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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SAVED?

MANY of you may be saying just now in your heart: 'It is quite true I am not at present a saved *person*; but I am not far from the kingdom of God. I have just to repent and believe on Jesus, and then I am saved. Now this is so short and simple a matter, I may do it at any time. I may enjoy the world and its pleasures a little longer; and then when death or disease threatens me, it may be a good time to become anxious.' Now, all this argument proceeds upon a falsehood. You think you are not far from salvation; but Ah! my friend, you are as far from salvation as any one can be that is in the land of the living. There is only one case in which you could be further from salvation and that is in hell. You are as far from salvation as anyone that is out of hell. You may have much head knowledge of sin without the Holy Spirit, but He alone can convince you of sin. That Spirit is a Sovereign Spirit. He is given to the children of God as often as they ask Him; but He is not at the bidding of unconverted men. You cannot bid Him come when you fall sick, or when you are going to die; or if you should bid Him, He has nowhere promised to obey. And now I wish you to see that there is a second Divine work needful on your heart before you can believe. The Spirit must convince you of Christ's righteousness.

Flesh and blood cannot reveal Christ unto you, “but my Father which is in heaven,” (Matt. 16:17). That God is a Sovereign God. He hath mercy upon whom He will have mercy. He is not at the bidding of unconverted men. He has nowhere promised to bring to Christ all whom He awakens. Oh! how plain that you are as far from salvation as any soul can be that is out of hell. And can you be easy when you are at such a distance from salvation? Can you go and sit down to a game of chance to while away the time between this and judgment? Can you go and laugh and be merry in your sins? How truly, then, did Solomon say: “The laughter of fools is like the crackling of thorns under a pot”—a loud noise for a moment, then everlasting silence—a short blaze, and a dark eternity.

Some of you may be awakened by God, but unless you attain to a conviction of righteousness, your conviction of sin will be all in vain. Remember, anxiety for the soul does not save the soul. Sailors in shipwreck are very anxious. They cry much to God in prayers and tears; and yet, though they are anxious men, they are not saved men—the vessel goes to pieces, and all are drowned. Travellers in a wilderness may be very anxious, their hearts may die within them, yet that does not show that they are safe; they may perish in the burning sands. So you are much afraid of the wrath of God, and it may be God has, in mercy, stirred up these anxieties in your bosom, but you are not yet saved; unless you come to Christ all will be in vain. Many are convinced who are not converted. Many are now in hell who were once as anxious to escape as you.

God only can give you this. The Spirit convinces of righteousness. It is not flesh and blood that can give you a sense of the preciousness of Christ. It is true, the Bible and preaching are the means through which God works this conviction. He always works through the Truth—never without the Truth. If you be truly awakened, I know how anxiously you will wait on these means; how you will search the Scriptures with tears, and lose no opportunity of hearing the

Word preached. But still, the Bible and preaching are only means of themselves; they can only make natural impressions on your mind. God only can make supernatural impressions. Cry to God, then.

But remember, God is a sovereign God. Do not cry to Him to convert you, as if it were a debt He owed you. There is only one thing you can claim from God as a right, and that is a place in hell. If you think you have any claim on God you are deceiving yourself. You are not yet convinced of sin. Lie at the feet of God as a sovereign God—a God who owes you nothing but punishment. Lie at His feet as the God who alone can reveal Christ unto you. Cry night and day that He would reveal Christ unto you—that He would shine into your darkness, and give you the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. One glimpse of that face will give you peace. It may be you shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.

Robert Murray McCheyne
(Extract from Sermon on John 16:8-10)

“Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.” (Isaiah 55:6, 7).

The Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne, minister of the Church of Scotland in the town of Dundee, died at the early age of 29 years in the year 1843. His ministry in Dundee and elsewhere was greatly blessed in the conversion of sinners and in the revival of genuine godliness. The saintliness of his life and his whole-hearted devotion to the work of the ministry is revealed in his “Memoir” written by the Rev. Andrew Bonar. His sermons, translated into several languages, have to the present day a world-wide circulation.

A MESSAGE FROM GOD TO YOU!

God is warning you in His Holy Word that your sins will bring you to hell, and that unless you repent, confess and forsake your sins, you will be eternally damned. These are solemn realities. They are the truths of the eternal God. All who have been saved in the past believed them. All who are now saved believe them. All who shall yet be saved shall believe them. Salvation is from the Lord. He alone is the God of salvation. No sinner is saved apart from believing what God declares and reveals in His Word about salvation. Deny what God says, and you are guilty of making God a liar. "He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son of God hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (1 John 5:10-12).

The denial of these truths is widespread in our day, a day of practical atheism, of blasphemy and contempt for the things of God. The denial of them does not for a moment alter them. They remain infallibly true. "The Word of the Lord endureth forever." (1 Peter 1:25). If you do not believe the truth of them there is no hope for you. None whatsoever. Flee from the wrath due to your sins to the

Lord Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of God's providing. Christ is freely offered to you as a sinner. That is your warrant as a sinner to look to Christ for salvation.

Pray to God for the Holy Spirit to teach you and to enlighten you. You can never know the things which belong to the salvation of your soul apart from the gracious teaching of God the Holy Ghost. You have neither faith nor repentance. You cannot work them up in your own heart. Neither man nor angel can give them to you. They are divine gifts, purchased by the blood of Christ. You receive them when Christ is revealed by the Holy Spirit in your heart. (Rom. 10:10). Christ is to be found in the Word of God—the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. His own command is, "Search the Scriptures." It is through the Bible being blessed to you by the Holy Spirit that you will find Christ, "the pearl of great price," and see Him as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29). Apart from God's holy, inspired and infallible Word, not a single ray of spiritual light can enter your soul.

God has given you His Holy Word. He has also given you His Holy Day. He commands you to keep it holy. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," etc. (Exodus 20:8-11). It is the memorial of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. Trample God's day underfoot and you are guilty before God of trampling upon the blood of Christ. Christ's precious blood is the one and only sacrifice for sin. "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:7). The Lord tells us how we are to keep His Day holy. Read Isaiah, chapter 58, verses 13 and 14. And to meet all objections which might be brought against the way in which He would have us keep His Day, He confirms what He says with the words, "for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." If you have no love for the Lord's Day your faith is a dead faith, and your hope for eternity is false and vain. "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:4).

“If ye love me” Christ says, “keep my commandments.” (John 14:15). Included in His Commandments is the Fourth Commandment—“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”

Drunkenness, immorality, and theft along with the awful desecration of God’s day by sport, pleasure-seeking and worldly activities are the rampant sins of our time. What God says shall stand. “Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” (1 Cor. 6:9-10). No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21). The bar or the pub has been rightly described as a short cut to hell. The same can be said of drug addiction.

The Lord Jesus Christ the alone Head of the Church, ordained the Gospel ministry to continue to the end of the world. (Matthew 28:18-20). Ministers of the Gospel are ambassadors for Christ. In this day of appalling apostacy from “the faith once delivered to the saints” (Jude 3), ministers, with few exceptions, are blind leaders of the blind. Shun, therefore, as you would the plague, *Modernism* on the one hand, and *Arminianism* on the other, for both will destroy your soul for eternity. Modernism is the blight and the curse of the majority of the pulpits, colleges and schools of our land, in its blasphemous denial of the infallibility of God’s Word, and in its repudiation of some of its cardinal doctrines, moral standards and miracles. Arminianism condemns Modernism and claims to be the gospel of Christ. It is in reality another gospel. It is the gospel of decisionism, of evangelical churches so called, of Gospel and Mission Halls, of modern evangelists of the Billy Graham type, and for the most part of youth camps, conferences and crusades. Arminianism, notwithstanding all it has to say about salvation, heaven and hell, will give you a hope that is false, an assurance of salvation that is

presumptuous and will lead you to build on a foundation which at death will prove to be a foundation of sand.

Have nothing to do with the “damnable heresies” of the sects which have sprung up in recent times, most of them of American origin—Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Christian Scientists, Theosophists, Seventh Day Adventists, Spiritualists, Pentecostals, Moral Re-Armament, Cooneyites, Branhamites, the Radio Church of God and the Plain Truth of Herbert Armstrong, etc.—all of them of satanic origin, evil spirits appearing as angels of light. (2 Cor. 11:13-15 and 1 John 4:1).

“Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” (Eph. 5:14).

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WHITER THAN SNOW

WASH me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Psalm 51:7

This is a prayer we all need, for we are all defiled and polluted by sin. “There is none righteous, no not one. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” We have been conceived and born in sin. To original sin we have added actual transgression in thought, word and deed. The foul leprosy of sin has permeated all the faculties of our souls. “We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities as the wind have taken us away.”

We may live, as it is to be feared the majority do, insensible to our disease, but the end is inevitable. “Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death. The soul that sinneth it shall die.” To die in one’s sins, impenitent, unwashed, and unforgiven is to incur in full measure the penalty due to sin—the eternal wrath of God in a lost eternity. No impenitent, unforgiven sinner shall ever enter heaven. The torments of hell will be his eternal portion. “He that believeth not shall be damned.” The sentence inflexible in its rectitude shall go forth against all who die in their sins—“Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”

In his love and mercy God hath made provision for cleansing

sinners. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." In the incarnation, perfect obedience and substitutionary death of the Lord Jesus Christ a fountain has been opened for sin and for uncleanness. "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." The infinite and eternally intrinsic merit of His one sacrifice on Calvary's cross can wash the foulest sinner clean. "Come now and let us reason together saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool."

The Holy Spirit alone who proceeds from the Father and from the Son can convince the sinner of his sin. Sin which hitherto was sweet to his taste is now made bitter. He realises that it is against God that he has sinned, and that through sinning against God he has made himself obnoxious to His wrath and to His curse. Petitions and confessions of penitence now arise from his awakened soul. With the Psalmist he cries, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." And with the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Wash himself he cannot. By bitter experience he learns that all his righteousnesses are as filthy rags. The washing of an outward reformation will not suffice. His soul is still laden with sin and guilt. Nothing short of the washing of regeneration can reach his soul. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The leper of old came to Christ and worshipped Him saying, "Lord if Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth His hand and touched him saying, I will be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." So it is true spiritually. Christ who has power on earth to forgive sin, through His Word and Spirit applies forgiveness to the sin-convicted, sin-sick soul. "I even I, am

He that blotteth out thy transgressions for My own sake, and will not remember thy sins.”

The soul that has received the divine gift of forgiveness is washed from the guilt and condemnation of his sin. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” The power and dominion which sin and Satan hitherto exercised over his life is now broken. “If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.” There is a new creation in his soul. The old sinful nature known in Scripture as the flesh or the carnal mind still remains, and wages an incessant warfare against grace in the soul. It is at death that the regenerate soul is finally and fully delivered from the being of sin, for “at death the souls of believers are made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory, and their bodies being still united to Christ do rest in their graves till the resurrection.”

These are solemn realities of our Christian faith. Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father, and from thence He shall come to judge the world at the last day. Without repentance and forgiveness we shall die in our sins and go to hell, gainsay such a doctrine as men may. “Let God be true and every man a liar. Though hand join in hand the wicked shall not be unpunished.” If we confess and forsake our sins we shall obtain mercy and heaven shall be our eternal home. There are but two abodes in eternity—heaven and hell. We are hastening to either. It behoves us to consider our ways and be wise, and in the light of God’s unerring chart—His own inspired and infallible Word—to set our course for the haven of eternal rest. “Behold now is the accepted time: behold now is the day of salvation. Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake His way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He

will have mercy upon him; and to our God for He will abundantly pardon.”

May the prayer of the Psalmist, the prayer too of the ransomed Church of God in time be ours in truth and in sincerity. “Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.”

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FALSE LIBERALITY TOWARDS THE CHURCH OF ROME

From Forty Years in the Church of Christ
A REPLY TO DR. CHARLES HODGE OF PRINCETON¹

Rev. Charles Chiniquy was born in Quebec in 1809. He was ordained priest of the Roman Catholic Church in 1833. He says: “For twenty-five years I was priest of that Church, and I tell you frankly that I loved the Church of Rome. I would have shed every drop of my blood for that Church. My great ambition was to convert the Protestants and bring them into my Church because I was told, and I preached, that outside the Church of Rome there was no salvation.

“My dear mother taught me to read the Bible. When I was eight or nine years old, I read the Divine Book with incredible pleasure. Some of the chapters I loved more than others and these I learned by heart. This is the light which was put into my soul when young, and thanks be to God, that light has never been extinguished.”

¹ This article is not to be understood as critical of the otherwise outstanding gifts of Dr. Hodge as a theologian.

He became a famous preacher, and often preached in the large Cathedral in Montreal to many thousands. He established the first temperance society in Quebec, and because of his ability and piety he went, at the request of the Bishops, to found a French Colony. In 1851, he took with him about 75,000 French Canadians, and settled on the magnificent prairies of Illinois to take possession of the country in the name of the Church of Rome. He devoted himself entirely to their welfare, and provided nearly every family with a Bible. The Bishop was very angry at him for this. He had no idea of giving up the Church of Rome, but wanted to guide his people as best he could in the way of holiness.

It is a fact that today the Roman Catholic Church grants permission to read the Bible, and you will find the Bible in the homes of some Roman Catholics, but the condition is, that they must never, under any circumstances, interpret a single word according to their conscience, or their intelligence, and that it is a grievous sin to take upon themselves the interpretation of a single word. The priest says in effect to the people, "If you try to interpret the Bible with your own intelligence, you are lost. It is a most dangerous book, but it is better not to read it, *because you cannot understand it.*"

Father Chiniquy had great struggles of mind. He wanted to live and die in the Roman Catholic Church, but every time he read the Bible, his conscience said to him, "Do you not see that in the Church of Rome you do not follow the teachings of the Word of God."

The Bishops began to suspect that he was a Protestant, and asked him to give an assurance in writing that he was still a Roman Catholic. He did so, promising to obey their authority, according to the Word of God as we find it in the Gospel of Christ. This assurance was not received, and from that time Chiniquy and his devoted people severed their connection with the Roman Catholic Church. He lived a devout, holy life, loved by his people, and travelled extensively delivering lectures. He was bitterly persecuted by the

Roman Catholic “dignitaries,” who, with slander and evil speaking, tried to blacken his reputation. He was a friend of Abraham Lincoln, who was assassinated in 1865.

He died in his ninetieth year in Montreal in 1899 after a long and useful life of labour in the Masters vineyard.

This article is a chapter in *Forty Years in the Church of Christ*, by Charles Chiniquy, D.D., who is also the author of *Fifty Years in the Church of Rome*.

Because of its almost prophetic message, which has to an alarming extent come true, it is reprinted in the hope that it may awaken the slumbering churches.

FALSE LIBERALITY TOWARDS THE CHURCH OF ROME

Let us therefore stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Galatians 5:1

Rev. Dr. Hodge says of the Church of Rome, “She proclaims the divine authority of the Scriptures” and he takes that as his ground for approving those who build up the churches of the Pope. What would the good Doctor think and say were I to go to him with a golden cup half filled with the purest water, but after having put as much arsenic as there is water in the cup, I would tell him, “Please, sir, drink; this is good and refreshing water?” Would he not repulse me with horror, and justly call me a murderer?

Now what is the Church of Rome doing with the gospel? Does she not offer it to the people only after she has mixed it with her poisonous tradition? Does not the Church of Rome, in the most absolute and positive way, say that the written gospel (which we call the Scriptures) is only a part—an unfinished fragment—of the gospel? Can Dr. Hodge ignore that the Council of Trent has put

the tradition (which they call the unwritten gospel) on a level with the written gospel; that the one is of as much divine authority as the other; and that the Roman Catholic is not allowed to drink the waters of life except when mixed with the deadly poison—arsenic preparations—of Popery?

The learned theologian says that Rome proclaims the divine authority of the Scriptures, but he forgets that it is only on condition that we receive the Holy Scriptures in the light of Romish tradition. For Rome proclaims the divine authority of the Scriptures, but only with the condition that, under that name, we accept the divine origin and authority of the traditions about Purgatory, Transubstantiation, Indulgences, Auricular Confession, Immaculate Conception, Infallibility of the Pope, etc. Does he really accept the meaning which that Church attaches to the Word of God—Holy Scriptures? Does he believe that by rejecting the authority of the one he rejects the authority of the other? Then he is a good Roman Catholic; he is all right when he takes the side of the priests of Rome, and approves the Protestants who spend money in building the churches of the Pope. But if he rejects, with horror, from his lips the golden cup which Rome offers her blind slaves, then he is wrong. The mistake of Dr. Hodge is very common among the honest and unsuspecting Protestants of the United States. They too easily forget that the Church of Rome very often says one thing and means another quite different. When she speaks of the Holy Scriptures with an apparent respect, and proclaims their divinity, many think that she means only that blessed Word of God which is contained in the Holy Bible, such as they have at Princeton College. But it is not so. When Rome speaks of the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, she means the Scriptures transmitted through the written and unwritten tradition, she means the Apocrypha, purgatory, celibacy, absolution, mass, holy water, works of supererogation, worship of Mary, infallibility, etc.

She pretends to have the greatest respect for those two things when perfectly united in one body of doctrine. But she does not conceal her implacable hatred of the true Scriptures—the Bible, as Dr. Hodge has it in his hands. That learned man seems to ignore that the Scripture, the Bible, separated from the traditions and the Romish commentaries, is absolutely declared a dangerous, a soul-destroying, book by Rome, and the Council of Trent has forbidden the people to read it in their mother tongue. He also seems to have forgotten that the Bible Society, whose object is to give the Holy Scriptures, unmixed with traditions, notes, and comments, has been, from time to time, declared by the infallible Church of Rome to be an instrument of the devil to destroy the souls of men. No doubt the book of the *Index expurgatory* of Rome is in the library of Princeton. Then let him consult the long list of books forbidden for their *impiety and immorality*, and he will find that his Bible stands at the head of the list. Let him consult the pages of the history of France, Italy, Spain, Ireland, England, Canada, and even the history of the United States, and he will see that Rome, as often as she has found her opportunity, instead of proclaiming the divine authority of the true and unmixed Scriptures, has burned and destroyed them, as we burn and destroy a viper. Yes, let him open the store of his memory and vast science, and he will remember that not only has Rome destroyed the true and undefiled Holy Scriptures every time she could do it safely, but she has invariably condemned to death those who have been found guilty of reading the Bible.

The memory of Dr. Hodge cannot be so bad as to have made him forget that the Madias of Florence, and the twelve noble young men in Spain, only yesterday, were condemned to death by the Holy Inquisition for the *unpardonable crime* of having the Bible and reading it.

That great theologian, following more the instincts of his kind nature and Christian feelings than the teachings of history, assures

us that the Church of Rome “proclaims the divine authority of the Scriptures”! Yes, by putting the Holy Scriptures in the *Index*, at the head of the most damnable books which hell ever inspired!

Rome proclaims the divinity of the Scriptures! Yes, by torturing in her dark and filthy dungeons, slaughtering on her gibbets, burning in her *auto date*, the disciples of the dear Saviour who dare to read, love, and follow those Holy Scriptures. Rome proclaims the authority of the Scriptures, says Dr. Hodge. Yes, says the history of these last thousand years; yes, answer millions of martyrs, she proclaims and acknowledges the divinity of the Scriptures just as the Jews acknowledged and proclaimed the divinity of Christ by spitting in His face, nailing Him on a cross as a criminal, and killing Him between two thieves.

There are many deplorable things to be seen among the Protestants of the United States, but one of the most deplorable is the fatal tendency of so many to ignore the great apostasy and abominations of Rome. In Europe, where Rome is better known, Principal Cunningham called that Church “the masterpiece of Satan”—and surely she is the masterpiece of Satan. But what a sad spectacle we have under our eyes on this continent! Almost everywhere the Bible-burning Church of the Pope, instead of being sternly opposed by the children of God, is petted, helped and enriched, encouraged, strengthened, and praised by the greater part of them. Everywhere, with very little exception, the Protestants, shutting their eyes to the silent but rapid progress of Rome, sleep when the enemy is raising and arming his impregnable citadels, training his skilful legions, and sharpening his sword for the approach of the inevitable contest.

But there will soon be an awakening, and it will be a terrible one. When the Protestants see the extent of their incredible folly in so betraying the interests of truth and liberty into the hands of their greatest enemy, it will be too late! There will be then a Roman Catholic President in Washington. The armies of the great Republic

will then be commanded by Roman Catholic generals and officers: the fleets will be commanded by Roman Catholic admirals and the fortresses will be in the hands of Roman Catholic traitors. Then the treasure and the immense resources of this magnificent country will be at the mercy of the Jesuits, at the service of the Pope, and the flag of liberty will be trampled in the dust. Then the American people, who are today sold into the hands of Rome by their politicians, and lulled to sleep by their theologians, will understand that when Rome speaks of the divine authority of the Scriptures it only means that the Bible must be dragged out of the schools and torn away from the hands of old and young to make a bonfire.

There are two things which Rome hates with an implacable hatred. They are the Bible and liberty. At any cost Rome is bound to fight down these two things till they are completely destroyed. But the more she hates our dear Bible and our glorious liberty, the more she conceals her hatred under the most deceptive words and the most fictitious demonstrations of love and respect. It is just when she lays the surest and most perfidious plans to drag away the Bible from the school and the private house that she proclaims most eloquently its divine authority, just as the murderer puts on a smiling face at the approach of his victim, the better to prevent him from being on his guard. Thanks to the betrayals of the politicians and the delusions of the theologians, except God makes a miracle of it, the Bible and liberty are doomed in the United States.

Till lately I have had my doubts about that deplorable issue, but these last few years' study of things and men here makes it impossible to entertain any doubt about it. Blind, indeed, must be the man who does not see the portentous signs which fortell that the days of liberty are numbered and will be very short. With the hundred thousand Protestants who give their daughters, their sons, and their money to the Jesuits, and with the connivance—the silence, if not the public approbation—of thousands of ministers who dare not speak out.

Rome is raising her proud banner on every hill, in every valley, of the United States.

See how Rome is ruling in the midst of all our great cities from New York to San Francisco, from Quebec to San Jago. It would require the united efforts—the stern energies—of all the disciples of the gospel to put a stop to the giant power and aggressive work of Rome; but instead of trying to defeat the public and grand conspiracy of Popery against liberty and the Bible, the Protestants, with few exceptions, are vying with each other who will most efficiently give aid and comfort to the enemy.

Does Dr. Hodge take the ground that the Church of Rome proclaims the divine authority of the Scriptures? But there is not a student at Princeton who does not know that the faith of Rome in the Holy Scriptures, and the so-called proclamation of their divine authority, are founded on what the logicians call a vicious circle.

Does not Rome boast that she receives the Holy Scriptures because they point to her as the only infallible Church, when, in the meantime, she refers to those Scriptures to prove the title she has to the supreme respect and submission of the nations? I ask my intelligent readers, what is all that bombast of Rome about her faith in the dignity of the Scriptures if it is not a castle built in a misty cloud high in the air? Who can believe in the divinity of a thing in favour of which not a single reason can be given which can be accepted by common sense? Who will believe Rome, proclaiming the divine authority of the Scriptures, when she has no other argument or reason to our intelligence than a vicious circle?

Though there is a great deal of show in the Church of Rome there is no real faith, even among the priests. The little faith which remains has no more solidity than the building raised on quicksand. From the highest to the lowest ranks of Rome, with very few exceptions, infidelity and skepticism are the rule; very few today, even among the priests of that apostate Church, care anything for the Scriptures.

They do not ask, “What saith the Lord?” but they ask, “What saith the Pope?” It is not necessary to be so profound a logician as the celebrated theologian of Princeton to understand that with an “infallible Pope” there is no need of an infallible Bible. It is just because the Scriptures ceased to be an authority in the Church of Rome that it was found necessary to provide another authority to guide the human intellect. As the Holy Bible had ceased to be the oracle—the source of truth—among the Roman Catholics, it was a question of life or death to find or invent a new oracle—a new fountain of truth and life. Yes, it became a necessity to proclaim an infallible Pope the very day that the Holy Scriptures had ceased to be an infallible guide. Many have misunderstood the terrible logic which forced the Roman Catholics—almost in spite of themselves—to proclaim the infallibility of the Pope. To every serious thinker the proclamation of the dogma is the most natural and most logical fact. These last ten centuries the Roman Catholic nations have sternly, but in vain, tried to resist the logical consequences of the false and anti-Christian principles which their Church had accepted as divine truths. The proclamation of the infallibility of the Pope is not only the logical consequence of the rejection of the divine authority of the Scriptures in the Church of Rome, it is also the last and ultimate effort of that apostate Church to get forever rid of the Holy Scriptures, in every page of which she finds her condemnation written. From the profound thinker, Bossuet, to the learned Montalembert, many intelligent Roman Catholics had foreseen and foretold that the proclamation of the infallibility would be a death-blow to the authority of the Scriptures, and would sweep away the last Christian principle from their Church.

But logic is stronger than men. When men, in a moment of blindness, have accepted a false principle to replace a Christian one which they have rejected, they are dragged, in spite of themselves, into its fatal consequences. By admitting the divinity of traditions

which were opposed to the Holy Scriptures, the Roman Catholics had prepared for the rejection of the authority of those infallible oracles and the necessity of finding some other infallible guide.

From one abyss the Roman Catholics had fallen into a profounder one, with the same fatal necessity and irresistible law by which a stone must roll to the bottom of the pit the very moment the crumbling support on which it rested on the side of the precipice had been removed.

By proclaiming the divine authority of the tradition which gives an infallible Pope, and by accepting that man as equal to God in wisdom and science, the Roman Catholic Church has fallen to the bottom of an unfathomable abyss. Human folly and depravity could not go further. The last link which united Rome to the Christian world has been cut. It is no more from Christ—speaking to him through the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures—that the Roman Catholic will receive the truth; it is from the Pope. By taking away the cornerstone, Christ, whom the Father had laid as the foundation of His Church, in order to give place to her infallible Pope, Rome has renewed on earth the awful rebellion of Lucifer in heaven.

And the Protestants who build the Church of this modern Lucifer—like those who approve them—may be honest and learned, but they are mistaken men. They give help and comfort to the enemy. They are of those for whom Christ said on the Cross, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

C. Chiniquy

THE SCOFIELD BIBLE, DISPENSATIONALISM and THE CONVERSION OF THE JEWS

THE SCOFIELD BIBLE AND DISPENSATIONALISM

1. The Seven Dispensations

Dr. Scofield defines a dispensation as a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some *specific* revelation of the will of God. He teaches in the Scofield Bible that there are Seven Dispensations: (1) The Dispensation of Innocency: before the Fall; (2) The Dispensation of Conscience: before the Flood; (3) The Dispensation of Human Government; (4) The Dispensation of Promise: from the calling of Abraham until Mt. Sinai; (5) The Dispensation of the Law: from Mt. Sinai to the cross of Christ; (6) The Dispensation of Grace: from the cross of Christ to the Second Advent; (7) The Dispensation of the Kingdom: the Millennium.

“These dispensations are regarded not as stages in one single organic development, but as distinct and mutually exclusive, or even as opposed to each other. This practice of dividing the Bible into parts, and setting one part against the others, means for instance, that

in the Dispensation of the Law there was no grace, and during the Dispensation of Grace there is no law [whereas] the plan of salvation as set forth in the Bible is one organic whole, revealing a marvellous and profound unity. It cannot be split up into contradictory parts, much less into seven mutually exclusive dispensations.” (Summarised quotation from “The Millennium” by Boettner).

In connection with the *Dispensation of Conscience*, Scofield says, “Expelled from Eden . . . man was responsible to do all known good, and to abstain from all known evil, and to approach God through sacrifice . . . the dispensation ended in the judgment of the flood.” “Ended”—what ended? asks Professor Albertus Pieters in his “Candid Examination of the Scofield Bible.” “The responsibility of every man to do all known good, and to abstain from all known evil? Certainly not, that abides today. The responsibility to approach God through sacrifice? That command continued until the final sacrifice of Christ. The operation of conscience in the heart of man? By no means. St. Paul refers to it as operative in his day and there has been no change since.”

In connection with the “Dispensation of Promise” we are told that it ended with the giving of the Law upon Mt. Sinai. “Again we ask,” continues Prof. Pieters, “In what sense did it end then? and again we get no intelligible reply. Was the promise revoked? It was not. St. Paul tells that the giving of the Law had no such effect. “And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.” (Gal. 3:17).

“The entire ‘dispensational scheme,’ therefore,” concludes Prof. Pieters, “when subjected to examination in the light of Holy Scripture, breaks down completely—yet it is accepted by multitudes today as the undoubted teaching of the Bible, because Scofield says so.”

Some dispensationalists hold that the sermon on the Mount and most of the Gospels belong to the Kingdom Dispensation which is yet future. The Book of Revelation after the third chapter also is said to belong to the future. Thus only part of the Gospels and the Pauline Epistles are said to be intended for the Christians of today.

The slogan of Dispensationalists is “rightly dividing the word of truth.” But as one writer, Dr. Murray quoted by Boettner, puts it, “Dividing the plan of salvation into dispensations, is not rightly dividing the word of truth, but wrongly dividing the Word of God.”

2. Dispensationalism and the Church

In its doctrine of the Church, Dispensationalism holds that the Jewish rejection of the kingdom caused Jesus to postpone the kingdom until the Second Advent, and to establish the church as an interlude between the two advents. They hold that the church is in no sense a fulfillment of the Old Testament but something entirely new and revealed for the first time to the Apostle Paul and that the Church Age will come to an end in the Rapture which it is alleged, is the first stage of the Second Advent. Following the Rapture, Christ and His people are to be in the air for a period of seven years (the seventieth week, according to Dispensationalism, of Daniel’s prophecy). At the end of the seven years there occurs the Revelation, which is the public visible return of Christ and His people to the earth.

The key text on which this view of the church is based is Ephesians 3:3-7. As to the “mystery” mentioned by Paul in these verses, it is the mystery which was not revealed as it is now to the apostles, that the Gentiles were to be partakers of the same spiritual blessings as the converted Jews. The “mystery” that Paul speaks of was not completely unknown in Old Testament times, but was not so well known as it is

now. It was not unknown to Abraham for the promise given to him was that “in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” The Lord revealed that Christ was to be given as a light to the Gentiles and His salvation to the ends of the earth. The emphasis in the passage in Ephesians must be laid on the word *as*. The mystery was not formerly revealed *as*, that is not so fully or so clearly as under the Gospel. Stephen before his martyrdom spoke of Christ as being with “the church in the wilderness.” (Acts 7:38). The Lord had a church in the world since He revealed Himself in His mercy and grace after the Fall.

“In regard to the meaning of the Greek word *ekklesia* translated ‘church’ it is well to keep in mind that in the Septuagint, which was a Greek translation of the Old Testament and which was in common use in Palestine in Jesus’ day, the word *ekklesia* is used about 70 times to render the Hebrew word *qahal*, assembly or congregation. This translation was made in Alexandria, Egypt, about 150 B.C., by a group of 70 scholars, whence it received its name. Consequently the Jewish people would have connected the New Testament Church with the assembly or congregation of Israel as it had existed in Old Testament times. The glory of the Church under the New Testament dispensation is far greater than it was under the old. But regardless of the differences the church in the new dispensation is the continuation of that in the old, so that we who are Gentiles are, as Paul tells us, “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” (Eph. 2:19-22)” (The Millennium by L. Boettner).

“Another serious defect in dispensational teaching is its doctrine that many portions of the Bible are not meant for the Church age at

all, that is, not for Christians, but that they are intended for a future Jewish-led kingdom. This follows from their belief that most of Christ's ministry was taken up with preaching designed to prepare Israel for the Kingdom, but that when it became evident that the Jews would not accept the Kingdom the Church was substituted. This means that the Lord's prayer, the Sermon on the Mount, the Kingdom parables, the Great Tribulation, the Book of Revelation chapters 4 to 19, and some say, most of the New Testament except the Pauline Epistles, are "Jewish" and "legal" and therefore do not concern the Church. We point out, however, that Paul certainly did not make this distinction between the gospel of Grace and the gospel of the Kingdom of God. Rather, he identified the two, for late in his ministry he said to the elders from Ephesus: "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify *the gospel of the grace of God*. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone *preaching the kingdom of God*, shall see my face no more." (Acts 20:24, 25) (The Millennium pp 244-245 by L. Boettner).

Dr. H. A. Ironside, a dispensationalist and an ardent disciple of Scofield, acknowledges that the dispensational doctrine of the Church is of comparatively recent origin and that it was brought to the fore through the writings of Mr. J. N. Darby, the leader of the 'Plymouth Brethren,' who died in 1882.

When George Muller of Bristol came up against the Dispensationalist doctrines of the Brethren movement, he severed all connection with it. "The time came," he said, "when I had either to part from my Bible or part from John Darby. I chose to keep my precious Bible and part from John Darby."

Dispensationalists lay special claim to "rightly dividing the word of truth." The above is instead a confounding of it, a darkening of it by a new-fangled exegesis which is alien to it.

3. Dispensationalism and the Rapture

The Secret Rapture Theory based on 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 teaches according to Dispensationalism that Christ will descend from heaven to “the air” raise the righteous dead and translate the living saints who will be caught away to remain with Christ for a period of seven years in the air. Of the so-called secret Rapture which is *silent* and mysterious, neither the waiting people nor the world is to have a moment’s warning, the saints being first apprised of it by their heavenly flight, and the world by the departure of the “missing ones.” A leading Dispensationalist describes it in this way: “Imagine getting up some morning and your wife is not there, and you call for her, but there is no answer. You go downstairs, but she is not there. You call upstairs to daughter asking where mother is, but no answer from daughter. Daughter too is gone. You ring the police but the line is busy. Hundreds and thousands are calling up, jamming the telephone lines. You rush out of doors and bump into the pal of last night’s wild party. He is white as a sheet. He is out of breath, and he stammers a few words, and bawls out, ‘My wife is gone. My brother is gone, and I don’t know where they are.’ Down the streets runs a woman shrieking at the top of her voice, ‘Someone has kidnapped my baby!’ and in a moment the streets are full of people, weeping, crying and howling over the disappearance of loved ones. What has happened? The Lord has come, like a thief in the night. He has quietly stolen away those who trusted him, like Enoch, and no one is left behind to warn you any more, to pray or show you the way.” (Rev. Richard W. De-Haan, Radio Bible Class, Nov. 1954). (Quoted in “The Millennium” p. 172).

Dispensationalists make unwarranted distinctions between the words *Coming* (parousia), the *Appearing* (Epiphany) and the *Revelation* (Apocalypse). All these words have essentially the same meaning. They are kindred terms to describe one great future

event, the second coming of Christ *at the last day* and are used *interchangeably*.

“That the Rapture is not a secret event is evident from 1 Thess. 4:15-18. “For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (go before) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a SHOUT, with the VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL and with the TRUMP OF GOD; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

If anyone can make a secret coming out of this Scripture, language has no significance at all. There is no secrecy here! It is open, visible, audible; yet it is Christ’s parousia, His coming FOR His saints and not a subsequent epiphany.

The *Parousia*, the *Epiphania*, the *Apokalipsis*, the *End*, all synchronise at one great crisis “*at the last day*” The shout, the voice of the archangel, the sound of the great trumpet, the quaking earth, the passing away of the heavens “with a great noise” (2 Peter 3:10, 12), the resurrection and translation of saints, the destruction of sinners will attend the coming (Parousia) of the Son of Man.

“From all the foregoing considerations, the ‘secret rapture theory’ must be respected as *one of the most glaring of errors*, and it is one that has already wrought much mischief. ‘Let no man deceive you.’ If they say, Behold he is in the secret chambers, BELIEVE IT NOT!” (Will the Secret Rapture Precede the Second Coming of Christ? by Dr. G. B. Fletcher). (See this full article on page 136).

4. Dispensationalism and the 70th Week of Daniel's Prophecy

Dispensationalists hold that after the secret Rapture, the saints will be with Christ in the sky for seven years. At the end of this period He shall return visibly with His saints to the earth (commonly called the Revelation). "This theory," writes Dr. Fletcher, "is a perversion of Second Coming truth, a delusion of the last days, widely held. Nowhere does the New Testament teach two future comings of Christ, first *for* His saints, and then *with* His saints. Those who hold this view seek to harmonise it with the New Testament teaching on the Second Coming of Christ by asserting that the coming *for* and *with* His saints several years later are not two comings, but two stages of the Second Coming of Christ. This attempt to justify the theory cannot overthrow the testimony of the senses that the coming *for* the saints is a FIRST second coming, and the subsequent coming *with* the saints is a SECOND coming. But this cannot be. He came once, and He will come once more—and only once more: 'the second time without sin unto salvation' (Heb. 9:28).

If it be asked, where in Scripture is there authority for a seven year period such as Dispensationalism sets forth as elapsing between the Rapture and the Revelation, the answer must be: there is none. It is a period of time imported by inference from Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks, it being *assumed* that the 70th week has not yet been fulfilled, that it is the 7th week or the seven years between the Rapture and the Revelation and that during that time a number of predicted events—such as the apostasy, the appearance and reign of the Antichrist, the Great Tribulation, the return of the Jews to Palestine and their conversion are to occur.

"But there are no grounds "writes Dr. Boettner "either in reason or in Scripture for inserting a parenthesis of many centuries duration between the 69th and the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy,

a parenthesis which strangely has already extended nearly four times as long as the entire period of the 70 weeks themselves. In this prophecy it is quite evident that the weeks refer to years. The Jews had just completed 70 years captivity in Babylon—years that had run consecutively. Daniel understood from the prophecies that the time was at an end, and he besought God earnestly in prayer for their deliverance. It was revealed to him that 7 times 70 were determined to complete God's dealings with Israel as a nation—for their return to their own land, the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple, and until Messiah should come and accomplish His work of redemption. Certainly the natural inference is that in this prophecy time runs concurrently as it does in any other prophecy. Nowhere in Scripture is a specified number of time-units, making up a described period of time set forth as meaning anything but continuous and consecutive time. Likewise the 70 weeks in Daniel's prophecy are 70 links in a chain, each holding to the others, a definite measure of the remaining time allotted to the nation of Israel before the coming of the Messiah.

The correct interpretation of Daniel's prophecy is, we believe, that the events of the 70th week were fulfilled during the public ministry of Christ in Palestine including the completion and abolition of the Old Covenant. After a further period of grace, some 37 years later, the final break-up of the Jewish economy came with the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem and the final dispersion of the Jews." (The Millennium).

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people" etc. (Daniel 9:24). The seventy weeks, weeks of years are 490 years. These 490 years are to the death of Christ as the remainder of the verse makes clear. It was by His death that He finished transgression, made an end of sin by His complete atonement for it and brought in an everlasting righteousness. His death is mentioned first as it was to this end that He came into the world.

“And to seal up the vision and prophecy. “He came to seal up the vision and prophecy, all the prophetic visions of the Old Testament, which had reference to the Messiah. He sealed them up, that is He accomplished them, answered to them to a tittle; all the things that were written in the law, the prophets and the psalms concerning the Messiah, were fulfilled in Him. Thus He confirmed the truth of them as well as His own mission. He sealed them up, that is He put an end to that method of God’s discovering His mind and will, and took another course by completing the Scripture-canon in the New Testament, which is the more sure word of prophecy than by vision.” (Matthew Henry).

“He came to anoint the most holy,” that is Himself, the Holy One who was anointed (that is appointed to His work and qualified for it) by the Holy Ghost, that oil of gladness which He received without measure above His fellows: or to “anoint” the gospel-church, His spiritual temple or holy place, to sanctify and cleanse it and appropriate it to Himself, (Eph. 5:26), or to consecrate for us ‘a new and living way’ into the holiest by His own blood (Heb. 10:20) as the sanctuary was anointed (Exodus 30:25 etc.). He is called Messiah (v. 25, 26) which signifies Christ—*Anointed* (John 1:41) because He received the unction both for Himself and for all that are His. In order to do all this Messiah must be cut off, must die a violent death, and so be cut off from the land of the living as was foretold in Isaiah 53:8. (Matthew Henry).

v. 25. “Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”

The seven weeks or 49 years are from the publication of the edict to restore and to build Jerusalem. The restoring and building of Jerusalem took place “in troublous times.” The troubles encountered in connection with the work are narrated for us in the

Book of Nehemiah. The 49 weeks ended at the end of Nehemiah's reformation. Then 62 weeks are mentioned. The 7 weeks and the 62 weeks making 69 weeks or 483 years, are said to be "unto Messiah the Prince" unto the time of His public manifestation through the ministry and baptism of John the Baptist the forerunner of the Messiah, the Prince and King of the kingdom. "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached and every man presseth into it." (Luke 16:16).

v. 26. "And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself "etc. That is *AFTER* the 483 years or 69 weeks, that is in the 70th week—the week embracing the ministry of John the Baptist which lasted for about 3½ years and Christ's own ministry for 31 years. The 70 weeks or the 490 years as stated in v. 24 are to the death of Christ. There is therefore no foundation whatsoever in the Word of God for the Dispensational fantasy that the final week of seven years is still future, the period between the Rapture and the Revelation. "This theory" as quoted above by Dr. Fletcher "is a perversion of the Second Coming truth, a delusion of the last days widely held."

In verse 26 we read that after Messiah had been cut off but not for Himself, "the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." The learned Dr. Gill, the noted 18th century commentator, takes this to be a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple by the Romans under the Emperor Titus and to the desolations which ensued.

v. 27. "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" etc. In the midst of the week must be therefore about 70 A.D. the date of the destruction of the city and the temple. With the destruction of the temple an end was put to the sacrifice and the oblation, as sacrifices *could* only be offered in the temple.

“The Romans spoken of in the latter part of verse 26” writes Dr. Gill, “in order to accomplish their design to destroy the city and temple of Jerusalem, made peace with many nations, entered into covenant and alliance with them, particularly the Medes, Parthians and Armenians for the space of one week or seven years; as it appears they did at the beginning of this week; “and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease”; the daily sacrifice of the Jews and all their offerings; and which was literally fulfilled “in the half-part” of this week, as it may be rendered, towards the latter half of it when the city of Jerusalem being closely besieged by Titus, what through the closeness of the siege, the divisions of the people and the want both of time and men, and beasts to offer, the daily sacrifice ceased as Josephus says, to the great grief of the people; nor have the Jews since the destruction of their city and temple offered any sacrifice, esteeming it unlawful to do so in a strange land.”

Dr. Gill points out that the “week” spoken of here did not immediately follow the 70 weeks at the end of which the Messiah was cut off. It was 30 or 40 years after this. “The reason” as Dr. Gill observes, “was the long-suffering and forbearance of God towards the Jews, who gave them as to the old world space to repent; but His grace and goodness being slighted, things began to work at the beginning of this week towards their final ruin, which in the close of it, was fully accomplished.”

“And for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate” or as it is in the margin “with abominable armies,” the Roman armies being abominable to the Jews.

Even until the consummation, until the time appointed by God for their return to the land, Jerusalem was to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

“And that determined shall be poured upon the desolate” or *desolator* (margin)—the vengeance will continue upon the Jews until

the time determined when the wrath shall be turned upon those who made them desolate.

5. Dispensationalism and the Anti-Christ

Dispensationalists hold that the appearance and reign of the Anti-Christ takes place during the seven year period after the Rapture. At the end of the seven years Christ returns with His saints, defeats and destroys the Anti-Christ and his armies in the battle of Armageddon, and sets up an earthly kingdom in Jerusalem over which He rules in person for 1000 years. The reign of Christ on earth at that time according to Scofield, will be a sitting on the throne of David, as King of the Jews, *literally, strictly and politically* understood.

This Futuristic theory of the Anti-Christ propagated by Dr. Scofield is the Popish view. “Alarmed by the fact that the Reformers were pointing to the Pope as the Anti-Christ, the Jesuit Ribera at the end of the sixteenth century, invented or at least propagated futuristic views of the Anti-Christ, and pointed to a solitary Infidel Anti-Christ who would appear in the dim future. Ribera’s view soon infected the High Church party. J. N. Darby caught the contagion, and finally Dr. D. L. Scofield swallowed the Jesuit’s pill. Thus Ribera succeeded beyond his wildest dreams, for the attention of thousands of Protestants became deflected from the Papacy, a future Infidel Anti-Christ was looked for, and the historic Protestant view handed down by the Reformers was despised by many. These are the hard facts of history. A Protestantism saturated with Ribera’s Futurism is not the Protestantism of the Reformers, nor is it feared by the Papacy.” (The Roman Anti-Christ by Rev. F. S. Leahy).

In the days of the Apostle John there were many antichrists, heretics who denied either the divinity of Christ or His actual incarnation. “Even now” he writes “are there many antichrists.” He also says, “Little children, it is the last time: and ye have heard that

Antichrist shall come.” (1 John 2:18). According to Matthew Henry the generality of Christians had been informed of the coming of the Antichrist. Paul’s 2nd Epistle to the Thessalonians Ch. 2:8-10 made it clear to them. He is called *the* Antichrist as though there were none but he, because he was so eminently above all others. He is, therefore, called “the man of sin” and “the son of perdition” and the system of which he is the head “the mystery of iniquity.”

The Meaning of Anti-Christ

All the Reformers and all the Churches of the Reformation and the great body of Protestant interpreters hold that the Pope of Rome or the Papacy is the Anti-Christ, the word *anti-christos* being composed of *kristos* meaning anointed (Christ) and the prefix *anti*. “Anti” means *against* also *instead of* or *in the place of*. “When prefixed to the name of an individual it indicates an agent who assumes that individual’s place, and at the same time acts in opposition to him. Thus Rome herself speaks of Anti-popes. Anti-Christ therefore means one who pretends to be a vicar of Christ, and assumes to act in His name, but who is at the same time His rival and greatest enemy.” (“The Roman Anti-Christ” by Leahy).

In the Smalcald Articles Martin Luther singles out one particular statement of the Apostle Paul which beyond all doubt labels the Pope as the Anti-Christ “. . . the Pope raised his head above all. This teaching shows forcefully that the Pope is the very Anti-Christ, who has exalted himself above and opposed himself against Christ, because he will not permit Christians to be saved without his power. This is properly speaking to exalt himself above all that is called God, as Paul said, (2 Thess. 2:4) (Smalcald Art 11, art. 4:9-10).

“No one else has ever and will never be able to exalt himself above all that is called God more than the Pope of Rome, who holds

millions of people at his command and over four thousand priests as agents of his ambition. He dares to oppose and rejects even the central truth of the Scriptures. He condemns justification by faith, which is fundamental to all, the heart of the Gospel. He puts himself against Christ, he damns, curses this cardinal truth given by Christ.” (“Who is the Antichrist?” by J. Zacchello, D.D.).

“To submit to the Roman Pontiff, we declare, say, define and pronounce to be absolutely necessary to every human creature to salvation.” (Bull Unam Sanctam of Pope Boniface VIII).

“If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy which remits sin for Christ’s sake; or that this confidence alone is that whereby we are justified, let him be accursed.” (Council of Trent Can. 9:12).

The late Pope John XXIII was no sooner inaugurated in November 1958 than in his coronation address said: “Into this fold of Jesus Christ no one can enter it if not under the guidance of the Sovereign Pontiff; and men can securely reach salvation *only* when they are united with him, since the Roman Pontiff is the Vicar of Christ and represents His person on earth.”

The Babylon of the Apocalypse

As the Pope is the Anti-Christ, Babylon in the Book of the Revelation is the Church of Rome. Babylon cannot be the *literal* Babylon for it was not built on seven hills, nor was it the Queen of the earth in John’s time. Even the great Roman Catholic controversialists have been driven to admit that Rome fits the description of Babylon in the Revelation. “St. John in the Apocalypse” says Cardinal Bellarmine, “calls Rome Babylon, for *no other* city besides Rome reigned in his age over the kings of the earth, and it is well known that Rome was seated upon Seven Hills.”

“It is confessed by *all*” says Cardinal Baronius, “that Rome is

signified in the Apocalypse by the name of Babylon.” And the language of the celebrated French Prelate Bousset, in his Exposition of the Book of the Revelation is: “The features (in the Apocalypse) are so marked, that it is easy to decipher Rome under the figure Babylon.”

The above quotations from Bellarmine, Baronius and Bousset are taken from “*Is the Church of Rome the Babylon of the Apocalypse?*” a classic by Charles Wordsworth, D.D., Canon of Westminster and later Bishop of Lincoln, who died in 1885.

“These Apocalyptic prophecies, which describe the Woman who is called Babylon and is seated on the Beast with seven heads and ten horns do *not* concern the older, *literal*, Assyrian Babylon. The inscription on the woman’s forehead is *Mystery*, indicating a *spiritual* meaning. This word had been used by the Apostle Paul in his description of the *Mystery of Iniquity* opposed to the *Mystery of Godliness*; and St. John adopts the word from St. Paul, and applies it to the same object as that which had been portrayed by that Apostle.

“Again, the Babylon of the Apocalypse is described as a city existing and *reigning* in St. John’s age; but the literal, or Assyrian Babylon *had* long ceased to be a reigning city when St. John wrote. Therefore the Babylon of the Apocalypse cannot be the literal or Assyrian Babylon.”

In the conclusion Canon Wordsworth writes: “We have been contemplating the TWO MYSTERIES of the Apocalypse. The word *Mystery* signifies something *spiritual*; it here describes a *church*. The first Mystery is explained to us by Christ Himself. “*The Mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest . . . The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches*” (Rev. 1:20). The second Mystery is explained also: “*I will tell thee the Mystery of the Woman*” The Beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads, is described, and the *seven heads* are

expounded to be *seven mountains on which the woman sitteth*. (Rev. 17:7.9).

1. The first Mystery is the Mystery of the seven stars.

The second Mystery is the Mystery of the seven hills.

The first mystery represents the *universal church* in its sevenfold fulness, containing within it all particular churches.

The second mystery represents a particular church, the church on the seven hills, the Church of Rome, claiming to be the church universal.

The first mystery represents the universal church, liable to defects, but not imposing errors as terms of communion; and therefore, by virtue of the Word and the sacraments, held together in Apostolic communion with St. John and Christ, *who walketh in the midst of it*, and governed by an apostolic ministry, shining like a glorious constellation in the hand of Christ.

2. The second mystery represents the particular Church of Rome, holding the cup of her false doctrines in her hand, and making all nations to drink thereof. And the voice from heaven cries, "*Come out of her, my people that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not her plagues*"

The first mystery is a "Mystery of Godliness."

The second is a "Mystery of Iniquity."

Such is the interpretation of the two Mysteries of the Apocalypse.

"*If any minister or member of the Church of Rome can disprove this conclusion, he is hereby invited to do so.* If he can, doubtless he will; and if none attempt it, it may be presumed that they cannot; and if they cannot, then as they love their salvation, they ought to embrace the truth, which is preached to them by the mouth of St. John, and by the voice of Christ."

"This appeal was just made in a sermon preached by the Canon

on Sunday, April 28th, 1850, in Westminster Abbey, and reiterated in Westminster Abbey on Sunday, February 16th, 1851. As far as the writer is aware, no reply has yet been made to it by any member of the Church of Rome. It is therefore repeated here.”

With reference to Paul’s description of the Anti-Christ in 2 Thess. 2:3-8, Dr. Charles Hodge of theological fame says, “This portrait suits the Papacy so exactly that Protestants have rarely doubted that it is the Anti-Christ which the apostle intended to describe.”

“So strikingly” says Richard Baxter, “does the Church of Rome resemble Anti-Christ that any one is justified in mistaking the similarity for sameness.”

“And the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth” (Rev. 17:9). “And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH AND I SAW THE WOMAN DRUNKEN WITH THE BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS OF JESUS.” (Rev. 17:5, 6).

The Doom of the Papacy

“As sure as the Papacy has had its glory, so surely shall its doom come. Paul before closing his prophecy pauses, and in solemn and awful words foretells the night of horrors in which its career is to end. “That wicked—whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.” (2 Thess. 2:8). This day of wrath will be unspeakably great and will mark as one of the greatest days of vengeance since the foundation of the world. Paul despatches it in a single sentence; John expands it into a whole chapter. And in what other chapter of the Bible or of human history is there such another spectacle of judgement—such another picture of horrors of awestruck consternation, of loud and bitter wailings and cries of woe as in the eighteenth chapter of the

Apocalypse? “The kings of the earth shall bewail her and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas! Alas! That great city Babylon, the mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.” (Rev. 18:9, 10).

But this dark scene has one relieving feature. It is a scene that will not be repeated for it will close earth’s evil days and begin the hallelujahs of the nations. “And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down and shall be found no more at all. Rejoice over her, thou heavens, and holy apostles and prophets: for God hath avenged you on her . . . and in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all that were slain upon the earth.” (Rev. 18:20, 21, 24). (*The Papacy is the Anti-Christ*—p. 128 by Rev. J. A. Wylie).

6. Dispensationalism and the Millennium

Dispensationalists are Premillennial in their view of the Millennium. But all Premillennialists are not Dispensationalists. Many noted Premillennialists expose and reject the particular tenets of Dispensationalists. According to the Premillennial view Christ will return to this world, resurrect the righteous dead according to its interpretation of the “*first resurrection*” mentioned in Revelation 20, will reign in person on the throne of David in Jerusalem for a thousand years, over a world of men yet in the flesh, eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage. After the thousand years are finished the rest of the dead shall be raised. This the Premillennialists hold is the *second resurrection* mentioned in Revelation 20. Christ will then judge the world.

The Post Millennial view (so called because it asserts that the second coming of Christ is after the Millennium at the great day

of judgment) is that the Millennium shall be ushered in through Christ coming in the power of the Holy Spirit as He did at Pentecost, blessing the everlasting gospel of the grace of God in all lands. Dr. A. A. Hodge in his *Outlines of Theology* p. 569 shows that although many of the Christian Jews in the early church, mistaking altogether the spiritual character of the Messiah's kingdom, were Millennialists or Chiliasts (from the Greek *Chilias*, a thousand), the view generally recognised by the *whole church* was the Postmillennial view. It rejected Chiliasm, as did the great Augustine who was a Post Millennialist. Chiliasm or Premillennialism, Boettner observes, was in total eclipse for a thousand years, between the time of Augustine and the Reformation, and that during the Reformation period and for a long time afterward it was held by only a few small sects that were considered quite heretical. The Amillennial view advanced by the German theologian Kliefoth in 1874 denies a millennium in this world. The thousand years or millennium of Revelation 20 is according to this view the millennium of the saints in their intermediate state of perfect blessedness. The A-Millennial millennium is not on this earth but in heaven. The Dutch theologians Drs. Abraham Kyper, Harmen Bavinck and others popularised this view. It is now widely held in Holland and in Dutch circles and professedly orthodox churches in America.

1. Shall Christ return to this world to sit on the Throne of David in Jerusalem?

"Jesus of Nazareth needed no outward enthronement or local seat of government on earth, to constitute Him the possessor of David's kingdom, as He needed no physical anointing to consecrate Him priest for evermore, or material altar and temple for the due presentation of His acceptable service. Being the Son of the living God, and as Son, heir of all things, He possessed, from the first, the powers of the kingdom; and *proved* that He possessed them, in

every authoritative word He uttered, every work of deliverance He performed, every judgment He pronounced, every act of mercy and forgiveness He dispensed, and the resistless control He wielded over the elements of nature, and the realms of the dead. *These* were the signs of royalty He bore about with Him upon earth; and wonderful though they were—eclipsing, in real grandeur, all the glory of David and Solomon—they were still but the earlier preludes of the peerless majesty which David from afar discried when He saw Him, as His Lord, seated in royal state at the Father's right hand, and on which He formally entered when He ascended up on high with the word, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth; and lo! I am with you alway even to the end of the world Amen." (The Interpretation of Prophecy, P. 236, by Principal Fairbairn).

Christ sat on David's throne as David's Son and David's Lord when the Father at His ascension said to Him "Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool" (Ps. 110:1). That throne in the glory of His exaltation He will not vacate in order to sit on a material throne in Jerusalem. How repugnant the view that would subject the glorified Redeemer to what is tantamount to a second humiliation! He is now reigning "for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," and He shall through His Word and Spirit graciously subdue the nations of the world to submit to His sceptre, so that the knowledge of His glory shall cover the earth as the waters cover the face of the sea.

2. Shall Christ appear in Person in the world at the beginning of the Millennium?

Let us hear what the renowned Puritan divine, Dr. John Owen, the greatest theologian ever raised in Britain, wrote—"Should the Lord Jesus now appear to any of us in His majesty and glory it should not be unto our edification nor consolation. For we are not meet nor able, by the power of any light or grace that we have received or

can receive, to bear the immediate appearance and representation of Him. His beloved apostle John had leaned on His bosom probably many a time in His life, but when He afterward appeared unto him in His glory, “he fell at His feet as one dead.” And when He appeared unto Paul, all the account he could give thereof was “that he saw a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun,” whereupon he, and all that were with him, “fell to the ground.”

And this was one reason why in the days of His ministry here on earth, His glory was veiled in the infirmities of the flesh and all sorts of sufferings, as we have before related. The church in this life is no way meet, by the grace which it can be made partaker of, to converse with Him in the immediate manifestation of His glory. And therefore those who dream of His personal reign on the earth before the day of judgment, unless they suppose that all the saints shall be perfectly glorified also (which is only to bring down heaven to the earth for a while, to no purpose), provide not at all for the edification or consolation of the church. For no present grace advanced into the highest degree whereof it is capable, can make us meet for an immediate converse with Christ in His unveiled glory.” (The Glory of Christ).

7. Dispensationalism and the “First Resurrection”

Dispensationalists and Pre-Millennialists hold that the “first resurrection” in Revelation 20 is to be understood as a literal physical resurrection. “This notion that the resurrection of the righteous is to occur a thousand years before the end of the world is contradicted by Jesus who on four different occasions, said He would raise up those who believe in Him *at the last day*. (John 6:40, 44, 54). Clearly there can be no other days after the last day.” (The Millennium p. 169).

“The glory and happiness of this thousand years reign of the saints is to be understood, not literally but spiritually and figuratively

according to the common style of the book. It could not consist with the happiness of the saints to leave the heavenly mansions and live in bodies needing meat and drink, nor if their bodies were raised spiritual and incorruptible would they need any such thing. The dead in Christ are also represented as all rising together at the last day. And a proper resurrection is never in Scripture represented as a reviving or living again of the soul but of the body. The resurrection of the martyrs' and confessors' souls here spoken of must therefore mean, not the resurrection of these deceased persons, but the remarkable reformation, deliverance, comfort and activity of the church in their successors. As Elijah is represented living in John the Baptist and Anti-Christian Rome is called in the Revelation, Sodom, Egypt and Babylon on account of her likeness to them in luxury, cruelty, pride and idolatry, so the ancient martyrs will live in the Christians of this period, being united to the same Head, members of the same body and of the same temper, faith, patience, zeal and fortitude and professing the same Gospel truths." (Prof. John Brown of Haddington).

"The visible kingdom of satan shall be overthrown, and the kingdom of Christ set up in the ruins of it, everywhere throughout the whole habitable globe. Now shall the promise made to Abraham be fulfilled that 'in him and in his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed'; and Christ now shall become the desire of all nations, agreeable to Haggai 2:7. Now the kingdom of Christ shall in the most strict and literal sense be extended to all nations, and the whole earth. There are many passages in Scripture that can be understood in no other sense. What can be more universal than that in Isaiah 11:9 'For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.' As much as to say, as there is no part of the channel or cavity of the sea anywhere, but what is covered with water; so there shall be no part of the world of mankind but what shall be covered with the knowledge of God. It is foretold

in Isaiah 45:22, that all ends of the earth shall look to Christ, and be saved. And to show that the words are to be understood in the most universal sense, it is said in the next verse, ‘I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.’ So the most universal expression is used (Daniel 7:27) ‘And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High God.’ You see the expression includes *all* under the *whole heaven*.” (Jonathan Edwards).

The Final Apostasy and the “Second Resurrection”

A little before the end of the world, a great part of the world shall fall away from Christ and His Church. Accordingly we are told that when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison to go forth to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog. Gog and Magog indicate a resurgence of evil powers, hostile to the church of God. We also read, “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” (Rev. 20:5).

“But who are the ‘rest of the dead’? They are the *wicked* dead who lived not again until the thousand years were finished. They did not live in that time. Their views and customs during the thousand years were not triumphant. They are to live again when the thousand years are past. Their principles, etc., are to have a resurrection—this is the *second* resurrection, but there is no blessing pronounced upon those who have a part in this resurrection such as is pronounced upon those who have a part in the first resurrection. The wicked dead now live and reign with Satan. Here again the resurrection is *figurative*. Neither the *first* nor *second* resurrection is of the body—they are of souls. There is not a word in these verses (4-6) which says anything

about the coming of Christ nor about a bodily resurrection.” (Rev. D. Beaton, *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, Vol. 39, p. 10).

“They compassed the camp of the saints about and the beloved city” (v. 9). “The Church is likened to a military camp. This is a figure borrowed from the time of Moses and Joshua when the church even externally presented the form of a military camp. The twelve tribes with their banners surrounded the tabernacle on four sides. The camp was in the form of a square; of which the four sides were to be placed toward the four quarters of the compass. This was a type of the heavenly city as seen by Ezekiel 48:20 and the city foursquare of Revelation 21:16. The camp and the city are but different figures of speech to describe the church upon earth. The Church in heaven will never be surrounded by enemies such as are pictured to us in Revelation 20 (*Revelation Twenty* by Rev. J. Marcellus Kik). Commenting on the statement that fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them, Mr. Kik says, “Since nothing more is written in this prophecy concerning an intervening period and the resurrection of the just and the unjust at the last day, this must be the final destructive blow. It is the revealing of Christ as described in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, “with His mighty angels, in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” etc. The chapter closes with an account of the resurrection of the dead and the judgment of the great day.

8. Dispensationalism and the Jews.

Dispensationalists hold that during the seven year period between the Rapture and the Revelation, which they claim to be the 70th week of Daniel’s prophecy, a number of predicted events are to occur—such as the apostacy, the appearance and reign of the Anti-Christ, the Great Tribulation, and the conversion of the Jews. At the Rapture,

they maintain that the church is caught up out of the world to be with Christ in the air. With the departure of the church the Holy Spirit is also withdrawn from the world. "The Jews, so this theory holds, are to be converted at the mere sight of Christ their Messiah on the Mount of Olives, and through their testimony, whole nations are to be converted. We must point out, however, that people were not converted at the mere sight of Jesus at the time of His first advent, and that it is the particular work of the Holy Spirit to regenerate the soul and give it new vision and so enable it to turn to Christ. The mere presence of Christ often had the effect of hardening His enemies rather than converting them. Dr. David Cooper, a leading Dispensationalist and President of the Biblical Research Society, says: "The greatest revival of all ages will occur in the Tribulation—after the Church has been removed from the earth by Rapture." It is simply preposterous" writes Dr. Boettner, "to believe that during the Tribulation Jews without the Pentecostal presence and power of the Holy Spirit can accomplish the evangelisation of the world after the Church has been removed." Alexander Reese, a Premillennialist but not a Dispensationalist, in "The Approaching Advent of Christ" p. 269, ridicules this Dispensationalist notion that the Jews will convert the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the world at a time when the Holy Spirit is in heaven and the Anti-Christ is raging here below"? (The Millennium pp. 186, 187).

Not only is this notion preposterous and ridiculous, but thoroughly unscriptural. The scriptures make it clear that it is through the outpouring of the Spirit of grace and of supplications that the Jews will be converted and come to a saving knowledge of Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah. (Zechariah 12:10). It is the Spirit of the Lord as the apostle declares, that will destroy the veil that is upon their heart. (2 Cor. 3:15-17).

Will the Temple be Rebuilt?

Dispensationalists insist that Chapters 40-48 of Ezekiel are to be taken literally, that their fulfilment will be in the millennial kingdom, that the temple will be rebuilt and animal sacrifices are again to be offered. "Doubtless these offerings," says Scofield, "will be memorial, looking back to the cross, as the offerings under the old covenant were anticipatory, looking forward to the cross." (p. 890).

In connection with the crass carnality of such views, the Rev. Harold Dekker writes, "It is one of the plainest universal teachings of the New Testament that the sacrifices of the Mosaic economy were fulfilled in Christ and were taken away as vanishing shadows that prefigured the substance. Paul's warnings against a return to them are cited: "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage." "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." (Gal. 4:9 & 5:1).

"The Epistle to the Hebrews" says Dr. J. H. Snowden "is one long and conclusive argument that the old ordinances are fulfilled and done away in Christ, "who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once, when he offered up himself." (7:27) (The Coming of the Lord).

There will be no further "memorial looking back to the cross" but the memorial which the Lord Jesus instituted the night in which He was betrayed and which He commanded His disciples to observe "till He come."

The glorious temple detailed in Ezekiel, chapter 40, etc., is a symbolic representation of the New Testament Church in her millennial glory, described in Old Testament language. It is not a literal temple, any more than the words "this is my body" and "this is my blood" are to be taken literally. This is the view held by the godly

and eminent divines of the past. Jonathan Edwards says, “A very great and clear evidence, that the city of Jerusalem, the holy city and the temple in all its parts and measures, and its various appendages and utensils, with all its officers, services, sacrifices and ceremonies, and so all things pertaining to the ceremonial law, were typical of things appertaining to the Messiah and His church and kingdom, is that these things are evidently made use of as such, in a very particular manner in the vision of the prophet Ezekiel; that we have an account of in the nine last chapters of his prophecy. These there mentioned which are the same which were in Israel under the law, are mentioned as resemblances, figures, or symbolical representations of spiritual things. So that God has in these chapters determined, that these things are figures, symbols, or types representing the things of the Messiah’s kingdom, because here he plainly makes use of them as such. (Vol. 2, p. 674).

Is it any wonder that Dispensationalism has been described as “among the sorriest in the whole history of freak exegesis”!

Philip Munro says, “Dispensationalism may be fascinating as a work of art, but as a revelation it rests on a foundation of sand. The entire system of dispensational teaching is modernistic in the strictest sense; it is modernism, moreover of a very pernicious sort, such that it must have a Bible of its own (i.e. the Scofield Reference Bible) for the propaganda of its peculiar doctrines since they are not in the Word of God.”

In connection with the Scofield Bible it has been said; “It is a matter of great concern to many Christians that a book should exist, and be offered for sale, wherein corrupt words of mortal men are printed and set as positive statements in the midst of the Holy Word of God Almighty. Is not this an affront before God Himself? ‘Let God be true and every man a liar’ (Rom. 3:4).”

THE CONVERSION OF THE JEWS

“With the destiny of Israel has always been linked that of the universal race of man. The casting away of them hath been the reconciling of the world, and the receiving of them will be life from the dead.” So said the saintly Rev. John Duncan, LL.D., in one of his addresses on the subject of the evangelisation of the Jews at the Free Church General Assembly in Edinburgh in May 1860. His profound knowledge of Hebrew and of oriental languages of which he was professor, and his love for the Jews, earned him the title of “Rabbi” Duncan.

The conversion of the Jews to Christ their Messiah is recorded and set forth in both the Old and New Testaments. “For I would not, brethren,” writes the Apostle Paul in Romans 11, “that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved” etc. (v. 25, 26).

“By all Israel here we are not to understand the whole Church of God, all the elect consisting of Jews and Gentiles. It is true that in Gal. 6:16 and elsewhere, the word Israel is applied in that general sense to the Church of God. But in this chapter Israel means the nation and people of the Jews. ‘All’ is used as in many other instances in a general way and here indicates a very great number, and in a manner the whole Jewish nation in a full body.” So writes the eminent Netherlands divine, Hermann Witsius D.D. (1636-1708), Professor of Divinity in the Universities of Utrecht and Leyden.

“They depart from the apostle’s meaning” he continues, “who by ‘all Israel’ understand the mystical Israel, or the people of God, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, without admitting the conversion of the whole Jewish nation to Christ, in the sense we here mentioned. Notwithstanding this may be confirmed by the following arguments. *First*, the apostle speaks of the Israel, to whom

he ascribes his own pedigree v. 1. whom he calls his flesh, that is, his kindred, v. 14, and the natural branches v. 21, whom he constantly distinguishes from the Gentiles; to whom he testifies, blindness has happened. All this is applicable to Israel properly so called. *Secondly*, he lays before us a mystery, but it was no mystery, that a very few Jews were converted to Christ together with the Gentiles; for we have daily instances of that. *Thirdly*, he reminds the Gentiles not to exalt over, or despise the Jews, from this argument, that, as they themselves were now taken in among the people of God, so, in like manner, the Jews were in due time to be taken in again. But if the apostle meant that the body of the Jewish nation was to continue in their hardness; and but a few of them to be saved, who, joined to the Gentiles would form a mystical Israel, the whole of the discourse would be more adapted to the commendation of the Gentiles, than of the Israelites; and encourage rather than depress the pride of the Gentiles. *Fourthly*, as the fall and diminishing of Israel, v. 12, and their casting away, v. 15, are to be understood; so likewise the receiving and saving them, for here the rules of a just opposition must be observed. But the fall, diminishing and casting away of Israel are to be understood of the generality of the Jewish nation; therefore the receiving and saving of Israel in like manner:

“To this restoration of Israel shall be joined the riches of the whole church, and as it were, life from the dead (Rom. 11:12) “Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?” and v. 15 “For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?” The apostle intimates that much greater and more extensive benefits shall redound to the Christian Church from the fulness and restoration of the Jews, than did to the Gentiles from their fall and diminution; greater, I say intensely, or with respect to degrees, and larger with respect to extent.

As to intenseness or degrees, it is supposed that about the time of the conversion of the Jews, the Gentile world will be like a dead person, in a manner almost as Christ describes the church of Sardis, Rev. 3:1, 2, namely, both that light of saving knowledge, and that fervent piety, and that lively and vigorous simplicity of ancient Christianity, will in a course of years be very much impaired. Many nations, which had formerly embraced the gospel with much zeal afterwards almost to be extinguished by the venom of Mahommedanism, Popery, Libertinism and Atheism would verify this prophecy; but upon the restoration of the Jews these will suddenly arise, as out of the grave; a new light will shine upon them, a new zeal be kindled up; the life of Christ be again manifested in His mystical body, more lively, perhaps, and vigorous than ever.

Agreeably to which James has said, Act 15:15-17 “And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, after this I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.” The reparation of the fallen tabernacle of David signifies the restoration of true and spiritual worship among the Israelites. And when that shall come to pass, the rest of mankind, who never gave up their names to Christ, and the nations, upon which His name was formerly called, but which by their falling away lost the benefit of the Gospel will then with emulation seek the Lord.

“And what is more evident than that prophecy in Isaiah? The prophet in Ch. 59:20, 21, having foretold the restoration of Israel, according to the apostle’s commentary, immediately, in Ch. 60:1 exclaims, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee,” and in v. 3 “And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising” etc. (The Economy of the Covenants Book 4, ch. 15).

Rich Gleanings from “Rabbi” Duncan.

At several General Assemblies Dr. Duncan delivered highly animated and elevated addresses, marked by genius and spiritual power, on the subject of the evangelisation of the Jews. Six of these addresses from 1857-1867 are given in “*Rich Gleanings After the Vintage from Rabbi Duncan*” edited by the late Rev. James S. Sinclair, Glasgow. The following are extracts linked together.

“How miserable, yet how deeply interesting the situation of Israel after the flesh! And how deeply mysterious the procedure of God’s adorable providence toward them! The spirit of the Lord preserveth among them the holy books of the law and the prophets, and thus maintaineth even in the synagogue a constant, though ever resisted testimony for Christ! They are perpetually conversant with what is spiritual (for the law is spiritual) though only after a carnal manner, they themselves being carnal. Wonders (glorious things) are still before their eyes, but their eyes are not opened to behold them. The Spirit is present by the Word, a loud reprover, but unheard, for His saving influences are for a period judicially removed. Christ is present by the Word, for the whole of the Old Testament is full of Him—all day long stretching forth His hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people. (Rom. 10:21). “For behold God hath laid in Zion a stumbling-block and a rock of offence; and whosoever believeth in Him shall not be ashamed.” (Rom. 9:33). What a lesson does this afford to us, how insufficient the best means and noblest privileges are to benefit a people, unless the gracious presence and inward operation of the Holy Spirit accompany them! What a warning that we do nothing to grieve and provoke that good Spirit, especially by refusing to behold the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ! And as regards the Jews themselves, how astonishingly has a system of means, fitted and destined to prepare them for the ultimate reception of the kingdom of God, been, during all the fierce anger of the Lord,

kept up among them! How wide in one respect and yet in another, how small is the separation between the church and the synagogue! Let but the veil which is between the face of Moses, and the heart of Israel, and which has been removed from Moses' face in Christ, be removed also from their heart, and the synagogue immediately becomes the church; for if they believe Moses, they will believe Christ. But remove this veil no creature can; it is the work of God's Spirit *solely* and *entirely*. God will not give His glory to another. The residue of the Spirit is with Him and it will be bestowed in answer to believing, earnest, importunate, persevering prayer. Oh then pray—pray without ceasing, that the salvation of Israel may come out of Zion.

“I would call on you to remember the days of old, when Israel was holiness to the Lord, the first fruits of His increase, at the time when God left all nations, our own fathers among them, to walk in the way of their own hearts. How bright was then the beauty over whose departure for a time, we mourn! He showed not such favour to any nation, for they had not known His judgments. Think on all the exalted privileges conferred on them by Him who had mercy on them—the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God. Think that theirs are the fathers; and greatest of all, that of them, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all blessed for ever. Think of our obligations to them. When we were poor aliens they thought on us, they prayed for us: “We have a little sister and she hath no breasts; what shall we do for our sister, in the day when she shall be spoken for?” (Songs 8:8). “God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all (heathen) nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.” (Ps. 67:1-5). Into their olive tree we have

been ingrafted and partake of the root and fatness: on the skirts of a Jew we hang for life everlasting. "Salvation is of the Jews." Think of the benefit still in prospect for ourselves, to whom the receiving of them shall be as life from the dead.

Meanwhile, let us pray, hope, work and wait. Israel waited long for us; longer for us than we have yet had to wait for him. He waited, for he had a promise that we should be brought; and so we have been. We also have a promise concerning him. It cannot fail; and we shall yet receive him. How glorious shall the consummation be when it comes! The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun sevenfold, as the light of seven days, when the Lord shall bind up the breach of His people, and heal "the stroke of their wound."

O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice and Israel shall sing. Rejoice ye Gentiles with His people, for

He mindful of his grace and truth
To Israel's house hath been;
And the salvation of our God
All ends of the earth have seen.

(Ps. 98:3).

Rev. W. MacLean

THE ABSENCE OF THE SENSE OF SIN IN PRESENT-DAY RELIGION

Many are the fundamental defects of the popular religion of the present day. Some of these are to be seen in the outward practice of its professors; others, in the inner frame of mind which characterises them and which does not fail to show itself. One of the latter defects, which is patent to the eye of the spiritual observer, is the absence of the sense of sin. There are no “sinners” nowadays, in the felt sense of the word, among the general class of supposed Christians. The explanation is that a generation of people have arisen who are “pure in their own eyes and yet are not washed from their filthiness.”

Let us observe, in the first place, that there is the greatest possible difference between the committal of sin and the sense of sin. Sin itself is of the creature, but the sense of it is of God. It is necessary to make plain this distinction. Many ignorant people are found who cannot discriminate in this matter. When some such happen to hear a sincere child of God confessing his sins in prayer, they are ready to conclude that he must surely be a greater transgressor than others, or that he has committed some specially heinous iniquities. They do not understand that the enlightened conscience has a keener sense

of sin and guilt than others, and sees sin and guilt where others see none. Another fact that is overlooked is that indulgence in sin, instead of awakening the sense of it, has entirely the opposite effect. Criminal indulgence has the direct tendency to stupefy and deaden the conscience. The conscience is rendered inactive and insensate. Thus it frequently happens that hardened sinners are in their own opinion the most innocent people in the world. All the miseries they bring upon themselves they attribute to the ill intentions of other people. On the other hand, where the true sense of sin is, there is a sense of its constant presence in thought and action, its evil and its guilt, and there is the disposition to hate it and forsake it. Let it be clearly marked then, that sin is of man and the devil, but the sense of it is the work of God in the soul.

It is to be noted more fully that the sense of sin is produced by the Holy Spirit in conversion, and is sustained by the same Spirit in sanctification. This is clearly the teaching of the Holy Scriptures on the subject.

As to the sense of sin in **conversion**, Christ Himself speaks in the sixteenth chapter of John, when He intimates that after He departs He will send forth the Spirit of truth who “will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on Me.” And this is illustrated by frequent examples in the Acts of the Apostles. Witness the thousands on the day of Pentecost, Saul of Tarsus, and the Phillipian jailor. Similar has been the experience of Christians in subsequent times. Take the eminent examples of Augustine, Luther, John Bunyan, Owen, Halyburton and others. True, cases can be found where the first stroke of the Spirit’s power was the manifestation of love—the love of God—but the stroke left a sense of sin behind it. It is a sense of sin and unworthiness that makes the love of God in Christ so inexpressibly wonderful and precious in the eyes of the soul. The one is the complement of the other in saving experience, though in cases where the sense of love

far exceeded the sense of sin, the latter was swallowed up in the former, and, to the soul's consciousness, hardly seemed there at all. It is usually, however, the cry of the publican—"God be merciful to me, a sinner"—that is the first experience of God's people under the Spirit's work in conversion.

As to the sense of sin in *sanctification*, the Psalmist in the Old Testament and the Apostle Paul in the New, are outstanding inspired witnesses. The psalms bear striking testimony to the sense of sin in the process of sanctification. David and the other heaven-taught writers are constantly sensible of being still sinners in heart and life. They confess their shortcomings and provocations with plaintive sorrow, and they seek with persevering earnestness that will not take denial, the forgiveness of their iniquities and the light of God's favourable countenance. The Apostle Paul in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, describes his own experience at and after conversion, and his testimony clearly is that the living soul finds evil present with him. "I delight in the law of God after the inward man (a thing no unconverted or merely awakened sinner can say); but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Under an overwhelming sense of indwelling corruption he cries: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And yet in the same breath he adds: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Some modern interpreters who stand high in Presbyterian Churches, hold that the Apostle is here describing his first convictions of sin only prior to conversion—a great mistake and delusion. It is the man of faith and hope who says, "I thank God through Jesus Christ," that bemoans at the same time the weight of "the body of this death". Again, the Apostle describes the case of his brethren in Christ in Galatians 5:17, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that

ye would.” Here an inward conflict is described which undoubtedly involves a sense of indwelling sin.

Further, we remark that it stands to Christian commonsense, in meditating upon these things of God and the soul, that the case should be as it really is. Regeneration is not perfect sanctification. Regeneration is the creation of a new man—“a new heart and a right spirit”—but it is not the complete casting out of “the old man”. “The old man” is cast down but not cast out. He is still alive and active, and though dethroned, seeks to regain the ascendancy that he has lost. All this underlines the manifold exhortations and warnings that the Apostle Paul and the other Apostles address to “the faithful in Christ Jesus”, in relation to dangers from sin—and sin clearly and unmistakably in their own breasts—lasciviousness, malice, wrath, unbelief, and such like. Where the new creation reigns, there must, of necessity, be a sense of the sin that remains, a consciousness of its depravity and guilt, a conflict with its workings, and intense longings for deliverance from it, root and branch. How conspicuous by its absence is such a sense of sin in the popular religion of the times in which we live! Weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, that religion is found entirely wanting.

It is manifest, therefore, that the absence of this sense implies the absence of the Spirit which is necessary to salvation. Many, indeed, are the evil results of the absence of the Spirit’s work in His convincing and enlightening operations. The sinner who has religious convictions of a kind, and is not humbled before God by a sense of his sins, is beset with grave spiritual dangers. In fact, it has been remarked by thoughtful students of the things of the kingdom of God, that no great error in doctrine or departure from the Scriptures has ever taken place, but an insufficient sense of the sinfulness of sin lay at the bottom of it. A deep conviction of our own sinfulness and liability to err, will keep us submissive to the wisdom of God as expressed in His word, and dependent on the

teaching of the Spirit of truth, who cannot lie. We now proceed to observe:—

Some all-important departments of religion from which the sense of sin is absent at the present day.

It is conspicuous by its absence from the general preaching of the time. Let it be noticed that the theology which is popular in the larger religious denominations takes little account of the fact of sin. The inspired account of the Fall is treated by many more as myth or poetry than as simple truth, while the doctrine of the total depravity of the race in relation to anything spiritually good is practically, often emphatically, denied. Divinity students who have never been savingly taught of God themselves, and who imbibe seriously-defective views of sin and salvation at theological Halls, will necessarily give expression to these views in the pulpit when they become ordained and responsible ministers of the Gospel. Thus it has come to pass that the average preacher of the day is a man who does not seem to have any sense of sin himself, and makes no effort to impress his hearers with the necessity of having it. He was never convinced in his own soul that he was a fallen, lost sinner before God, or that he possesses a heart that is “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” (Jerem. 17:9), and so these solemn realities have no place in his thoughts or his preaching. He stands up with the aspect of a just and good man who never thought or did anything particularly wrong or sinful in his life, and addresses his hearers as if they were very much like himself in this respect. They need, no doubt, to be instructed or corrected on some minor points, or consoled in view of troubles and disappointments they have experienced in their daily life, and he administers the supposed instruction or comfort required. Further than this he seldom, if ever, goes. Sin, if it is handled at all, is chiefly treated in its bearing on one’s neighbour or fellow-creature. Moral evil, as between man and man, is at times largely descanted on and strongly denounced, but sin,

as committed against God and incurring His holy displeasure and righteous curse, is not discussed or proclaimed. The Bible doctrines of sin and its consequent punishment—hell—are regarded by many preachers as the gloomy notions of an unenlightened past, in no wise fit for the ears of the cultured people of today. We have surely fallen upon evil times when the unerring truth of God's Word cannot be spoken or listened to in the professing Church of Christ, and when blind leaders of the blind so largely occupy the Christian pulpit. We do not touch the various consequences of this popular preaching meantime: we simply note the fact that the sense of sin, both as a doctrine and an experience, is absent from it to a fatal degree.

The sense of sin is also conspicuously absent from the exercise of public prayer. The Lord Jesus, as the Head of the Church, taught his disciples to pray: "Forgive us our sins for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us" (Luke 11:4). And the Apostle John, as an inspired teacher, addressing the children of God, declares, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8, 9). These infallible testimonies clearly prove both that a sense of sin is an important element in Christian experience, and that sin should be a matter of confession and supplication unto God on the part of those who walk in the light. Now, we find that this feature is very seldom to be observed in the general ministerial prayers of the present day. There is no confession of sin, or entreaty for forgiveness. The cry of the broken spirit, which is in God's sight a pleasing sacrifice, is not to be heard from professional lips—a sure indication of the reign of spiritual death. What is generally to be heard is a series of thanksgivings for blessings received—"We thank Thee; we thank Thee; we thank Thee"—a manner of address too suggestive of the Pharisee's prayer in the temple: "I thank Thee that I am not as other men are." The supplication of the Publican—"God be merciful to

me a sinner,”—is far away. Let us not, however, be understood for a moment as decrying the spirit of true thankfulness to the Most High for His goodness, or the appropriate expression of it. This is admirable and necessary in its own place, but it comes to this, that when no sense of sin or need is expressed, the discerning hearer is apt to call in Question whether the leader in prayer has ever received any of the saving blessings of the Gospel, and, as a result, whether he is capable of rendering spiritual thankfulness to God for anything whatsoever. The most highly-favoured of God’s servants feel their own sins and shortcomings most, and the need of constant application to the throne of grace for forgiveness and cleansing, and for quickening, renewing, comforting and strengthening influences. They count not themselves to have apprehended, but “press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:14). The absence of the sense of sin from the devotional utterances of those who ought to be an example to others will have an injurious effect upon the views of the people who listen to them. The tendency will be to choke the sense of sin and need, even where it is to be found. Unconverted ministers are bound to destroy much good and to do incalculable harm to their fellow-sinners.

The sense of sin is, further, absent from the general *religious life* of our time. We use the word life in a modified sense. The life that is so much talked of is for most part only a form of death. Spiritual death has its activities as well as spiritual life, and these activities bewray themselves, for they do not run in the channel of God’s Word. Let it be noticed, then, that the sense of sin is absent from many supposed *conversions*. This important change is now generally reduced to one category, decision for Christ. All that the convert is expected to say is that he believes in and intends to follow Christ. There is no word of conviction of sin, and ruin, and helplessness. A lost sinner, crying to the Lord for mercy and pardon and faith through Jesus Christ, and not ceasing till he is helped and saved from above, is not the

newer Christian at his beginnings. He believes and decides by his own native ability with hardly a pang of conscience, and this is what is called conversion. True it is that a decision to follow Christ is part of a true conversion to God, but it is not the whole. It belongs to the fruit rather than the root of the matter. None can truly obey the Redeemer but one who has been saved by Him from sin in its guilt and dominion, and this implies an inward change of soul—a new birth—that is generally attended with many inward struggles and agonies on account of sin.

We further observe that the sense of sin, which always accompanies vital godliness, is conspicuous by its absence from the supposed spiritual life of the modern class of Christians. The absence of this consciousness of sin is clearly connected in the present day with the lack of those gracious dispositions which evidence the “new creation”, as may be seen from the following particulars:—

There is an absence of “the fear of the Lord” from modern religious life. The fear of the Lord is an essential feature of true piety, whether under the Old Testament or the New. The children of God, under the old economy, are very frequently described as those that fear the Lord, and it is written of the early Christians in the Acts of the Apostles that “they walked in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.” The “perfect love” of the Gospel casts out slavish fear—the fear which proceeds from a sense of guilt—the fear in which there is nothing but fear —but it does not cast out filial fear, which consists in the love and reverence of the living and accepted child. Where this gracious fear is, there is a view of the infinite majesty and holiness of God, as seen both on Mount Sinai and Mount Calvary, and not less on the latter—a view which fills the soul with a sense of its inexpressible vileness and unworthiness. “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.” Now, this godly fear, accompanied with a deep sense of sin, is conspicuously

absent from the newer religion. "The Lost Fear of God" was the title of an article in a popular religious paper some time ago. Unhallowed familiarity and presumptuous boldness have taken the place of "reverence and godly fear."

There is the presence of a great deal of confidence in the flesh. The Apostle Paul describes true believers as those who "rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh". Fleshly confidence is an outstanding feature of present-day religion—a fitting accompaniment of the lack of the sense of sin. When the eyes of people are not opened to see their fallen and lost condition as sinners before God, and when there is no perception of the sin that cleaves to every thought, word and action, there must necessarily be a great deal of esteem for the energies and works of the creature, self-complacency and self-confidence hold the field, and men walk on from day to day well-contented with themselves, their doings, and their attainments. They secretly, if not openly, resent the idea of man's total depravity by nature, and inability to do anything pleasing to God, and they do their best to flatter their own souls, and the souls of many of their fellows, that all are objects of God's favour and shall stand well at last. Flattery of the creature and his accomplishments is one of the most conspicuous symptoms of the absence of spiritual health in the religious life of today. If men knew in reality the deceitfulness and wickedness of their own hearts, they would act differently in this matter from what they do. This confidence in the flesh also disposes them, in the religious sphere, to multiply a great variety of organisations with a view, as they think, to benefit spiritually their fellow creatures. They set aside Gospel simplicity, and launch on a course of inventing new methods of worship and service, whereby they imagine they will draw men to Christ—at least to the Christ of their own fancy. Here they bewray their ignorance of themselves and of God. He will say to them "Who hath required this at your hands?" "The sacrifice of the wicked is

an abomination to the Lord”—especially those sacrifices which he has never prescribed. Many of them, as vain displays of human art, cannot be anything else than loathsome in His sight.

There is the absence of a real life of faith upon the Son of God as the Divine Saviour and Mediator of the new covenant. Many suppose that it is quite enough to be born within the pale of the visible Church, to be baptised in the name of the Triune God, to go from the Sabbath School to the Bible Class, from the latter to the young Communicants' Class, and thence to the Lord's Table, in order to be sound Christians. They have no sense of sin or soul dependence upon Christ for salvation. Completely dead, they are in a mere profession; and if they have an orthodox creed, their sleep is intensified. Others, again, have had some slight religious turn in their lives. They were impressed with some sermon they heard, or some event in Providence; they became anxious for a season; and then they heard some word that they felt comforting, and so they passed on to be members in full communion and workers in the congregation. And yet, for all this, there is no real life of God in their souls; they rest in a natural faith, and are not needy sinners entirely dependent upon the Lord Jesus Christ for righteousness, strength and all covenant blessings. Where there is the genuine faith, there is a constant realisation of soul need, and a daily seeking the face of the Lord—an inability to live without some communion at a throne of grace with the Father, through the Son and by the Holy Ghost. If this access is denied in experience, such Christians are sorrowful and downcast, but they persevere in watching and waiting for the rise of the Sun of righteousness upon their souls. They cling by a faith of adherence to the word of promise when everything is dark to sense and feeling, and light arises to such upright ones in due time. What a lack of this vital godliness is to be seen in a generation who are pure in their own eyes!

The fourth and last general point that we shall presently notice

is the serious results of the want of the sense of sin in the modern pulpit, and their bearing upon the pew. Some of these results are that the preacher makes little or no distinction in his sermons between nature and grace, between a state of condemnation and a state of salvation, between the broad way that leadeth to destruction and the narrow way that leadeth to eternal life. Unconverted sinners are not warned of their sin and guilt and danger, or directed to the way of escape through Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Nominal professors are allowed to sleep on in their self-complacency and carnal security, while, if there be one child of God in the congregation, he is starved and stupefied until he hardly knows light from darkness. The way of salvation that is generally presented to the hearers, is a new but thinly-veiled edition of salvation by works—salvation by character, as the word is nowadays. The perfect example of the Lord Jesus is held up to view as the chief object of attention to the sinful worshipper—as if he could so follow that spotless example by his natural religious efforts as to win eternal life for himself. Christ is only a partial Redeemer: the sinner shares largely with Him the glory of his redemption. In fact, the chief part of the work is ascribed to the sinner; Christ's merit and power to save are thrust into the background. Can anything more delusive or soul-destroying be imagined? How many must pass into eternity with a lie in their right hand!

Such are the manifold evil results of a ministry where the professed ambassador for Christ is a man ignorant of his own heart, ignorant of God, and ignorant of the scheme of redemption. And perhaps there are some who may not be destitute of saving grace who need another day of power in their experience, when superficial sentimentality shall be swept away, and when they shall declare the whole counsel of God in a discriminating and searching manner which they know very little of now. It is a dreadful thing to be lulling sinners asleep in the arms of a false peace on the brink of a lost

eternity. The message that is frequently needed is not “All is well, and be happy”, but “Escape for thy life; look not behind thee; neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain (of God’s mercy in Christ) lest thou be consumed.” (Gen. 19:17).

Rev. J. S. Sinclair

** These articles came from the pen of Rev. J. S. Sinclair when he was Editor of the Free Presbyterian Magazine. When visiting the late Pastor J. H. Gosden in Maidstone during the last war, he remarked to us that these articles made a profound impression upon him when he first read them and they never left his mind. They are certainly worthy of reproduction at the present time.*

Rev. D. MacLean
Glasgow

THE MASS

It is surprising how many Protestants do not understand the significance of the Roman Catholic mass. Some think of it as merely a church ritual and dismiss it as just another form of the Lord's supper or holy communion. But that is far from being the case. For Protestants and Roman Catholics alike, the Lord's supper or holy communion is a sacrament. For Protestants it is a means of spiritual blessing and a memorial service, recalling to mind the glorious Person of Christ and the great service He rendered for us on Calvary. But for Roman Catholics it is something quite different. For them it is also a *sacrifice*, performed by a priest. And its sacrificial element is by far the most important. In fact the sacrifice of the mass is the central point in their worship, while even the preaching of the Gospel is assigned a subordinate role and is not even held to be an essential of the priestly office.

According to Roman teaching, in the sacrifice of the mass, the bread and the wine are changed by the power of the priest at the time of consecration into the actual body and blood of Christ. The bread, in the form of thin, round wafers, hundreds of which may be consecrated simultaneously, is contained in a golden dish. The wine is in a golden cup. The supposed body and blood of Christ are then raised before the altar by the hands of the priest and offered up to God for the sins both of the living and the dead. During this

part of the ceremony, the people are little more than spectators to a religious drama. Practically everything is done by the priest, or by the priest and his helpers.

The elaborate ritual of the mass is really an extended pageant, designed to re-enact the experiences of Christ from the supper in the upper room, through the agony in the garden, the betrayal, trial, crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. It is a drama crowding the detailed events of many days into the space of one hour or less. For its proper performance the priest in seminary goes through long periods of training and needs a marvellous memory. Witness the following: he makes the sign of the cross sixteen times; turns towards the congregation six times; lifts his eyes to heaven eleven times; kisses the altar eight times: folds his hands four times: strikes his breast ten times: bows his head twenty-one times; genuflects eight times: bows his shoulders seven times: blesses the altar with the sign of the cross thirty times: lays his hands flat on the altar twenty-nine times; prays secretly eleven times: prays aloud thirteen times; takes the bread and the wine and turns it into the body and blood of Christ: covers and uncovers the chalice ten times; goes to and fro twenty times: and in addition performs numerous other acts. His bowings and genuflections are imitations of Christ in His agony and suffering. The various articles of clothing worn by the priest at different stages of the drama represent those worn by Christ: the seamless robe, the purple coat, etc. Add to the above the highly coloured robes of the clergy, the candles, the bells, incense, music, and the special church architecture of the chancel.

What a miserable form of play-acting it is! What a poor substitute for the Gospel do the people depend on for eternal life! In contrast, how simple was the scene in the upper room as Christ instituted the Lord's Supper! In 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, in just four verses, Paul outlines the whole simple service: The Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; He gave thanks; He broke

the bread; and He gave it to them as a memorial of His body which was to be broken for them. Just four simple actions concerning the bread. Then two actions are recorded concerning the wine: He took the cup; and He gave it to them as symbolical of His blood which was to be shed for them. All that we are asked to remember is that He died to save sinners and that we are so to commemorate His death until He returns. But this simple event the Church of Rome has magnified into the glaring, elaborate, showy pageantry and drama of the mass!

For centuries the sacrificing priesthood of the Old Testament era had been typical of the one true Priest who was to come. But after He had come and had accomplished his work, there was no further need to continue the empty forms. So the priesthood, having served its purpose, was abolished, and Christ made no provision for His apostles and ministers to continue any kind of sacrifice. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews has much to say about the endless repetition and futility of the ancient sacrifices. He shows that their chief value was to symbolise and point forward to the one true sacrifice that was to be made by Christ. 'We are sanctified,' he said, 'Through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ *once* for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, after He had offered *one sacrifice for sin for ever* sat down on the right hand of God; henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. For by *one* offering He hath *perfected for ever* them that are sanctified' (10:10-14). The New Testament, therefore, announces the termination of all sacrifices, declaring that Christ alone is our true sacrifice, and that He offered Himself 'once for all,' thus forever ending all other sacrifices.

It staggers the imagination to realise that a merely human pantomime, so absurd and so contradictory to Holy Scripture, could be accepted and slavishly attended day after day and week after week by thinking men and women.

The Mass the Same Sacrifice as on Calvary

The Church of Rome holds that the mass is a continuation of the sacrifice that Christ made on Calvary, that it is in reality a re-crucifixion of our Lord over and over again, in an unbloody manner. It also holds that this sacrifice is just as efficacious to take away sin as was the sacrifice on Calvary. Christ supposedly is offered in sacrifice every time the mass is celebrated, that is, daily, in thousands of Roman Catholic churches throughout the world. The mass, therefore, is not a memorial, but a ritual in which the bread and the wine are transformed into the literal flesh and blood of Christ, which is then offered as a true sacrifice. The only difference is the manner in which the two are made. Rome thus claims to continue an act which the Scriptures say was completed two thousand years ago.

In the sacrifice of the mass the Roman priest becomes an 'Alter Christus', that is, 'Another Christ', in that he sacrifices the real Christ upon the altar and presents Him for the salvation of the faithful and for the deliverance of souls in purgatory. The Roman Church teaches that Christ, in the form of the 'host' (the consecrated wafer), is in reality upon the altar, and that the priests have Him in their power, that they hold Him in their hands, and carry Him from place to place. There is even a ritual sometimes used at the close of a night service known as 'Putting Jesus to bed.'

We must, of necessity, take strong exception to such pretended sacrifice. We cannot regard it as anything other than a deception, a mockery, and an abomination before God. The so-called sacrifice in the mass certainly is not identical with that on Calvary, regardless of what the priests may say. There is in the mass no real Christ, no suffering, and no bleeding. And a bloodless sacrifice is ineffectual. The writer of the book of Hebrews says that 'without shedding of blood is no remission' of sin (9:22); and John says, 'The blood of

Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin' (1 John 1:7). Since admittedly there is no blood in the mass, it simply cannot be a sacrifice for sin.

In the New Testament the ordinance of the Lord's Supper is always presented as a sacrament, never as a sacrifice. Furthermore according to the Levitical law, a sin offering was *never to be eaten*, and all eating of blood, even animal blood, and much more the eating of human blood, was strictly forbidden. The fact that in the Lord's Supper the elements are eaten is proof in itself that it was never intended to be a sacrifice.

Transubstantiation

The word 'transubstantiation' means *a change of substance*. The Church of Rome teaches that the whole substance of the bread and wine is changed into the literal physical body and blood of Christ.

The priest supposedly is endowed with power by the bishop at the time of his ordination to change the bread and wine into the literal living body and blood of Christ, which is then known as the 'host', and so to bring Him down upon the altar. And that body is said to be complete in all its parts, down to the last eyelash and toenail! How it can exist in thousands of places and in its full proportions, even in a small piece of bread, is not explained, but is taken on faith as a miracle.

It must not be supposed for a minute that modern Roman Catholics do not literally believe this jumble of medieval superstition. They have been taught it from infancy, and they do believe it. It is the very sternest doctrine of their church. It is one of the chief doctrines, if indeed it is not the chief doctrine, upon which their church rests. The priests preach it literally and emphatically several times a year, and Roman Catholic laymen dare not express any doubt about it.

After the adoration of the consecrated 'host,' the uplifted hands of the priest pretend to offer to God the very body and blood of Christ as a sacrifice for the living and the dead. Then, in the observance of the Eucharist he pretends to eat Him alive, in the presence of the people, also to give Him to the people under the appearance of bread, to be eaten by them.

This doctrine of the mass is based on the assumption that the words of Christ, 'This is my body,' and 'This is my blood' (Matthew 26:26-28), must be taken literally. The accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper, both in the Gospels and in Paul's letter to the Corinthians, make it perfectly clear that He spoke in figurative terms. Jesus said, 'This cup is the new testament in My blood' (Luke 22:20). And Paul quotes Jesus as saying: 'This cup is the new testament in My blood. . . . For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come' (1 Corinthians 11:25-26). In these words He uses a double figure of speech. The cup is put for the wine, and the wine is called the new testament. The cup is not literally the new testament, although it is declared to be so as definitely as the bread is declared to be His body. They did not literally drink the cup, nor did they literally drink the new testament. How ridiculous to say that they did! Nor was the bread literally His body, or the wine His blood. After giving the wine to the disciples Jesus said, 'I will not drink the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come' (Luke 22:18). So the wine, even as He gave it to them, and after He had given it to them, remained 'the fruit of the vine'! Paul too says that the bread remains bread: 'Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily. . . . But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup' (1 Corinthians 11:27, 28). No change had taken place in the elements. This was after the prayer of consecration, when the Church of Rome supposes the change took place,

and Jesus and Paul both declare that the elements still are bread and wine.

Jesus' words, 'This do in remembrance of me,' show that the Lord's Supper was not some kind of magical operation, but primarily a memorial, instituted to call Christians throughout the ages to remember the wondrous cross of the crucified Lord and all its marvellous benefits and lessons for us. A memorial does not present the reality, in this case His true body and blood, but something quite different, which serves only as a reminder of the real thing.

We may show a friend a photograph and say. 'This is my wife'; 'This is my son'; 'This is my daughter.' Such language is readily understood in ordinary conversation. Nobody takes such words literally. The Bible is written in the language of the common people. Hence it is perfectly obvious to any observant reader that the Lord's Supper was intended primarily as a simple memorial feast, in no sense a literal reincarnation of Christ.

We believe that the real meaning of Christ's words can be seen when they are compared with similar figurative language which He used in John 4:13, 14. There, speaking to the woman at Jacob's well, He said: 'Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.'

On other occasions He used similar language. He said, 'I am the door' (John 10:7)—but obviously He did not mean that He was a literal wooden door with lock and hinges. He said, 'I am the vine' (John 15:5)—but no one understood Him to mean that He was a grapevine. When He said, 'I am the Good Shepherd' (John 10:14), He did not mean that He was actually a shepherd. When He said, 'Ye must be born again' (John 3:7), He referred not to a physical birth but to a spiritual birth. When He said, 'Destroy this temple, and in

three days I will raise it up' (John 2:19), He meant His body, not the structure of wood and stone.

Clearly none of these statements is intended to be taken literally. The disciples had no trouble understanding Jesus' figures of speech. Similarly, the expressions, 'This is My body,' and, 'This is My blood,' are clear enough for all except those who will not see, or those who merely follow medieval theologians, it is unreasonable in the extreme to take these two expressions literally while taking the others figuratively.

The adherents of Rome, under threat of eternal condemnation, are forced to believe what their church tells them, even though it contradicts their senses. The effect cannot be other than detrimental when men are forced to accept as true that which they know to be false.

When the Roman priest consecrates the wafer it is then called the 'host,' and they worship it as God. But if the doctrine of transubstantiation is false, then the 'host' is no more the body of Christ than is any other piece of bread. And if the soul and divinity of Christ are not present, then the worship of it is sheer idolatry, of the same kind as that of pagan tribes who worship fetishes.

The Mass and Money

One very prominent feature of the mass as conducted in the Roman Church is the financial support which it brings in. It is by all odds the largest income-producing ceremony in the church. An elaborate system has been worked out. In the United States, low mass, for the benefit of a soul in purgatory, read by the priest in a low tone of voice and without music, costs a minimum of two dollars. The high mass, on Sundays and holy days, sung by the priest in a loud voice, with music and choirs, costs a minimum of ten dollars. The usual price for high mass is twenty-five to thirty-five dollars. The high requiem

mass (at funerals), and the high nuptial mass (at weddings), may cost much more, even hundreds of dollars, depending on the number and rank of the priests taking part, the flowers, the music, and the candles. Prices vary in the different dioceses and according to the ability of the parishioners to pay. No masses are said without money. The Irish have a saying: High money, high mass; low money, low mass; no money, no mass.

The most popular mass is that to alleviate or terminate the suffering of souls in purgatory. The more masses said for an agonising soul the better. Purgatorial societies and mass leagues offer blanket masses recited for beneficiaries *en masse*, in which anyone who sends, say ten dollars, can secure for a departed soul a certain number of high masses celebrated daily for a month or longer.

One consequence of this system is that the poor are left to burn in purgatory longer, while the rich can have more and higher grade masses said and so escape more quickly. People with property are sometimes urged to leave thousands of dollars to provide for prayers and masses to be said perpetually for their souls. According to the teaching of the Church of Rome, the great majority of those dying within the pale of the church go to purgatory, where they can remain in a state of suffering with no known termination date before the day of judgement. Those outside the Roman Church are, for the most part, said to be hopelessly lost and therefore beyond help.

One of the worst features about the mass system is that the priest can never give assurance that the soul for which he has said mass is out of purgatory. He admittedly has no criterion by which that can be known. Hence the offerings may be continued for years—as long as the deluded Romanist is willing to continue paying.

Historical Development of the Doctrine

In view of the prominent place given the mass in the present day Roman Church, it is of particular interest to find that it was unknown in the early church, that it was first proposed by a Benedictine monk, Radbertus, in the ninth century, and that it did not become an official part of Romanist doctrine until pronounced as such by the Lateran Council of 1215 under the direction of pope Innocent III. It was reaffirmed by the Council of Trent, in 1545. Transubstantiation is not mentioned in the Apostles' Creed or in the Nicene or Athanasian creeds. Its first credal mention is by pope Pius IV, in the year 1564.

Conclusion

It has been our purpose to show that there is no transubstantiation in the mass and therefore no physical presence of Christ in the bread and wine and that there is no true sacrifice in the mass. We assert unqualifiedly that the mass as practised in the Roman Catholic Church is a fraud and a deception—for the simple reason that it is the selling of non-existent values. The sale of masses to gullible people for various purposes has transformed the ministers of the Roman Church into sacrificing priests, and has been an effective means by which under false pretences huge sums of money have been extracted from the people.

We ask in all seriousness: What is there in the Roman service of the mass that compares with the beauty and simplicity of the Lord's Supper as observed in Protestant churches. In the latter you have no pompous hierarchy separated from the laity and communing with themselves, partaking of the bread and the wine while standing at the altar on a higher level and with their backs to the congregation, while the laity, like children, kneel before the clergy with closed eyes and open mouths and receive the wafer

which is dropped into their mouths. In the Protestant churches the minister comes from the pulpit and sits at the communion table on the same level with the people. Minister and people are a company of Christian brethren partaking together of the Lord's Supper as a simple memorial feast, each one eating of the bread and each one drinking of the cup as the rite was originally instituted. In the light of New Testament revelation surely the latter is right, and it alone.

(Extracts from "Roman Catholicism"
by Dr. L. Boettner, D.L., D.D.)

MISCELLANEOUS

(Most early unnumbered WS articles were produced on stencils and run off on Gestetner and Remington duplicating machines)

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

as Unveiled in the Lord Jesus

The record of Christ's unprecedented life is found in the four Gospels. Those Gospels were written by men who were constantly in Christ's company during the days of His ministry, being an ungarnished record of what they personally saw with their own eyes and heard with their own ears. Numerous copies of those Gospels have been in known existence since the first century of this Christian era. Only three explanations of them are feasible. First, that they were written by deluded fanatics. But the character of their contents, the calmness of their tenor, the absence of anything savouring of enthusiasm, cause anyone capable of weighing evidence to promptly reject such an hypothesis. The dreams of visionaries had never received such widespread credence. Second, that they were the inventions of deceitful men. But that could not be, otherwise their contemporaries had exposed them as impostors. Wicked men could not have devised the Sermon on the Mount! Third, that they were written by honest men, who chronicled actual facts.

The person of the Lord Jesus presents a baffling problem, yea, an insoluble enigma unto infidelity. Scepticism is quite unable to supply any rational explanation of the phenomenon which He presents. Yet "what think ye of Christ?" is a question which cannot be avoided or

evaded by anyone who professes to use his reasoning powers or lays any claim to being an educated person. The obvious fact confronts believer and unbeliever alike that the appearing of Jesus Christ on the stage of this world has exerted a more powerful, lasting, and extensive influence than has any other person, factor or event that can be named. To say that Christ has revolutionised human history is only to affirm what His bitterest foes are compelled to acknowledge. He dwelt in no palace, led no army, overthrew no mundane empire, yet His fame has spread to the ends of the earth. He wrote no book, framed no philosophy, erected no temple, yet He occupies a place in literature and religion which none else has ever achieved. How is this to be explained? Unbelief can furnish no answer! Nor can it refute, for the historicity of Christ is established far more conclusively than that of Socrates and Plato.

Viewed simply from the human plane the Lord Jesus presents a phenomenon which admits of no human explanation. The law of heredity cannot account for Him, for He transcends all merely racial characteristics. Though according to the flesh He was the Son of Abraham, yet He is bounded by no Jewish limitations. He rises above all national restrictions. The law of environment cannot explain Him, for He was born in poverty, lived in a small town, received no collegiate training, toiled at the carpenter's bench. Such an environment was not conducive to the development of thought and teaching which was to enlighten the whole world.

Napoleon Bonaparte, the military genius of a century ago, declared, "Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and myself have founded empires, but upon **what** did those creations of our genius depend? Upon **force**. Jesus Christ alone established His empire upon love. I have inspired multitudes with such an enthusiastic devotion that they would have died for me . . . but to do this it was necessary that I should be **visibly** present, with the electric influence of my looks, of my words, of my voice. When I saw men and spoke

to them, I lighted up the flame of self-devotion in their hearts. Christ alone has succeeded in raising the mind of men toward the Unseen, that it becomes insensible to the barriers of time and space. Across a chasm of eighteen hundred years Jesus Christ makes a demand which is, beyond all others, difficult to satisfy. He asks for the human **heart**. He will have it entirely for and to Himself. He demands it unconditionally.”

Alexander, Napoleon, Lincoln are dead, and we refer to them in the **past** tense. But not so with Christ. We do not think or speak of Him as One who **was**, but as One who **IS**. The Lord Jesus is far more than a memory. He is the great “I AM”; the same yesterday and today and forever. On what principle, scientifically, can we rationally account for the dynamic influence of the Lord Jesus today? That One now at a distance of almost two millenniums is still moulding human thought, attracting human hearts, transforming human lives, with such mighty sway that He stands forth from all other teachers as the sun makes the stars recede into dimness and pale before the lustre of His refulgence. As a strictly scientific question, the mystery of Christ’s influence demands an adequate solution. It requires neither science nor philosophy to **deny**, but it does to **explain**. The only satisfactory explanation is that Christ is God, omnipotent and omnipresent.

We call attention now to what has well been termed “THE LOGIC OF THE CHANGED CALENDAR.” Few people stop to inquire for an explanation of one of the most amazing facts which is presented to the notice of everybody, namely, the fact that all civilised time is dated from the birth of Jesus Christ! This is the twentieth century, and from what event are those centuries dated? From the birth of a Jew, who, according to the view of infidels, if He ever existed, was a peasant in an obscure province, who was the author of no wonderful invention, who occupied no throne, who died when, as men count years, He had scarcely reached His prime, and who died the death

of a criminal. Now if the Lord Jesus Christ were nothing more than what sceptics will allow, then is it not utterly unthinkable that the chronology of the civilised world should be reckoned from **His** birth? The effect must correspond to the cause, and there is no agreement between such a phenomenon and such an inadequate producer.

To have some common measure of time is, of course, a necessity of organised society, but where shall we find an adequate starting point for the calendar?—i.e., one which will be acceptable to all civilised nations! A world-shattering victory, the founding of some many-centuried city, the birth of a dynasty, the beginning of a revolution: some such event, it might reasonably be expected, would give time a new starting point. But no conqueror's sword has ever cut deep enough on Time to leave an enduring mark. The Julian era, the Alexandrian era, era of the Sileucidae, all had their brief day and have vanished. There is for civilised men but one suitable, enduring and universally recognised starting point for civilised time, and that is **the manger at Bethlehem!** And how is that strange yet startling fact to be explained? It was imposed neither by the authority of a conqueror, the device of priests, the enactment of a despot, nor even by Constantine; but by slow and gradual consent.

The name of Jesus Christ did not emerge in the calendar till five centuries after His death—a space of time long enough for Him to be forgotten had He been an impostor. It took another five hundred years to become universally accepted; and the process is linked to no human name. Here then is a phenomenon that scepticism cannot explain: that without any conspiracy of Christian fanatics Jesus Christ has altered the almanacs of the world. The one event which towers above the horizon of history serves as a landmark to measure time for all civilised races. The Lord of time has indelibly written His signature across time itself; the years of the modern world being labelled by common consent the years **of our Lord!** Every letter you receive (though penned by an atheist), every newspaper carrying

date of its issue (though published by Communists), bears testimony to the historicity of Christ! The One who entered this world to shape its history to a new pattern changed its calendar from A.M. to A.D.

All that had transpired previously in human history counted for nothing. The name of the most famous of the world's generals or of its most powerful monarchs was not deemed worthy to be imprinted upon all succeeding centuries. By a deep, unanimous, inarticulated and yet irresistible instinct, each nation has recognised and recorded on its almanacs the true starting point of its life. Several attempts have been made to establish another point of departure for recorded time. Islam has made a faint but broken mark upon the centuries, relating time to the sword; but the Moslem almanac is confined to but a cluster of half-civilised races. La Place, the astronomer, proposed to give stability and dignity to human chronology by linking it to the stars, but the world approved not. France sought to popularise its Revolution, and count 1793 as year one, but her calendar lasted but thirteen years. The centuries belong to Christ and pay homage to Him by bearing **His** name!

Young men, young women, who are at present being tossed to and fro upon a sea of doubt, there is no reason why you should remain there. The value and Divinity of Christ's teaching may be personally **verified** by yourself. How? "If any man will do His will," said Christ, "he shall **know** of the doctrine" (John 7:17). If you will read the record of it in the Gospels, submit to Christ's authority, conform to His requirements, regulate your life by His precepts, then **you** shall obtain a settled conviction that He "spake as never man spake," that His are the words of Truth.

Nay, further. If you be an honest inquirer, prepared to follow the truth wherever it leads—and it will be out of the mists of scepticism and away from the fogs of uncertainty—you may obtain definite and conclusive proof that Christ **is** and that He is the Rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. His invitation is, "If any man thirst, let

him come unto Me and drink” (John 7:37), and upon compliance, He promises to satisfy that thirst. **Test Him for yourself.** If the empty cisterns of this world—its poor pleasures or its intellectual speculations—have failed to satisfy your soul, Christ can. He declares, “Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). If you have toiled in vain for peace and your conscience be burdened with a sense of guilt, then cast yourself on the mercy of Christ and you shall find “rest unto your soul.”—such as this world can neither give nor take away.

Arthur W. Pink

THE PLAN OF SALVATION

The Augustinian scheme includes the following points: (1.) That the glory of God, or the manifestation of his perfections, is the highest and ultimate end of all things. (2.) For that end God purposed the creation of the universe, and the whole plan of providence and redemption. (3.) That He placed man in a state of probation, making Adam, their first parent, their head and representative. (4.) That the fall of Adam brought all his posterity into a state of condemnation, sin, and misery, from which they are utterly unable to deliver themselves. (5.) From the mass of fallen men God elected a number innumerable to eternal life, and left the rest of mankind to the just recompense of their sins. (6.) That the ground of this election is not the foresight of anything in the one class to distinguish them favourably from the members of the other class, but the good pleasure of God. (7.) That for the salvation of those thus chosen to eternal life, God gave his own Son, to become man, and to obey and suffer for his people, thus making a full satisfaction for sin and bringing in everlasting righteousness, rendering the ultimate salvation of the elect absolutely certain. (8.) That while the Holy Spirit, in his common operations, is present with every man, so long as he lives, restraining evil and exciting good, his certainly efficacious and saving- power is exercised only in behalf of the elect. (9.) That all those whom God has thus chosen to life, and for whom

Christ specially gave Himself in the covenant of redemption, shall certainly (unless they die in infancy), be brought to the knowledge of the truth, to the exercise of faith, and to perseverance in holy living unto the end.

Such is the great scheme of doctrine known in history as the Pauline, Augustinian, or Calvinistic, taught, as we believe, in the Scriptures, developed by Augustine, formally sanctioned by the Latin Church, adhered to by the witnesses of the truth during the Middle Ages, repudiated by the Church of Rome in the Council of Trent, revived in that Church by the Jansenists, adopted by all the Reformers, incorporated in the creeds of the Protestant Churches of Switzerland, of the Palatinate, of France, Holland, England, and Scotland, and unfolded in the Standards framed by the Westminster Assembly, the common representative of Presbyterians throughout the world.

C. Hodge, D.D.

FOR WHOM DID CHRIST DIE?

“The Father imposed His wrath due unto, and the Son underwent punishment for, either:

1. All the sins of all men.
2. All the sins of some men, or
3. Some of the sins of all men.

In which case it may be said:

- a. That if the last be true, all men have some sins to answer for, and so none are saved.
- b. That if the second be true, then Christ, in their stead suffered for all the sins of all the elect in the whole world, and this is the truth
- c. But if the first be the case, why are not all men free from the punishment due unto their sins?

You answer, Because of unbelief. I ask, Is this unbelief a sin, or is it not? If it be, then Christ suffered the punishment due unto it, or He did not. If He did, why must that hinder them, more than their other sins for which He died? If He did not, He did not die for all their sins!”

Dr. John Owen Chaplain to Oliver Cromwell and
Vice Chancellor of Oxford University.

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

THE Sovereignty of God is an expression that once was generally understood. It was a phrase commonly used in religious literature. It was a theme frequently expounded in the pulpit. It was a truth which brought comfort to many hearts, and gave virility and stability to Christian character. But today, to make mention of Gods sovereignty is, in many quarters, to speak in an unknown tongue. Were we to announce from the average pulpit that the subject of our discourse would be the sovereignty of God, it would sound very much as though we had borrowed a phrase from one of the dead languages. Alas! that it should be so. Alas! that the doctrine which is the key to history, the interpreter of Providence, the warp and woof of Scripture, and the foundation of Christian theology, should be so sadly neglected and so little understood.

The sovereignty of God. What do we mean by this expression? We mean the supremacy of God, the kingship of God, the godhood of God. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that God *is* God. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the Most High, “doing according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that none can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest Thou” (Dan. 4:35). To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the Almighty, the Possessor of all power in heaven and earth, so that none can defeat His counsels, thwart His

purpose, or resist His will (Ps. 115:3). To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is "The Governor among the nations" (Ps. 22:28), setting up kingdoms, overthrowing empires, and determining the course of dynasties as pleases Him best. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that "He is the Only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of Lords" (1 Tim. 6:15). Such is the God of the Bible.

How different is the God of the Bible from the God of modern Christendom! The conception of Deity which prevails most widely today, even among those who profess to give heed to the Scriptures, is a miserable caricature, a blasphemous travesty of the Truth. The God of the twentieth century is a helpless, effeminate being who commands the respect of no really thoughtful man. The God of the popular mind is the creation of a maudlin sentimentality. The God of many a present-day pulpit is an object of pity rather than of awe-inspiring reverence. To say that God the Father has purposed the salvation of all mankind, that God the Son died with the express intention of saving the whole human race, and that God the Holy Spirit is now seeking to win the world to Christ; when, as a matter of common observation, it is apparent that the great majority of our fellow-men are dying in sin, and passing into a hopeless eternity: is to say that God the Father is *disappointed*, that God the Son is *dissatisfied*, and that God the Holy Spirit is *defeated*. We have stated the issue baldly, but there is no escaping the conclusion. To argue that God is trying His best to save all mankind, but that the majority of men will not let Him save them, is to insist that the will of the Creator is impotent, and that the will of the creature is omnipotent. To throw the blame, as many do, upon the Devil, does not remove the difficulty, for if Satan is defeating the purpose of God, then Satan is Almighty and God is no longer the Supreme Being.

To declare that the Creators original plan has been frustrated by sin, is to *dethrone* God. To suggest that God was taken by surprise in Eden and that He is now attempting to remedy an unforeseen

calamity, is to *degrade* the Most High to the level of a finite, erring mortal. To argue that man is a free moral agent and the determiner of his own destiny, and that therefore he has the power to checkmate his Maker, is to *strip* God of the attribute of Omnipotence. To say that the creature has burst the bounds assigned by his Creator, and that God is now practically a helpless Spectator before the sin and suffering entailed by Adams fall, is to *repudiate* the express declaration of Holy Writ, namely "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath *shalt Thou restrain*" (Ps. 76:10). In a word, to deny the sovereignty of God is to enter upon a path which, if followed to its logical terminus, is to arrive at blank atheism.

The sovereignty of the God of Scripture is absolute, irresistible, infinite. When we say that God is sovereign we affirm His right to govern the universe, which He has made for His own glory, just as He pleases. We affirm that *His right* is the right of the Potter over the clay, i.e., that He may mould that clay into whatsoever form He chooses, fashioning out of *the same lump* one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. We affirm that He is under no rule or law outside of His own will and nature, *that God is a Law unto Himself*, and that He is under no obligation to give an account of His matters to any.

Sovereignty characterises the whole Being of God, He is sovereign in all His attributes. *He is sovereign in the exercise of His power.* His power is exercised as He wills, when He wills, where He wills. This fact is evidenced on every page of Scripture.

A.W. Pink

*From Dr. Pink's greatest work,
THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD*

ELECTION

In my early researches after truth, the doctrine of election began to appear very plain in the Bible which led my mind into greater perplexity than ever; read where I would, it still appeared. However, if I found it in the prophets, or in the epistles, I regarded it not; but if it appeared in the four evangelists, then I thought it was Christ's own word, and would certainly stand fast for ever. I therefore got my pen, ink and paper, and was determined to read **every** book in the Bible carefully to see if each pen-man of the scriptures had written respecting this doctrine. This was a hard task for me, as I could not read one chapter with propriety. However I began, and read through several books; writing down the chapters and verses in which the doctrine of election occurred: and the more I searched after it the plainer it appeared; for the doctrines of election and absolute predestination seemed to be the principle arteries of that whole body of divinity. However, I fled to the evangelists, in hopes of setting the doctrines of Christ by them, to contradict all the prophets. But, alas! I found Christ preached it more forcibly than all the prophets put together as appeared from the following scriptures

Ye are not of my sheep, (John 10:26)

Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me (John 7:34)

I pray not for the world, (John 17:9)

And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; but to others in parables, (Luke 8:10) and again—

But to them it is not given, (Matt. 13:11)

I pray for them which thou hast given me (John 17:9)

I lay down my life for the sheep, John (10:15)

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, (John 6:37)

I know whom I have chosen, (John 13:18)

No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him, (John 6:44)

Many are called, but few are chosen, (Matt. 20:16)

And the angels shall gather together his elect from the four winds, (Matt. 24:31)

And of all that the Father hath given me I shall lose nothing, (John 6.39)

And I saw the doctrines of predestination and election reflected in many other passages of scripture.

All these doctrines ran through the whole Bible. There are some whom Christ did not redeem; as he declares, I lay down my life for my sheep, but ye are not of my sheep. No; for they had sold themselves to work wickedness.

W. Huntington S.S.
From the Kingdom of Heaven Taken by Prayer

ADDRESSING GOD IN PRAYER AND WORSHIP

One of the features of our modern permissive society, is the tendency to familiarity in addressing the aged or those in positions of authority. It is becoming quite common for children and young people to call old people by their first name. It is one of the results of modern revolt and the breakdown of law and order and authority, to drop the old terms of honour and respect in addressing their elders.

Conditions in the world usually have a way of manifesting themselves in the church. It is becoming increasingly common to hear God addressed with the familiar “you” instead of the reverential “thou.” The argument is that the reverential form is archaic, it was used in Shakespeare’s day, and was the common form of speech when the King James version of the Bible was translated in 1611. We no longer use it today in addressing each other, therefore let us drop it in addressing God! It is regarded as a mark of superior education and sophistication to avoid the old forms and use modern language in praying to the Deity. Those who do it, insist that it is not a lack of reverence, but using language that everyone understands. This is very plausible, but is it true?

THE QUESTION OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR

We are told that the old form of the second person “thou,” and its use in everyday speech has been dropped. Admittedly, when the King James Version was translated, “thou, thee” etc. were simply singular forms of the pronouns, while “you” was the plural form. The translators followed this rule whether God or man was being addressed. But today the plural form “you” is commonly used as a singular. While this is true, yet the old form of the second person and its reverential use, is a part of our language. We learn it in school in our verb conjugations: I am, thou art, he is, etc. In most languages, reverential forms of speech are used in addressing the Deity. For example, in the Latin languages, such as Spanish and Portuguese, the second person “tu” (thou) is used in a three-fold way:

1. Endearment and intimacy, between husband and wife, to a child or intimate friend.
2. It is used in disparagement to one regarded as an inferior.
3. Always in a reverential way in addressing the Deity.

In Bantu languages used in Africa, and among so-called primitive people generally, God is addressed in majestic terms and titles. No African child would think of addressing his parent or an elder by the familiar form, and to speak to Almighty God in this way would be unthinkable!

THE NEED FOR REVERENCE

In addressing a king or the president, or a cabinet minister or a judge on the bench when a law court is in session, it is customary to use respectful terms which we do not ordinarily use; your majesty, your honour, etc. The New Testament sanctions and gives examples

of such usages. We read there of an honourable counsellor and of honourable women. Luke addresses his Gospel to the “Most Excellent Theophilus,” and Paul, addressing Festus the Governor, uses the term “Most Noble.” It is a part of the present day decline in respect, to despise dignities and authority. But if one were to use the language of the street or the market place in addressing a judge while he is presiding in a law court, he would be held in contempt of court, how much more the need for reverence and respect in addressing the Creator and Redeemer of the universe!

Another important point is consideration for the feelings of others. From time immemorial it has been the custom to follow the examples in Scripture in addressing Almighty God. But this is not just mere custom or tradition. God said to the wicked in Ps. 50:21, “Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself.” It is both the direct teaching and example of Holy Scripture. To hear anyone publicly address God in familiar language, calling Him “you,” shocks the feelings of older and sensitive, spiritual people, who are characterized by the fear of God in their lives and speech. It is altogether wrong to hurt and shock the feelings of the saints in this way.

One would make a distinction between a young person recently saved, who is not familiar with the teaching and language of Holy Scripture, and the mature person who uses this kind of language deliberately. There is a difference between ignorance and arrogance. The first needs teaching, the second, rebuke. A much used and abused word today is “communication.” Some have the idea that in speaking to the young and immature, we have to use the language and vocabulary of the street corner or the high school. The only way to raise the level of respect and the dignity of personality, is to use simple but dignified language in speaking to them.

MODERN BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

One very serious contributing factor, that has helped along this tendency of disrespect in addressing God, has been some of the modern revisions and paraphrases of Scripture. Two of the chief offenders in this respect are the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, authorized in 1951 by the National Council of Churches and the New English Bible, the New Testament of which was published in 1961. Some of the men on the committees for translation of both of these versions are notorious liberals who do not believe in the deity of Christ, His virgin birth and other fundamentals of the faith. This decided bias comes out in their translation of vital passages. Sometimes in the RSV, the formal address of “thee,” “thou” and “thine” is used, while at other times the familiar “you” and “yours” is used. Dean Weigle, the chairman of the revision committee, on page 56 of “An Introduction to the RSV” explains their use in this way: “After two years of debate and experiment, it was decided to abandon these forms, and to follow the modern usage, except in language addressed to God.” Note carefully the distinction; the formal address is used in addressing God, and the informal is used in speaking to man. Let us look at one or two examples which illustrate this rule of translation:

The AV of Matt. 16:16 reads: Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God.

The RSV reads: You are the Christ, the son of the living God.

Does this mean that Christ is only a man and not God? According to Dean Weigle’s explanation, this is the only conclusion we can reach.

The AV of Acts 9:5 reads: Who art thou, Lord?

The RSV reads: Who are you, Lord?

Did Saul of Tarsus believe that the One who spoke to him from heaven was only a man?

The New English translation follows the same rule. In this version

the reverential “thee” or “thou” is never used in the Gospels in addressing our Lord Jesus Christ. This distinction of pronouns has a subtle doctrinal implication, and gives the impression that the translators are trying to separate our Lord and Saviour from God and so undermine the doctrine of His deity.

THE INFLUENCE OF THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES

Unfortunately many of the teachers in academic theological circles have adopted the use of the familiar “you” in addressing both God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. This has helped to popularize the trend. Young people take their cue from their teachers. They can do no wrong and it sounds educated to imitate them. Leaders and teachers today have a tremendous responsibility to show an example of reverence and becoming humility in speaking to a Holy God.

We would lovingly appeal to all who know and love, worship and serve our Lord Jesus Christ, and who confess Him, not only as the unique Son of God, but as God the Son manifest in flesh, to avoid any semblance of disrespectful or slang language, either in speaking to Him in prayer and praise, or speaking about Him in the preaching of the Gospel, or in the ministry of the Word.

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” Amen. Rev. 5:12.

In the Psalms “you” and “your” occur 30 times, and never in addressing God; but “Thy” and “Thou” occur 2860 times. Solomon’s great prayer, recorded in Second Chronicles, uses “Thy” 61 times, but “you” is not to be found.

The prayer of our Lord Jesus in John 17 lacks a single “You,” but contains “Thou” and “Thine” 41 times.

T. Ernest Wilson

REVIVALISTS

“The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.”

Isaiah 52:10

Now, as you are aware, I have been suspicious of revivals. Whenever I see a man who is called a revivalist I always set him down for a cipher. I would scorn the taking of such a title as that to myself. If God pleases to make use of a man for the promoting of a revival, well and good; but for any man to assume the title and office of a revivalist, and go about the country, believing that wherever he goes, he is the vessel of mercy appointed to convey a revival of religion, is, I think, an assumption far too arrogant for any man who has the slightest degree of modesty. And again, there are a large number of revivals, which occur every now and then in our towns, and sometimes in our city (London), which I believe to be spurious and worthless. I have heard of the people crowding in the morning, the afternoon, and the evening, to hear some noted revivalist, and under his preaching some have screamed, have shrieked, have fallen down on the floor, have rolled themselves in convulsions, and afterwards when he has set a form for penitents, employing one or two decoy ducks to run out from the rest and make

a confession of sin, hundreds have come forward, impressed by that one sermon, and declared that they were there and then turned from the error of their ways; and it was only last week I saw a record of a certain place in our own country giving an account that on such a day, under the preaching of the Rev. Mr. So-and-So 17 persons were thoroughly sanctified, 28 were convinced of sin, and 29 received the blessing of justification. Then comes the next day, so many more; the following day, so many more; and afterwards they are all cast up together, making a grand total of so many hundreds who have been blessed during three services, under the ministry of Mr. So-and-So. All that I call farce! There may be something very good in it; but the outside looks to me to be so rotten that I should scarcely trust myself to think that the good within comes to any great amount. When people go to work to calculate so exactly by arithmetic it always strikes me they have mistaken what they are at. We may easily say that so many were added to the church on a certain occasion, but to take a separate census of the convinced, the justified, and sanctified is absurd.

I must say once more that if God should send us a great revival of religion it will be our duty not to relax the bonds of discipline. Some churches when they increase very largely are apt to take people into their number by wholesale, without due and proper examination. We ought to be just as strict in the paroxysms of a revival as in the cooler times of a gradual increase, and if the Lord sends His Spirit like a hurricane, it is ours to deal with the sails, lest the hurricane should wreck us by driving us upon some fell rock that may do us serious injury. Take care ye that are officers in the church when ye see the people stirred up that ye exercise still a holy caution lest the church become lowered in its standard of piety by the admission of persons not truly saved.”

C.H. Spurgeon

GRAVEN IMAGES

IS there really any harm in wearing a cross around your neck, or having a picture of Jesus on the wall? Is it wrong to use symbols of religion?

The second great law that God Almighty gave (which most people have posted on their walls) says, “THOU SHALT NOT MAKE UNTO THEE ANY GRAVEN IMAGE, OR ANY LIKENESS OF ANY THING THAT IS IN HEAVEN ABOVE, OR THAT IS IN THE EARTH BENEATH, OR THAT IS IN THE WATER UNDER THE EARTH” (Exodus 20:4). If someone says “That means worshipping idols,” you are right! And if you don’t think people worship these symbols (crosses and pictures), just try and take one down from a steeple, throw one away, or write an article against them! If the express command of the Holy God is not clear enough for people, then I am sure that what I say will not help. But I cannot help but speak up in the midst of such blatant idolatry in our land.

The scriptures say that “God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him MUST worship Him in spirit (not hand but heart; not ceremony but sincerity) and in truth” (John 4:24). The wearing of a cross does not prove one is a Christian (rock singers wear them!), but only proves one’s fetish for wearing jewelry. If you are a true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, you won’t need a symbol because your life and speech will show forth your profession.

What about a picture on the wall which is supposed to be Jesus? Well, isn't Christ in Heaven right now, and didn't God say no likenesses of anything in Heaven or earth? Besides, how does anyone know what Christ really looked like while on this earth? Can you imagine anyone putting a picture on the wall of one who closely resembles his mother but is not really her? Absurd, isn't it! Let someone try to paint a picture of the Jesus Christ Who is described in Revelation 1, whose "eyes were as a flame of fire, and his countenance as the SUN SHINETH in his strength." Now that's the Jesus Christ of the Bible we must worship.

Paul Mahan,
Rocky Mt. VA

JOHN CALVIN ON CHURCH MUSIC

To sing the praises of God upon the harp and psaltery unquestionably formed a part of the training of the law and of the service of God under the dispensation of shadows and figures; but they are not now to be used in public thanksgiving.” (Calvin on Psalm 71:22)

“With respect to the tabret, harp, and psaltery, we have formerly observed, and will find it necessary afterwards to repeat the same remark, that the Levites, under the law, were justified in making use of instrumental music in the worship of God; it having been his will to train his people, while they were yet tender and like children, by such rudiments until the coming of Christ. But now, when the clear light of the gospel has dissipated the shadows of the law and taught us that God is to be served in a simpler form, it would be to act a foolish and mistaken part to imitate that which the prophet enjoined only upon those of his own time.” (Calvin on Psalm 81:3)

“We are to remember that the worship of God was never understood to consist in such outward services, which were only necessary to help forward a people as yet weak and rude in knowledge in the spiritual worship of God. A difference is to be observed in this respect between his people under the Old and under the New

Testament; for now that Christ has appeared, and the church has reached full age, it were only to bury the light of the gospel should we introduce the shadows of a departed dispensation.” (Calvin on Psalm 92:1)

“I have no doubt that playing upon cymbals, touching the harp and viol, and all that kind of music, which is so frequently mentioned in the Psalms, was a part of the education—that is to say, the puerile instruction of the law. I speak of the stated service of the temple. For even now, if believers choose to cheer themselves with musical instruments, they should, I think, make it their object not to dissever their cheerfulness from the praises of God. But when they frequent their sacred assemblies, musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up of lamps, and the restoration of the other shadows of the law. The Papists, therefore, have foolishly borrowed this, as well as many other things, from the Jews. Men who are fond of outward pomp may delight in that noise; but the simplicity which God recommends to us by the apostle is far more pleasing to him. Paul allows us to bless God in the public assembly of the saints, only in a known tongue (1 Cor. 14:16). The voice of man, although not understood by the generality, assuredly excels all inanimate instruments of music; and yet we see what Paul determines concerning speaking in an unknown tongue. What shall we then say of chanting, which fills the ears with nothing but an empty sound? Does any one object that music is very useful for awakening the minds of men and moving their hearts? I own it; but we should always take care that no corruption creep in, which might both defile the pure worship of God, and involve men in superstition. Moreover, since the Holy Spirit expressly warns us of this danger by the mouth of Paul, to proceed beyond what we are there warranted by him is not only, I must say, unadvised zeal, but wicked and perverse obstinacy.” (Calvin on Psalm 33)

“I do not insist upon the words in the Hebrew signifying the musical instruments; only let the reader remember that sundry different kinds are here mentioned, which were in use under the legal economy . . .” (Calvin on Psalm 150:3-5).

“What, therefore, was in use under the law is by no means entitled to our practice under the gospel; and these things being not only superfluous, but useless, are to be abstained from, because pure and simple modulation is sufficient for the praise of God, if it is sung with the heart and with the mouth. We know that our Lord Jesus Christ has appeared, and by his advent has abolished these legal shadows. Instrumental music, we therefore maintain, was only tolerated on account of the times and the people, because they were as boys, as the sacred Scripture speaketh, whose condition required these puerile rudiments. But in gospel times we must not have recourse to these unless we wish to destroy the evangelical perfection, and to obscure the meridian light which we enjoy in Christ our Lord.”(Calvin’s Sermon on 1 Samuel 18:1-9).

The foregoing quotations from Calvin’s works set forth the great Reformer’s views on instrumental music in worship in his own words. It is a constant source of astonishment that scholars professing to be Calvinists attempt to derive principles concerning a Calvinistic view of instrumental music in worship by deductive reasoning from general features of Calvin’s theology, while they totally disregard Calvin’s own explicit rejection of the whole idea of instrumental music in New Testament worship. Can it be sound to use deductions from Calvin’s theology to contradict explicit, emphatic statements of Calvin himself? Or can we claim that Calvin’s view of instrumental music was contrary to Calvinism?

CHURCH SOCIALS

Take these things hence.

John 2:16

Quasi-Religious social evenings are becoming an unmitigated nuisance. This sort of thing began in treats for children as inducements to attend, and as rewards for attending, the Sabbath School. But it did not stop there. We have now congregational social evenings, at which an annual opportunity is taken of parading the work done, and the money raised, during the past year, flattering speeches are exchanged by those who take kindly to be licked all over with an oily tongue, and a great deal of vapid sentiment is mixed up with exaggerated statements as to success seasoned with bits of drollery, and interspersed with sensational music. The attempt to sanctify all this by the Word and by prayer is successful only as a sacrilege. What should be exalted, is degraded, and the alliance of religion and the world, in that as in every other instance, is all to the gain of the latter. It would be folly to expect a spark to live if placed, in the midst of ice. The ice could not be fuel for the spark,—but would by the contact dissolve in water to quench it. So must it fare with spiritual fervour in contact with the surroundings of a social evening.—The Present Cast and Tendency of Religious Thought and Feeling in Scotland.

John Kennedy, D.D.

A TIME TO DANCE

A ball having occurred in the parish of a worthy minister, at a season of peculiar seriousness among the youth of his pastoral charge, and many of them having declined to attend, their absence was attributed erroneously to the influence of the pastor, who in consequence received the following anonymous note:

“Sir,—Obey the voice of Holy Scripture. Take the following for your text and contradict it. Show in what consists the evil of that *innocent amusement* of dancing: Eccles. 3:4.

A true Christian but no Hypocrite.”

The minister immediately wrote the following reply, which, as the note was anonymous and without address, remained in his own possession for some time, when he communicated it to the public, thinking it might meet the eye of the writer of the note and others:

My dear Sir,—Your request that I would preach from Eccles. 3:4 I cannot comply with at present, since there are some Christian duties more important than dancing, which a part of my people seem disposed to neglect. Whenever, however, I see that the duty of dancing is too much neglected, I shall not fail to raise a warning voice against so dangerous an omission. In the meantime there are certain difficulties in the text which you commend to my notice,

the solution of which I should receive with gratitude from a true Christian.

My first difficulty respects the *time* for dancing, for although the text declares that there is a time to dance, yet when that time is, it does not determine. Now this point I wish to ascertain exactly before I preach upon the subject for it would be as criminal, I conclude, to dance at the *wrong* time as to neglect to dance at the *right* time. I have been able to satisfy myself in some particulars when it is *not* a time to dance. We shall agree I presume that on the Sabbath day, or at a funeral, or during the prevalence of a pestilence, or the rocking of an earth-quake, or the roaring of a thunderstorm, it would be no time to dance. If we were condemned to die and were waiting in prison the day of execution, this would be no time for dancing, and if our feet stood on slippery places beside a precipice we should not dare to dance. But suppose the very day to be ascertained, is the whole day or only a part to be devoted to this amusement? And if a part of the day only, then *which* part is the time to dance? From the notoriously pernicious effect of *midnight meetings* in all ages upon morals and health, no one will pretend *that* to be the right time to dance, and perhaps it may be immaterial which portion of the daylight is devoted to that innocent amusement.

But allowing the *time* to be ascertained, there still is an obscurity in the text. Is it a *command* to dance or only a *permission*? Or is it a declaration of the fact that as men are constituted there is a time when all the events alluded to, in the providence of God come to pass? If the text be a *command*, is it of universal obligation, and must old men and maidens, young men and children dance obedience? Or if the text be merely a declaration that there *is* a time when men dance, as there is a time when men die, then I might as well be requested to take the first eight verses of the chapter, and shew in what consists the evil of those *innocent* practices of *hating and making war and killing men*, for which it seems there is a time as well as for dancing.

There is still another difficulty in the text which just now occurs to me. What *kind* of dancing does the text intend, for it is certainly of no small consequence to a *true Christian* to dance in a scriptural *manner* as well as at a scriptural time. Now to avoid mistakes on a point of such importance, I have consulted every passage in the Bible which speaks of dancing; the most important of which permit me to submit to your inspection. Exod. 15:20: "And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with *dances*." This also was on account of the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea. Judges 11:34: "The daughter of Jephthah came out to meet him with timbrels and with *dances*." This was also on account of a victory over the enemies of Israel. Judges 21: The yearly feast in Shiloh was a feast *unto the Lord*, in which the daughters of Shiloh went forth in the dances. This was done as an act of *religious* worship. And David *danced before the Lord* with all his might. But the irreligious Michal came out to meet David, and said: "How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the *vain fellows* shamelessly uncovereth himself." Dancing it seems was a *sacred* rite and was usually performed by women. At that day it was perverted from its sacred use by none but *vain fellows destitute of shame*. David vindicates himself from her irony by saying *it was before the Lord*, admitting that had this not been the case her rebuke would have been merited, 1 Sam. 18:6: On account of the victory of Saul and David over the Philistines, women came out of all the cities of Israel singing and dancing. Ps. 149:3: "Let them praise His name in the dance." Ps. 30:11: "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing." The deliverance here spoken of was a recovery from sickness, and the dancing an expression of religious gratitude and joy. Exod. 32:19: "As soon as he came nigh unto the camp, he saw the calf and the dancing." From this it appears that dancing was a feast also of idol worship. Jer. 31:4: "O virgin

of Israel, thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets and go forth in the dances of them that make merry.” This passage predicts the return from captivity and the restoration of the divine favour, with the consequent expressions of religious joy. Matt. 11:17: “We have piped unto you and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you and ye have not lamented.” That is, neither the judgments of God produce any effects upon this incorrigible generation; they neither mourn when called to mourning by His providence; nor rejoice with the tokens of religious joy when His mercies demand their gratitude. Luke 15:25: “Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came nigh he heard music and dancing.” The return of the prodigal was a joyful event, for which, the grateful father, according to the usages of the Jewish Church and the exhortation of the Psalmist, praised the Lord in the dance. Eccles. 3:4: “A time to mourn and a time to dance.” Since the Jewish church knew nothing of dancing except as *a religious ceremony*, or an *expression of gratitude and praise*, the text is a declaration that the providence of God sometimes demands mourning and sometimes gladness and gratitude. Matt. 14:6: “But when Herod’s birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod.” Here dancing was perverted from its original purpose to those of *vanity and ostentation*. Job 21:7, 11, 13, 14, 15: “Wherefore doth the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto Him?” Their wealth and dancing are assigned as a reason for their saying unto God, “Depart from us”, and of their not desiring the knowledge of His ways, and not delighting to serve Him or pray to Him.

From the preceding quotations it will appear: First, That dancing

was a religious act, both of the true and also of idol worship. Secondly, That it was practised exclusively on joyful occasions, such as national festivals, or great victories. Thirdly, That it was performed by maidens only. Fourthly, That it was usually performed in the *day-time* in the open air, in highways, fields, or groves. That men who perverted dancing to *amusement* were *deemed infamous*. That no instances of dancing are found upon record in the Bible in which the two sexes united in the exercise, either as an act of worship or amusement, except that of *vain fellows* devoid of shame; of the irreligious families described by Job, which produced increased impiety and ended in destruction, and of Herodias which terminated in the rash act of Herod and *the murder of John the Baptist*.

THE CHURCH WALKING WITH THE WORLD

The Church and the World walked far apart
On the changing shore of time:
The World was singing a giddy song,
And the Church a Psalm sublime.
“Come give me your hand,” said the merry World.
“And then walk with me this way,”
But the good Church hid her snowy hand.
And solemnly answered—“Nay.
I will not give you my hand at all
And I will not walk with you;
Your way is the way of eternal death.
And your words are all untrue.”

“Nay, walk with me a little space.”
Said the World with a kindly air,
“The road I walk is a pleasant road,
And the sun shines always there.
Your way is narrow and thorny and rough,
While mine is flowery and smooth;
Your lot is sad with reproach and toil,
But in rounds of joy I move.

My way you can see, is a broad fair one.
And my gate is high and wide;
There is room enough for you and me.
And we'll travel side by side."

Half shyly the Church approached the World.
And gave him her hand of snow;
And the false World grasped it, and walked along
And whispered in accents low.
"Your dress is too simple to please my taste.
I have gold and pearls to wear;
Rich velvets and silks for your graceful form.
And diamonds to deck your hair."

The Church looked down at her plain white robes
And then at the dazzling World,
And blushed as she saw his handsome lip,
With a smile contemptuous curled;
"I will change my dress for a costlier one",
Said the Church with a smile of grace;
Then her pure white garment drifted away,
And the World gave in their place
Beautiful satins, and fashionable silks.
And roses and gems and pearls;
And over her forehead her bright hair fell
And waved in a thousand curls.

"Your house is too plain," said the proud old World.
"Let us build you one like mine.
With kitchen for feasting and parlour for play.
And furniture never so fine."
So he built her a costly and beautiful house—
Splendid it was to behold:

Her sons and daughters met frequently there.
Shining in purple and gold;
And fair and festival—frolics untold,
Were held in the place of prayer;
And maidens, bewitching as sirens of old—
With world-winning graces rare,
Bedecked with fair jewels and hair all curled—
Untrammelled by Gospel or Laws,
To beguile and amuse and win from the World,
Some help for “the righteous cause”.

The Angel of mercy rebuked the Church.
And whispered, “I know thy sin;”
Then the Church looked sad, and anxiously longed
To gather the children in.
But some were away at the midnight ball.
And others were at the play;
And some were drinking in gay saloons,
And the angel went away.

And then said the World in soothing tones—
“Your much loved ones mean no harm—
Merely indulging in innocent sports”.
So she leaned on his proffered arm.
And smiled, and chatted, and gathered flowers,
And walked along with the World;
While countless millions of precious souls
Were hungering for truth untold.

“Your preachers are all too old and plain”,
Said the gay World with a sneer;
“They frighten my children with dreadful tales
Which I do not like to hear.

They talk of judgments and fire and pain.
And the doom of darkest night.
They warn of a place that should not be
Thus spoken to ears polite!
I will send you some of a better stamp,
More brilliant and gay and fast,
Who will show how men may live as they list
And go to heaven at last.
The Father is merciful, great and good,
Loving and tender and kind;
Do you think He'd take one child to heaven,
And leave another behind?"

So she called for pleasing and gay divines,
Deemed gifted, and great, and learned;
And the plain old men that had preached the cross
Were out of her pulpits turned.
Then Mammon came in and supported the Church,
And rented a prominent pew;
And preaching and singing and floral display
Soon proclaimed a gospel new.

"You give too much to the poor," said the World,
"Far more than you ought to do;
Though the poor need shelter, food and clothes.
Why thus need it trouble you?
Go take your money and buy rich robes
And horses and carriage fine;
And pearls and jewels and dainty food.
The rarest and costliest wine.
My children, they dote on all such things.
And if you their love would win,

You must do as they do, and walk in the way.
The flowery way they're in."

Then the Church her purse-strings tightly held
And gracefully lowered her head.
And simpered, "I've given too much away.
I will do, sir, as you have said."
So the poor were turned from the door in scorn
She heard not the orphans' cry;
And she drew her beautiful robes aside
As the widows went weeping by.
And they of the Church, and they of the
World Journeyed closely, hand and heart,
And none but the Master, who knoweth all,
Could discern the two apart.

Then the Church sat down at her ease and said.
"I'm rich and in goods increased.
I have need of nothing, and naught to do.
But to laugh and dance and feast."
The sly World heard her and laughed within.
And mockingly said aside,
"The Church has fallen—the beautiful Church.
Her shame is her boast and pride."

Thus her witnessing power, alas, was lost.
And perilous times came in;
The times of the end, so often foretold.
Of form and pleasure and sin.
Then the Angel drew near the mercy-seat.
And whispered in sighs her name,

And the saints their anthems of rapture hushed,
And covered their heads with shame.

A voice came down from the hush of heaven.

From Him who sat on the throne:

“I know thy works and what thou has said

But alas! thou hast not known

That thou art poor and naked and blind,

With pride and ruin enthralled;

The expectant Bride of a heavenly Groom

Is the harlot of the World!

Thou hast ceased to watch for that blessed hope,

Hast fallen from zeal and grace;

So now, alas! I must cast thee out,

And blot thy name from its place.”

But out from the side of the harlot church,

While she sleeps in indolent shame,

Will be taken the remnant who keep God’s word,

And honour His holy name.

By the word of their testimony, and the blood of the Lamb,

They overcame the world.

They prayed for the day when their enemy strong,

Would be into the abyss hurled.

For those who keep their garments clean,

Shall walk with Him in white,

In the day when He comes to claim His own,

To make them His jewels bright.

Author Unknown

“What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” 2 Cor. 6:16-18.

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. 1 John 2:15-17.

ABOUT XMAS

Thus saith the Lord, learn not the way of the heathen...for the customs of the people are vain.

Jer. 10:1-3

Christmas is coming! Quite so: but what is “Christmas?” Does not the very term itself denote it’s source—“Christmas.” Thus it is of Roman origin, brought over from paganism. But, says someone, Christmas is the time when we commemorate the Saviour’s birth. It is? And WHO authorized such commemoration? Certainly God did not. The Redeemer bade His disciples “remember” Him in His death, but there is not a word in scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, which tells us to celebrate His birth. Moreover, who knows when, in what month, He was born? The Bible is silent thereon. It is without reason that the only “birthday” commemorations mentioned in God’s Word are Pharaoh’s (Gen. 40:20) and Herod’s (Matt. 14:6)? Is this recorded “for our learning?” If so, have we prayerfully taken it to heart? And WHO is it that celebrates “Christmas?” The whole “civilized world.” Millions who make no profession of faith in the blood of the Lamb, who “despise and reject Him,” and millions more who while claiming to be His followers yet in works deny Him, join in merrymaking under the pretense of honoring the birth of the Lord Jesus. Putting it on it’s

lowest ground, we would ask, is it fitting that His friends should unite with His enemies in a worldly round of fleshly gratification? Does any true born again soul really think that He whom the world cast out is either pleased or glorified by such participation in the world's joys? Verily, the customs of the people are VAIN; and it is written, "*Thou shall not follow a multitude to do evil*" (Ex. 23:2).

Some will argue for the "keeping of Christmas" on the ground of "giving the kiddies a good time." But why do this under the cloak of honoring the Saviour's birth? Why is it necessary to drag in His holy name in connection with what takes place at that season of carnal jollification? Is this taking the little one with you OUT of Egypt (Ex. 10:9-10) a type of the world, or is it not plainly mingling with present day Egyptains in their "pleasures of sin for a season?" (Heb 11:25) Scripture says, "*Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it*" (Prov. 22:6). Scripture does command God's people to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4), but where does it stipulate that it is our duty to give the little one a "good time?" Do we ever give the children "a good time" when we engage in anything upon which we cannot fittingly ask THE LORD'S blessing?

There are those who DO abstain from some of the grosser carnalities of the "festive season," yet are they nevertheless in cruel bondage to the prevailing custom of "Christmas" namely that of exchanging "gifts." We say "exchanging" for that is what it really amounts to in many cases. A list is kept, either on paper or in memory, of those from whom gifts were received last year, and that for the purpose of returning the compliment this year. Nor is this all: great care has been taken that the "gift" made to the friend is worth as much in dollars and cents as the one they expect to receive from him or her. Thus, with many who can ill afford it, a considerable sum has to be set aside each year with which to purchase things simply to send them out in RETURN for others which are likely to be received.

Thus a burden has been bound on them which not a few find hard to bear. But what are we to do? If we fail to send out “gifts” our friends will think hard of us, probably deem us stingy and miserly.

The honest course is to go to the trouble of notifying them—by letter if at a distance—that from now on you do not propose to send out any more “Christmas gifts” as such. Give your reasons. State plainly that you have been brought to see that “Christmas merry-making” is entirely a thing OF THE WORLD, devoid of any Scriptural warrant; that it is a Romish institution, and now that you see this, you dare no longer have any fellowship with it (Eph. 5:11): that you are the Lord’s “free man” (1 Cor. 7:22), and therefore you refuse to be in bondage to a costly custom imposed by the world.

What about sending out “Christmas cards” with a text of Scripture on them? That also is an abomination in the sight of God. Why? Because His Word expressly forbids all unholy mixtures; (Deut. 22:10-11) typified this. What do we mean by an “unholy mixture?” This: the linking together of the pure Word of God with the Romish “Christ-MASS.” By all means send cards (preferably at some other time of the year) to your ungodly friends, and Christians too, with a verse of Scripture, but NOT with “Christmas” on it. What would you think of a printed program of a vaudeville having Isa. 53:5 at the foot of it? Why, that it was altogether OUT OF PLACE, highly incongruous. But in the sight of God the circus and the theatre are far less obnoxious than the “Christmas celebration” of Romish and Protestant “churches.” Why? Because the latter are done under the cover of the holy name of Christ; the former are not. *“But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto perfect day”* (Prov. 4:18). Where there is a heart that really desires to please the Lord, He graciously grants increasing knowledge of His will. If He is pleased to use these lines in opening the eyes of some of His dear people to recognize what is a growing evil, and to show them that they have been dishonouring Christ by linking the name of the

Man of Sorrows (and such He WAS, when on earth) with a “MERRY Christmas,” then join with the writer in a repentant confessing of this sin to God, seeking His grace for complete deliverance from it, and praise Him for the light which He has granted you concerning it. Beloved fellow-Christian, “*The coming of the Lord draweth nigh*” (Jas. 5:8). Do we really believe this? Believe it not because the Papacy is regaining its lost temporal power, but because GOD says so—“*for we walk by faith not by sight*” (2 Cor. 5:7). If so, what effects does such believing have on our walk? This may be your last Christmas on earth. Would you like to be summoned from a “Christmas party” to meet Him? The call for the moment is “*Go ye OUT to meet Him*” (Matt. 25:6) out from a Godless Christendom, out from the horrible burlesque of “religion” which now masquerades under His name.

“*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*” (2 Cor. 5:10). How solemn and searching! The Lord Jesus declared that “*every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment*” (Matt. 12:36). If every “idle word” is going to be taken note of, then most assuredly will be every wasted energy, every wasted dollar, every wasted hour! Should we still be on earth when the closing days of this year arrive, let writer and reader earnestly seek grace to live and act with the judgment seat of Christ before us. HIS “well done” will be ample compensation for the sneers and taunts which we may now receive from Christless souls.

Does any Christian reader imagine for a moment that when he or she shall stand before their holy Lord, that they will regret having lived “too strictly” on earth? Is there the slightest danger of His reproving any of His own because they were “too extreme” in “*abstaining from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul*” (1 Peter 2:11)? We may gain the good will and good works of worldly religionists today by our compromising on “little (?) points,” but shall we receive His smile

and approval on that day? Oh to be more concerned about what HE thinks, and less concerned about what perishing mortals think.

“Thou shall not follow a multitude to do evil” (Ex. 23:2). Ah, it is an easy thing to float with the tide of popular opinion; but it takes much grace diligently sought from God, to swim against it. Yet that is what the heir of heaven is called on to do: to *“Be not conformed to this world”* (Rom. 12:2), to deny self, take up the cross, and follow a rejected Christ.

How sorely does both writer and reader need to heed that word of the Savior, *“Behold I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown”* (Rev. 3:11). Oh that each of us may be able to truthfully say, *“I have refrained my feet from EVERY evil way, that I might keep THY WORD”* (Psa. 119:101).

Our final word is to the pastors. To you the Word of the Lord is, *“Be THOU AN EXAMPLE of believers in word, in conversation, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity* (1 Tim. 4:12), is it not true that the most corrupt “churches” you know of, where almost every fundamental of the faith is denied, will yet have their “Christmas celebrations?” Will you imitate them? Are you consistent to protest against unscriptural methods of “raising money,” and then to sanction unscriptural “Christmas services?” Seek grace to firmly but lovingly set God’s truth on this subject before your people, and announce that you can have no pail in following Pagan, Romish, and worldly customs.

A W Pink

‘TIS A POINT I LONG TO KNOW

‘Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I His, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse,
Who have never heard His name.

Could my heart so hard remain,
Prayer a task and burden prove,
Ev’ry trifle give me pain,
If I knew a Saviour’s love?

When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Fill’d with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?

'Tis A Point I Long To Know

If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mix'd with all I do;
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?

Yet I mourn my stubborn will,
Find my sin a grief and thrall:
Should I grieve for what I feel,
If I did not love at all?

Could I joy his saints to meet,
Choose the ways I once abhorr'd,
Find at times the promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord?

Lord, decide the doubtful case:
Thou, who art Thy people's sun,
Shine upon Thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun.

Let me love Thee more and more,
If I love at all, I pray;
If I have not lov'd before,
Help me to begin to-day.

John Newton

WHAT IS THIS POINT YOU LONG TO KNOW?

What is this point you long to know?
Methinks I hear you say, 'Tis this—
I want to know I'm born of God,
An heir of everlasting bliss.

Is this the point you long to know?
The point is settled in my view—
For if you want to love your God,
It proves He first has loved you.

I want to know Christ died for me,
I want to feel the seal within;
I want to know Christ's precious blood—
Was shed to wash away my sin.

I want to feel more love to Christ,
I want more liberty in prayer;
But when I look within my heart,
It almost drives me to despair.

I want a mind more firmly fixed
On Christ, my everlasting Head;
I want to feel my soul alive,
And not so barren, or so dead.

What Is This Point You Long To Know?

I want more faith, a stronger faith;
I want to feel its power within;
I want to feel more love to God,
I want to feel less love to sin.

I want to live above the world,
And count it all but trash and toys;
I want more tokens of God's grace,
Some foretaste of eternal joys.

I want - I know not what I want,
I want that real and special good!
Yet all my wants are summed up here,
I want to love! I want my God!

Is this the point you long to know?
The dead can neither feel nor see;
It is the slave that's bound in chains,
That knows the worth of liberty.

So where a want like this is found,
I think I may be bold to say—
That God has fixed within thy heart,
What hell can never take away.

However small thy grace appears,
There's plenty in thy Living Head;
These wants you feel, my Christian friend,
Were never found amongst the dead.

Daniel Herbert

WHEN DOES THE SABBATH BEGIN?

Q. When doth the weekly Sabbath begin?

A. In the morning, immediately after midnight.

Q. How prove you that?

A. As Christ rose early in the morning, and the evening after is called the evening of the same day; and Moses said, *To-morrow* (not this night) *is a Sabbath to the Lord*, John 20:1, 19. Exodus 16:23.

Q. How then is it said, Lev. 23:32. *From evening to evening shall ye celebrate your Sabbath?*

A. That related to the ceremonial, not to the weekly Sabbath.

extracted from *The Assembly's Shorter Catechism*, by John Brown of Haddington.

Q.10. When should we begin and end this day?

A. We should measure it just as we do other days, from midnight to midnight, without alienating any part of it to our own works.

extracted from *Fisher's Catechism*, a work by James Fisher and Ebenezer Erskine.

What Lessons do you derive from the above Doctrines [i.e. Q.#58 of the Shorter Catechism]?

I learn that from twelve on Saturday night to twelve on Sabbath night, is a period sacred to God and separated from worldly uses, and that any one part of this period is as sacred as any other part of it, and to be observed accordingly.

extracted from *The Westminster Shorter Catechism*. by James R. Boyd, printed by Presbyterian Board of Publication.

Obs.220.—*The Fourth Commandment requireth us to sanctify one whole day in seven, which God hath expressly appointed to be a holy Sabbath to himself.*

By *one whole day*, as the stated time of worshipping God, we are to understand the same that we are to understand by any other whole day—namely, a period consisting of twenty-four hours, or what is commonly called a *natural day*; and this day we should begin and end at the same time that we begin and end any other day—namely, at midnight.

extracted from *A Concise System of Theology* by Alexander Smith Paterson.

Q. *Quhat [What] is it to sanctifie the Sabbath?*

A. It is to sett all apairt from the dawning of the day untill midnight (Joh. 20:1; Acts 20:7) for Godis service.

extracted from *Ane Catachisme conteining the Soume [Sum] of Christian Religion*, by Samuel Rutherford, in *Catechisms of the Second Reformation*, by Alexander Mitchell, printed by James Nisbet & Co. London.

When does the Sabbath begin?

There is some diversity in the Christian world respecting the time, at which the Sabbath begins. Some date it from sunset on Saturday

till sunset on Sabbath. When asked for their authority, they refer to a phrase which occurs several times in the first chapter of Genesis: "And the evening and the morning were the first day." This has not been considered sufficient proof by the great mass of the Christian world. Nor ought it to be, as all the world knows that no day of creation began in the evening; but all of them began in the morning. That saying of Moses therefore only declares that the day was made up of two parts, the after part, and the fore part. Indeed the evidence in the New Testament seems to be clearly against this view. "Our Sabbath begins where the Jewish Sabbath ended; but the Jewish Sabbath did not end towards the evening, but towards the morning. Matt, 28:1. 'In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week,' &c. In the New Testament, the evening following, and not going before this first day of the week, is called the evening of the first day. John 20:19. 'The same day, at evening, being the first day of the week,' &c. Our Sabbath is held in memory of Christ's resurrection, and it is certain that Christ rose early in the morning of the first day of the week.

extracted from *The Law of God, as Contained in the Ten Commandments, Explained and Enforced*, by William S. Plumer, printed by Presbyterian Board of Publication.

... [S]ince the resurrection of Christ, the first day of the week, comprehending twenty-four hours from midnight to midnight, is the weekly Sabbath.

The Sabbath is a whole day from midnight to midnight, and is of universal moral obligation.

extracted from "*Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland*" compiled by James Dodson, H.S.H.

PRAYING FOR THE DEAD?

The Pope told a gathering of thousands of his followers in St Peter's Square, Rome, that it was their duty to pray for the dead. But if we follow the Bible, we will not pray for the dead—and the Bible is the only rule to direct us as to what we should believe. Nowhere from Genesis to Revelation is there the slightest suggestion that we should pray for the dead.

When Jesus spoke about the deaths of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16) He made it clear that they both went straight to where they were going to spend eternity—either in hell or in heaven. There was nowhere Lazarus had to pass through before he could reach heaven—no purgatory in which he must suffer till he was completely purified from his sins.

The Pope explained his thinking: “The [Roman Catholic] Church has always exhorted to pray for the dead. She invites believers to look upon the mystery of death not as the last word on human fate.” But death is the last word on the eternal future of sinners as they leave this world. That future is according to Solomon's picture: “If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be”. So it is with us. As we are when we reach death, so will we be to all eternity. Whether we lean towards heaven or towards hell before death, that is where we will go when we die. There is no possibility of being changed afterwards.

Since he believes in purgatory, the Pope claims that “it is important and proper to pray for the dead because, even if they died in grace and in friendship with God, perhaps they still have need of further purification to enter into the joy of heaven”. But if people die in friendship with God it is because they have come to Him through Christ and have given up their trust in everything else—including their own good works, the prayers of saints and everyone else, and all the performances of a priest.

And if they die in friendship with God, they die completely free from the guilt of sin. As Paul makes plain, there is “no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1); those who believe in Christ will never be condemned. They are also completely free from the power of sin. There is no sin left from which they must be purified by the pains of an imaginary purgatory. So there is no need to pray for believers who have died; they are all safe in heaven already. And it is too late to pray for unbelievers who have died; they are, solemnly, in hell, from which there is no return. But let us pray earnestly for ourselves and for others, while we are spared in this world, so that we may flee to Christ by faith. Let us do so urgently, for death may come unexpectedly, and there is no hope of pardon on the other side of death.

WILL A SECRET RAPTURE PRECEDE THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST?

THE SECRET RAPTURE THEORY

The Secret Rapture Theory teaches that Christ will descend from heaven to “the air,” raise the righteous dead and translate the living saints who will be caught away to the ‘secret chambers,’ there to remain with Christ for a period of approximately seven years. Of this so-called secret rapture, neither the waiting Church, nor the world is to have a moment’s warning, the saints being first appraised of it by their heavenward flight, and the world by the departure of the “missing ones.” After the pouring out of great judgments upon the earth and the conversion of great multitudes by unparalleled revivals of religion, Christ and His immortalized saints, with the angelic hosts, are to be manifested to the world by their visible descent in great power and glory to establish the Kingdom of God upon earth for a thousand years; (this is known as the Futurist Jewish Millennium).

This view is said to be supported by the use of three Greek words: “parousia,” “apokalupsis,” and “epiphaneia”—the first Greek word “parousia” applying to the secret coming of Christ to the air *for* His saints (commonly called the Rapture) and the two latter words

“apokalupsis,” “epiphaneia” to the visible coming of Christ *with* His saints to the earth (commonly called the *Revelation*). This theory is a perversion of Second Coming truth, a delusion of the last days, widely held. Nowhere does the New Testament teach two future comings of Christ, first *for* His saints, and then *with* His saints some three-and-a-half to seven years later. Those who hold this view seek to harmonize it with the New Testament teaching on the Second Coming of Christ by asserting that the coming *for* and *with* the Saints several years later are not two comings, but two stages of the Second Coming of Christ. This attempt to justify the theory cannot overthrow the testimony of the senses that the coming *for* the saints is a FIRST second coming, and the subsequent coming *with* the saints is a SECOND second coming. But this cannot be. He came once, and He will come once more—and only once more: “the second time without sin unto salvation” (Heb. 9:28).

In order to guard believers against this very idea of a Secret Rapture, Christ taught His disciples, “If they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the SECRET CHAMBERS; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the East, and SHINETH even unto the West; so (visible) shall also the coming (*Parousia*) of the Son of man be” (Matt. 24:26, 27). Hence, as the lightning flash is open and visible to all, so is Christ’s *Parousia* to be.

The disciples associated the coming (*Parousia*) with the “end of the world,” or age, when they asked Christ the question on the Mount of Olives: “What shall be the sign of thy coming (*Parousia*), and of the end of the world?” (Matt. 24:3). But to those who believe in the Secret Rapture theory, the end does not come with the *parousia* but with the subsequent appearing (*Epiphaneia*). Both cannot be right. Christ’s parallel forbids a secret coming: “But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming (*Parousia*) of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were

eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the Ark, and knew not until the flood *came*, and took them all away; so shall also the coming (*Parousia*) of the Son of man be” (Matt. 24-37-39). The flood did not come secretly and unperceived upon the world; nor was the destruction of the antediluvians postponed to some time after the flood. In the very nature of things, the flood drowned them all; even so will the coming (*Parousia*) of the Son of Man bring the destruction of the wicked.

CHRIST AND THE APOSTLE PAUL AGREE THAT THE RAPTURE IS NEITHER SECRET NOR INVISIBLE

That the Rapture is not a secret event is evident from 1 Thess. 4:15-18: “For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming (*Parousia*) of the Lord shall not prevent (go before) them which are asleep. For the Lord HIMSELF shall descend from heaven with a SHOUT, with the VOICE OF THE ARCH-ANGEL, and with the TRUMP OF GOD; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.” If anyone can make a secret coming out of this scripture, language has no significance at all. There is no secrecy here! It is open, visible, audible; yet it is Christ’s parousia, His coming FOR His saints, and not a subsequent epiphaneia. Christ also teaches the same: “And he shall send his angels WITH A GREAT SOUND OF A TRUMPET, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (Matt. 24:31). This coming is thrice said to be the Parousia (Matt. 24:27, 37, 39), and likened to the lightning flash. A “shout”, “the voice of the archangel”, and “a great sound of a trumpet” are to precede the gathering of the elect at the parousia, yet the age-to-come brethren declare these elect are to be the subjects of the Secret Rapture.

9 REASONS WHY PAROUSIA, APOKALUPIS, AND EPIPHANEIA ARE KINDRED TERMS TO DESCRIBE ONE GREAT FUTURE EVENT

Are Christians seen in connection with the *Epiphaneia* (appearing of Christ) and with His *Apokalupsis* (revelation)? Here are 9 reasons to prove that they are! Bear in mind that the Epistles, though addressed to Christians and Churches of the first century, are equally addressed to Christians through the whole course of the age.

1. There is a crown laid up for Paul, and for “all of them also that love his (Christ’s) appearing (*Epiphaneia*).” Will they then receive it as a previous parousia some seven years before?
2. According to the Apostle Paul the commission to “preach the Word” does not expire until the coming of Christ “at his appearing (*Epiphaneia*) and his kingdom” (2 Tim. 4:1, 2). But all the preachers of God’s Word, according to the Secret Rapture theory, are delivered at the previous parousia!
3. Christ declared that “the wheat and tares” are to remain “together” in “the field” until “the harvest”, or “END of the world”; whereas the Secret Rapture theory teaches that all the wheat is removed, and the tares left standing, BEFORE the end (Matt. 13:24-30; 36-42)!
4. The saints’ probation continues until the epiphaneia, which could not be true if they are made immortal by a previous parousia. “That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing (*Epiphaneia*) of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Tim. 6:14).
5. The “Blessed Hope” is “the glorious appearing (*Epiphaneia*)” of the great God and our Saviour Jesus

Christ (Tit. 2:11-13). “What a man *seeth*, why doth he yet hope for?” (Rom. 8:24); therefore, the hope continues until the epiphaneia, and is not realized at a previous parousia some seven years before!

6. Paul declared that because of the “hope of Israel” he was accused of the Jews, which hope was the resurrection (Acts 26:6-8). 1 Cor. 15:23 shows the resurrection will be at the coming (*Parousia*) but 2 Thess. 1:7-10 shows that the saints will be glorified when the Lord shall be revealed (*Apokalupsis*). Hence, the parousia and apokalupsis are simultaneous!
7. The saints of the Corinthian church were commanded to wait for the “coming (*Apokalupsis*) of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 1:7). What would be the sense of this, if they were to be raptured several years before at the parousia?
8. Works of faith shall be rewarded at the “appearing (*Apokalupsis*) of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:7). What would be the significance of this, if raptured saints had received it at the parousia several years before?
9. Christ will recompense tribulation to the troublers of His people, and rest to those who are troubled. When? Not at the parousia, but at the revelation (*Apokalupsis*) of Christ “with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking *vengeance*” on the wicked (2 Thess. 1:6-10). Rest for His people, and vengeance upon the ungodly take place at the same time at the one and only Second Coming of Christ!

1 THESSALONIANS 3:13 CONSIDERED

This passage is sometimes offered as evidence of a two-fold coming of our Lord: “*To the end he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.*” As these “saints” are said to come *with* Christ, it is supposed that they were previously resurrected or translated. If this were said to be the *Epiphaneia* there might be some show or argument from this verse in favour of a previous parousia; but “coming” here is *Parousia*, so if it proves anything concerning “saints,” it is that they are with Christ when He descends from heaven to “the air,” which the apostle in the next chapter contradicts; for there Christ is said to “descend from heaven” BEFORE the resurrection or translation (1 Thess. 4:13-18). Those who in the text are said to be “unblamable before God” are all embraced in the pronoun “your”; and they are not those who come *with* Christ but are to be established “before” or in the presence of Christ and those who come with Him, namely, the angels. The word *Hagios* here rendered “saints,” means “holy”, or “holy ones.” In Mark 8:38 we read: “Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father *with the holy angels.*”

IN CONCLUSION

The *Parousia*, the *Epiphaneia*, the *Apokalupsis*, the *end*, all synchronize at one great crisis “at the last day.” The shout, the voice of the arch-angel, the sound of a great trumpet, the quaking earth, the passing away of the heavens “with a great noise” (2 Pet. 3:10, 12), the resurrection and translation of saints, the destruction of sinners, will all attend the coming (*Parousia*) of the Son of Man.

From all the foregoing considerations the “secret rapture theory” *must be respected* as one of the most glaring of errors; *and it is* one that has *already wrought much mischief*. “Let no man deceive you!” If they say, “Behold he is in the secret chambers, BELIEVE IT NOT!”

God grant that you, dear reader, shall be ready for His glorious appearing, and be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless. There is only one way in which this can be true; namely, repent of your sin by forsaking it and turning to Christ alone for pardon through faith in His blood, confessing Him before the world as your Lord and Saviour. “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:9, 10)

Dr. G.B. Fletcher

MINCED OATHS

A very commonly used interjection is “Gee.” It is capitalized in Webster’s *New International Dictionary* and given this definition: “A form of Jesus, used in minced oaths.” This derivation is even more apparent when the form “Geez,” now frequently heard, is used. Two other common words and their definitions are these: “Golly—a euphemism for God, used in minced oaths; gosh, a substitute for God, used in minced oaths.” “Darn, darned, darnation” are said to be “colloquial euphemisms for damn, damned, damnation.” Persons who allow their lips to utter “Gosh- darned” quite freely would be shocked if they realized the real meaning of the word.

A certain minister, professor in a sound seminary, when he was a child was not allowed to use “goodness,” “mercy,” or “gracious” as exclamations. He was inclined to think the restrictions a family peculiarity, merely a parental overcarefulness, but now he can see that it had a sound Calvinistic basis. The Shorter Catechism asks, “What is required in the third commandment?” and then gives this answer: “The third commandment requireth the holy and reverent use of God’s names, titles, attributes, ordinances, words, and works.” Certainly goodness is an attribute of God. That this is so is recognized by Webster in the latter part of his definition: “The word is used colloquially as an exclamation, or in various exclamatory phrases,

as “for goodness sake! goodness gracious!”—the reference being originally to the goodness of God.”

The use of minced oaths is quite contrary to the spirit of the New Testament teaching. For example, our Lord Jesus said: “But I say unto you, Swear not at all. . . . But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil” (Matt. 5:37). The phrase “whatsoever is more than these” suggests the meaning of expletives, or exclamations: an expletive is defined as “something added merely as a filling; especially a word, letter, or syllable not necessary to the sense, but inserted to fill a vacancy.”

James in writing his Epistle repeats almost exactly the words of the Lord Jesus quoted above: “But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, nor by the earth neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; lest ye fall not into condemnation” (Jas. 5:12). That last word recalls our Lord’s declaration: “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment” (Matt. 12:36). The result of this judgment is given in the following verse, “For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”

If we try to excuse ourselves by saying that these exclamations slip through our lips unawares, we need to heed the Holy Spirit’s warning in the Epistle of James: “If any man seem to be religious, and bridleth [or, curbeth] not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain” (1:26). Even though we do not intend these minced oaths to bear the meaning the words originally had, we certainly cannot truthfully say that the use of them accords with Christ’s command, “Let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay.”

James seemed puzzled by the same anomaly that puzzles us, namely, the presence of minced oaths on the lips of Christians. Writing of the tongue as a restless evil . . . “full of deadly poison.” “Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we

men, which are made after the similitude of God: out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be” (Jas. 3:8-10).

While no attempt has been made to give a complete list of all the words in the vocabulary of near-profanity, enough has been said to indicate that present-day speech has fallen below that standard which Christ Jesus set for his disciples.

The tendency in the use of expletives is to find the milder ones becoming less expressive of our feelings, to discard them, and use stronger ones in their stead. A careless following of others in the use of these common minced oaths will dull our own spiritual sensitiveness, and will weaken our Christian testimony.

To gain the victory in this matter of full obedience to our Lord Jesus, we need to make the prayer of David our daily petition: “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer” (Psalm 19:14).

Dr. G.H. Seville

IS THE CHURCH OF ROME A TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST?

[Turretin, L. 18, q. 14; Thormvell's Writings, III.
pp. 283 ff.; Conf. of Faith, Chapter 25.]

1. *State of the question:* Not whether the church of Rome of the apostle's time, nor of the second, third, or fourth century, but the church of Rome since the Trent Council, is a church of Christ? Nor is it about the church of Rome generally considered, as contradistinguished from Mohammedanism, Judaism, Paganism, but particularly as subject to the pope as the head thereof.

2. *Proofs that it is not a church of Christ:* (1), From the design of the visible church, which is to glorify God in the ingathering and upbuilding of the elect. Any church whose constitution is such, or whose administration is such that the tendency, on the whole, is not to save men, but to destroy them, is not a church of Christ. This is conceded virtually by Rome herself, in insisting, as she does, that there is no possibility of salvation out of her communion, because she is the only true church. Is, then, the prevailing tendency of Rome and her ordinances a tendency to salvation? I say prevailing tendency. Men may be converted within her pale, no doubt; and men may be converted in an infidel club, or in a theatre, or in a circle of boon companions; but in spite of the tendencies, as is evident from

the fact that, as soon as they are born again, the atmosphere of such society becomes stifling to their new life, and they quit it as soon as possible. "Come out of her, my people," etc. Now, that the tendency of Rome is not saving, but damning, is evident from the fact that she has not "the ministry, oracles, and ordinances" which God has given to the church visible for this end. Of these in their order:

(a) *Ministry.* Contrast the hierarchy with the officers of the apostolic church. The people disfranchised and ground to pieces by the great iron wheel. The names they have retained, those of bishop, presbyter, and deacon, but how totally different the nature of the offices. Neither bishop nor presbyter is a preacher of the gospel, but a priest; and, when consecrated, the priest has given to him, not a Bible as the symbol of his office, but the cup and paten, with authority to offer sacrifice, and that, too, sacrifice of the body and blood of the Son of God, for the sins of the living and the dead : thus exercising an office totally different from that of the minister of the word, whose commission was, "Go ye into all the world and preach the glad tidings," etc. The minister is no priest in the literal sense, for Christ is the only priest; he is not the only priest in the tropical sense, for all God's people are priests, a royal priesthood. The Roman priesthood, therefore, is at once the denial of the priesthood, both of Christ and of his people. The bishops are no spiritual rulers, chosen of God, through the voice of the people, and administering the law of Christ, but the tools of a despotism which consults only the demands of the lusts of power and gold, and using heaven and hell as the sanctions of their anti-christian tyranny. To crown all, the pope is antichrist, setting himself in the place of Christ (and therefore against him), as prophet, priest and king, and head over all things to the body, the church—lording it over God's heritage, instead of being a helper of their joy. Even the ambitious Pontiff, Gregory I., in the close of the sixth century, pronounced the claim to be universal bishop blasphemous, infamous and a mark of antichrist.

(*b*) *Oracles*. This includes not only the Rule of Faith, but the authorized and current interpretation of the rule. Under this head observe, (*a*), That she has *added* to the rule which God has given; (*b*), That in the interpretation of the rule, she makes the part which God has given bend to the part she herself has added; thus acting in contradiction to the example of the apostles who, when adding to the rules of the Old Testament under their commission from God as inspired, still quote everywhere the Old Testament, to show that their teaching was in harmony with the Old Testament—that their religion was not new, but as old as the garden of Eden; (*c*), That she denies the rule to her members, upon the pretence that the church alone has the right to interpret; thereby practically denying faith and repentance to the people, and damning them; thereby shutting out the Holy Ghost, and usurping his office as the infallible witness of Christ. Rome decrees that God shall not speak to men except through the atheists, adulterers and murderers that sit in the seat on the Seven Hills, and claiming to be gods and worshipped as gods; (*d*), That the creed thus derived, from the infallible interpretation of the church, is not a *saving* creed. Not that it formally denies all the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, but teaches so much of error, and such kind of error, as to make the creed, as a whole, poison and not food. The sum of the teachings of Scripture, concerning the plan of salvation, is contained in 1 John 5:8—the three-fold record of the Spirit, the water and the blood. The two last are emblematical of the two great divisions of the Redeemer’s work—a change of state and a change of character—justification and sanctification. The Spirit’s testimony being the mode by which these blessings become the property of the sinner. As to the **blood**, it can be shown that Rome is fundamentally heretical. Paul teaches that no creed which teaches salvation by works can be a saving one. But Rome teaches such a creed, resolving our justifying righteousness into personal holiness, damning the doctrine of imputation, audaciously proclaiming the of

figment of human merit, both of congruity and condignity, making Christ only the remote and ultimate cause of pardon and acceptance. As to the **water**, she makes holiness impossible by denying the blood. Pardon is essential to holiness, and Rome, in denying the possibility of pardon, denies the possibility of holiness. She is also *antinomian*, expunging one of the commandments of the decalogue, and making a hypocritical will-worship to take the place of holy obedience. She is an idolatrous church. As to the *Spirit*, she is a Pelagian, or, at the very best, a semi-Pelagian.

(c) *Ordinances*. The most of her ordinances are of her own invention; but even of those which God has ordained, she has changed utterly their *nature* and their *use*, so that they are no longer the ordinances of God. Baptism, the Lord's supper, ordination, are changed materially and formally. As to the use, her notion of the efficacy of the sacraments denies the agency of the Spirit, and makes them *causes* or *laws* of grace instead of *means*. So that no sinner believing the creed of Rome and obeying the laws of Rome, can possibly be saved. She is, therefore, no church of Christ.

Dr. T.E. Peck
in Notes of Ecclesiology

PETER A POPE?

We are being asked to believe that the Pope who reigned for longer than anyone else was Peter, the brother of Andrew, Jesus' disciple—and that he was head of the Church in Rome for no less than something between 34 and 37 years. But there is no clear evidence that Peter was ever in Rome². We do know that Peter was in Jerusalem around 50 AD—14 years after Paul was converted (see Galatians 2)—and that by about 68 AD Peter was dead. So it is obviously impossible to squeeze a stay of over 30 years in Rome into any part of Peter's life.

Can anyone imagine Paul writing his Epistle to the Church in Rome (which he did around AD 58) and sending greetings to a great number of people there, yet missing out Peter *his* fellow-apostle—if Peter was actually in the city at the time? It is, of course, totally unbelievable.

In fact, no one ever thought of one man having complete authority over the Church until hundreds of years later. Peter most certainly never thought of being in that position. He was not even the

2 Was Peter Ever in Rome? No! Says Rev. John Dickson, Temuka, NZ, in his thorough and detailed investigation on page 227, "Our Liberties and Eternal Vigilance". He also wrote the History of the Presbyterian Church of NZ.

moderator of the Council of Jerusalem, which we read about in Acts 15. It was James who summed up the discussion and put together the statement which expressed the conclusion of the meeting. Again, when he writes his First Epistle, we find Peter putting himself on the same level as the other elders—not, like a pope, far above them. “The elders which are among you I exhort,” he tells them, “*who am also an elder*” (5:1). Peter would never have said about himself what an official Roman Catholic book says about the pope: he “has full, supreme and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered”. How dangerous for a sinner to allow himself to be in a position where he can exercise unhindered power!

It was only as the Church was drifting seriously away from a proper obedience to the Bible that anyone ever thought of becoming a pope. If Peter could see the Roman Catholic system as it is today, or as it has been for very many centuries, he would have nothing whatever to do with it. He would be ashamed to have his name associated with it. But he might repeat the warning he gave the Church in his Second Epistle: “There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction”. (2 Pet. 2:1)

FISH ON FRIDAYS?

For centuries Roman Catholics were banned from eating meat on Fridays. This was supposed to be an act of penance connected with the death of Jesus on that day. (By penance Roman Catholics mean some act of prayer, charity, or self-denial by which they make amends for their sins.) Yet it was quite acceptable to eat fish: but it obviously did not involve much self-denial for someone who likes fish better than meat!

If you follow the Bible, you will recognise that such a practice has no authority whatever. And it is from the Bible we must get our authority for every issue of right and wrong. If we are to practise penance, we need to find the idea in the Bible. But we cannot. What we find is repentance: a turning away from sin, by the grace of God. But repentance will never make amends for sin. Only the saving work of Jesus Christ can do so. And if we must refrain from eating animal flesh, we must find the idea in the Bible. But, however long we may search, we will not find it.

In 1983, Rome decided that bishops in individual countries could relax the rule about meat. Roman Catholics were then supposed to do some other kind of penance instead. The result of relaxing the ban was that almost everyone felt free to eat meat on Fridays. Indeed, it seems that few Roman Catholics did any penance at all on a Friday. But later, the RC bishops in England and Wales decided again to

forbid eating meat on Fridays. “I think Catholics will welcome this.” Vincent Nichols, Archbishop, said hopefully. But one cannot see them going back to denying themselves meat on Fridays; most people nowadays will not fall so easily for a made-up rule like this.

In more than one of his Epistles, Paul warns of serious departure from the truth. His warnings help us identify the Church of Rome as a body in very serious error, and therefore one we must have nothing to do with. For instance, Paul tells Timothy about those who “shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils” (1 Timothy 4:1). He emphasises that this is not his own idea; it is something “the [Holy] Spirit speaketh expressly”. One description Paul gives that points very directly to the Roman Catholic Church is, “Forbidding to marry”, for priests, monks and nuns must not marry. Another is “commanding to abstain from meats”, which is what we have mostly been speaking about in this article. (1 Tim. 4:3)

We should always take the Bible’s warnings seriously.

CONTEND FOR THE FAITH

“While a spirit of lukewarmness and indifference to the truth is advancing under the mask of charity and liberality, there is a loud call on all Christians to “Stand fast. . .”

Robert Haldane

Everything reminds us of the shortness of life and the approach of eternity. And in the prospect of that hour when an account is to be rendered to God, it becomes more evident that the Holy Volume of inspiration and the truths which it contains are far too solemn and too sacred to be used as materials for the display of scholarship and the exercise of metaphysical ingenuity. I bless God for the opportunity He has given me of testifying for His truth in the face of the laborious efforts of these writers to obscure it with error.

Many religious persons have a dread of controversy and wish truth to be stated without any reference to those who hold the opposite errors. Controversy and a bad spirit are, in their estimation, synonymous terms. And strenuously to oppose what is wrong is considered as contrary to Christian meekness. Those who hold this opinion seem to overlook what every page of the New Testament lays before us. In all the history of our Lord Jesus Christ, we never find Him out of controversy. From the moment He entered on the

discharge of His office in the synagogue of Nazareth till He expired on the cross, it was an uninterrupted scene of controversy. Nor did He, with all the heavenly meekness which in Him shone so brightly, treat truth and error without reference to those who held them or study to avoid giving its proper appellation to those corruptions in doctrine or practice that endangered the interests of immortal souls. His censures were not confined to doctrine but included the abettors of false principles themselves.

And as to the Apostles, their epistles are generally controversial. Most of them were directly written for the express purpose of vindicating truth and opposing error—and the authors of heresies do not escape with an abstract condemnation of their false doctrine. Paul again and again most indignantly denounces the conduct of the opposers of the Gospel and, by name, points out those against whom he cautions his brethren. When Hymenaeus and Alexander erred concerning the faith and when he delivered them unto Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme, he did not compliment them as amiable and learned persons. Even that Apostle who treats most of love and who possessed so much of that spirit which was so eminently manifested in his Divine Master, does not avoid controversy—nor in controversy does he study to avoid severity of censure on the opposers of the truth.

In the examples of opposing error (left on record for our imitation) we perceive nothing of that frigid spirit of indifference which smiles on the corruptors of the Word of God and shuns to call heresy by its proper name. With what holy indignation do the Apostles denounce the subtle machinations of the enemies of the Gospel! *In vain shall we look among those faithful servants of the Lord for anything to justify that trembling reserve which fears to say decidedly that truth is truth—and error is error.* In what style, indeed, should perversions of the truth of God be censured? Ought they to be treated as mere matters of opinion on which we may innocently

and safely differ? Or ought they to be met in a tone of solemn, strong and decided approbation? Paul warned Christians against men who arose from among themselves, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them—and instead of complimenting false teachers in his day, denounced an angel from heaven on the supposition of his preaching another gospel. And if an Apostle was withstood to the face, because he was to be blamed, are the writings of those who subvert the Gospel to pass without rebuke?

When the canker of the principles of ³neology, derived from the Continent and from America, is perverting the faith of many and seducing them into the paths of error—while a spirit of lukewarmness and indifference to truth is advancing under the mask of charity and liberality, there is a loud call on all Christians to “Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel,” to present a firm and united phalanx of opposition to error under every name—from whatever quarter it may approach. *Should believers become unfaithful to their trust and be seduced to abandon their protest against false doctrines, they may gain the approbation of the world—but what will this avail when compared with the favor of God?* But if (with prayer to God, in the use of the appointed means) they contend earnestly for the truth, then they may expect the gracious fulfilment of the blessed promise, “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.”

3 Neology is a word which has fallen into disuse. It may be defined as, “the use of new meanings for established words.” This. “theological double-talk” was well-known to Robert Haldane (one of Scotland’s most noble saints) in his day. Neology (theological double-talk) is even more prevalent today!

A HEAD-COVERING IN PUBLIC WORSHIP?

“Is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?”

1 Corinthians 11:13

The question is often asked—Does this passage of Scripture require that women present at a service of worship and prayer *today* are required by God to wear a hat or some kind of headcovering? Some assume that the instructions given in 1 Cor. 11 were only relevant to the place, the age and the community to which they immediately refer, and that they do not apply to women in our own country today. Others retain the custom, but may have great difficulty in explaining the passage on which it rests. All who respect the Bible as the Word of God must acknowledge that this portion of it is meaningful and designed for the guidance and instruction of the Lord’s people.

Verse 1 may be regarded either as a conclusion to chapter 10 or as an introduction to chapter 11—“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ”. In either case it reminds the reader that the epistle was written by an apostle who “followed Christ” in his life and teaching.

In verse 2 Paul commends his readers for their remembrance of him and for their attention to the “*ordinances*” which he delivered to them. The word could be rendered “*traditions*” meaning instructions

handed down, first by the Holy Spirit who inspired him, and then handed on from Paul to his readers.

In verse 3 the Apostle lays the foundation upon which his instructions are to rest. All things stand in a certain order in relation to each other and to God. That order is part of God's design and an expression of the perfection of His own Being. "The head of every man is Christ; the head of the woman is the man; and the Head of Christ is God." The second clause does not separate Christian women from the Headship of Christ, but asserts the position which God has designed that the woman should occupy in relation to the man. The third clause does not assert that Christ is less than God or inferior to Him. In His Person, Christ is equal to the Father and could say, "I and My Father are one". In taking upon Himself the office of Mediator and in undertaking to redeem His people, Christ humbled Himself—"Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered"—Hebrews 5:8.

There is a place in the Divine order for the acknowledgment of the Headship of the Father by Christ, the acknowledgment of the headship of the man by the woman. This acknowledgment is made in words and in conduct and in the attitude of the heart and of the mind. The Apostle proceeds to demonstrate that it also has a bearing upon the use of a headcovering in public worship.

Verse 4 plainly states that a man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonours his Head—Who is Christ (verse 3). This is hardly ever the cause of argument among Christians today, but it has not always been interpreted in the same way, even by "reformed" scholars. In some of the continental churches at the time of the Reformation it was not unusual for the minister and male members of the congregation to wear their hats during a public service. Today, however, Christian people would feel a sense of outrage if their minister entered the pulpit wearing a hat, and they would say that it was dishonouring to Christ. Obedience to this precept as far as the

man is concerned is unquestionably regarded as a mark of reverence, humility and subjection to God.

Verse 5 makes it clear that the woman praying or prophesying should have her head covered, and that if she does otherwise she “dishonoureth her head”—that is, she dishonours her husband. The covering of the head was a mark of subjection, not servility. “The Church is subject unto Christ”, (Eph. 5:24). In that relationship to Him the Church occupies a place of high dignity and honour and is loved by Him. The woman is subject to the man, and in that relationship she is honoured and loved by the man. If the headcovering is a token of that relationship, can she discard it without dishonouring him? Paul makes it clear that she cannot. Shaving a woman’s head was the punishment meted out to an adulteress, and a woman so shorn would be ashamed to appear anywhere in public, least of all among an assembly of Christian people at worship, for she would be known by all to have “dishonoured her head”. In verses 5 and 6 the Apostle says that to discard the head covering is just as dishonouring—“let her be covered”.

Verse 7 forbids the man to cover his head while at worship, because “he is the image and glory of God”. His Divine “Head” is not *visibly* present, and if the man veils his face or covers his head it might be interpreted as an indication of subordination or subjection to men, to the minister or elders. The last part of verse 7 is closely connected with the statements of 8 and 9—“For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man”. This refers back to the creation—Genesis 2:23 “She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man”. Paul continues, “Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man”—a further reference to Genesis 2 verse 18 “I will make him an help meet for him”.

Upon these truths of Holy Scripture Paul establishes the instruction given in verse 10, “For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels”. This verse has been a difficulty to

many readers. “For this cause”—because the woman was taken out of man and was made for man—the woman ought “to have power on her head. . . .” Our English word “power” stands for two different words in the Greek, one meaning “might” or “physical power” and the other meaning “right” or “authority”. The context has already shown that the covering of the head was a mark of subjection, and this verse emphasises that in public worship the woman should wear upon her head that covering which was symbolic of her relationship to her husband and her acknowledgment of his authority, which she must not usurp. (See 1 Timothy 2:12 “. . . nor to usurp authority over the man . . .”).

The woman worships God in the presence not only of men but also of His invisible ministers, the angels—“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” (Hebrews 1:14). The woman is reminded that she is in the presence of God and of holy angels, and that in honouring her husband she honours God Who made them both.

Verses 11 and 12 remind the man that in another respect he is dependent upon the woman, and although in the order of creation and of nature she is subordinate to him and subject to him, he is not to tyrannise over her. “Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord”. They are dependent upon each other and are exhorted to love one another—Eph. 5:21-33, “Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church . . . Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it. . . . Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband”. “The woman is of the man . . . the man also

is by the woman; but all things of God". The relative position of man and woman was not ordained by men, but by God and He has not made one a master and the other a slave, but He has made both to be dependent upon Him and upon each other, to love Him and to love, honour and respect each other. Where there is such love, honour and respect, can it be a very great burden to show it in such a small thing as an article of dress?

In verse 13 the Apostle is moved by the Holy Spirit to address the consciences of his readers—"Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?" This does not refer to her private approach to the Throne of Grace, but to her appearance and conduct in public worship—when the congregation at large are in a position to "judge in themselves". The verse does not suggest that the women prayed audibly in the course of public worship and the contrary is clearly established in other passages such as 1 Tim. 2:8 "I will therefore that men pray every where" (Greek "*the men*"). The Apostle asks in effect whether his readers' minds were entirely at rest when any of the women of the congregation appeared with their heads uncovered. He knew that it must have caused more than embarrassment to many, and he has written enough to stir the conscience of some who perhaps had accustomed themselves to accept conduct which they would have censured a few years ago.

In verses 14 and 15 he shows that they were almost instinctively aware that some things which are becoming in a woman are offensive in a man. They would frown upon a man who appeared in their assembly with excessively long hair like a woman's. "Doth not nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him." They would know it and admit it, and would not even argue about it. It would be clear to them that such a fashion was not suitable and becoming for a man. On the contrary "If a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given her for a covering."

Paul has touched upon two things in the immediately preceding

verses—verse 13 “Is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?” and verse 14 “If a man have long hair it is a shame unto him”. Now the inspired writer brings the matter to a concise conclusion in verse 16 by telling his readers how to deal with any man who wants to argue about it. Tell that man, says the Apostle, that “we have no such custom, neither the churches of God”. It is not a custom in the churches of God for a woman to pray with her head uncovered, any more than it is our custom for a man to have long hair.

Who are “we” in this verse? Paul and Sosthenes, 1 Cor. 1:1 “Paul . . . and Sosthenes our brother”. The pronoun may be more inclusive and refer also to the Corinthian Christians to whom the epistle was addressed—“We Paul, Sosthenes and the Corinthians—we have no such custom, neither the churches of God (in other places)”.

Some professing Christians today would agree that the interpretation given in the present article would have been appropriate only to the time, the place and the circumstances immediately referred to in the epistle, and that in a later age, in another country, and in a community long accustomed to a concept of equality of status of men and women, the teaching of this part of the epistle no longer applies. Against this accommodating view it should be stated that the principles set forth by the inspired Apostle are traced back to the sovereign purpose of God from the foundation of the world, and the mere passage of time does not nullify the purpose of Him Who changes not.

In asserting the relative positions of men and women the Scriptures elevate the woman to a place of dignity, honour and respect, and these will be preserved only where those restraints are recognised which God Himself imposes in those portions of His Word which require modesty in apparel and behaviour—“that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety;

not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.” (1 Timothy 2:9). In public worship “Modest apparel” includes the head covering, and Paul shows that to discard it implies a lack of respect toward man and toward God.

Although 1 Cor. 11:1-16 appears to refer primarily to the dress and conduct of the married woman in the assembly, it is evident from the context that it applies with equal force to all of the women, whether married or single. At the present time many who genuinely profess to have no desire to be irreverent or careless with regard to what is taught in the Word of God may contend that so many women are seen hatless in the churches that those who conform with the precepts of this chapter will appear conspicuous. To this we must reply that it is better to conform with God’s Word than to conform with the world. “Be not conformed with this present world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds. . . .” (Romans 12:2).

Today many may brush these requirements aside with amusement or with angry contempt, but it must be remembered that the precepts did not originate in the mind of man, but are set forth in the Word of God, being designed for His glory and for the spiritual well-being of His people.

Rev. T.H. Brown

SALVATION IS OF THE LORD

Do not think, beloved, because we preach election that we preach the election of a few. I find that this is a common mistake. Someone will say to me, “I don’t like your Calvinism Sir, because it says that there are a few elected, and that nobody else will be saved.” Nay, sir, but it does not say any such thing; it says they are a multitude that no man can number, who have been elected; and who knows but what you are one of them? Calvinism gives you ten thousand times more reason for hope than the Arminian preacher, who stands up and says, “There is room for everybody; but I do not think there is any special grace to make them come; if they won’t come, they won’t come, and there is an end of it; it is their own fault, and God will not make them come.”

The Word of God says, they cannot come, YET the Arminian says they can; the poor sinner feels that he cannot, yet the Arminian declares positively that he could if he liked; and though the poor sinner feels sometimes that he would if he could, and groans over his inability, this Blind guide tells him it is all nonsense; whereas, it is, in truth God’s own Work. You must feel it; and you may plead against yourself on account of it, but you shall come for all that. He will not plead against you; but He will put strength in you. There is more hope for you in the pure gospel of the blessed God, than there is in those fancies and fictions of men which are nowadays preached everywhere, except in a few places where God hath reserved unto

Himself a people who have not bowed their knee to the Baal of the age.

And if God requires a sinner—dead in sin—that he should take the first step, then He requires just that which renders Salvation as impossible under the GOSPEL as ever it was under the law, seeing man is as unable to believe as he is to obey and is just as much without power to come to Christ as he is without power to go to HEAVEN without Christ. The power must be given to him of the Spirit. He lieth dead in sin; the Spirit must quicken him. He is bound hand and foot, fettered by transgression; the Spirit must cut his bonds, and then he will leap to liberty. GOD must come and dash the iron bars out of their sockets, and then he can escape afterwards, but unless the first thing be done for him, he must perish as surely under the GOSPEL as he would have done under the law. I would cease to preach, if I believed that GOD, in the matter of Salvation, required anything whatsoever of man which He Himself had not also engaged to furnish. . . . I, am the messenger; I tell the masters message; if you do not like the message quarrel with the Bible, not with me; so long as I have Scripture on my side I will dare and defy you to do anything against me. “Salvation is of the Lord.” The Lord has to apply it, to make the unwilling willing, to make the ungodly godly, and bring the vile rebel to the feet of Jesus, or else Salvation will never be accomplished. Leave that one thing undone, and you have broken the link of the chain, the very link which was just necessary to its integrity. Take away the fact that GOD begins the good work, and that HE sends us what the old divines call preventing grace—take that away, and you have spoilt the whole of Salvation; you have just taken the key-stone out of the arch and down it tumbles. There is NOTHING left then.

C. H. SPURGEON

(from *The Treasury of The Old Testament*)

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