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J. GRESHAM MACHEN • EDITOR 1936-1937

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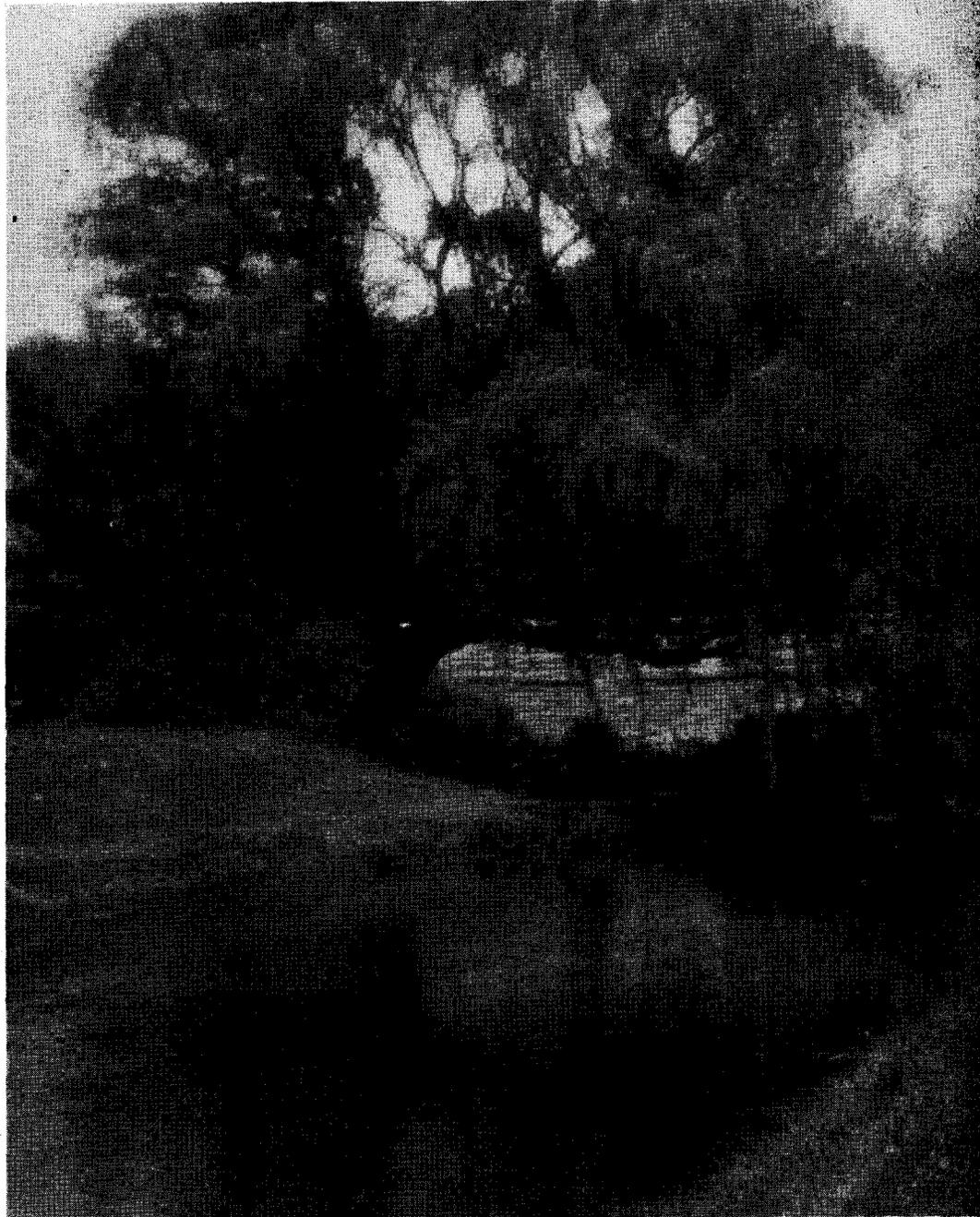


Photo by Thomas R. Birch

**"I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up among the grass, as willows by the watercourses."**

**April 10, 1946**

VOLUME 15, NO. 7

## Have You Noticed That . . .

EVERY Wednesday morning there is a meeting of U. S. Senators for prayer and meditation at 8:30 in the Capitol. A larger group of Representatives meets on Thursday. In the middle of May a great campaign with a schedule of thirty to forty daily meetings is planned for Washington. The originator of this movement, Abraham Vereide, is cooperating in a modernist symposium entitled, *Together*, just published by the Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. Additional contributors are E. Stanley Jones, Howard Thurman, Rufus M. Jones, Samuel M. Shoemaker and others.

A drive has been opened to secure the appointment by Canada of a representative to the Vatican. The only four large countries not now represented are Canada, Mexico, Turkey, and the USSR.

The merger of the United Brethren and Evangelical Churches is to be consummated next November at Johnstown, Pa.

The Reformed Church of America and the United Presbyterian Church are opening cooperative mission work among unreached primitive tribes in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

A woman who applied to the congregation of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. to which she belonged for a letter of dismissal to the St. Andrew's Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Baltimore was dropped from the roll for "lack of interest"!

The upsurge of Arab nationalism in the Near East is resulting in an increased emotional attachment to Islam. This makes Christian mission work more difficult.

"America's Town Meeting" announces that the mail response to the recent radio debate on "Are We Losing Our Religion?" was one of the largest in history. There had been no such response to a program for at least five years. It was on this occasion that C. C. Morrison of *The Christian Century* defended the affirmative.

For some time there have been Orthodox Presbyterian congregations with both Negro and white members. Now the

Federal Council of Churches has announced, through its recent Columbus meeting, that it will work for a non-segregated church.

A sound motion picture, entitled "The God of Creation," has recently been released by the Moody Bible Institute. It features full-color views of stars, taken through the giant 100-inch telescope of Mt. Wilson Observatory, lapse-time photographs of the development of flowers and of the metamorphosis of a caterpillar. The film will be shown in churches by the Institute extension staff, and will also be shown in schools and colleges as an educational picture.

A prize of \$7500 for "a distinguished book manuscript in the broad field of evangelical Christianity" has been offered by the Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. The judges for this "evangelical" work include Presidents Mackay of Princeton Seminary, Van Dusen of Union Theological Seminary and Colwell of the University of Chicago.

The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. is about to launch an officially controlled magazine to be known as *Presbyterian Life*. Publication is to begin when 100,000 subscriptions have been secured.

The February issue of *The Cresset* contains a penetrating evaluation of "Luther after four centuries," in which the writer shows that, in view of his unwavering acceptance of theonomy (rule by God), it is "a travesty to try to make of Luther the father of modern political liberalism or Nazi totalitarianism." The latter point of view, however, finds current expression in *The Christian Century* for February 13th, where Luther, and modern Lutherans also for that matter, are excoriated for acquiescence in the existing order in society and for neutrality on social issues, although Dean Inge is thought to have been somewhat extreme in his charge that Luther, rather than Hitler or Bismarck or Frederick the Great, is "the worst evil genius" of that country.

The American Bible Society is planning a new series of sound motion pictures. A public announcement will be forthcoming as soon as plans are completed.

Universalist ministers have been urged by the trustees of the denomination to have Reformed Jewish rabbis occupy their pulpits on Sunday, April 28th, when the ministers will be away attending the Universalist General Assembly at Akron, Ohio.

A large quantity of American army surplus war material in the Middle East, Near East and Europe is being bought by missionary and relief organizations.

Haile Selassie of Ethiopia is asking for two Swedish Protestant missionaries for each province in the country and promises to erect a mission station for them in each one.

A conference of the United Church of Canada in Truro, Nova Scotia, was addressed on the subject of the cooperative movement by a Roman Catholic priest.

Scandinavian missionaries are now traveling direct between Stockholm and India in a transcontinental plane owned by the Scandinavian Free Church Missionary Association.

The Federal Council of Churches is condemned as "a menace to true Christianity" and as "unholy" and "unscriptural" in a resolution adopted at its recent convention by the American Baptist Association, a group of independent Baptist churches in the southwestern states.

*The Presbyterian Outlook*, organ of modernist tendency in the Southern Presbyterian Church, has polled the ministers, ruling elders and seminary students of that church in seven states (Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia) on the question of union with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

First returns are as follows:

For union now . . . . .	39%
For union, but not while there is a considerable protesting minority . . . . .	32%
Against union . . . . .	29%

The great bulk of the Russian Orthodox churches in the United States have refused to submit to the Moscow Patriarch and the representative of the latter has sailed home on a freighter. The American churches object to the subservience to the state of the Patriarchate in Moscow.

# The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

A Sermon Preached on Easter Sunday, May 27, 1921,  
in the First and Central Presbyterian Church, Wilmington, Del.

By the REV. J. GRESHAM MACHEN, D.D., Litt.D.

SOME nineteen hundred years ago, in one of the petty principalities subject to Rome, there lived an interesting man. Until the age of thirty years He lived an obscure life in a Galilean family; then began a course of religious and ethical teaching, accompanied by a remarkable ministry of healing. At first His preaching was crowned with success, but soon the crowds deserted Him, and after three or four years, in Jerusalem, He fell victim to the jealousy of His countrymen and the cowardice of the Roman governor. His few faithful disciples were utterly disheartened. His shameful death was the end of all their high ambitions. After a few days, however, these same men displayed a surprising activity. They began preaching with astonishing success in Jerusalem, the very scene of their disgrace. In a few years the religion that they preached burst the bands of Judaism, and planted itself in the great centers of the Græco-Roman world. At first ignored, then persecuted, it overcame all obstacles, and in less than two hundred years became the dominant religion of the Empire. But it survived the Empire. It conquered the conquerors of Rome. During the long centuries of mediæval darkness, in the midst of war and violence, it kept alive the flickering flame of learning and of spiritual life. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, it burst forth into new life, and has exerted a tremendous moral and spiritual influence upon the modern world. Today, although in the midst of renewed conflict, it displays no signs of decrepitude, but is being propagated more broadly than before throughout the whole world. Christianity is incomparably the most influential movement of the past two thousand years. To the historical student it presents an exhaustless field for research. But of all historical questions connected with it, by far the most interesting is the question of its origin. How did Christianity begin its conquest of the world?

Jesus Himself, the Founder, did not

win any considerable number of permanent adherents. During His lifetime, the genuine disciples were comparatively few. It was after His death that the origin of Christianity as an active movement is to be placed. Now it seems exceedingly unlikely that Jesus' disciples could accomplish what He had failed to accomplish. They were evidently far inferior to Him in spiritual discernment and in courage. They had not shown the slightest trace of originality. They had been abjectly dependent upon the Master. They had not even succeeded in understanding Him. Furthermore, after His death, what little understanding, what little courage they may have had, was dissipated by blank despair. "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." How could such men succeed where their Master had failed? How could they institute the mightiest movement in the history of the world?

Of course, you can amuse yourself by suggesting impossible hypotheses. You might suggest, for instance, that after the death of Jesus His disciples sat down quietly and reflected on His teaching. "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." "Love your enemies." These are pretty good principles—they are of permanent value. Are they not as good now, the disciples might have said, as they were when Jesus was alive? "Our Father which art in heaven." Is that not a good way of addressing God? May not God be our Father even though Jesus is now dead? The disciples might conceivably have come to such conclusions. But nothing could be more unlikely. These men had not even understood the teachings of Jesus when He was alive, not even under the immediate impact of that tremendous personality. How much less would they understand after He had died, and died in a way that indicated hopeless failure! What hope could such men have, at such a time, of influencing the world? Furthermore, the hypothesis has not a jot of evidence in its favor. Christianity

never was the continuation of the work of a dead teacher.

## The Resurrection Fact

It is evident, therefore, that, in the short interval between the death of Jesus and the first Christian preaching, something had happened. Something must have happened to explain the transformation of those weak discouraged men into the triumphant preachers of a conquering faith. Whatever that happening was, it is the greatest event in history. An event is measured by its consequences. That event has transformed the world.

What was the event that changed a humble band of mourners into the spiritual conquerors of the world? What was the event that produced the Christian church?

Now it is perfectly evident what it was thought to be by those who were immediately concerned. Jesus of Nazareth was thought to have risen from the dead. That is what explains the remarkable transition of the disciples from the depths of despair to the height of joy, from abject weakness to resistless power. The endless discussions of the question by modern historians have at least established one fact beyond fear of contradiction: Christianity was founded upon the belief of the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth in His resurrection. Somehow or other, the men who had been intimate with Him on earth—who had seen Him subject to all the ordinary conditions of life, who had seen Him walk and talk and sleep and eat and drink—these men came to believe that He had risen from the dead. So much is now admitted alike by opponents and friends of Christianity. The sincere belief of Jesus' disciples in His resurrection was the foundation of the Christian church.

But how is that belief, that change in the convictions of the disciples, itself to be explained? By visions, by hallucinations, says the modern man. That hypothesis cannot here be discussed in detail. But certain fundamental objections to it appear even on

the most cursory examination. How did these visions happen to appear to so many different persons? Why did not the opponents of the new faith point triumphantly to the dead body of the alleged Messiah still resting in the tomb? An hallucination is rather a flimsy foundation upon which to build the whole edifice of the Christian world. But how else may the belief of the early disciples in the resurrection be explained? Only by supposing that the resurrection was a fact.

### The Resurrection a Miracle

There is therefore weighty historical evidence for the resurrection of Jesus. "But," says the modern man, "you are going too fast. I admit a good deal of what you are saying. That transition of the disciples from despair to joy is certainly a very curious thing. Their belief in the resurrection of Jesus is certainly very difficult of explanation. In fact, I am not certain that I can explain it. It certainly would save trouble if I could think that that belief was founded upon fact. If the resurrection of Jesus, therefore, were an ordinary event, I should certainly accept it. But are you not forgetting that it is a miracle? Miracles do not happen. There is some evidence for the resurrection of Jesus—very strong evidence, indeed—but not sufficient to support a miracle, not sufficient to make me change my whole view of the uniformity of nature."

Such is the objection of the modern man, and it is a well-founded objection. Isolate the resurrection of Christ from everything else, and the testimony is perhaps insufficient to establish it. The resurrection is a miracle, and there is a deep-seated shrinking of the modern mind from any such thing—a shrinking which hardly any testimony can overcome. If a dozen men for whose judgment and character I have the highest respect should come in one by one and testify simply that a man had risen from the dead I am not sure that I should believe them. But I should be very much puzzled; I should strive to get at the underlying meaning of their remarkable information. So it is with the resurrection of Jesus. The testimony to it is singularly strong. If it be not a fact, the whole history of the Christian church and of the Christian world is an unsolved riddle. The strength of the testimony at least compels further

investigation. What is the deeper meaning of this marvelous tale?

So far, we have been examining Christianity from the outside, simply as a phenomenon of history. That is not enough. It must also be examined from the inside, before any decision about it can be made. Where shall we get such inside information?

From various sources, no doubt, but best of all from the Apostle Paul. Paul was personally acquainted with the original disciples of Jesus. He must have known all that they had to tell about the resurrection. Nay, he was himself a witness to it. He saw the risen Lord. On the other hand, he was a good representative of Christianity as a whole. He had not known the earthly Jesus. Peter's thought of Christ could not but be influenced by the years of intercourse in Galilee and Judea. A great gulf separates his religious life from that of later Christians. Paul was the first great Christian whose spiritual life was developed under essentially the same conditions as our own. He knew only the risen Christ.

### The Resurrection and Human Sin

What has Paul to say about the inner meaning of Christianity and of the resurrection?

In the first place, let us understand the starting point of all his thinking. That starting point is the conviction of sin. This world is lost in sin. How shall we escape from it?

Do we share this great presupposition of Paul's thinking? The evil of the world does not rest upon Paul's testimony alone. It has been perceived by deep thinkers of all ages. Hundreds of years before Christ it was perceived by Buddha, when he sat under the *pippala* tree in India, seeking the great secret of release from the world. It was perceived by Plato, when he represented the visible world as a world of flitting shadows cast by firelight in a cave, and sought to ascend to the blessed sunshine of a higher world of ideas. But conviction of sin cannot be attained by testimony or by a process of reasoning. It is far too fundamental for that. A man must be immediately conscious of it. What effect will the consciousness of sin have upon a man's attitude toward the resurrection of Christ? Simply this—the truly penitent man knows that no ordinary thing can save him. He knows that he is sold

under sin, and that all have sinned—that everything the world can produce is sinful. If there is any salvation, therefore, it must come from outside the world. In other words, it must be a miracle. The truly penitent man is out on a desperate search for a miracle. If he finds one, he is likely to accept it. The modern preacher comes to him, all laden as he is with his guilt. "My dear friend," he says, "I have something to offer you. I have here a purely natural religion, a religion that can easily be believed. Miracles are a great stumbling block; here is a religion that has nothing but natural features." What does the truly penitent man reply? He says, "My dear sir, you have evidently mistaken me for someone else. You have evidently mistaken me for a man who regards sin just as a little imperfection which will doubtless be removed in time. I regard it as deadly guilt in the sight of God, as subjection to a Satanic power that is leading me I know not whither. I have no use for a natural religion, a religion that is easy-to-believe. It will take something a great deal bigger than that to save me. You are giving me a man-made religion, a religion that is just the product of evolution, when I know that only God can save me."

So the truly penitent man rejoices in the miraculous, in the marvelous. He knows that the world has been shaken once for his downfall. Why should it not be shaken again for his salvation? Only a miraculous religion will meet his need. But does such a religion exist? Can it be found in Christianity? In the first place, Christianity claims to be such a religion. That is perfectly plain in Paul. His whole experience is based upon the view that Christ is a new beginning in humanity. He is not the product of evolution. He is the second Adam, as much a new beginning as the first Adam. He is not of this world.

But we can examine Christ for ourselves. As He is depicted in the Gospels, does He look like one of us? An unrepentant man may think the difference is one of degree rather than of kind. But the truly penitent man knows better. The awful, mysterious, holy person is revealed to him. Here is the wonder of a man without sin.

Turn now to the evidence for the resurrection. It is a miracle, you say. Very good, only a miracle can save  
(See "Machen," Page 110)

# The New Modernism

A Review by Ruling Elder H. EVAN RUNNER

THE NEW MODERNISM, by Cornelius Van Til, Ph.D. The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Philadelphia, 1946. xx, 384 pages. \$3.75. (May be ordered from THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN.)

**B**ARTH and Brunner are, theologically speaking, names of the hour. Their theology issues from a desire, enhanced by the stress of World War One, to escape the this-worldliness (immanentism) of nineteenth century German Modernism. They want a God who is Judge over us men and over our history. Right here it is that our interest is quickened in these two theologians, (sometimes called crisis theologians or dialectical theologians) since churchmen are very much disagreed on the point whether the new movement does present the church with the high and holy God of the Scriptures. The controversy years ago extended to our own country, until now no inconsiderable influence is exerted in American church life by both Barth and Brunner themselves and by men more or less under their spell. Princeton and Union (N. Y.), among other seminaries, have been very much affected. Brunner taught for a few years before the recent war at Princeton. Is this influence for good or evil? Is the new theology essentially orthodox or modernist?

By its title, *The New Modernism* tells us what Dr. Van Til's answer will be. Dr. Cornelius Van Til devoted his recent year of leave from Westminster Theological Seminary, where he is Professor of Apologetics, to the writing of this eagerly awaited book; to his analysis of the Barthian theology he has given many years of his life. A book could scarcely be more timely, but it is also most unusual. For, although there have been studies of one aspect or another of the Theology of Crisis, as the new tendency is also called, there has never been, to my knowledge, a full-scale attempt to come to grips with its essential structure. To do just this is the task Dr. Van Til sets before himself. For such work God has given him special qualifications.

Without knowing it, one might quickly surmise that the book was written in California. From first to last

we come across mention of oranges and orange-crates. But when oranges turn, right before the reader's eye, into snowballs, and when crates of oranges are shipped to Attu, that is, to Redlands, California, that is, to Nowhere, the reader finds it desirable to take a firmer hold of his chair and, simultaneously, to get a more solid grasp of the thought. It is a difficult book. Not all will be able to read it, although the reading ought by no means to be confined to the clergy.

Dr. Van Til feels that some Christians, not fully apprised of the "system" of thought behind the new theology, have erred in thinking themselves able to agree with this or that point in it. An important reason for his writing the book was to show that the "system" is of the greatest importance, and that it is a "system" so radically different from the system of truth found in the Scriptures that Christians cannot legitimately find areas of agreement between historic Christianity and the Theology of Crisis.

Permit me to digress for a moment to illustrate how easily identical words and phrases can in two different systems of thought mean very different things. A recent speaker on the Macartney lectureship of the Arch Street Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia said to his audience that the idea of reconciliation was common to all religions. Yet, is it not true that "reconciliation" means a totally different process in Christianity from what it means in Buddhism or some form of animism? To the Christian it means *God's reconciling sinners to Himself* through the grace of the Mediator; adherents of other religions mean by it *man's reconciling himself to God* through his own efforts. In the one case the process is from God to man for God's glory; in the others it is from man to God for man's relief. The Macartney lecturer never explained the difference. He was thinking abstractly. He did not make clear that the fundamental ideas of Christianity require a certain meaning for the expression "reconciliation," while differing fundamental ideas of other religions require a different meaning

for the same expression taken abstractly. So it is with all language: words and phrases take their precise meaning from certain basic ideas which form the system of thought.

To assist Christians to think scripturally and not abstractly about the Theology of Crisis, Dr. Van Til has elaborated the system lying behind it. "It has . . . been our chief concern," he tells us, "to deal with the basic principle to which both Barth and Brunner avow allegiance. . . . They have all along insisted that we must take all or nothing of their theology. Dialecticism forms an organic unity; we cannot deal with it as children deal with houses of blocks. Evangelicals and Calvinists, Fundamentalists and Modernists may in turn claim or disclaim certain dialectical positions; they will in the end be confronted with the responsibility of rejecting or accepting the basic dialectical principle" (pp. 364f.). Our author's interest goes beyond the sphere of the Reformed Faith. Arminians, Lutherans, Wesleyans, Pelagians—all must see that the principle of the dialectical theology is so radical as to make it futile to argue about whether the new theology is more like Arminianism or Calvinism, more like pre-, post-, or amillennialism. The difference goes much deeper than that. A "Calvinist should not object to the Lutheranism in Barth; there is no Lutheranism there. A Lutheran should not object to the Calvinism in Barth; there is no Calvinism there. An Arminian should not object to the Calvinism of Barth's doctrine of election; there is no Calvinism in it. A Calvinist should not object to the Arminianism in Barth's universalism; there is no Arminianism in it. A Reformation theology reconstructed along the lines of modern critical principles is not a Reformation theology in any form" (p. 366).

The reason so few Americans have understood the dialectical theology is that so few American Christians understand Immanuel Kant. Without reference to Kant one cannot hope to understand the theology of Barth and Brunner. "All the doctrines of the Theology of Crisis . . . must be seen through the spectacles of the Critique

of *Pure Reason*.<sup>1</sup> Nothing could be more untrue to history than to say that the theology of Barth and Brunner is basically similar to that of Luther and Calvin. Dialecticism is a basic reconstruction of the whole of Reformation theology along critical [that is, Kantian] lines" (*idem*).

So thoroughgoing was Kant's criticism of previous philosophy that an understanding of his work is fundamental for an understanding of modern science, philosophy, and religion. Speaking of modern philosophy, Van Til tells us, "Modern philosophy is to be differentiated from ancient and medieval philosophy by the measure of consistency with which it has placed the consciousness of man not merely at the center, but actually at the base, of all that it says about being or knowledge. Modern philosophy . . . has had the fatal courage of consistency in proclaiming what was inherent in the fall of man, namely, the idea of the complete autonomy [independence] of the human mind" (p. 369). Of the effect of Kant's thought Dr. Van Til says, "Kant's Criticism offers a scepticism more basic than that of Hume. . . . Kant prepared the way for the most thoroughgoing scepticism the history of human thought has seen. . . . And it is this basic scepticism that Barth has borrowed from Kant and his successors. His theology would leave us without God and without hope in the world" (p. 362).

It is no doubt because the later developments of the critical principle of Kant in German thought are so little understood here that our author takes up Hegel, Kierkegaard, Overbeck and Heidegger. These men all represent the dialectical principle, and they have all influenced Barth and Brunner. This procedure, though perhaps a bit tedious at times, is justified if it helps the American student to see more clearly how very far removed the dialectical principle is from Christian principles. With such a principle, indeed, not even a Barth or a Brunner can find the God who is Judge of men and of history.

The *New Modernism* demonstrates satisfactorily that there is no difference of principle between the "earlier" and "later" Barth or between the "earlier" and "later" Brunner or between the two men. All are but stages in the

<sup>1</sup> Kant's chief work dealing with theoretical knowledge.

consistent working out of the principle of dialecticism. Dr. Van Til is fully aware of considerations of "more and less," but it is salutary to be driven back again and again to the formative principle of the new movement.

Dr. Van Til is perhaps the most vigorous apologist the Reformed church has; his purpose, therefore, in driving us back to the skeptical heart of the *Theology of Crisis* is to drive us thereafter into the arms of the Head of the church. Even in criticizing a modernist theology, Dr. Van Til, like a true son of the Calvinistic Reformation, is preaching the everlasting gospel. And to him the gospel of the grace of God is satisfactorily understood only in terms of the Reformed Faith. As he sees it, all theologies which are not derived solely from the Word of God will be more or less like the dialectical theology at bottom, and there is but one alternative, which the scriptural theology of the Reformed Faith alone can offer. "Over against this utter scepticism" are his words, "the historic Christian position, as expressed in the Reformed Faith, unequivocally sets forth the counsel of God as the source of whatsoever comes to pass. And just because such a God is not correlative to man He has genuine meaning for man. Just because this God is incomprehensible to man it is most rational to hold to Him. Without the presupposition of this God, human predication runs amuck. If non-Reformed, evangelical Christians will see and recognize this fact, they, too, joining the forces of the Reformed Faith, may see the new Modernism for what it really is and seek to win its adherents as well as all others to the gospel that is the gospel indeed" (pp. 378f.).

With this heartfelt appeal to all Christians everywhere to set themselves to become consciously and consistently Christian in all their thinking and evangelizing, Dr. Van Til closes his superb book. With a prayer that his call will be answered by earnest believers everywhere I close this review.

### Canadian Scholarship Offered by Westminster

WESTMINSTER Theological Seminary has the privilege of announcing that a special scholarship, limited to residents of Canada, is

being offered for the academic year 1946-1947. This is made possible by a gift for this purpose from two friends of the institution.

Application may be made by any resident of the Dominion who meets the entrance requirements of the Seminary. The scholarship will be awarded on the basis of academic promise and financial need. The amount of the award will be adequate to make a year's study at Westminster possible and will vary, within certain limits, with the financial needs of the recipient.

Information may be obtained from The Registrar, Westminster Theological Seminary, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia 18, Pa.

### Frank S. Hull

MR. FRANK S. HULL, one of the founders, deacon and treasurer of the Bethel Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Alexandria, S. D., died of coronary thrombosis on February 13th in Mitchell, S. D. He had been in poor health since 1939, but was seriously ill only a few days before his death.

Mr. Hull was born on March 15, 1877, and in 1900 moved to Alexandria. There he joined the Presbyterian church on confession of faith. He was a member of this church and also a trustee until the formation of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In April, 1937, he helped to organize Bethel Church and was so prominent in its organization that the townspeople called it "Frank Hull's church" for several years. He was a deacon of the church and also church treasurer.

He is survived by his wife, a brother and a sister. Because the church building was entirely too small for the host of friends, the funeral was held in the Methodist church in Alexandria, which also proved to be too small. The Rev. Russell D. Piper conducted the services on Sunday, February 17th, at the home, the church and the grave.

Frank Hull's passing will be a great loss to the Alexandria church, but the members know that their loss has been his gain.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth . . . that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

*The Presbyterian*  
**GUARDIAN**

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EDITORIAL

**Christianity Here  
and Now?**

SEVERAL decades ago Modernists made the social gospel popular in a number of American churches. There were many unfortunate results. One was to replace, in many quarters, the Biblical gospel of salvation by grace with a man-made gospel of salvation by works. In some of these churches the true gospel has never again been preached. There was, however, another result to which less attention has been paid. Many Bible believers were frightened away from any consideration of social problems in the light of Christianity. In avoiding the social gospel, evangelicals avoided the application of Christianity to so many phases of life that the gospel became almost divorced from the problems of society.

Jesus never divorced Himself from a problem. He answered men's questions, He healed their diseases, He encouraged the restoration of ill-gotten gains, and He denounced hypocrites and the self-righteous. The Sermon on the Mount is by no means just a blueprint for the future. It consists of our Lord's instructions to us for conduct toward others here and now. And "others" are the people who make up society. Christians are to do their best to see that every member of society is treated righteously.

In another column of this issue one of our contributors raises the question of caste in modern American society. As he implies, caste may be an expression based upon many factors. Wealth, geography, race, education, color are some of them. Mr. Marsden indicates that caste practices are the

results of an uneducated conscience. This is quite true. The result of a Christian education of the conscience will be the breaking down of every caste barrier.

The attitude of Christians toward people who differ from them in education, race, wealth and color is an important index of the depth and intensity of their Christianity. Our Lord sent the apostles out to "teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19, 20). The Sermon on the Mount was for everybody. There are no racial or social restrictions on the good news of salvation nor upon the moral law and the ethical precepts of Christianity.

Godless communism is a colossus which now bestrides a major portion of the earth's surface. Its adherents are striving to make its dominion complete. They have well-founded hopes of success. Why? Because in spite of its faults and failures, its deceit and chicanery, its golden dreams and leaden realities, it proclaims ever anew the right of every man to that share of the material things of earth which he can profitably use. Christians believe that the Scriptures teach them fairness, unselfishness, a respect for the rights of others, generosity, considerateness. Until Christians put those virtues into practice, communism will gain! It is gaining every hour. What are you doing to bring Christian standards of fair play, honesty and unselfishness into industry, into commerce, yes, into the social life of your family and your community? Are labor-management relations on a Christian basis in the cases where you have authority? Do you discriminate in the street car or bus against a man because of the shape of his nose or the color of his skin? Our Lord did not. Do Bible believing Christians believe the Bible even when it affects their pocketbooks and their friendships?

**Whither Education?**

EDUCATION in America is on the march, but it would be a bold prophet who would dare to say exactly where it is heading. In a land where so many diverse influences have been at work—political, cultural and

religious influences—there has not been, at least not for many years, merely one pattern of education. Nevertheless, during the past three-quarters of a century, certain tendencies have become more or less dominant. The characteristic American pattern took shape along two main lines.

In the first place, the rather rigid curriculum of the arts, including Greek and Latin classics, came to be rejected in favor of a very diversified and flexible system. Numerous courses in the sciences and in other fields of knowledge were added, the students meanwhile being given wide latitude to elect such courses as most appealed to them. Moreover, the practical aspect of education came to be stressed, with the result that vocational studies were given a prominent place in colleges and even in high schools.

The second main development is that education came increasingly under the dominance of philosophies opposed to historic Christianity. In the interest of a scientific and objective method, a completely neutral approach toward truth has been demanded. But the philosophy of complete neutrality is necessarily opposed to the Christian faith. Actually, of course, the so-called neutral approach was never neutral. And it has become increasingly clear that education not based on a Christian approach itself begins with a philosophy that is anti-Christian.

At the present time it appears that many educators are not as certain as they once were that the prevailing systems are adequate and the underlying philosophies valid. The world has been violently shaken by a second catastrophic war. And one consequence has been that men are not confident that the older education is suited to meet the crises of our times. The educational world is, consequently, in a state of ferment. Numerous plans, originating in institutions like the University of Chicago, Harvard University, Yale University and others, have been developed to rectify apparent weaknesses and to make imperative adjustments. These new plans, in several respects, modify the older pattern so drastically that their sponsors have on occasion even characterized them as revolutionary.

The main tendency in these new plans is in the direction of far greater

uniformity in the course of study. The college student, it has been increasingly recognized, is not actually being trained for life if his course is made up of isolated fragments of knowledge and if the main stress is placed on his specialty or vocation. For life consists of more than earning a living; one must also learn to take a place of leadership in society and the state, and this cannot be achieved if life is not seen as a whole. If, in all of the diversity of modern life, one is to see things in their relationships and unity, education must be far more general and comprehensive than it has been.

Along with this search for comprehensiveness, there has necessarily developed a quest for a philosophy that can lay bare the deeper unity and meaning of life. Students must be concerned not merely with facts, but also with principles, "the principles in the natural world" and "social and moral laws," as one of the reports expresses it.

We welcome these new developments as constituting, in a number of respects, solid improvements upon the older scheme of things. Moreover, the search for an adequate principle of interpretation of the world and life offers hope of the dawning of a brighter day. But the darker aspect must not be overlooked. In the midst of the current developments there are few signs of a return to a Christian approach to education. And even where, in certain sectors, there has been a reckoning with Christianity, some compromising form of Christianity, rather than the God-centered view of the Reformed Faith, has been conspicuously in view. It is splendid to acknowledge that life must be seen as a whole, and to insist that there can be no meaningful education without a return to first principles. But if the unity is found outside of Christ and His Word, and the principles are at variance with the truth of God, there may well result an education which is even more consciously and vigorously anti-Christian than that to which we have become accustomed. Education under the Nazis was remarkably unified and well-ordered, but its unifying philosophy was the philosophy of death and destruction!

The Christian answer, accordingly, is one which will insist that only the consistently Christian view of life and

the world can satisfy the search for unity and meaning. Only if God is acknowledged as the Beginning and the Ending, and His fear as the beginning of wisdom, will education make decisive progress. The challenge which confronts us, then, is to labor that Biblical Christianity may be set forth as clearly and as emphatically as

possible in order that, under the operations of the gracious power of God, His truth may win the battle. And the most concrete, constructive program of action is that which is offered by a system of Christian education comprehending the entire field of instruction from kindergarten to university.

## The Caste System

Faiths Men Die By—PART 19

By the REV. ROBERT S. MARSDEN

**W**ITHIN recent weeks the newspapers have been talking freely about a "caste" system in the United States armed services. People who have not thought of the matter in connection with missions have had it brought to their attention in connection with a sphere with which they are familiar.

When a person arrives in India there are many things that immediately impress him, but as he learns just a little about the social life of the land he finds the caste system the most impressive. With hundreds of millions of people in economic, religious and social strait-jackets, the caste system has had a most profound effect upon Hindu civilization for centuries.

There is much dispute among authorities regarding the origin of the caste system. Undoubtedly one cause of it was a supposed racial superiority of the Aryans who invaded India and who oppressed the dark-skinned aboriginal inhabitants thousands of years ago. For centuries it has developed along occupational lines, and there is a caste for each occupation and a sub-caste for most. For instance, a skilled metal worker would be in a different caste, or at least in a different sub-caste, than an unskilled one, and a farm owner would not be in the same caste as his tenant. Whatever its origin, it has dominated the whole structure of Hindu life.

The caste system circumscribes the life of the people with an almost infinite number of rules regarding all the affairs of life. Eating, drinking, social ceremonies, marriage and religion are all rigidly regulated and

woe be to one who violates the unwritten laws of caste. A caste member must abstain from food regarded by his caste-fellows as impure, and from acts that are held to be improper for him. He must not take food or drink from a man of inferior caste. He must not render certain services to men of low caste. If polluted by their touch or, it may be, by their proximity, he must purify himself, while if their shadow should fall on his food, he must immediately throw it away. Along the roads there are springs from which travelers may drink. Beside the spring there is often a cup from which the high-caste traveler may drink; a low-caste traveler may not touch his lips to the cup but must drink the water as it is poured through a long bamboo pole.

The caste system in operation is seen most clearly in its application to marriage laws. With certain exceptions it is not permissible to marry outside one's caste. Since the number of members of any one of the multitudinous castes living in a community may be rather limited, it makes for a great deal of intermarriage within the family and the limited opportunities make marriage well-nigh impossible for many. In the upper castes it is essential that the marriage take place while the parties are small children. However, in the upper castes it is permissible for a boy to be married to a lower caste girl and raise her and her parents to his caste. There is thus a scramble on the part of parents to marry their daughters to a higher caste. It is permissible for a girl, however, to be married only in her own caste or into a higher caste, and hence

there are many unmarried upper caste girls, with all the immorality attendant upon this condition in a heathen society. If the marriage laws are rigid, the ceremonies connected with the marriage festival are equally so. Woe be to him who forgets or neglects any of the ceremonies!

How is this discipline maintained? In many of the castes it is maintained by a recognized leader, but in some of them simply by the force of public opinion. For minor breaches of caste it is usually possible to do penance in the form of some ceremonies, but for major breaches of caste the penalty is excommunication. The offender is shunned as a leper and his life is made so miserable that he must move away and seek his livelihood as he can.

The economic effects of caste upon the Hindu society are terrible. The system has frozen millions in occupations that are no longer necessary or profitable. Numerous farmers, through the operation of the laws of inheritance, have had their acreage reduced to a tiny tract, yet they can do nothing about it. If a man is born a farmer he may have little land to support his family, yet he cannot take to weaving or to working for any hire, for then he would lower his caste. He would starve rather than do this, and many Hindus do just that.

Naturally modern civilization has had the effect of breaking down the caste barriers. Those Hindus who have been compelled to have much intercourse with the outside world necessarily have had to relax their caste practices, but they persist unabated in the thousands of villages which have not been touched by civilization. It would be amusing if it were not so sad to see high-caste Hindus attempting to maintain their separateness on a crowded streetcar or train. The rise of political consciousness among the Hindus has also done much to break down the caste system, and it is not now unheard of for Hindus and Mohammedans in India to eat together, a practice which is forbidden by both their codes. Mohandas Gandhi and his party have done much to break down the caste barriers and, whatever may be thought of Gandhi's methods, he has been a benefactor to millions of Hindus in raising their social level.

What effect has Christianity had upon caste? The Roman Catholic

Church has recognized the castes, and converts have been permitted to continue their caste practices. Most Protestants have insisted that when one becomes a Christian, caste must go. One can well imagine the great barrier that this righteous provision imposes upon the Hindu who, in order to become a Christian, must forsake his family and his whole community life and become an outcast from Hindu society. To be sure, this makes Romanism more attractive to the Hindu, yet the Protestants have rightly insisted that if one is to be a Christian he must be willing to leave everything, no matter how dear, for the sake of his new Lord and King.

Lest we be tempted to think that the caste system is simply a heathen custom with which we have only a remote connection, it behooves us to examine our own society in twentieth century America to see what we have done to enforce a caste system right here. To be sure, there are many barriers which race and color have erected in America and which are exceedingly difficult to break down, even with the best of intentions. There is a question whether all of them would need to be broken down even in a Christian society. Yet in many parts of this country there is a caste system, whether it be imposed by the so-called Brahmans of New England or by the followers of Senator Bilbo in the South.

One of the encouraging features of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is the manner in which it has been able to break down barriers of caste. The church has acted in advance of our age in emphasizing in its practices the oneness of all, of whatever race or color, who are in Christ Jesus.

What a contrast there is between the slavery which caste imposes upon the individual and the freedom wherewith Christ has made him free! Caste illustrates just about the ultimate in a human society wherein the individual is bound in conscience by the opinions of men rather than by the laws of God. When one allows himself to be bound by the opinions of men in matters that are not in themselves morally good or bad, he has taken the first step toward the slavery of which the Hindu society is the horrible example.

This is the last of the series of articles on Hinduism. A study of this

important faith, by which millions are dying every year, reveals to us clearly that no political stop-gaps will cure India's ills, but only the gospel of Christ which alone is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes—to the high caste and the low caste alike.

## Church Union

THE following dispatches to the Religious News Service contain up-to-the-minute information on the situation in the Orient:

### Korea

Is there or is there not a united Protestant church in Korea? This is the most debated question in Christian circles here today.

There is a concentrated leadership in Seoul of a united church, built on what was left of a 15-day-old Japanese-sponsored union. There is also a skeleton Methodist organization trying to reshape itself, and throughout the country the presbyteries of the Presbyterian church are reforming. A union church in this country is almost entirely a Presbyterian-Methodist affair, as those two denominations are by far the largest. There is also a smaller Holiness group which has been reformed after five years of oblivion and is actively promoting a revival program throughout southern Korea.

Korea is an ideal Christian community for union. There are only two major denominations in the field, and throughout the years their efforts have been closely synchronized. They did not compete in areas one or the other served. The large Christian institutions in the country, like Severance Union Medical College and Hospital, the Ewha College for women and Chosen Christian College, are all union institutions and have been for many years. Furthermore, there has always been a strong pro-union group among the leaders and laity of both the Methodist and Presbyterian denominations.

As in Japan, the government sought to control the Christian churches here by uniting them under one dictatorial head. The Korean union, however, did not come as quickly as it did in Japan. It was not until June, 1945, that the Japanese vice governor-general in Seoul called in the Protestant leaders and told them it would be desirable for them to get together. The leaders had all been coached in advance and approved an immediate union. A committee, including government bureaucrats, wrote the constitution of the united church in the four days from June 26th to 29th.

The constitutional convention of this

united church was called for July 19th and 20th, with twenty-seven Presbyterian representatives present, twenty-one Methodist, six Salvation Army, and one each from five smaller groups. The delegates were not elected but named by their denominational headquarters.

The conference was held in the Chong Dong Methodist church in Seoul with delegates from the government there to congratulate the new church. The regulations were read and adopted. The leaders of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches and the Salvation Army resigned and formally dissolved their separate groups. An election was held for the head of the church, but the ballot was sealed and counted by the educational bureau of the government. This bureau announced that the Rev. Kim Kwan-sik, who himself admits that he could not possibly have had a majority of the votes, was elected chairman.

The resulting union went to work on August 1st and quit fourteen days later when Japan surrendered. Churchmen in Korea were then faced with a dilemma. What kind of a church did they have: denominations or a united church or none at all? The denominations had been legally dissolved. The Japanese-sponsored union expired with the Japanese regime in Korea.

A formal meeting dissolving the union was called in October. Only a few persons showed up. Members from north of the 38th parallel were unable to come, and many in southern Korea also stayed away. There was not a quorum present, and the only formal business done was the resignation of Mr. Kim and his staff.

On November 27th the Chong Dong church in Seoul was literally packed full of Christians of all denominations attending a mass meeting to welcome back to Korea two prominent Christians, Dr. Syngman Rhee and Kim Koo, of the provisional government. They had been long exiled from their homeland, and the Christians turned out en masse to greet their leaders.

The meeting quickly turned into a political rally, with a heavy emphasis upon Korean unity. On the spur of the moment certain leaders of the church captured this mood and pressed through a motion to form a united church on the spot. While objections were raised about the constitutionality of such a procedure, the motion was passed.

Mr. Kim was again elected chairman, and a committee of forty was authorized to draw up regulations for the church to be submitted to a full convention, probably in April. Only South Korea delegates were present at this meeting. Hence, the delay until April was effected in order to give time to bring in the Christians of north Korea. The organization brought into being at this meeting calls itself the Korean Christian Church, South Korea Synod.

The Salvation Army has already in-

dicated that it will not participate in another united church. The Holiness group, while it has reorganized by itself, may later join the union. Of the two major groups, the Methodists are most hesitant about the abrupt union.

The Methodists are the smaller of the two major denominations here, and they feel their own denominational concerns are not being cared for in the union which is dominated by Presbyterians. They also feel that the union is a clever shield by which the same wartime leaders of the churches are continuing in power.

These Methodist leaders, with some Presbyterians joining them, argue that the first move should be to restore the denominational sovereignty, and then on the basis of duly constituted delegates proceed to effect a democratic union. Dr. J. S. Ryang, long-time Methodist leader here, former bishop and at present secretary of the Christian Literature Society, and Dr. Fritz Hongkew Pyen, former president of the Methodist theological seminary and now a pastor, take this position.

Presbyterians are reorganizing their presbyteries, and the Methodist conferences hope to be reformed and meet soon. Meanwhile, both the denominations and the united church office are functioning simultaneously. The future will probably prove that the union of today is not firmly rooted in popular church support and that the denominations will be restored. When that day comes campaigns for reunification will be started.

### Japan

The most important problem in Japanese Christendom today is what is to become of the Kyodan, or United Church of Christ in Japan. While no decision has yet been reached, the likelihood is that Japanese Protestants will try to save their organic union and let the dissenters secede if they choose.

Unification of Protestants in Japan was created by two distinct pressures. One was the insistence of the government. The other was a movement, as old as modern missions in Japan, which has tried to unite the churches by mutual consent, on their own initiative.

A major reason church leaders in Japan want to keep the Kyodan is that they have always insisted it was a spontaneous union, not coerced by the government. To dissolve the union now, they feel, would be to lose face.

Throughout the war, the Kyodan was so concerned with church-state relations that it provided little spiritual leadership to the churches, and many Christians turned away from it for its lack of message. "It was just one more bureau of the government," they say, "and we were weary of being governed."

Despite these charges, the Kyodan must be credited with having tried to do its job

in a most difficult setting. The Rev. Mitsuru Tomita, as head of the union, traveled from North to South in Japan getting Christians out of trouble with the police. He went to the defense of the persecuted when he felt it was a Kyodan responsibility. More than anything, he kept the Christian church intact.

Japanese Christians are grateful to the Kyodan and its leaders for that. But many of them now argue that the price was high, that the compromises sapped the lifeblood of the church, that the men who made the compromises have no message for Japan's new day.

Within the past few weeks, a group of thirty-five young clergymen in the Tokyo area met and petitioned an irate Mr. Tomita to resign along with his whole staff and to permit the selection of new delegates to the general convention which will pass formally upon the new church constitution. Copies of this committee's action went to over 1,000 pastors in Japan and to the press.

Conscientious Christians who believe in a united Protestantism are worried about the stubborn attitude of the Kyodan leaders. They believe that the Kyodan's refusal to change its autocratic structure and its personnel will result in mass walk-outs from the union, whereas a more liberal attitude and a wiping of the slate clean might save it.

The new constitution of the Kyodan is now being drafted by a committee chosen by Mr. Tomita. It is recommending the keeping of an organically united church with what it calls "amendments to make it more democratic." These include some decentralization of authority, abolition of the post of torisha, head of the church, and some ambiguities permitting differences of doctrine and polity within the Kyodan structure. None of the keen Christian minds outside the Kyodan have been asked to serve on or advise this committee.

A large group of Christian leaders favor a complete dissolution of the Kyodan, adjournment of its offices *sine die*, abrogation of the constitution, dismissal of the personnel, and the calling of a new constitutional assembly to draw up a loose federation of Protestant churches, organized around functions which they can perform better together than they can separately.

This group believes that even the Episcopalians and other non-Kyodan churches would cooperate with such a federation, and thus the advantages of union would be retained with none of the disadvantages of war responsibility which now mark the Kyodan and are driving people and churches away.

All the institutions of wartime Japan have been closely scrutinized by General MacArthur's personnel for traces of militarism, ultra-nationalism and war guilt. All have been purged so far as possible. But punitive measures will not be taken,

except in the most extreme cases, against the church. It is American policy not to meddle with people's religious convictions.

The result of this policy is that the

United Church in Japan still holds within its membership and leadership many persons who in any other organization would long ago have been purged.

Meanwhile, the total energy of the Kyodan is being spent on organization details, and the job of evangelizing a spiritually bankrupt nation goes begging.

## Notes From a Navy Chaplain's Log

By E. LYNNE WADE, Lieutenant-Commander, USN  
Senior Chaplain, U. S. S. *Consolation*

### PART NINE

(*Preceding installments have appeared in the issues of May 10, July 10, August 15, September 10, October 10 and 25, and December 10, 1945, and January 10, 1946.*)

THE Solomon Islands are the fairest gem of God's creation I have ever personally seen. No attempt of mine at describing them could do justice to them. The only place I have seen in America that is anywhere nearly comparable to them is to be found in the blue-hazed mountains, the desert, and sky and clouds and sunsets of Arizona. But there are lacking such characteristic features of the South Seas as the jungles, the coral reefs and beaches, the brilliantly plumed birds, the mountainsides heavily forested with such magnificent trees as mahogany, teak, rosewood, banyan, ebony, and others, the many large, swift, sparkling streams—oh, and much else! See it for yourself some day, if you can.

After a few weeks on Guadalcanal, the daily and nightly air raids began to get a bit monotonous, less exciting, and a considerable nuisance. The Japs evidently figured on the nuisance value of their raids, because I remember one night when ten full hours elapsed from the time the first alert was sounded until the all clear was given. On that occasion, the enemy sent over only some two to six planes at a time, all night long. The first came about nine o'clock, and after buzzing about for a couple of hours in the vicinity, they finally dropped their bombs and started back to their home field. As the whirring of their engines died out in the darkness, most of us prepared to "hit the sack" even though the all clear had not sounded. We'd no sooner gotten in bed than the faint sound of "Washing-Machine Charley" was heard again in the distance. So we got up again, dressed,

and waited for another couple of hours while the planes circled all around overhead, dropped their bombs at last, and headed home. And so it continued all night. As if that weren't bad enough, I was particularly distressed by the fact that it was Saturday night. Nobody would be at my morning service, because the skipper would surely let the men sleep late. But the all clear sounded just shortly before my service was to begin at 7:00, and the men started streaming toward the meeting-place. I had the largest attendance at that particular service I had the entire year on the island, except on Easter Sunday!

I found myself becoming less alert, however, to the sound of the air-raid signal, and particularly after I had gone to sleep at night. Even in the daytime, I no longer grabbed my steel helmet in a mad rush for the nearest foxhole, but took my time and, a little later, after I had procured for myself a good pair of Jap binoculars, I found it much more interesting to get out in the open and watch the enemy planes, by day or night, and even the descent of the bombs from the time they flicked like shiny insects from the belly of the plane until they were lost to view.

But to be disturbed and aroused out of a deep sleep—that was really provoking! It began to take great will-power to make myself crawl out of my bunk, drag on my clothes, and sit in a foxhole swarming with mosquitoes. One night I was debating the value of doing so, when I suddenly heard the planes coming in quite close and low, as they had on the sneak raids I have described. At that I jumped out and was wrestling with my trousers when the familiar "swish" of the first bomb penetrated my ears so loudly I knew it was close. I dropped to the ground and the explosion followed immediately. It was in

the middle of the camp several hundred yards away, and I heard the fragments peppering everything all around me. But what I saw really amazed me. A giant orange flame billowed up from the spot, and instead of going out in a few seconds seemed to increase in intensity and brilliance for an endless period of time. I thought it might be some kind of a new flare bomb we hadn't seen before, in which case other planes would be using it as a target marker, so I decided it might be worthwhile to dash for a foxhole. Then I heard shouts and voices and a lot of commotion, and after a short while the flames died out completely. But no more bombs. It was a great mystery—until morning.

Our boys had been so busy doing things for others that they had not had time to make any improvements on their own camp or living conditions. At last they had taken some of their own time, tired as they were, to lay a concrete foundation for a more adequate galley. It was considered hard and dry enough that very evening to move every one of the fourteen brand-new and hitherto unused gasoline stoves we had on to the nice new deck. Side by side in two rows of seven each, back to back, and flush against one another, they were filled to brimming with gasoline, all ready for the first hot breakfast on the island the next morning. That bomb could not have been dropped more squarely in the center of those stoves if the Jap had done so by hand in broad daylight. From then on it was really a personal war between every man in the 26th Seabees and the whole Japanese empire!

That same occasion reminds me of another interesting aspect of aerial warfare. During such raids (there were other enemy bombers all around, apparently), every gun on the island seemed to be in action. I don't know

how many of the great 90-mm. anti-aircraft guns were on the island, but it seemed like hundreds at first, and thousands later, as more equipment was brought in. It only seemed so, of course. Every time one of them was fired, it projected a shell that cost the price of two \$25 war bonds—and there seemed to be an interval of only about ten seconds between each firing. Sometimes all the guns would be kept firing as fast as possible for a solid half-hour or more. Then later, as more planes would come into range, they would take it up for another half-hour or so. Oh, the awful waste of war—just materially! But they kept the enemy up high in the air, destroying his accuracy, so that though few of them were ever brought down by anti-aircraft, it was worth it. And what a spectacle! Every time a gun was fired, the flash would light up the entire surrounding countryside brilliantly. For anyone who likes fireworks (and I do), there was something thrilling and beautiful about it.

But the firing of the guns added a new danger to the enemy's bombs. A few minutes after the shells exploded high above, with another flash that sent their fragments flying in every direction, like a skyrocket bursting into a thousand stars, the shattered, jagged pieces, some no bigger than the end of your finger and others almost ten inches wide and long, would begin to drop all around you. As the intensity of the firing increased, there would be such a thick hail of them raining down that the only safe place was under some really sturdy covering. I realized this all the more when I heard one hit my tent that night. Investigating the next morning, I found that one of the smallest pieces had penetrated three thicknesses of the thick, heavy, new canvas (my door flap, doubly thick, was thrown back) and dug a full inch into the ground beneath. I have kept the wicked-looking thing to this day as a souvenir.

The unusual phenomenon connected with the falling of flak is the singing sound it sets up. It is positively the most eerie, unearthly sound I have ever heard. You almost feel it more than you hear it, as it beats against your ears and into your very innermost being. I cannot possibly describe it, but I have never found anyone else who could either. It's another one of those things you have to experience to understand.

It wasn't long before we had our first death in camp. Ray and Jack (my organist), another fellow who played the cornet for me, and I were just leaving one Sunday morning to conduct a service in a neighboring Marine hospital, when we saw our Pharmacist Mates lifting a skeleton-like man into the jeep we used as an ambulance. He had refused to give up or turn in, and now it was apparently too late, because as soon as we returned from the service, I was met by as excited a group of men as I ever saw, including the Executive Officer, who informed me that the man had died. I had been told that nobody ever seems to know what to do when a man dies in the Navy except the Chaplain, so I had to give a lot of instructions and we prepared to bury our dead that afternoon. My funeral text was, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Funerals had one great value—they afforded me the only opportunities I ever got for preaching the gospel to every member of the battalion—Jews, Roman Catholics and Protestants alike—for no one would stay away from the funeral of a buddy.

My four or five Jewish boys in the 26th, however, attended my regular services quite frequently. One in particular came regularly to the Bible class until he was evacuated. Whenever Jewish services were held on the island, they would borrow my jeep to go to them. One day they brought back the leader of these services to meet me—a Jewish Army doctor. He asked me if I would preach the sermon at the next Saturday's service. I consented and accordingly did so, on the text of Isaiah 8:20, and preaching Christ. I have since preached at a number of Jewish services, always with an Old Testament text, but always presenting Christ faithfully. I have always been courteously received and treated, after the service as well as before it, heartily thanked, and asked to come back and preach again, which I have done a couple of times. This has resulted also in further inquiry by Jewish personnel coming to me personally and individually, showing a lasting interest in what I had said.

Similarly, just as a Roman Catholic Chaplain is free to instruct any person not a member of that church who wants to change or become one (and many do, usually as the result of their desire to marry Roman Catholics), so

also is the Protestant Chaplain in the Navy free to deal with a Roman Catholic. I think the Roman Church itself would insist on such liberty being maintained, because, as a matter of fact, they gain far more than they lose by it. If the Navy absolutely prohibited anyone from being dealt with in the matter of changing his church, the Roman Church would have an intolerable problem. Don't let the *Christian Beacon*, or anybody else, tell you that a Navy Chaplain who is sensible, courteous, and level-headed does not have complete freedom to carry out his spiritual ministry. There may be occasional trouble from a narrow-minded, bigoted skipper, but the Navy so guarantees that freedom to its Chaplains that such a skipper will always lose out in a showdown. I have always enjoyed the most perfect freedom in the Chaplaincy (I am in my fifth year now, as I write this), with no interference from any source whatsoever.

I could multiply thrilling experiences many times, but I shall skip many of them to tell about the two biggest mass air raids the Japs launched on the Solomon Islands, inasmuch as I had a "box seat" for both of them. They both happened on Wednesday afternoons, when I was on my way over to Tulagi for my weekly visit. The first was April 7, and we were not quite halfway across the bay between the two islands. On that occasion, the enemy sank four of our ships, including a tanker so close to our little ship that we could see the whole thing. It was interesting to hear "Tokyo Rose" declare over the radio a night or two later that the invincible Japanese air force had sunk nineteen of our ships, damaged others, and downed some hundred of our planes, at a loss of only six of their own! The loss of planes had been exactly the reverse. It was the first time I had seen dog-fights on a large scale being fought in the skies in every direction you looked. If I were asked to decide what has afforded me the greatest thrill in war or in peace, in the things of this world, I should unhesitatingly choose such a scene. I lived on the excitement of that experience for the next two months until I was in the middle of a similar scene even more exciting. I'll tell you about that in the next installment of my log.

(To be continued)

# The Life of Jesus Christ

A Home Study Course by the REV. LESLIE W. SLOAT

## LESSON 8

### Jesus and Nicodemus

SCRIPTURE: *John 3: 1-21.*

WHILE Jesus was in Jerusalem for the Passover, He engaged in a considerable amount of preaching, and doubtless also performed a number of miracles. His works must have attracted the attention of many people, including some of the religious leaders. One of these latter, Nicodemus, came to Jesus on a certain evening, and John tells us of the conversation that took place.

Nicodemus was a Pharisee, and a member of the supreme Jewish council or Sanhedrin. The Pharisees were a class or party of the Jewish people who prided themselves on their public and strict observance of the Mosaic law. They made it a special business of theirs to study and interpret that law, and they had developed along with it a sizable body of traditions received from the Jewish fathers. Although this public observance of the Mosaic regulations had become a sort of a formal thing, a party label, there were some among the Pharisees who were truly religious and devout worshippers of God, and who had apparently some understanding of the deeper things of the Mosaic teaching. Nicodemus seems to have been one of this better class of Pharisees.

He came to Jesus by night. This may have been because he was afraid of popular opinion and did not wish to be seen openly conferring with Christ. Or it may merely have been as a matter of convenience. But we are interested that he came at all. Apparently he had been troubled by what he had heard and seen of Jesus, and desired a first-hand acquaintance. His opening sentence indicates the impression Jesus had made on the people, or at least on some of them. But Nicodemus did not get far enough to state the particular question he had in his mind, when Jesus interrupted him.

Perhaps Jesus read, underneath the remarks already made, something of the prideful spirit of Pharisaism which professed to know and understand spiritual things. Perhaps Jesus wished to stop him abruptly by informing him at the outset that, however much he thought he knew about the kingdom

of God, actually he knew nothing at all. Nicodemus said, "We know thou art a teacher sent from God, for no one could do these signs which thou doest, except God be with him." But Jesus immediately said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." It is interesting to trace the "impossibles" that appear in this conversation. Jesus says in effect that whatever Nicodemus professes to know about the kingdom of God is impossible for him, unless he be born again. His judgment, his discernment in spiritual things is dependent upon a new birth.

Nicodemus does not understand, or perhaps he understands too well, the implication of Jesus' remark. He is a Pharisee, and yet Jesus says that he cannot see the kingdom of God without the new birth. He replies, asking how a man can be born again, placing the idea on the physical level. Jesus again affirms that without a new or second birth a man can neither see nor enter the kingdom of God. But He now proceeds to point out that the new birth He is talking about is a birth wrought out, not by the flesh, but by the Spirit of God. Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh, regardless of how many times it might be born of the flesh. But what is born of the Spirit of God is itself spirit, and not subject to the conditions which affect the flesh, that is, the corruption of sin and the blindness which accompanies it. Now Jesus goes on to show that this new birth is not something accomplished by what a man does. The Spirit of God is not subject to the will of man, but of God. The new birth takes place according to the will and purpose of God, who is sovereign even at this very initial point in the application of salvation to men.

Nicodemus now is bewildered. He who as a Pharisee knew so much suddenly realizes that he knows little. He is in the presence of one who has turned all his knowledge into ignorance. He is ready at last to ask how these things can be. Jesus expresses a certain degree of amazement at his ignorance, since he is a teacher in Israel. Jesus then affirms that He is indeed a teacher sent from God, who speaks that which He has seen. He has the authority of God, and as the

Son of Man knows whereof He speaks.

Then follows the wonderful passage which speaks of the lifting up of the Son of Man, an event comparable to Moses' action in raising a brass serpent on a pole. But as those who looked upon that serpent were healed of their snake-bites, so, says Jesus, everyone who looks upon and trusts in the Son of Man, will have eternal life. In the sixteenth verse of this chapter, we have the wonderful gospel in miniature, in which the Son of Man is identified also as the Son of God, sent into the world out of the love of God, that He might bring life to men.

The rest of the passage to verse 21 expands the thought of the life which is given through the work of the Son of God. He had not come into the world to condemn the world. The world already stood condemned before God, for its sin and guilt. But God had sent His Son to bring life to men. That life was received through trust in the Son, and those who believed in Him had it; those who believed not did not have it. Moreover, the very presence of the Son of God in the midst of men provided a ground for judgment, for making a distinction, since those whose deeds were evil would have nothing to do with Him whose life was altogether righteous, while those who did that which was according to the truth would also come to Him and rejoice in Him. Their works would give evidence that their lives were hid in God.

In the remaining verses of the chapter, we have the final witness of John the Baptist to Jesus, or at least the last record of such a witness. Naturally there would arise among the ardent disciples of John a certain amount of disappointment and jealousy, in that Jesus was attracting more attention than John himself. To all such thoughts John puts a stop, by pointing out that his own purpose in his whole life was to prepare the way for one who would follow him. That one was Jesus, and how could he—John—be sad that his work was bearing its fruit, and that the one of whom he was the forerunner was now entering into His rightful lot. That was his destiny, to be a shining light before Christ, but to become dim and disappear as Christ came into His own.

Later on Jesus bears witness to the greatness of John the Baptist, as the one who came according to prophecy in the spirit of Elijah. And yet John

sought nothing for himself. He longed only for the glory of Christ. Is not this a beautiful and yet pointed example for everyone who would be a disciple of Christ? All that we do as individuals must be for His honor and for His glory. It is His kingdom whose worldwide expansion we desire. He is the Lord and the King. Even when we have done all that is required of us, we are yet at best unprofitable servants. Christ must ever be the center of the picture, the headstone of the corner, the vine from which whatever strength we have is drawn.

Even our Lord himself recognized this, for in His teaching, His own person and work were at the center. Thus it appeared in the conversation with Nicodemus. The new birth was something that was necessary, but also something outside the power of Nicodemus to accomplish. But there was something required of Nicodemus himself. That was faith in the Son of God, sent to die for the sins of the world. And so Jesus did not leave Nicodemus with simply the teaching concerning the new birth. He also went on and told him the gospel. He gave him the truth which must be the ground of saving faith. And that is the redemptive work of the Son. Where the gospel of what Jesus has done is set forth, it can be expected that the renewing work of the Spirit will also be present and effective.

#### QUESTIONS ON LESSON 8

##### Factual Questions.

1. What was Nicodemus' first statement to Jesus? What was Jesus' reply?
2. What was Nicodemus' position among the Jews?
3. Does Jesus limit the necessity of the new birth to any particular class of people?

##### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.

1. Was Jesus sympathetic toward Nicodemus? Should we be sympathetic toward those who have questions about the Christian faith?
2. Did Jesus believe in eternal punishment as well as eternal life? Can we still believe in it today?

## Machen

(Concluded From Page 100)

us. If there be no miracle, then we are in the blackness of despair. But it is not the only miracle. Another

miracle, equally well-attested, is the character of Jesus. The two support each other. It is unlikely that a man should rise from the dead. Is it unlikely that Jesus should rise? Considered as a bare fact, apart from everything, the resurrection was not accepted. But considered in connection with the deepest facts of the human soul, and with the character of Jesus of Nazareth, it becomes a certain fact.

It is recognition of that fact which is the most tremendous intellectual decision that a man can make. Modern skepticism is quite correct about that. It is no easy thing to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. It means a Copernican revolution—a different way of looking at the world. And it means a new direction of the will and affections. For if Jesus Christ has risen from the dead, then His claims are substantiated to the full. He is the one link with the unseen world. Upon Him and Him alone depends our rescue from dreadful guilt and from bondage to the power of sin. And He is Lord. Accept the resurrection of Jesus, and you are no longer your own master. Your whole life must be torn from the control of self, and from reliance upon this world, even the best that is in it, and committed without reserve to the one Lord. Modern science has done a service to religion in making it hard to believe in the resurrection of Christ, for no light, easy belief would be in place. It is well that we have learned the true non-naturalness of miracle, for nothing natural would meet the need. God alone can conquer sin.

### The Resurrection and Salvation

The resurrection of Jesus then, that world-defying, sin-defying act of God's power, is important first of all as substantiating Jesus' claims. He is not a dead reformer, but the living, eternal Lord. But the resurrection has also a more special significance. The great events in the life of Christ are not like ordinary events; they mean something for those who are united with Him by faith. His death means the satisfaction of the law's demands. He that has died is justified from sin. The law has nothing to say to one who has paid its penalty. They that have died with Christ need not fear the thunderings of Sinai. So also, the resurrection means something for all Christians. In His resurrection as in His

death, Christ was the representative of His people. "We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." When is it that we rise with Christ? At the last day, is the first answer that occurs to us. That is true. Christ is the first-fruits of them that slept. His resurrection is the guarantee of immortality, worth all the other arguments for it put together. That obvious answer is a true answer. But it is not the whole of the truth. It is also true that every Christian has risen with Christ already. That is the great idea of the sixth chapter of Romans. What does it mean?

In the first place, back of a resurrection lies death. Every Christian has died together with Christ. That is not literally meant. The Christian church is not a community of ghosts. We are still creatures of flesh and blood. But because it is not literally meant, it does not follow that it has no meaning at all. On the contrary, it has a meaning that comes very near to the heart of the Christian religion. What is the fundamental thing about death? Why surely this—it is a complete change of existence. A man may take a long, long journey and yet keep up communications with his home. But a dead man is done with this life for good and all. No letters are delivered beyond the tomb. What Paul means when he says that the Christian has died together with Christ is that he has broken away not partially but completely, not temporarily but forever, from the old life. It is true that death is not the painful death on the cross or the accursed death of God's displeasure from which His grace has saved us. But it is no light thing. It means the absolute relinquishment of sin, and the absolute withdrawal of confidence in ourselves or in this world. It is not easy. But if we would rise with Christ, we must first die with Him.

Some men are content to tinker a little with the old life—to improve it a little here and there—to build a better building with the same materials. But it is a mistake to call that Christianity. Christianity is no mere improvement of the old life, no mere

easy development from it. It involves the throes of death and of a new birth. In that new life, Christ is all in all. It is no longer we that live but Christ that liveth in us. That is a great claim, and it must be substantiated by great deeds. The Christian who has a strong hope that he will be made perfect in heaven, but now goes on drifting with the current without any very special improvement, or any very special effort after it, has something radically wrong with his faith. Sin belonged to the old life; it has no right in the new life that is lived with Christ. The Christian must have a deadly hatred of sin impossible to the man of the world. But he can also have a new courage in combatting it. He has a new power on his side—the Spirit of the risen Christ. Walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

Easter day is a time of joy. Christ is risen. But it has no joy for those who prefer the old life of sin and selfishness. We must make the choice. Do we prefer the pleasures of the world, are we satisfied with the world's goodness, or shall we rise to a new life where Christ alone is Lord?



## Your FAMILY ALTAR

APRIL 20TH. LUKE 23:50-56  
(1st Lesson)

**H**AVE you ever thought how unusual it was for Joseph to ask for the body of Jesus? Usually the body would be turned over to the family or to the band of disciples. But here is a man, heretofore apparently not an open disciple, begging for the body. Pilate granted his request. Joseph buried it in his own sepulchre. Thereby the Scriptures were fulfilled when they said, "and with the rich in his death."

MATT. 27:62-66 (2nd Lesson)

Consider the malice of the Satan-fostered enemies of Christ. Remembering His words (which is more than the disciples seemed to do), they requested that the grave be made secure. Very likely they broke the Sabbath to see that the grave was sealed. Every means was used to prevent the fulfillment of Christ's words. But their very zeal against Christ is one of the most forceful legal argu-

ments for the resurrection. They effectively prevented any fraud.

EASTER. JOHN 20:1-23 (1st Lesson)

There is a beauty, warmth and glory about the first Easter morning. Surely every Christian heart is touched as the narrative of the most thrilling scene in the history of the world unfolds. The simple devotion of the women; their startling message to the disciples; the race to view the empty tomb; the tender inquiry of the angels; the sorrowful response of Mary; the recognition of the Master; His appearance to the assembled and preplexed disciples—these and other scenes flash before us and fill us with the wonder of our risen Redeemer.

I COR. 15 (2nd Lesson)

Here we behold the centrality of the resurrection in our Christian religion. The power and purpose of God is revealed. The humility and glory of Christ is manifested. The overthrow of Satan and death is evident. The glory of the resurrected life is presented unto us. Apart from this great historic event, Christians would have no hope; Christianity would have no vitality; Christ would be just the name of another martyr who had died for a good cause. "But now is Christ risen"—rejoice in hope, O Christian—advance in victory, O Christianity—blessed be Thy name, O Christ!

22ND. HEB. 9:15-28 (28)

In the afterglow of Easter, our hearts rejoice and continue to radiate the blessing of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. How sobering is the truth that behind the great victory of that "first day of the week" is the anguish and suffering borne by our Saviour! Christ the Son of God "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Has your sin been put away? Are you trusting in the crucified, risen Redeemer?

23RD. HEB. 10:1-22 (14)

The effectual sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God slain before the foundation of the world, is contrasted with the sacrifices of the old dispensation. The blood of animal sacrifices did not make the offerers perfect. Each year the atonement day was observed. Daily the priests ministered and offered the sacrifices, having only a shadow of good things to come. But the blood of Christ, once offered and by Him once presented within the veil of heaven, is effectual to the saving of believers.

24TH. I PET. 3:8-22 (18)

How full this verse is! Of Christ we learn: His character—just; His vicarious suffering—death; His great purpose—to present us to God; His great victory—resurrection. Of ourselves we learn: our condition—unjust or sinful; our need—reconciliation to God; our way of righteousness—Christ. If you so know Christ and you so know yourself, you will rely on Him by faith.

25TH. ROM. 6:9-23 (11)

The death and resurrection of Christ have their counterpart in the Christian. We likewise died in Christ unto sin. The power of sin is broken and the pull of sin is to be overcome.

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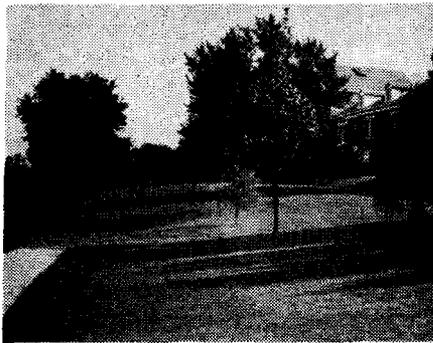
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The pollution of sin is washed away. Therefore, we are not to live unto the flesh. Furthermore, having died unto sin we are made alive unto God through our risen Lord Jesus Christ. We are raised with Him unto a new life, new tastes, new aspirations and new motives. Are you thus bound up in the bundle of life with Christ?

26TH. COL. 3:1-17 (1)

That new life spoken of yesterday comes through being identified with Christ in His resurrection. Now the thought of His ascension enters. We are to remember our identity with Him in this also. Hence we are admonished to "seek those things that are above," "set our affections on things above." If these are held prominently before us, we will exhibit Christ here on earth by putting on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind and so forth, doing all in the name of our exalted Lord Jesus.

27TH. ACTS 10:34-48 (43)

In the beginning of his ministry to Cornelius, a Gentile, Peter emphasized the resurrection. This doctrine is foundational to the doctrine of remission. While remission of sins in Christ was more clearly enunciated by the prophets, yet the resurrection, glimpsed of old, is fundamental to it. Relying by faith on the testimony of the disciples, we have forgiveness of sins through the risen Lord.

28TH. I JOHN 5:1-13 (5)

It is faith in the Lord Jesus as the Son of God that enables us to be victorious in this life. To overcome the world we must be born of God. The eye of faith, then, looks not upon our duty to God as burdensome; nor does it look to the glitter of the world with longing. Through faith we are entirely married to Christ and find our full satisfaction in Him.

29TH. ACTS 13:26-44 (38)

On the first missionary journey, the theme of the apostle was that Christ in His resurrection fulfilled the promises to David. Christ was not only the fulfillment of the prophecies and promises but He was also the answer to the faith of the Old Testament saints. What a glorious reception was accorded these words in Antioch of Pisidia! What kind of a reception has the gospel in your heart?

30TH. I PET. 2:17-25 (24)

The suffering of Christ which culminated in His crucifixion is an ex-

ample to us. Many Christians are falsely accused, shamefully treated, unjustly persecuted and often subjected to physical pain without a cause. Remember that our Lord Jesus suffered unjustly and His sufferings ending in death were the means of our salvation. Commit yourself unto the righteous Judge and resent not the thorns nor hate the persecutors.

MAY 1ST. PSALM 56 (3)

Continuing our thought of suffering, there is that great Old Testament character who was tried by hardship and persecution, David. When we realize that his hardest experiences came after he was anointed to be king, we can take courage and press forward. Often Satan will hurl his most powerful assaults against a young Christian who is determined to serve Christ wholeheartedly. Follow David's course and put your trust in the living God.

2ND. PSALM 60 (12)

Picking up the last refrain of our previous devotion, we observe the determination of David to persist in his trust in God. Such enduring trust will always triumph. "Through God we shall do valiantly." Thus is the confidence of the psalmist. Thus David would gird his loins and go forward. Thus may we hope to achieve great things for God.

3RD. PSALM 117 (1, 2)

Two great motives are given us in this brief psalm as the basis for praising the name of the Lord. The first has to do with the grace which God has poured out upon His people in such abounding measure. The second has to do with the eternal duration of truth. Truth is personified in Christ; it is inscripturated in the Bible; it is the foundation of all Christian doctrine; it is indeed the divine revelation. You who have enjoyed His loving kindness and have received His word of truth, unite your voices with ours in His praise.

4TH. PSALM 114 (7)

In Jewish worship this is the second of the songs of the Great Hallel. It calls for the worshiper to fear Jehovah; to fear Him because of His wonder-working power in behalf of Israel. His wonders are first listed, then God is identified. Well might we so approach Him in our prayers as well as our praises, remembering His great acts, then acknowledging Him as the divine Author of them.—HENRY D. PHILLIPS