall depart away.
3. Corn shall make the young men this.
4. Motto on the bells of the horses.
5. Zion's King comes, riding upon this.
6. The man on this horse stood among the myrtle trees.
7. Zechariah's grandfather.
8. The Lord said "He that toucheth you toucheth" this.
9. Describes Joshua in this book.

SOLUTION OF No. 156

The whole: Archangel (Jude v. 9).

1. Amittai (Jonah 1 : 3).
2. Rufus (Mark 15 : 21).
3. Caleb (Judges 1 : 15).
4. Hur (Exodus 17 : 12).
5. Anna (Luke 2 : 36, 37).
6. Nun (Joshua 1 : 1).
7. Gabriel (Luke 1 : 19, 26).
8. Eutychus (Acts 20 : 9).
9. Lot (II Peter 2 : 7).