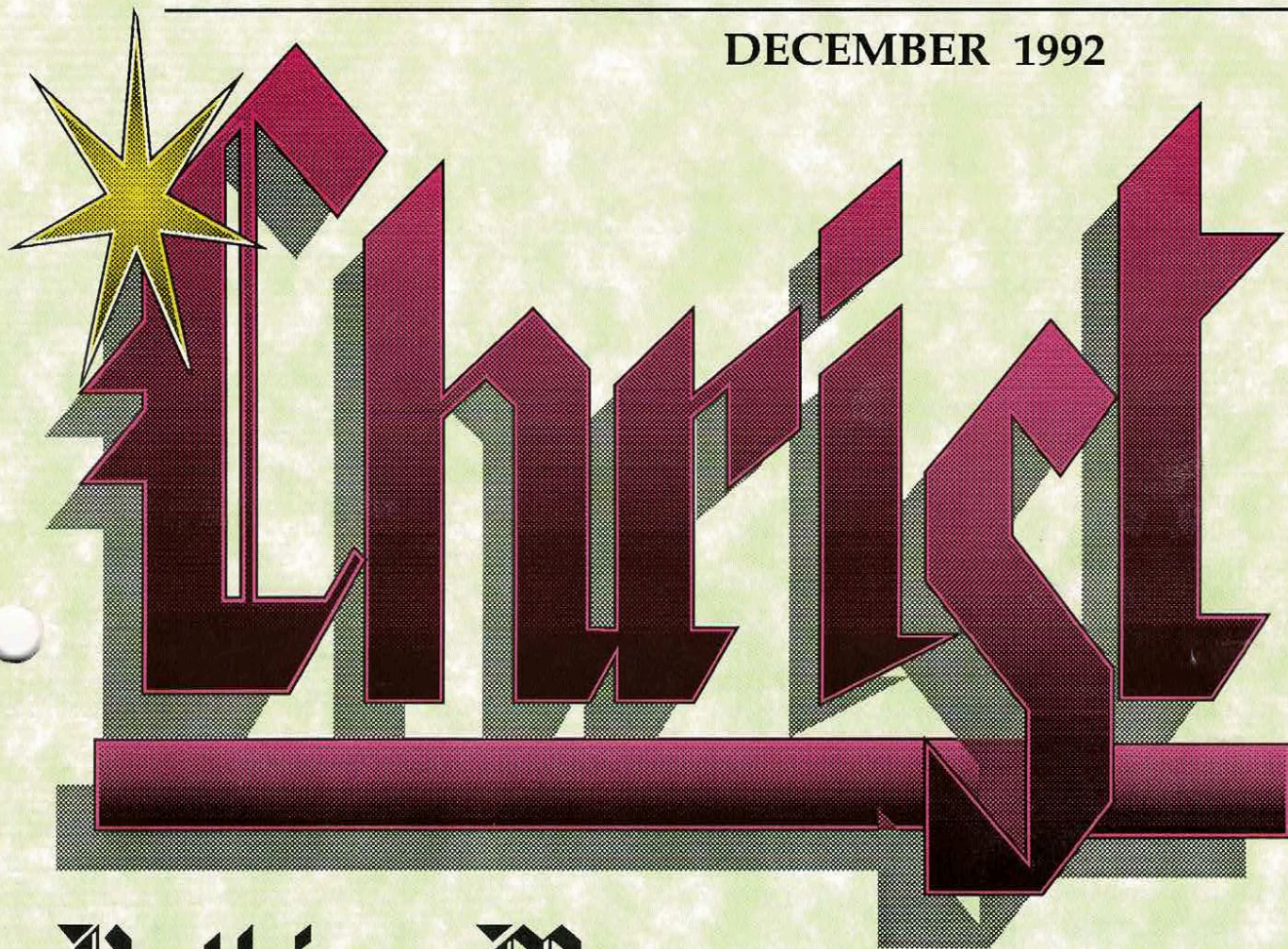



UPLOOK

DECEMBER 1992



Nothing More,
Nothing Less,
Nothing Else

A solid red horizontal bar with a thin black outline, positioned at the bottom of the page.



EDITORIAL

No Exaggeration

J. B. Nicholson, Jr.

It is not difficult to exaggerate human things. They are, by nature, so small that one can almost unsuspectingly cross the line. It's so easy that we have invented a score of words to describe the phenomenon. The poet calls it hyperbole. The artist speaks of coloring the truth. The lawyer names it misrepresentation; the sportsman, a fish story.

I don't wish to exaggerate, but we *always* seem to be doing it. Especially in this age of Madison Avenue advertising with its constant use of superlatives. So it is with a sense of relief that we turn to divine things. See the sweeping vistas, the soaring peaks, and unplumbed depths of God's things. You will never come to the end of them.

In order to "speak with stammering lips and another tongue" (Isa. 28:11)—to reach down to man and the cramped confines of his intellect—God uses some verbal mirrors to reflect heavenly truth to the sons of men.

He speaks of our sin being put into the depths of the sea, as if out of sight is out of existence. It is much like a father hiding a coin or candy from his child and saying, "All gone." How can we fathom that our sin really is *all gone*? It is. And the picture of the sea helps us. The reality is far greater than that, but this is as close as we may approach it. Exaggerate the picture if you like; His mercy is deeper than that.

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:9). Is it the atmospheric heavens He is speaking about? Probably (see the next verse). But it doesn't really matter. A few miles or a few million light years—neither come close to reflecting the chasm between how God acts and thinks and how I do. Exaggerate the picture. Use your largest telescope; His ways are higher than that.

Never do such attempts to reach down to our level become so obviously understated as when we have word pictures painted of the Christ. I do not mean to say they are not delightful. They are as much as we can grasp down here. But if Sheba's monarch was overcome with the kingdom of Solomon, whose glory was surpassed by a scarlet anemone growing on the Galilean hillside,

what shall we say of this Rose of Sharon, this Lily of the Valley? If a star shining over Bethlehem brought wise men from the east, what will you tell me about the Bright and Morning Star, the Sun of Righteousness, the brightest luminary in God's heaven? Exaggerate the pictures as far as you can. Fill the world with such flowers; fill the sky with such stars. He is fairer than that.

He is the most regal lion that ever emblazoned the field; the lamb that never strayed, even unto death; the hind of the morning, hounded yet harmless among the bulls and dogs that surrounded Him. He is the lone sparrow with the sweetest song; the eagle who carries her young on her wings; the gentle dove, pure and faithful. He is the tree planted by the river of God; the root out of dry ground; as stately as the cedar; as fruitful as the apple; as enriching as the olive.

He is the fruit-bearer; He is the burden-bearer; He is the sin-bearer; and shall be the glory-bearer.

He is the most eloquent orator—the incarnate Word. He is the most celebrated artist—He decorated the universe. He is the most gracious host—He has opened heaven to us. He is the greatest conqueror—the worlds will fall at His feet.

Let men speak of their plans and schemes; let them plot their exaggerated empires. All are too small for the soul that has gazed at Christ. It is not that we think too big. It is that we are far too easily pleased. Why settle for organization when you can enter into the enjoyment of oneness with Him? Why stoop to membership fees and their dubious benefits, when you can have "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" in Him?

If only the Laodicean church had responded to the longing of Paul, their future might have been quite different: "*That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. For . . . yet am I with you in spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ*" (Col. 2:2-5).

Christ—nothing more, nothing less, nothing else.

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Thinking of Christ

John C. Ryle

Let us consider why all men ought to think of Christ; common thoughts of many about Christ; and thoughts true Christians have about Him.

Why All Men Ought to Think of Christ

All men ought to think of Christ because of *the office Christ fills* between God and man. He is the eternal Son of God, through whom alone the Father can be known, approached, and served. He is the appointed Mediator between God and man, through whom alone we can be reconciled to God, pardoned, justified, and saved. He is the Divine Person whom God the Father has sealed to be the giver of everything that man requires for his soul. To Him are committed the keys of death and Hades. In His favor is life. There is no person of such immense importance to all men as Christ.

All men ought to think of Christ because of *what Christ has done* for all men. He kindly set His thoughts on humanity when man was lost and bankrupt and helpless by the fall, and undertook to save sinners. In the fullness of time, He was born of Mary, and lived thirty-three years in this evil world. At the end of that time, He shed His own life-blood to pay man's debt to God. He was made a curse for man, that man might be blessed. He died for man, that man might live. He was counted a sinner for man, that man might be counted righteous. If Christ had

not died for us, we would only look forward to the wrath of God.

Time is too short to set down all the reasons why men ought to think of Christ. Christ is the grand subject of the Bible; Christ is the great object to whom all Christians give honor; Christ is the end and substance of the ordinances; Christ is the great source of light and peace and hope. There is not a spark of spiritual comfort that has ever illumined a sinner's heart that has not come from Christ. There is no one in whom the world has such a deep interest. There is no one to whom all the world owes so much—high and low, rich and poor, old and young, gentle and simple—all ought to think about Christ.

Common Thoughts of Many About Christ

There were many strange thoughts about Christ when He was on earth. There are still many strange and wrong thoughts about Christ now when He is in Heaven.

The thoughts of some people about Christ are simply blasphemous. They are not ashamed to deny His divinity. They refuse to believe the miracles recorded of Him. They tell us that He ought to be ranked with great reformers and philosophers, like Socrates, Seneca, and Confucius, but no higher. There is not the slightest comparison to be made between Christ and any other teacher of mankind that ever lived. The difference between Him and others is a gulf that cannot be spanned, a height that can-



THINKING OF CHRIST

not be measured. It is the difference between gold and clay, between the sun and a candle. Nothing can account for Christ and Christianity but the belief that Christ is very God.

The thoughts of some men about Christ are mean and low. They consider that if they do their best, and live moral lives, and go to Church pretty regularly, Christ will deal mercifully with them at last, and make up any deficiencies. Thoughts such as these utterly fail to explain why Christ died on the Cross. They take the crown off Christ's head. They overthrow the whole system of the gospel, and pull up all its leading doctrines by the roots. They exalt man to an absurdly high position; as if he could pay some part of the price of his soul. They rob man of all the comforts of the gospel, and place the Cross and the atonement in a degraded and inferior position.

Thoughts of True Christians About Christ

True Christians have *high thoughts* about Christ. They see in Him a wondrous Person, far above all other beings in His nature—a Person who is at one and the same time perfect God, mighty to save, and perfect man, able to feel. They see in Him an all-powerful Redeemer, who has paid their countless debts to God, and delivered their souls from guilt and hell.

They see in Him an almighty Friend, who left heaven for them, died for them, rose again for them that He might save them forevermore. They see in Him an almighty Physician, who washed away their sins in His own blood, put His own Spirit in their hearts, delivered them from the power of sin, and gave them power to become God's children. Happy are they who have such thoughts!

True Christians have *trustful thoughts* of Christ. They daily lean the weight of their souls upon Him by faith, for pardon and peace. They daily commit the care of their souls to Him, as a man commits a treasure to a safe keeper. They daily cling to Him by faith, as a child in a crowd clings to its mother's hand. They daily look to Him for mercy, grace, comfort, help, and strength, as Israel looked to the pillar of cloud and fire in the wilderness for guidance.

Christ is the Rock under their feet and the staff in their hand, their ark and their city of refuge, their sun and their shield, their health and their light, their life, their hope, and their all. Happy are they who have such thoughts!

True Christians have *experimental thoughts* of Christ. The things that they think of Him, they do not merely think with their heads. They have not learned them from schools, or picked them up from others. They think them because they have found them true by their own hearts' experience. They have proved them, and tasted them, and tried them.

They think what they have felt out for themselves. There is all the difference in the world between knowing that a man is a doctor or a lawyer

while we never have occasion to employ him, and knowing him as "our own" because we have gone to him for medicine or law. Just the same there is a wide difference between head knowledge and experimental thoughts about Christ. Happy are they who have such thoughts.

True Christians have *hopeful thoughts* about Christ. They expect to receive from Him far more than they have ever yet received. They look forward to Christ's Second Coming, and expect that then they will see far more than they have

seen, and enjoy far more than they have yet enjoyed. They have the earnest of an inheritance now, in the Spirit dwelling in their heart. But they hope for a far fuller possession when this world has passed away.

Some of them know more of them and some of them know less. But all true Christians know something about them. They do not always feel them equally at all times. They do not always find such thoughts equally fresh and green in their minds. They have their winter as well as their summer, and their low tide as well as their high water. In other things they may be unable to agree and see alike. But they all agree in their thoughts about Christ. One word they can all say, which is the same in every tongue: that word is HALLELUJAH! Praise to the Lord Christ! One answer they can all make, which in every tongue is equally the same: that word is "AMEN," so be it.

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"Christians . . . do not always find such thoughts equally fresh and green in their minds. They have their winter as well as their summer."

Front Lines

TRAGEDY AND TRIUMPH

Recently, brother Neil Dougal (Worcester, MA) was called away from two weeks of gospel meetings in Reidsville, NC to take his younger brother's funeral. He returned to Reidsville to continue the meetings and the first evening back, had the joy of seeing a young man saved. Physical death and spiritual life—tragedy and triumph.

ON THE HORIZON

Greenwood Hills has announced its conference and camp schedule for 1993.

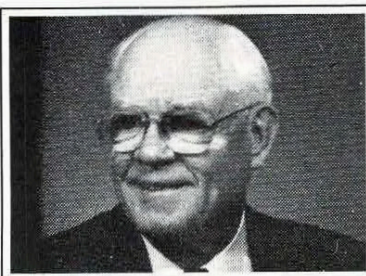
D.V., on January 8-10, J. B. Nicholson Jr. will be the speaker at the Congress Retreat. Bob Gessner will speak to couples at the Couples Retreat on April 16-18. This is followed by the Ladies' Missionary Retreat to be held on April 23-25.

For more information on these, and any other conferences or camps through the coming year, contact:

Greenwood Hills
(717)352-2150

A PRINCE AND A MIGHTY MAN

We have recently received word of the passing of brother Lester Wilson, recently of Pittsboro, NC. His large funeral was held in Burlington, NC. Brother Wilson was commended to the work of God by the Stratford, ON assembly in 1931 and, in association with a number of fellow-workers, plowed up the Piedmont of North Carolina for God. Sowing much, they reaped much, and saw the establishment of a score of assemblies that continue to this day.



Lester Wilson

With a winsome smile, a whole-hearted devotion, a big voice, and a direct and earnest approach, Lester Wilson turned his back on a promising career in sports to give his life for Christ. Many, there will be, who will be his "crown of rejoicing" in that day.

WINNING THE WEST (FOR CHRIST)

In the majority of the states west of the Rocky Mountains, more people are not affiliated with a religious group, than are. The only exceptions were Utah and Idaho, where Mormons are a significant percentage of the population. In some parts of Colorado, Oregon, Nevada,

Washington, and Montana, fewer than one-fourth of the inhabitants belong to a church or religious organization.

—Association of American Religious Bodies

LITTLE THINGS COUNT A LOT

Carl Smith (see news in *What's Going On?*) writes: "Do you ever feel discouraged because it seems that you can do so little? We fail to realize that little bits often add up to huge amounts . . . In watching the Olympics this summer, I noticed that the difference between winning or losing is measured in hundredths of a second!"

"There is a highway in the United States that is never steeper than a seven percent grade. Beginning in California, it eventually crosses Independence Pass at an elevation of more than 12,000 feet; yet it is never steeper than the imperceptible seven percent grade anywhere along the way.

So, the next time you're asked to help with a missions project,



Distributing Bibles in Ploesti, Romania

FRONT LINES

remember, you may not be able to do everything, but you can do something. Your little bit is worth far more than you realize."

RELIEF FUND UPDATE

As of the end of September, almost \$40,000 was distributed to victims of Hurricane Andrew through CMML.

Under the auspices of Bible Truth Chapel (Miami), Jack Davis and Randy Beers are heading up the relief efforts in Southern Florida. The Spanish Wells Chapel and the Current Gospel Chapel are carrying on the work in the two islands in the Bahamas most severely affected, Spanish Wells and Eleuthera.

In South Dade County alone, some 97,000 homes received major damage, leaving an estimated 250,000 people homeless.

FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE

Please pray for the Home Bible Studies that Randy and Sylvia Amos are conducting in Rochester, NY. It is not unusual for the Monday night study to attract 25 college-age young people, many of whom have assembly connections.

In addition, some 40 believers have registered for Bible school which is conducted on Thursday nights. Please pray for the ministry in these home outreaches as the Word is taught.

ASSEMBLY NOTICE

Countryside Bible Chapel is a new work in Winnebago, IL, which is a rural community but in the greater Rockford area.

If you are visiting in the area, I'm sure they would appreciate a visit. For more information, contact:

Jerre W. Wright

1712 S. Winnebago Road
Winnebago, IL 61088
(815) 335-7353

LABORS IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Samuel J. Cardy is seeking to establish a New Testament assembly in Crescent City, CA. Using a three-times-a-week television program, he is using the air time to preach the Gospel and teach the Word. The program can be heard not only in northern California but also along the Oregon coast.

Brother Cardy has had Bible studies with some who have shown an interest. He has also received some encouragement from some brethren who have visited from the Sixteenth Avenue Assembly in Vancouver, BC. Please pray for this work.

Samuel J. Cardy
555 Pacific Ave.
Crescent City, CA 95531
Phone (707) 464-1370

LOVE EQUALS T-I-M-E

When *Focus on the Family* editors Yorkey and Johnson talked with Christian fathers around the country, they asked, "What makes a good dad?" Almost to a man, the interviewees said that it involves spending lots of time with your children. Some of their suggestions for how to do that included:

- Work hours. Some men may be able to rearrange their work schedule in order to have more time with the kids.
- Dinnertime. Making dinner with the family a priority insures a regular time for sharing and interaction.
- Television. The "boob tube" can gobble up many precious hours. Among the successful fathers Johnson and Yorkey interviewed, 29% don't watch any

TV during the week and 61% view no more than two hours a night—a figure the authors call "manageable."

ADDRESS CHANGES

The Gainesville (FL) area's Bible Truth Chapel has a new street address:

13410 Archer Road
Archer, FL 32618
(904) 495-3459
Their correspondent:
William Grant
808 SW 96th St.
Gainesville, FL 32607
(904) 332-2403

Bethany Gospel Chapel's (Newport News, VA) new correspondent is:

Roy V. Markham
114 Avery Crescent
Newport News, VA 23606

Chambersburg (PA) Gospel Chapel's new correspondent is:

William Sheaffer
515 Starr Ave.
Chambersburg, PA 17201

Bethany Gospel Chapel's (Worcester, MA) new correspondent is:

Ralph C. Lacerte
43 Shady Lane Avenue
Shrewsbury, MA 01545

Carl and Sara Dorner
Route 3, #1 Country Estates
Mobile Home Park
Blair, NE 68008

Jerry and Marilyn Boisvert
2839 rue Tousaint-Dussault
Apt. 6
Ste-Foy PQ G1V 1K9
Canada

Harold and Gertrude Mackay
3901 US Highway 220
N #238
Greensboro, NC 27410

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WHAT'S GOING ON?

News from Around the Globe

CHINESE BELIEVERS PERSECUTED

More than 100 Chinese Christians remain in custody after police raided their house church meeting in southern Henan Province September 8, reports News Network International. "Recent reports indicate many of those still imprisoned have been repeatedly interrogated and beaten by authorities," NNI says. Three foreigners who had been arrested, however, have been released.

ISRAEL REBUFFS MESSIANIC JEWS

Israel's Supreme Court has ruled that Jews who believe Jesus is the Messiah are not Jews and are not eligible for citizenship. The Interior Ministry, controlled by an Orthodox political party, now plans to revoke the citizenship of all Messianic Jews who immigrated after December 25 (any significance?), 1989, a spokesperson says. An estimated 4,000 Jewish believers live in Israel, a third of them from the former U.S.S.R.

TOURIST TERRORISTS

Tourists are the latest targets of Egypt's Muslim militants, joining the ranks of Coptic Christians, intellectuals, and innocent bystanders. A British woman died October 21 after an attack on a tour vehicle south of Cairo. The government claims that Sudan is training 2,500 Egyptian militants, who are becoming better organized in any event due to experience fighting in Afghanistan. Charged a representative of the Islamic Group, "The ruling regime has started a

campaign to close mosques, prevent meetings, stop Friday prayers, arrest Muslim young men, and take their relatives hostage while it provides protection, luxury, and facilities for people called tourists." —*Pulse*

THREE—GIVE OR TAKE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY

Linguists are now saying that Indians from Greenland to Tierra del Fuego speak just three main languages—Eskimo-Aleut, Na-Dene, and Amerind—not the 150 or so they had supposed. "The families show closer affiliation with Asian language groups than with one another," says *U. S. News & World Report*, "suggesting that each corresponds to a separate wave of migration the first around 10,000 BC, which gave rise to the Amerind family; the NaDene somewhat later, and the Eskimo-Aleut somewhat later."

WHAT ROOTS?

Proselytizing is off limits, Alexy II, Russian Orthodox Church Patriarch told Billy Graham during the evangelist's October trip to Moscow. Graham agreed, saying, "I told him that we didn't come here to proselytize, and that I have a great love for the church and believe that the people need to go back to their roots and put a great deal of emphasis on Bible study."

ADHERENTS OF WORLD RELIGIONS, MID-1990

The following chart lists the approximate size (times 1,000) of various groups and the percentage they form of the world's population:

RELIGION	ADHERENTS	% OF POP.
Christian	1,758,778	33.3
R. Catholic	995,780	18.8
Protestant	363,290	6.9
Orthodox	166,942	3.2
Anglicans	72,980	1.4
Other	159,786	3.0
Muslim	935,000	17.7
Nonreligious	866,000	16.4
Hindu	705,000	13.3
Buddhist	303,000	5.7
Atheist	233,000	4.4
Folk religion	180,000	3.4
New religion	138,000	2.6
Tribal	92,012	1.7
Sikh	18,100	0.3
Jewish	17,400	0.3
Shamanist	10,100	0.2
Confucian	5,800	0.1
Baha'i	5,300	0.1
Jain	3,650	0.1
Shintoist	3,100	0.1
Other	17,938	0.3

—*World Almanac*, 1992

PREPARING FOR MISSIONS?

In the will of the Lord, on June 19-25, 1993, Christian Missions in Many Lands and Missionary Service Committee, Inc. are planning the Second Missionary Orientation Program for those exercised about going overseas in missions. For more details contact:

CMMI, Inc.
P. O. Box 13
Spring Lake, NJ 07762

MISSIONARY OPPORTUNITY

If you are interested in missionary service and would like to expand your horizons, then circle June 1-August 20 on your calendar.

Peter Clift of Kawasaki, Japan is arranging two months of im-

WHAT'S GOING ON

mersion in missionary life. You can expect the schedule to be strenuous, the work hard, the language and culture frustrating. But what is that in comparison to leading a soul to Christ?

The application deadline is March 1, 1993. For more information, contact:

Peter Clift
1-13-34 Kanahodo
Asao Ku
Kawasaki, Japan 215
Phone 011-81-44-955-9596

SOUTH AFRICAN VIOLENCE ESCALATES

"Hell Run" is what South Africans are calling a stretch of highway leading to Durban, a beachside resort. Both black and white drivers have been dragged out and beaten. Durban's Natal province may be moving toward a civil war between supporters of the African National Congress and the rival Inkatha movement. Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, leader of the Inkatha movement, is not expected to join in a peace plan proposed by ANC president, Nelson Mandela.

—U. S. News & World Report

CLOTHING AND RELIEF

Working through the local assemblies in Romania, hundreds, if not thousands of relief articles, including Christian literature, basic food stuffs, and clothing, are distributed each year. The Romanian winters are severe—attributed not only to the mountainous climate but to the cold, damp 'bloc' houses where, in many instances, the heat does not exceed 45-50° F.

Items always useable: men's suits (have worn suits dry-cleaned), men's shoes and boots, ladies' shoes and boots (no high heels), maternity clothes (no

slacks), ladies' clothing—sweaters, blouses and skirts, children's shoes and boots (all sizes, boys and girls), boys and girls clothing, kid's jackets, coats, snow pants, baby clothes and sleepers, umbrellas (compact). Please sort separately and mark the cartons as to content.

Prior to the Revolution, Sunday Schools and children's meetings were prohibited in the former Eastern Bloc countries. There is an urgent need for children's material. I have talked to Gospel Folio Press relative to translating their material. It's possible, but the project would be an awesome undertaking.

Carl H. Smith
Outreach, Inc.
P. O. Box 1000
Grand Rapids, MI 49501-1000
(616) 949-0615

CUBA: PEARL OF THE ANTILLES

The *Echoes* magazine reports: "George Muller was aware of a testimony there (in Cuba) as early as 1871. The records of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution show a gift was forwarded there in that year.

"The first assembly missionaries recorded as being in Cuba were Thomas and Jean Smith, commended from UK assemblies, who went to Havana in 1938, having had to leave Spain

at the time of the Civil War there. They were prolific distributors of tracts from which they saw fruit.

From then on the Lord called a succession of workers from assemblies in UK, USA, and Canada and the work progressed. Early on a printing press was established by David Adams in Pinar del Rio. It is on record that by 1960, 15 million tracts and 200,000 booklets had been printed.

Following the Castro coup, the missionaries left Cuba in 1961, realising that their presence might be an embarrassment to the national believers. For 30 years the assemblies have had little communication with the outside world."

Recently, however, with the end of aid from the former Soviet Union, there may be a lessening of pressure on the believers.

Recently we heard from brother George Walker (formerly a missionary in Cuba) that at La Salud, Cuba some 40 souls have been saved and added to the assembly there. Included with that group is a Roman Catholic priest who was recently saved and baptized. He now takes a good part in the meetings there.

Praise the Lord who daily adds to the church those being saved.



Fellowship over an evening meal (Echoes photo)

All In All



In attempting to magnify "the First and the Last" (Rev. 1:17), our greatest and gravest danger is not so much to magnify Him as to magnify our ability to magnify Him! Christ stands First and Last in all the thoughts, designs, words, and ways of God! He is first—in every epoch of time. He is last in an epochless eternity! Before Him there was no commencement! After Him there can be no consummation! He is not the "I WAS," although He ever was! He is not the "I WILL BE," although He will ever be! He is the "I AM!" He knows no past, He looks forward to no future! His is one great, grand, glorious present!
—T. Baird

Horatius Bonar tells of a heated discussion along religious lines between two travellers on a train. One of them, a skeptic, was trying to excuse his unbelief by expatiating on the evils that afflict Christendom.

In front of them sat a Christian who knew the accusations to be true. He said nothing. But soon the sceptic asked the Christian what he thought, wanting to expand his audience.

"I see you are quick to detect evil," said the Christian. "You have been uncovering the things that have turned Christendom into a wreck, and are fast ripening it for the judgment of God. Now I am a Christian, and love the Lord Jesus and His people. Not a word shall I offer in defense, but I solemnly challenge you to speak the first word against the Lord Jesus Himself."

The skeptic was surprised, almost frightened. "Well, no. I couldn't find fault with Him."

"That's the reason my heart was attracted to Him. The more I looked, the more I found I wasn't like Him at all. I was a sinner. All the evil of these professed followers of His cannot turn me away from Him. My salvation hangs on what He has done, not what they are doing."

*Great are the offices He bears,
And bright His character appears,
Exalted on the throne;
In songs of sweet untiring praise,
We would, to everlasting days,
Make all His glories known.*

—Samuel Medley

If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet distance makes no difference. He is praying for me.

—Robert Murray McCheyne

I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God. The miracles which He wrought establish in my mind His personal authority and render it proper for me to believe what He asserts.
—Daniel Webster

*Jesus, our Saviour, Shepherd, Friend,
Our Prophet, Priest, and King;
Our Lord, our Life, our Way, our End,
Accept the praise we bring.*

—John Newton

"Christ is all, and in all."
(Col. 3:11)

*Join all the glorious names
Of wisdom, love, and power,
That mortals ever knew,
That angels ever bore;
All are too mean to speak His worth,
Too mean to set the Saviour forth.*

—Isaac Watts

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
(Jn. 3:16)

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."
(Heb. 13:8)

"Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call Him a man, for He was a doer of wonderful works—a teacher of such men as receive truth with pleasure. He drew over to Him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was (the) Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principle men among us had condemned Him to the cross, those that loved Him at the first did not forsake Him, for He appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning Him; and the tribe of Christians, so named after Him, are not extinct at this day."

—Antiquities of Josephus, Book XVIII, Ch. 3, Section 3

Why the Saviour Came

F. J. Atkinson

*I*t is perfectly natural for us to ask the question: "Why was God manifest in the flesh and dwell among us?" We seek for an answer to satisfy both mind and heart.

To Fulfill Scripture

In the first place, we find that the Advent of Jesus was in fulfilment of the eternal purpose of Jehovah: and that every detail of prophetic Scriptures was completely fulfilled. His virgin birth; His lineage of the House of David; the place of His birth; the home of His childhood—all came to pass as the prophets had foretold. In God's due time, Mary travelled from the hill country of Galilee to Bethlehem Judea that Jesus might be born there at the time appointed.

To Come Near to Men

The Word was made flesh that God might come near to us in a visible and tangible manner. Made in the likeness of sinful flesh (but not sinful flesh), Emmanuel was seen by men. They heard His voice, were eye-witnesses of His majesty, and some became partakers of His works of grace. The saints of the old covenant realized the difference that existed between the created gods of the nations, which were visible, and the glory of the invisible Creator. They knew that He had spoken to their fathers and to the prophets. They were also conscious of His presence in the glory of the holy place, yet in a sense He was afar off in the heavens. But the advent of Christ brought God near to us in a manner which was wholly unknown before. Unfortunately only a

comparatively small number of persons realized the blessed reality of that holy presence. The world knew Him not, and His own received Him not.

To Show Us What God Was Like

"He dwelt among us" that the righteousness and holiness of Jehovah might be perfectly revealed in actual life. The life of Jesus was far more than a mere human life, inasmuch as every phase of it was an absolute reproduction of deity within the compass of a human body. His life was that of the holy, harmless, and undefiled One, in whose hands was no violence, and on whose lips no guile. The holy God was revealed in His well beloved Son. His holiness is unparalleled.

To Declare God's Love

Not only was the holiness of God revealed, His love was also made known. The life of Jesus made the love of God known in a way that was both unique, and unprecedented. No other life had wholly represented the character of God to men: human limitations and failures have beclouded the true vision of Jehovah's lovingkindness. The best human characters stand out in contrast with the Divine. But the sinless, selfless life of Jesus was a perfect pattern of the life of God. "He that hath seen the Father" were no mere meaningless words, but rather expressions of the truth, which alas, was not understood even by His followers. Even now we fail to grasp their full import.

By taking a human form, our Lord was able to give to the world a concrete



WHY THE SAVIOUR CAME

demonstration of the character of God. He has given us a more visible and conceivable knowledge of the invisible God than is afforded by the works of Creation; these reveal His glory, but Jesus revealed His love. He who spoke by the prophets, spoke more effectively in His Son (Heb. 1). "The only begotten of the Father, He hath declared Him."

The Patience of God

Jesus lived His life on earth under the most trying circumstances, and there by was revealed the patience and forbearance of God to a degree which was impossible to human nature. Even Job, the most patient of men, eventually gave way to complaint. Moses, the meekest of men, yielded to temper. But our Lord was never ruffled by rebuke. He was always tender toward the erring. However weary He was, He was ready to forgo His rest that He might comfort the sorrowing souls around Him. He shewed "the kindness of God" to all who needed His help, in spite of their unworthiness and ingratitude. His knowledge of men did not prevent His love being lavished on those He knew to be unworthy of it, and who would wilfully reject the grace He sought to bestow upon them. He meekly bore their jeers at His claims, and their mocking of His grief. Only "God in the flesh" could have endured the insults of the priests and elders in such silence as did our Lord.

He gladly fed the multitudes with bread, although He knew they cared not for the living bread from heaven. He continued to the end calling men to rest of soul while He knew that they loved darkness rather than light. Nothing but the love of God would have continued to seek and save such wilful, wayward souls. His love was wholly devoid of self-interest, so much so that no human example of love can adequately illustrate, or reveal it. His selfless love is far above our highest conceptions of affection and pity.

As the Sin-bearer

The Prince of Life took not upon Himself the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham in order that He might "bear our sins in His own body on the tree." As the servant of Jehovah, He became "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." His was the only way of escape for this sin-cursed race, and in order that the world might be reconciled to God, His well-beloved Son appeared on earth in obedience to the eternal pur-

pose of divine love.

The keynote of His life was "I delight to do Thy will, O God." In the body that was prepared for Him, He fulfilled the will of His Father "even unto death." Although His appearance "in the likeness of sinful flesh" was often a barrier to faith, and men said of Him, "Is not this the son of Joseph?" yet thereby was the purpose of God fulfilled in His beloved Son. His poverty, and His humility of spirit were means by which the eternal counsel of Jehovah might come to pass.

In His suffering life, He revealed the patience of God toward a world of sinners, and in His suffering death He manifested the love of God for all mankind. Thus did God commend His love toward us, in that "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." By this most wonderful event of events the second Adam restored more abundantly that which was lost by the first Adam. The Good Shepherd gave His life for the sheep, that they might have "the life more abundant" in Him.

To Make Us the Repositories of the Spirit

God Incarnate procured for us more than forgiveness of sin and deliverance from wrath. He brought also by His advent the subsequent blessings of Pentecost. By His death, His resurrection, and His ascension to the right hand of God, He has secured for us the gift of the Holy Ghost as the indwelling Comforter. Thereby the life of Jesus Himself may be manifested in our mortal flesh—"we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled we shall be saved by His life" (Rom. 5:10). The purpose of God in the Incarnation is that we who believe in His Son should also allow that life to be revealed again in our daily walk. Our bodies should be the temples through which His glory shines and we should be the trees of righteousness on which the fruit of the Spirit shall grow. Let us therefore yield ourselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead, and our members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

To Bring Us at Last to Glory

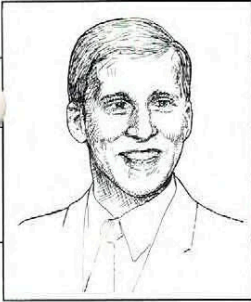
Jesus became poor that we through His poverty might be made rich. The purpose of His sufferings will be wholly fulfilled when all His blood-bought ones are with Him in glory. Then shall He see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. Let us with holy gratitude seek "to follow His steps" until we "walk with Him in white."

U

HEROES

Anthony Norris Groves

John A. Bjorlie



Anthony Norris Groves (1795-1853), "the father of faith missions," deeply influenced the founders of the China Inland Mission, the North Africa Mission, and particularly his own brother-in-law, George Muller.

Anthony was the only son in a family of six. His mother was gentle and talented. His father was an aggressive businessman, who lost much of his wealth in ill-advised ventures. The Groves were staunch Anglicans, attending the gloomy old grime-stained Anglican Church at Fulham in London. Coupled with the stern disciplines of a religious upbringing, the traits of the parents surfaced in Anthony. Like his father, he was both generous and adventurous, with a quiet determination which would not shake loose from a goal. He also displayed the serenity of his mother. Henry Craik was a tutor to Anthony's children before they left for Baghdad. Young Craik was a bit awed by Groves' example of "generosity, heavenly-mindedness, great talent, persuasive eloquence, gentleness, humility, and learning."

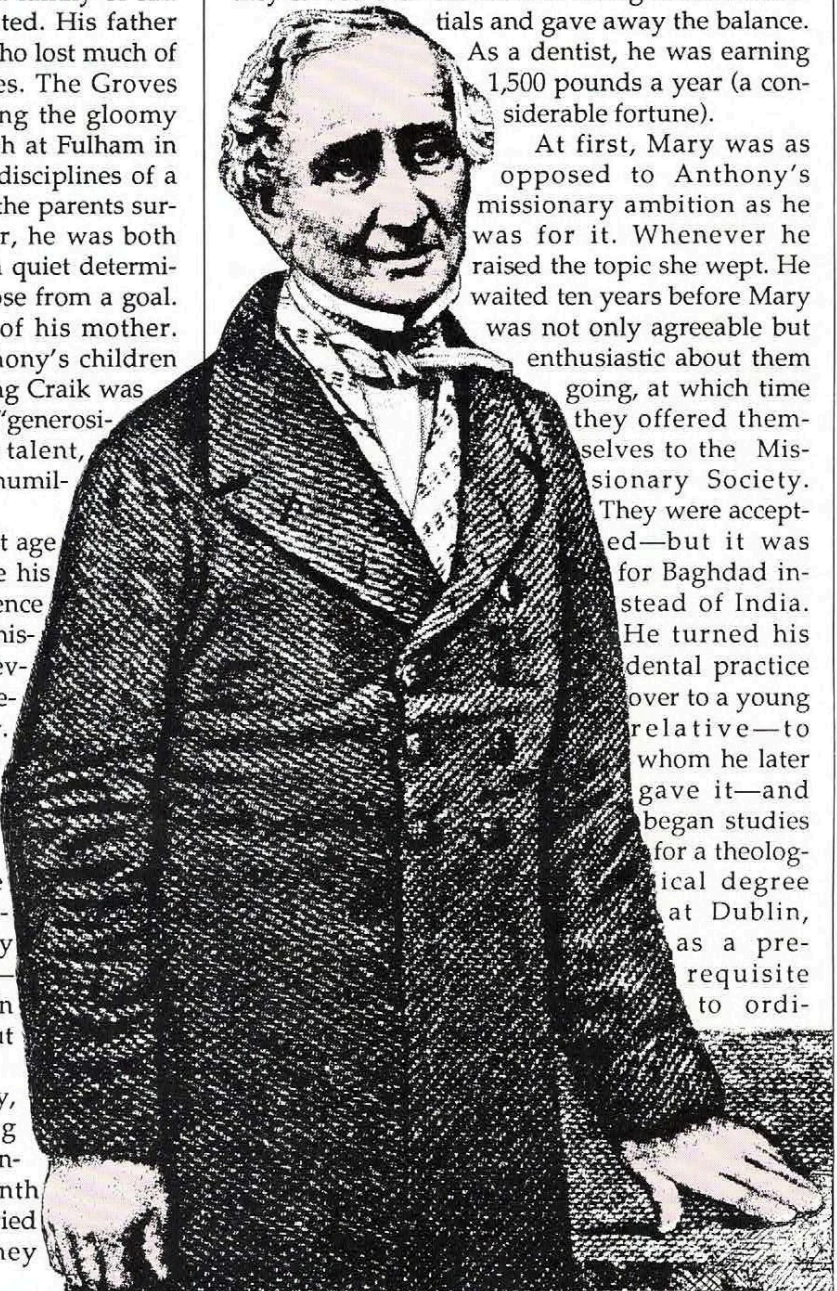
Groves was awakened in soul at age 13 or 14, and vowed to overcome his shortcomings and ease his conscience by doing protestant penance as a missionary in India. Thereafter, whenever spiritual disquiet recurred, he renewed his vow to be a missionary. At the age of 19, to atone for his sins, he offered himself to the Church Missionary Society. Then he met the Paget sisters, and through the witness of Miss Bessie Paget (who would later work closely with R. C. Chapman) Anthony came to Christ. His conversion—while it cleared the fog about sin and salvation—did not weaken but instead gave reason to his resolve.

Following training in chemistry, surgery and dentistry, young Groves had begun a career as a dentist in Plymouth on his nineteenth birthday. Two years later, he married Mary Bethia Thompson. As they

prospered, as a matter of principle, the young couple purposed to give a tenth of their income to the Lord for the needy. The proportion then increased to a fourth of their income, but the more they gave, the more they prospered. Ultimately they carved their standard of living to bare essentials and gave away the balance.

As a dentist, he was earning 1,500 pounds a year (a considerable fortune).

At first, Mary was as opposed to Anthony's missionary ambition as he was for it. Whenever he raised the topic she wept. He waited ten years before Mary was not only agreeable but enthusiastic about them going, at which time they offered themselves to the Missionary Society. They were accepted—but it was for Baghdad instead of India. He turned his dental practice over to a young relative—to whom he later gave it—and began studies for a theological degree at Dublin, as a prerequisite to ordi-



ANTHONY NORRIS GROVES

nation in the Anglican Church. At this time, he began questioning the need for a university degree for a prospective missionary. Then, in the summer of 1827, by a strange coincidence, his house was broken into and money set aside for schooling was stolen (although other money was left untouched). The Groves took this as a token of the Lord's guidance and dropped the course.

Next came doubts about ordination to preach. When he informed the mission that he was prepared to go to the field as a layman instead of as an ordained minister, they said he would not be able to celebrate the Lord's Supper! That was enough to sever their commitment to the C.M.S. They prepared to go at their own expense.

At this time Anthony gathered with believers in Dublin and broke bread after the New Testament pattern. Groves was a precursor to multitudes who set sail without the aid of ecclesiastical machinery. At the same time he shed the control of missionary organizations (which meant no salaries or pledges of any financial support from men). In a small sailing yacht, on June 12, 1829, Anthony, Mary, sons Henry (age 10) and Frank, (age 9), and seven co-laborers set sail for St. Petersburg, Russia.

The stormy voyage would be prophetic of the rest of the journey. In Russia they traveled through rugged landscape in springless carriages crammed with bodies and baggage. Attacks by mosquitoes, drenched in torrents, endangered by gangs, strange food, bad food, no food and failed horses combined to discourage.

But Anthony was resilient. At their destination, he gave thanks for every survivor of that journey of four months and 1,400 miles. Their account reads like a paraphrase of 2 Corinthians 11.

In the first year in Baghdad, Anthony wrote, "I never had a very strong expectation that what we were to do was manifestly very great, but that we shall answer a purpose in God's plan I have no doubt."

He started to study Arabic, opened a boys' school and, to establish contacts, gave free dental and optical treatment (including cataract operations). Baghdad's suffocating heat was dreadful. The citizens appeared to be warlike, thieving, and bigoted.

Then came the plague in April of 1830, which, during its peak, carried off a thousand victims a day. "Fifty unburied corpses might be seen during a walk of 500 yards, and the wails of naked

and starving children who roamed the streets were heartbreaking." At the height of the plague the river flooded, collapsing about 5,000 houses and crushing some of the inhabitants.

Most horrific was the death of Groves' devoted wife, Mary. Entire families had perished in the districts around the missionaries' home. Still the plague had not invaded their home. But as the clouds seemed to be receding, Anthony made this entry in his diary: "The Lord has this day manifested that the disease of my dear wife is the plague, and of a very dangerous type, so that our hearts are prostrate in the Lord's presence . . . It is indeed an awful moment, yet my dear wife's faith triumphs. The difference between a child of God and a worldling is not in death, but in the hope the one has in Jesus, while the other is without hope and without God in the world."

After the plague, a Turkish army besieged the city. In later years, Anthony's son Henry "pathetically recalled the fact that after leaving England he could not remember ever having been a boy." For Anthony, a hidden resource strengthened him to write, "When I consider how God, in His infinite and unsearchable Providence, has seen fit to bring to naught all our plans . . . I cannot but feel it is a strong call to form very few plans for the future and just to work by the day."

Among other trials, the long delay or loss of letters meant protracted isolation and privation. Financial support was uncertain. He once claimed that they went without financial support from anyone in England for over a year, but that the Lord did not allow him to go into debt. His diary contains repeated praise to the Lord for material provision. For example, "My soul is led to abhor more and more that love of independence which still clings to it, when I see how it would shut me out from these manifestations of my Father's loving care."

About this time, a revised charter granted to the East India Company opened the way for unrestricted missionary work in India. On invitation from Colonel (later General Sir) Arthur Cotton, in 1833, Groves visited widely among missionaries in India. He was in his element. Soon he brought his sons and others from Baghdad, and in the next two decades found open doors for the gospel of Christ, mainly in the Godavari Delta.

He was not a church-builder like his friends J. G. Bellet, R. C. Chapman, J. N. Darby, and George Muller, but rather a single-minded evan-

ANTHONY NORRIS GROVES

gelist and teacher. In logic, he was consistent (even if his applications were not always workable). He could be staunch, yet courteous to any who disagreed. And disagree they did.

His aggressive exhortations to missionaries to live simply and to trust God to supply their needs was not always welcome. But one young convert, John Aroolappen, acted on Groves' principles and as a full-time worker lived "by faith." Through Aroolappen's ministry, a revival broke out in Tinnevely in South India and many congregations were formed. Groves visited this area, and his teaching so upset the Anglicans that they accused him of being the greatest enemy the Church of England had in India.

After a year's furlough in England, he returned to India with a small party of missionaries and a generous stock of sheep, cattle, chickens, and geese (The sailors complained about being on Noah's ark) in 1836.

Groves continued preaching and teaching in India until illhealth forced him back to England in 1852. His condition deteriorated until he quietly passed into the presence of his Master in May 1853 in the home of George Muller.

Anthony Norris Groves' contribution to the missionary enterprise springs less from measurable results than it does from his utter devotion to Christ and complete dependence upon Him for his needs. He left a pattern to emulate.

Groves Speaks Out

From experiences in Persia and his study of the Bible, Groves formed his convictions of missionary work. He was not bashful about his view on ordination or in challenging the authority of missionary societies, the difference in status between foreign and national workers, fixed salaries, or the scandal of denominationalism. Groves seemed revolutionary to his peers. They readily accepted his dictum that what missionaries most needed was first love and then patience, and that they should "live" the gospel as well as preach it.

But they were not so eager to accept his criticism. For instance, they murmured against his suggestion that they translate into the vernacular instead of the language of the scholar. He reasoned that their preaching was often unintelligible and should be done in the colloquial languages. He urged workers to itinerate and not be stationary. By preaching from place to place, they could found a church, let others take responsibility, then move on to evangelize elsewhere. Groves condemned the caste system in India and maintained that the missionaries should live among the nationals; they should not occupy a higher status. He insisted that no lasting good could be seen until the missionaries condescended to men of low estate.

Throughout his ministry, he recognized the unity of believers. "Jesus meant His Church to be a body. The miserable substitute of men's arrangements for the Holy Ghost's has destroyed the true unison and order of the church of Christ by substituting that which is artificial for that which is of God; by appointing men to be the artificers of a work God alone can accomplish. Now the church presents a disunited aspect, the unity being marred, among other things, by the unscriptural distinction of clergy and laity, which confines ministry to a few, leaving the many without one office or service; this is not of the Spirit." One of his purposes in going to India was "to become united more truly in heart with all the missionary band there and to show that, notwithstanding all differences, we are one in Christ."

He reacted to what he viewed as sectarian attitudes and practices among his early friends in the homeland. "The theory of unity by separation . . . is false," he wrote, "the unity of God is found in the union of all who possess the common life from Jesus." He had no sympathy with any spirit of sectarianism. "I do not object to anyone's enjoying the forms he holds to be more scriptural, but I do absolutely object to his imposing his yoke on the back of his fellows." He revolted against J. N. Darby's theory of a "church in ruins" as absurd. To fellowship with all the family of God, "without exclusive attachment to any section of it" did not mean Groves endorsed assembly rule by democracy. "I have seen enough of that plan, of everyone doing what is right in his own eyes and then calling it the Spirit's order, to feel it to be a delusion" and "far more dishonoring to God."

He saw no conflict between holding the priesthood of all believers and the recognition of teachers. He viewed a regular spiritual diet in the Word as vital to the well-being of the assembly. He condemned preaching and teaching without previous preparation—what he belittled as "impulsive ministry." He maintained that those whom God called to teach should prepare thoroughly and supply the spiritual food needed by the flock.

The Deity of Christ

George E. Harpur



We Christians believe that the One who died for us on Golgotha is truly God as well as truly Man. This doctrine is one of the foundation truths of Christianity.

When Pliny wrote to the Emperor Trajan in the second century, he reported that the Christians at their meetings "sang a hymn to Christ as a god." Pliny's idea of deity is no doubt different from ours, but what he wrote is clear evidence of divine worship being paid to Christ, even at the pain of torture and death. At the same time, Ignatius, on his way to die at Rome, wrote of "our God Jesus Christ being in the Father."

Evidence in the New Testament

The canonical documents of the first century contain explicit statements of this doctrine. The very first sentence of one of them contains in its terse and pointed clauses the words, "The Word was God." This same prologue further adds, "and the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us," so declaring the Godhead of the Person who became known in history as Jesus (Jn. 1:1, 14).

In the first and last verses of 2 Peter there are plain statements of Peter's views. In one he speaks of "the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ," and in the other of "the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Every reader would apply all the titles in the latter sentence to the Redeemer, and the comparable phraseology of the former accentuates what the grammatical construction demands as the correct understanding. That is, that Jesus Christ is both Lord and God. Paul, similarly, wrote to Titus of "the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ."

In John's commentary on his Gospel, he practically concludes with "We are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." The antecedent to the pronoun "this" is Jesus Christ. The writer to the Hebrews plainly addresses the Son as God: "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever."

The doctrine of the deity of our Lord is implicit everywhere in the New Testament. Think of His claim in Revelation 22:13, "I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and

the last." Here Christ uses phrases that only God can (and does, Rev. 1:8, R.V.) use to show His "otherness." How could our Lord be first, if there is another before Him?

In Hebrews 1:10-12, there are applied to Christ words which in the Psalm quoted (102:24-27) are stated of God. The use of the name "Lord" connects with the apostolic custom of taking Old Testament statements about Jehovah and applying them to Christ. This shows how fundamental was their conception of the absolute deity of the Lord. (Paul, Rom. 10:13; Joel 2:32; Peter, 1 Pet. 2:3; Ps. 34:8; John, Jn. 12:41; Isa. 6:3.)

Could any words be stronger than Colossians 2:9, "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily"?

Old Testament Evidence

However the Jews may have interpreted, or misinterpreted, the prophecies of the Old Testament, we see that they set forth and substantiate the teaching of the deity of Messiah. Statements and mysteries find their counterpart and answer in Jesus of Nazareth. 1) Isaiah 9:6 could never be wholly applied to any but Him and it gives Him the title "The Mighty God." 2) The Immanuel prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 is deliberately translated from Hebrew to Greek in Matthew 1:23 to show that the Babe to be born was God among us. 3) The Jehovah-Righteousness of Jeremiah 23:5-6 was exhibited to be our Lord (1 Cor. 1:30).

At the beginning of God's revelation in the Old Testament were the mysterious plurals of Genesis 1:26; 3:22, but the mystery is all made plain in the New Testament light of the divinity of our Lord. The mysterious Angel of Jehovah also finds His elucidation in Jesus the Son of God.

Purpose of John

The deity of our Lord is not only explicit and implicit in the words of Scripture generally, but also particularly in the life and ways of our Lord in the four Gospel records. Indeed, one of these four was written for the express purpose of proving the deity of Jesus, as well as proving His Messiahship (John 20:30-31).

The proof is worked out in detail in the narra-

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

tive which commences, immediately after the prologue, in chapter 1:19.

Notice what proof John adduces. In the first section (1:19-2:11), he shows first the inspired witness of the last and greatest of the Old Testament prophets to the pre-existence and divine Sonship of Christ (vv. 30, 34). Then he follows with the "experimental" witness of those who knew Jesus earliest in His public life to the same two things (vv. 48-49). Thirdly, he brings out the witness of the works of Christ manifesting the glory of His deity by an act of creative power (2:11).

Then in the next section (2:13-4:54), John brings out in *Judea* the Lord's own witness to His heavenly origin and unique Sonship (3:13, 16; 2:16) and John the Baptist's witness to the same two things (3:31-35). In *Samaria*, there is the experimental witness of the woman and the men of Sychar to His Messiahship. In *Galilee*, there is another working proof of His deity in the sign recorded (4:54). This last is distinctly joined to the former sign at Cana, and the remaining miracles recorded in this Gospel are like these two and chosen for this very purpose. The two main evidences of deity are power to create and power to bestow life. These are enunciated in chapter 1:3-4 immediately after the statement of our Lord's deity. All the miracles recorded in John fall into one or other of these categories, and so prove His deity.

Briefly, chapters 1-12, in addition to these signs and their explanations by our Lord, show the rising claims of Christ, and the Jewish reactions to them. They knew exactly what He meant. (Examine 5:18; 8:58; 9:35-38; 10:30-33; 11:25; 12:44-45.)

In the conversations with the disciples in the upper room afterwards ("No created being could speak as Christ here speaks"), and in the prayer of chapter 17, we meet the same gigantic claims (e.g., 14:9; 17:5).

Finally, adducing the

detailed fulfillment of prophecy in the trial and death of Christ, he concludes with an account of the Resurrection which culminates in Thomas unequivocally acknowledging Jesus as "Lord and God" (20:28).

What the Deity of Christ Involves

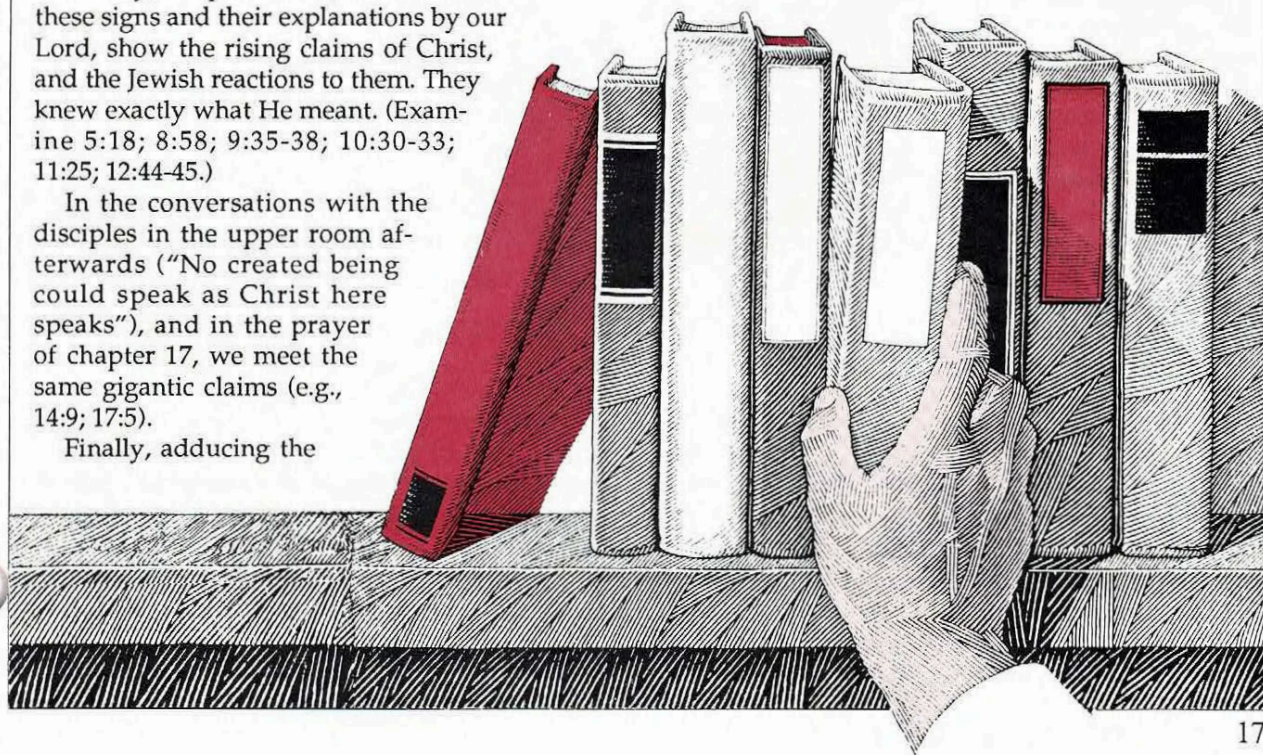
The doctrine of the deity of Christ involves, among other things:

1. His eternal existence (Jn. 1:1-2).
2. Omniscience (Jn. 21:17; Acts 1:24).
3. Omnipotence (Phil. 3:21).
4. Omnipresence (Mt. 18:20; Jn. 3:13).
5. Universal Lordship (Acts 10:36; Rev. 19:16).
6. His possession of all things (Jn. 16: 15).
7. Infinitude, equal with the Father (Mt. 11:27).

It involves, on our part:

1. Living unto Him as we live unto God (2 Cor. 5:15; Gal. 2:19).
2. Trusting Him as we trust God (Jn. 14:1).
3. Praying to Him as to God (Jn. 14:14, R.V.; 1 Jn. 5:13-15).
4. Invoking His name in worship (1 Cor. 1:2; Jn. 5:23; Rev. 5:12).

The Jews accused Him of being a man who was "making himself God." We have found in Him, God "being made in the likeness of men and . . . found in fashion as a man" (Phil. 2:5-8).



Behold Your King!

David Kirk

The hour is early, but not too early for the wicked Caiaphas to be abroad. He slept little, if any, the previous night, and now has dawned the day for which he has lived for full three years. Before the sun is down—his eyes glow with satanic fury as he anticipates—he hopes to gloat over the body, bruised and bleeding, of the despised and hated Nazarene.

Leading his crew of satellites from his ecclesiastical palace with the heavenly Prisoner in their midst, he marches towards the Roman governor's house. Diabolical business is on hand, but what matter? Is there not added triumph in store for the high priest? No love is lost between the religious leader of the Jewish race and Pontius Pilate, his Roman overlord. But today haughty Pilate shall be forced to accede to the wishes of the people whom he despises, and hang upon a cross of shame the mysterious Preacher whose name has now become a household word throughout the Judean country. So little wonder those eyes gleam again.

As Caiaphas had planned, so it happened. In those early hours, there was a battle of wits between the intellectual Roman and the cunning Jew which ended in the complete overthrow of all Pilate's strategy, so that he was forced to hand Christ over to his soldiers for torture and death; and this, against the prickings of his tortured conscience. He has condemned this strangely-silent Prisoner of whom (and he hates to admit it) he is afraid, to the cross.

But he will have his revenge. Does Caiaphas regard the verdict and death sentence imposed by

the unwilling governor as a personal triumph? Well, if so, Pilate will show both him and the rabble crowd he represents.

At one time during the trial, Pilate had dressed the Prisoner in a purple robe and a crown of thorns. Placing a reed in His hand, he mockingly presented Him to the assembled multitude in the words, "Behold your King!" Upon his startled ears had come their piercing denouncement, "We have no king but Caesar." He had then to quietly stand aside while the motley group mingled with the civil and religious heads and followed the band of soldiers to jeer and mock that blessed One as He bravely carried His cross to Calvary.

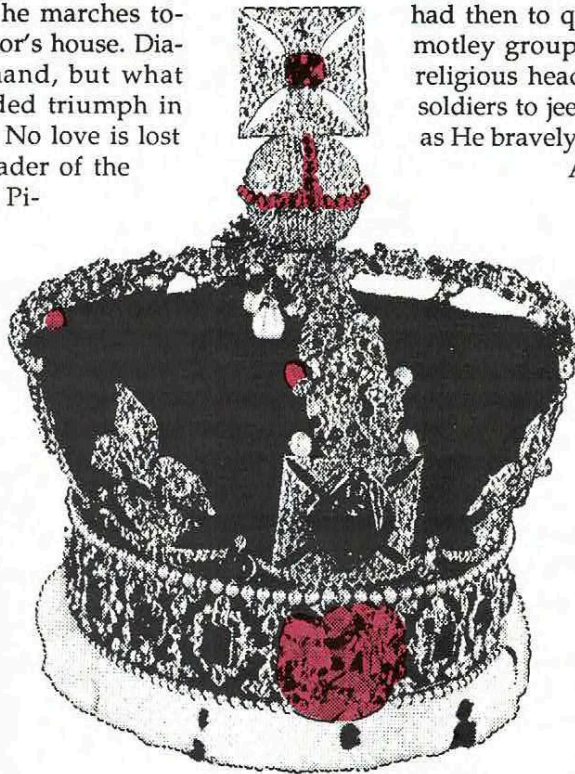
And now his plan for revenge is formulated. The judgment hall is clear. Pilate is alone with his thoughts—bitter reflections, no doubt, mingled with dread forebodings as he looks into the uncertain future. But pride and retaliation, rather than sorrow and repentance, charge the unhappy man's soul.

Hastily a writer is summoned, or, perhaps dispensing with such a service, he carefully copies in his own hand, in triplicate, the scroll to be fastened to yonder middle cross. Nailed above the Sufferer's head we behold in the

Roman language of authority and power, in the Greek tongue of culture and knowledge, and vindictively enough, in the Hebrew speech of religion and mysticism, words that are going to flash with glory when suns have eternally set and the names of Caiaphas and Pilate are no longer uttered:

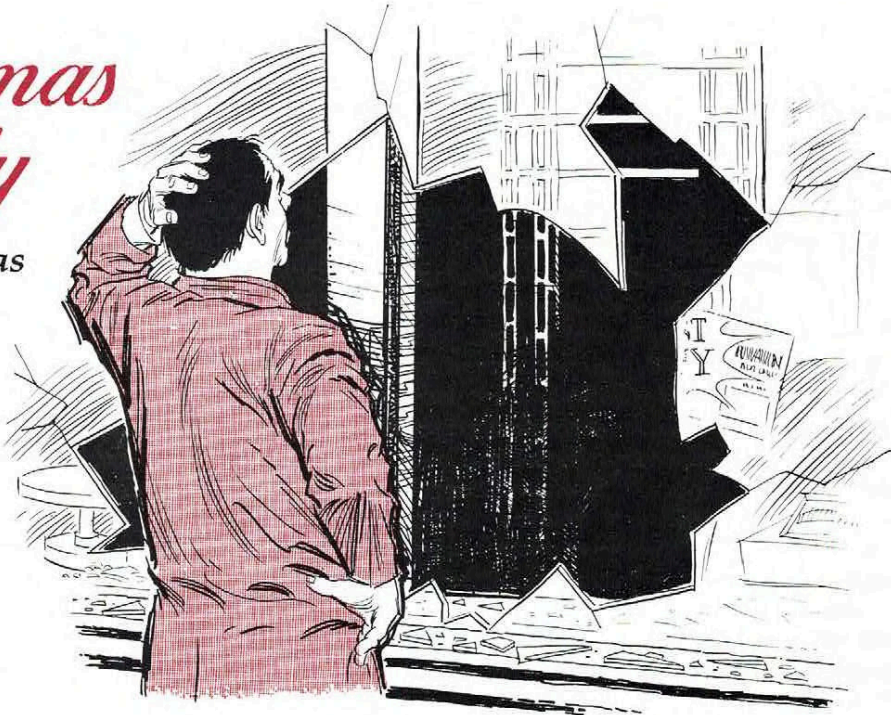
**"THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH,
THE KING OF THE JEWS."**

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Christmas in July

Richard Douglas



"Christmas in July," a local bar promoted, was an occasion not to celebrate the birth of the Saviour of the world but rather as an excuse to have its patrons drink more alcohol. I was part of the revelry that night, even joining others in the irreverent singing of Christmas hymns.

But the "peace on earth" and "goodwill toward men" was shattered when I got into a confrontation with another drunk. When the smoke cleared and the rattle of broken glass died, I had thrown my rival through a 6' by 12' window. Such happenings are sure to attract the attention of the police and it wasn't long before they arrived on the scene.

I recognized the investigating officer as a fellow with whom I had attended Police College in Aylmer, Ontario. Following our arrest and during the subsequent interrogation, a vehicle parked in front of the scout car. Out jumped a man, dressed in pajamas, his hair dishevelled and his eyes still blurry with sleep. Evidently our raucous behavior had disturbed the sleep of the establishment's owner.

I was not prepared for his reaction as he peered at us through the police car's window. His laughter seemed totally inappropriate for the occasion.

It made more sense, however, when I learned that the man I'd thrown through the window had that same afternoon sold an insurance policy to the tavern owner!

I would have better appreciated the humor of the situation if my behavior itself had not become so despicable and something to laugh at. Everything seemed to go wrong in my life. A cutback in manpower in the General Motors Plant in Windsor sent me back to the production line from my job as a security guard. What a letdown and a bruise to my pride! Especially as I boasted of being in charge of my own destiny!

Eagerly I sought ways to exit the dead-end street which my life had become. Night school, self-help books, mind control techniques—I spared no effort to climb out of the pit. All was in vain.

Like a scene in a play, Glen and P. J. now enter the stage. Glen had been such a "funloving guy" in the year we commuted together to work. Suddenly he became serious and quiet. Our routine of having a beer after work was now out of the question for Glen. The reason for the dramatic change in his life became apparent one day when he said, "I love you, Rick, because the Lord Jesus Christ loves me and has wonderfully saved me." I was

GRACE AT WORK

not altogether sad when Glen was transferred to another department. "At least now I only have to deal with P. J." I thought to myself. "Will I ever get away from these religious guys?"

Before I'd listen to what Paul (P. J.) had to say, my life had to hit rock bottom. One night in a drunken stupor, my stomach threatening to vomit, I drove my pickup off the side of the road. Falling out of the truck into a rain-swollen ditch, I decided to hike cross-country to my home for fear of being arrested for impaired driving. After walking across several fields, I suddenly became entangled in a barbed-wire fence guarding a major highway in Southern Ontario. Trapped, my head spinning and my body drenched with rain, I looked up into the sky and cried out, "God, help me—please!"

Managing to squirm free, I then crossed the busy highway, a feat not recommended even in the daytime and when one is sober. It was only the protecting hand of God that brought me safely across. Covered with mud from head to foot, I walked another seven miles until I reached a road where I stuck out my thumb to hitch a ride. "Have you been in an accident?" an elderly couple inquired, as they stopped to provide assistance. I was too embarrassed to answer.

I felt as low as any man could feel. I recalled the days when as a policeman I had to run in drunks who smelled of cheap wine. Now the roles were reversed. As the smell of booze, vomit, and sewer ditches filled my nostrils, I started to cry. When finally I arrived home, I found my wife Cecile worried sick. Later, my daughter told me, "I wanted to run away from home."

I tried all I could to turn my life around. I poured out the booze that I had in the house. Out came the self-help books again with their guarantees of happiness. Alongside, however, were the conversations on the job with P. J. which always centered on Jesus Christ, not religion. I had always thought they were the same. "You can never work yourself to God," P. J. said. "The only way to Him is through faith in His Son Jesus Christ." It all sounded too simple to me.

One day I was left speechless when P. J. asked, "Rick, when you die, are you going to heaven or hell?" I hadn't given it much thought and when I did, I'd always figured, "If you keep your nose clean, Rick Douglas, there shouldn't be any problem."

Again in the workplace and on another occa-

sion, P. J. asked, "Do you believe, Rick, that Jesus Christ died for your sins?" "Yes," I answered. "Do you believe," he added, "that Jesus Christ was buried in a tomb for three days and then was bodily resurrected?" Again I replied in the affirmative. "Then do you know," P. J. concluded, "that without a shadow of a doubt you can be sure you are saved?" That I couldn't buy. It was too easy in my way of thinking. I purposed to stay away from P. J. I couldn't deal with his questions anymore.

On a cold, rainy night in December, upon retiring to our barn, I began to cry without figuring out why. Looking up, I prayed, "Well, God, what do you want with me? What do you want me to do?" He was about to answer me.

The very next day, a Bible verse which I was reading, jumped out at me, "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32). Jesus' words were clear to my heart. On December 13, 1986, I took the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour.

I can't begin to express what the Lord Jesus Christ means to me today. I praise Him for His marvellous work of grace in my life. What a joy it is to know Him as my gracious Friend and Master. I can now, in a sense, celebrate His Incarnation every day, even in July!



Formerly a Police Constable in Toronto and now a machine operator in the General Motors Transmission Plant in Windsor, ON, Richard Douglas lives in Woodslee (Ontario) with his wife Cecile and their daughter Christine. They attend the Oakwood Assembly in Windsor.

Can it Be Done?

Brian Gunning

Can a man, with a wife and children, with a house and a job also do the work of an elder? Or is this work done more efficiently by a man whose sole occupation is shepherding?

There is pressure on elders to ask these questions. Would it be easier to hire a pastor to do work done by a group of elders? Can a man with no secular obligations do this work and take the pressure off a group of men who are too busy?

I was privileged to grow up in an area where several assemblies were cared for by men who maintained secular employment and many other responsibilities. I was enriched to see businessmen and professional men and tradesmen and salesmen—a variety of men who worked in other fulltime jobs, yet at the same time did the work of elders. This has been to the benefit of these local churches and an inspiring example to others to take up the responsibility of shepherding this way.

Let us affirm in a resounding way that a plurality of elders who are among the flock is the very best method to rule an assembly and feed the flock of God. Yes, it can be done!

Because It Is God's Method

This reason alone is sufficient for us to settle the questions. Every time elders are referred to in the New Testament, it is always in the plural. It was assumed by every church that elders were to function as a group. In fact, the striking absence of a single man even being a "chief elder" or pastor in any of the churches referred to in the New Testament is obvious.

The infinite wisdom of God in this arrangement is evident. The safety of "the multitude of counsellors" stands out. This variety of gift and

experience and ability found in any plurality of men suited to do the work of the elders is a rich resource made available to God's assembly. Such resources could never be found in a single man, even in the best of men.

This diversity protects and nourishes the flock.

Some men are men of action and decisiveness, and that is needed among elders. Some men are strong and courageous, and that is needed among elders. Some men are full of compassion and mercy, and that is needed among elders. Through this multiplicity, God is able to make His will known to the flock.

Some men are gifted public expositors of the Scripture. Others can effectively and persuasively teach the Word of God in private conversations. Both are needed among a group of elders.

Some men are younger and others older. A group of elders can beautifully combine the energy of youth and the wisdom of years to care for God's heritage. What poverty is inflicted on an assembly that

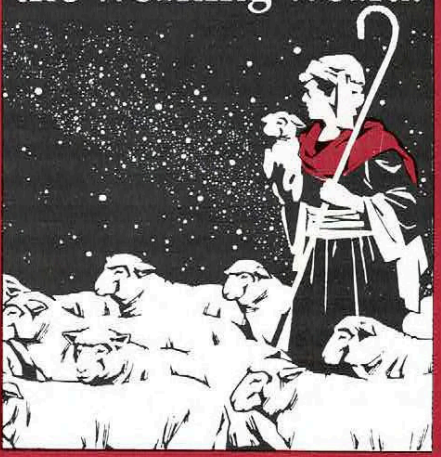
does not have just such a plurality.

No sheep can protest that the elder's counsel from the Scripture is borne out of a cloistered environment or lacks the test of life's experience. The shepherd and the sheep alike face the same demands and challenges of the working world.

Because Shepherding Can Be Done by Prayer

The work of an elder is a spiritual one. Most problems involving people are handled effectively through prayer. It is not in the energy of time spent in meetings and endless discussion that is crucial, but time spent in prayer. Who can honestly say they have *no* time to pray? Busy men can accomplish much for God in elder work in devoting much time to prayer about the sheep.

The shepherd and the sheep alike face the same demands and challenges of the working world.



CAN IT BE DONE?

Consider the value of several spiritually minded men who, with shepherd hearts, make members of the assembly the subject of earnest prayer. James reminds us, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Because of the Hidden Resources

The assembly is God's assembly, not yours or mine or the elders'. This should be a source of great comfort to every elder attempting to shepherd the flock. Peter beautifully draws our attention to "the chief Shepherd" in 1 Peter 5:4. All shepherds are workers to whom the chief Shepherd has delegated this work.

He always watches over His workers and never leaves them alone in their tasks. This chief Shepherd never asks of elders more than they are capable of accomplishing. He always stands ready to refresh and sustain and to share the care of the flock. It is in this context that Peter writes, "Casting *all* your care upon *Him*; for He careth for you." The elder draws his resources in doing this demanding and sometimes perplexing work from Him. What relief it is to turn to the Chief Shepherd and ask, "What shall we do?"

Because Elder's Work Is Being An Example

Being an example should not take time out of the normal routine of life. Much of an elder's work is *being*, as well as *doing*. Being at the meetings of the assembly. Being a Christ-like man. Being in the word of God. Again Peter, as an aged elder, writes, "Neither being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

Because the Work Can Be Done by Hospitality

Paul makes it clear that the elder is a man of hospitality. This would mean the elder's wife and children participate in his work. Much can be done by an elder in entertaining missionaries and itinerant workers who come to visit the assembly, together with members of the fellowship. These

opportunities can be seized to initiate private conversations in an informal atmosphere with a believer who may be in need of guidance or instruction or comfort. New believers can learn much as they see the elder in action in his own home.

Because It Is Work

There is no question, an elder's work is WORK! Paul makes that plain in 1 Timothy 3:1. No candidate for the work of the elder should assume this is an honorary title. It is a work that will take time. It will cause the elder to constantly assess and weigh career and business opportunities. He will examine every demand upon his time over which he has a choice and ask himself if this adds unnecessary pressure to his life, preventing him from doing the incomparable work of shepherding the flock of God.

This work will demand sacrifice on the part of the elder's family as well. Urgent calls for help from a sheep in pain or danger may cut across personal plans.

But none of us should conclude this is an impossible task. The chief Shepherd knows exactly what He is doing in arranging the care of His sheep

through this method.

Can it be done? A reverberating yes! We need to affirm again the practice of this effective system. We need to encourage men who sacrificially follow the example of the Good Shepherd. We need to pray that the Lord will raise up shepherds among us—real men who will rise to this high and noble calling. Men who will turn away from transient and petty uses of time to give themselves to the lofty work of God's heritage . . . "And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

Brian Gunning and his wife, Marlene, make their home in St. Catharines, ON. Brian is a father, businessman, and elder in the Brockview assembly.

Urgent calls for help from a sheep in pain or danger may cut across personal plans.



Christ is All

Hy. Pickering



The central theme of the Colossian epistle is found in chapter 3:11: "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all." The apostle seems to sweep aside everyone to magnify Christ. The world's greatest language—Greek; the only Divine religion that ever was—Jew; religious ordinances, as circumcision; non-religious Gentiles and races—uncircumcised; Barbarians, or the worst kind of barbarian—Scythian; slaves who are fettered or masters who are free; all must give place to Christ, for "Christ in all things must have the pre-eminence."

Naturally in an epistle in which a great statement like this climaxes, we look for stages or indications of the theme going before. Notice five:

Christ All in Creation

"For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him" (1:16).

Not often in Scripture is there a repetition in the same verse: "In Him all things were created—all things were created through Him and for Him." Here we have the sphere, the agent, and the purpose of creation.

However wise or carnal men may seek to evade the fact, and modernists or evolutionists try to explain it away, this is plain. The Scriptures declare that everything in heaven and earth, everything visible and invisible, all temporal and spiritual forces and powers were created by Christ.

The doctrines of grace, the discoveries of science, the development of history, and the divine revelation as to creation will yet harmonize in the realization that Christ is the cause, head, and goal of the created universe.

Christ All in Control

"And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist" or are controlled, upheld, and kept in being (1:17). John the Baptist was born six months before Jesus, yet John could say, "He was before me" (John 1:15). Abraham lived some 2200

years before the birth of Jesus, yet Christ said, "before Abram was, I AM." Not "I was," but "I AM" (Jn. 8:58). The world was created at least 4,000 years before Christ was born in Bethlehem, yet He spoke of His being with God, "before the world was" (Jn. 17:5). In fact, of Him the Spirit says, "From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God" (Ps. 90:2), and to Him the ancient prophecy ascribes the marvelous "before all" title of "The Father of Eternity" (Isa. 9:6, R. V., margin).

He is the Uncreated Creator of all things. "By Him all things consist." The vast universe of God is all kept in place, controlled, and guided by the One whom "they slew and hanged on a tree" (Acts 5:30). Marvelous mystery! While aged Simeon upheld Him, He upheld Simeon, and the ground on which Simeon was standing!

Sweeping from the immensity of His power to the individuality of His care and love, I remember that "not a sparrow" on the lonely moor or sandy desert, unknown to and unnoticed by man, falls to the ground without His knowledge (Mt. 10:29). We can come to the smallest of particles, rejoicing that while "worlds on worlds are hanging on His hand," He cares for every atom of every one of His own. "The very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Lk. 12:7). Christ All for my all.

Christ All in Salvation

"Having made peace through the blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself." (1:20).

In Philippians 2:10, where His dominion is in question, it is things in heaven, earth, and hell. In Colossians 1-20, where the theme is redemption, it is only heaven and earth. Solemn thought, there is no "blood," and therefore no redemption in Hell. The one glad opportunity is "Now" (2 Cor. 6:2).

Whatever else the Scripture makes plain, it makes this plain, that Salvation is only by sacrifice, and that the sacrifice of an unblemished victim. The only Perfect Sacrifice ever offered, was when the Son of God "made peace through the Blood of His Cross," for once, and only once, did perfect blood stain this sin-cursed earth, and that when "the Blood of His Own" (Acts 20:28, J. N. D.) flowed from the Sacrifice and Victor of Calvary.

CHRIST IS ALL

"Neither is there Salvation in any other" for Christ is alone the Author and Finisher of Salvation.

Christ All in the Church

"And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands . . . increaseth with the increase of God" (2:19). "And He is the Head of the Body, the Church" (1:18).

Christ loved the Church, died for the Church, nourishes and cherishes the Church, and will yet present the Church faultless in glory. He is the Theme of worship, the Center of gathering, the Subject of ministry, the Power for service, the Object of praise in time, and of endless and ceaseless glory and triumph in eternity of every member of the Church.

Christ as Head of the Church implies three great principles—life, unity, and rule. He is the Source of spiritual life, the center of all spiritual unity, and the Sovereign of all saints. "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren" (Mt. 23:8). How solemn to acknowledge as "Head of our Church" a pope, a priest, a human being of any description, or have any center but the God-given One.

Christ is All in Everyday Life

Lest any should think that "Christ is All" is a creational, theological, and yet not intensely practical, there is one more major theme. "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus" (3:17). "Christ all" is now linked with every thought, word, and deed, and with every attitude and relationship of life. Observe how this great fact is linked with—

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands" (v. 18). They may take the word "obey" out of the marriage ceremony in the Prayer Book, but it remains firm in the Word of God. "Wives, obey," not because inferior, or because commanded so to do, but because "it is fit so to do in the Lord."

"Husbands, love your wives" (v. 19). Evidently the Spirit touches the weak spot in each. Wives to obey; husbands to love. Not emotion, but devotion; not sentiment, but sacrifice. Christ is All, Christ loved you, therefore, "love your wives," and avoid any bitter words, irritable temper, un-

thoughtful acts, or unkind deeds. Sweet is the home life where husbands and wives "do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus."

"Children, obey your parents in all things" (v. 20). Not answering back, nor counting them as effete and to be disregarded, Christian children especially should remember Him who was "subject to His parents" (Lk. 2:51), and "obey" because

"this is well pleasing unto the Lord." Pleasing Christ, we please our parents; pleasing our parents, we please Christ.

"Fathers, provoke not your children" (v. 21). Instead of perpetually ordering, commanding, and demanding, remember that "like as a father pitieth His children" your heavenly Father pitied you, loved you, and bore with you. "Lest children should be discouraged," sympathize with and make companions of your boys and girls, so that

"Christ may be All" to parent and child alike.

"Mothers," strange to say, are not named. Was it because He who said, "Son, behold Thy mother," truly knew a mother's heart, and mother love needed little exhortation. "Can a mother forget?" (Isa. 49:15)

"Servants, obey in all things your masters . . . not with eye-service, not as men pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God" (vs. 22). Most of those to whom the letter was addressed were slaves. If the injunction applied to them, how much more to any of us in whatever position of service we may be privileged to occupy. A servant's place, however menial, is a post of honor in which he or she may glorify God, "for ye serve the Lord Christ" (vs. 24). "A little maid" honoured God more than a great general in days gone by.

"Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal" (chap. 4:1). A much needed exhortation in the days of slavery, and much needed in many places today. Herein lies the solution of most of the problems of classes and masses, strikes and riots, and such like. The Model master is the one who gives "just and equal," knowing that he has "also a Master in Heaven."

Thus it will be evident that in God's universe, in Christ's Church, and in the Christian family, He has the pre-eminence.

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**In God's universe,
in Christ's Church,
and in the
Christian family,
He has the
pre-eminence.**

Thou Art Worthy

David B. Long



Our glorious Lord is the foundation of all the work of God in every age; the source of every blessing for His people of all times; the unique element of cohesion in the whole universe; whether physical or spiritual, historical or moral, on Him everything depends. He is the One in whom: "all the fullness was pleased to dwell" (Col. 1:19); "in him all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily" (Col. 2:9); who is the visible form of the invisible God (Col. 1:15).

This One is the exact expression of the personality of God (Heb. 1:3); who ascends to glory as "this same Jesus"; who will come again exactly as He went away (Acts 1:11); and who is "the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). What He was in the past, both in eternity and in time, He is today, and shall be forever.

Only as our eyes, minds, and hearts are filled with Him in all His love, power, holiness, majesty, and total worthiness can our lives as Christians ever be what God wants them to be. Only then can we know true satisfaction, joy, and peace. Only while beholding Him as He truly is, in all His transcendental power and beauty, shall we find fulfillment and fruit in our service. Only while we are completely occupied with Him, and not questions about Him shall we know what true worship is.

The Scriptures are full of illustrations of this. Abraham found his joy in seeing "Christ's day," the day of His supremacy (Jn. 8:56). Isaiah saw His glory and worshipped Him before he was sent out in service to "speak of Him" (Jn. 12:41). The psalmists and poets sang as they mused on His greatness. The prophets poured out their hearts in the most moving and sublime prose as they "all gave witness to Him" (Acts 10:43).

The glory of this One so dimmed every other light and superseded every other loyalty that for love of Him, men, in the measure in which they "saw" Him, left all and lost all just to be His and to serve Him with no thought of self. His was the first name on their lips as they found new life in accepting His Lordship. His was the last name they whispered as they yearned only for acceptance by Him while they died for Him in the stonings of Jerusalem; through the obscene agonies of

the Roman arenas; the pogroms of the dark ages; the massacres of China, Japan, South America and the Near East; the horrors of the Inquisition; the fires of Smithfield; the exterminations of Alva and Claverhouse; the cannibalistic orgies of the South Seas; torture and death in Africa.

For Him all is given, all is attempted, all is suffered. To Him all is surrendered, all is devoted and dedicated. But it is to Him, as He truly is, in all His fullness and glory, and *not* to some limited, watered-down, phantom-Christ who, though called Emmanuel (God with us) and prophetically named The Mighty God, yet found Himself with inward conflict between two opposed natures. It is not an unreal Christ who either emptied Himself of His power and knowledge, or else while "possessing" them could not use them in acting as God in case some mere man should disqualify Him from being the Saviour for so doing. And it was certainly not a Christ so sectionalized that He could know things (as God) and not know them at the same time (as man); could do everything and yet could do nothing.

No, it is a full-orbed Christ who, though in a body and displaying the wounds of His humiliating yet triumphant death, drew from the prostrated disciple the almost gasping exclamation of awe and worship, "My Lord—my God." It is the Christ who now sits above waiting to appear as "Our great God and Saviour" and who, this same Jesus, will burst the clouds radiating the title "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

It is the One who now walks among the churches in all the majestic wisdom of "the Ancient of Days," who sees everything, knows everything, can do everything, and is everything (Rev. 2 and 3). And it is the very same One who is seen "in the midst of the throne and of the 24 elders, and of the four living creatures," in Revelation 5, the very seat and center of Godhood and to whom Heaven, Earth, and Hell are prostrated while the redeemed of the Lord chant with the music of the heavens,

"Thou art worthy."

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His Footprints Along the Way

Jim McKendrick

*T*he dictionary defines analysis as a separating or breaking up of any whole into its parts so as to look at its nature. Synthesis is the putting together of the parts so as to form a whole. Good exposition does both. It takes a portion of the Word of God and breaks it apart so we can see its components and the beauties of each part. Many commentaries stop here. They comment on each of the verses and help us to see the words used and the grammatical intricacies. This is good, but it is not complete. It is good analysis. But the Bible is a whole, and each of its parts make up a whole revelation. It is in the mastery of the whole that each of the parts takes on added significance. That takes years of study and meditation and walking with God. It is the rarified air of synthesis that separates the few from the many, the best from the good, the giants from the men.

I have just scanned two new books published by Gospel Folio Press. The emphasized word is "scanned." For these books are not appreciated by just scanning. Both of them need time to digest. But the processes of analysis and synthesis came forcibly to my mind as I read them. Both of these men have obviously read widely. They have a grasp of history and of the geography of the land of Israel. They both have a grasp of the Book itself in all its parts. They exhibit the fruits of years of study and devotion to their God. But they are two different men and their writing styles are distinct from one another. Both of these books will do you good.

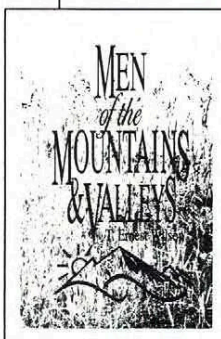
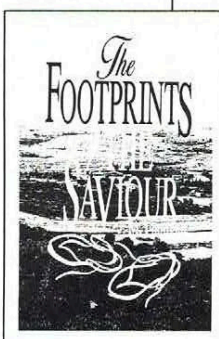
The first is "The Footprints of the Saviour," by Jim Flanigan. Mr. Flanigan traces the pathway of our Saviour from Bethlehem to Galilee where He had that intimate talk after His resurrection with the seven who had "gone fishing." In twelve chapters, he goes with the Saviour to twelve different places where His pathway led Him in doing the Father's will. He demonstrates a real intimacy with the geography of the land—not just the geography but the interplay between history

and geography at these various places. But this isn't primarily a geography book or even a history book—it is a book that points us to the One who walked here among us, the Son of God who became the Son of Man. This little volume takes us on an illuminating journey with the Eternal God who took on Him flesh and blood and walked the dusty roads of His land in the process of fulfilling His Father's will. Your temptation will be to read through this book too quickly. It is delightfully written. But slow down and enjoy; meditate and worship. You will be enriched.

The next book calls us to scale some mountains—not just any mountains, not just the foothills and plateaus, but the snowy summits where the air is pure and clean. But more than that, we are invited up the peaks where few men have ever been. At Sinai, the masses stayed at the foot and pled for the display of the holiness and majesty of God to be interpreted to them. They did not wish a face-to-face encounter. The elders dared to come up the mountain partway and eat with God. Then Joshua and Moses went farther. But there was a place where only Moses went and talked with God, seeing His glory as no one had seen Him before.

There are peaks where only the few and the brave have trod and they have been rewarded with a revelation of Him.

Mr. T. Ernest Wilson takes us to these mountains in a book entitled, "Men of the Mountains and Valleys." Six mountains and men of the Old Testament. Seven mountains and one Man—the man Christ Jesus—in the New. Here on these mountains you will be given insights into who God is and the greatness of His Son as He traversed this scene. This book is filled with keen insights gleaned from years of study and a close walk with God. Here you will find synthesis at its best as the parts are brought together and the exposition of "Christ in all the Scriptures" is emblazoned before us. Read, be instructed, and behold your God!



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Every Day Reading Plan

Section 25: Jeremiah— Death throes of a decadent nation

January 1	Jeremiah 1:1-19	Jeremiah's call and commission
January 2	Jeremiah 2:1-3:5	The indictment against Israel
January 3	Jeremiah 3:6-4:4	An appeal for repentance
January 4	Jeremiah 4:5-31	A warning: judgment from the north
January 5	Jeremiah 5:1-31	A vain search for any godly in the land
January 6	Jeremiah 6:1-30	The warning continued: northern devastation
January 7	Jeremiah 7:1-34	A rebuke on empty religious form
January 8	Jeremiah 8:1-22	The stubbornness of the sinner
January 9	Jeremiah 9:1-26	A chapter of tears: the weeping prophet
January 10	Jeremiah 10:1-25	The folly of idolatry and a valuable prayer
January 11	Jeremiah 11:1-12:17	The Palestinian covenant violated
January 12	Jeremiah 13:1-27	The parable of the loincloth
January 13	Jeremiah 14:1-22	Drought and doom for Israel
January 14	Jeremiah 15:1-21	The Lord's answer: intercession rejected
January 15	Jeremiah 16:1-21	The wages of sin: when God goes away
January 16	Jeremiah 17:1-27	Judah's terrible sin; desecration of the sabbath
January 17	Jeremiah 18:1-23	The prophet and the potter: two vessels
January 18	Jeremiah 19:1-15	The broken clay flask
January 19	Jeremiah 20:1-18	Jeremiah's public disgrace: complaint & calm
January 20	Jeremiah 21:1-14	The message to Zedekiah
January 21	Jeremiah 22:1-30	The other kings of Judah
January 22	Jeremiah 23:1-40	The righteous Branch and false prophets
January 23	Jeremiah 24:1-10	Two baskets of figs: good ones & rotting ones
January 24	Jeremiah 25:1-38	Israel exiled, nations judged, & day of the Lord
January 25	Jeremiah 26:1-24	The temple doomed & Jeremiah delivered
January 26	Jeremiah 27:1-28:17	The sign of the wooden yoke
January 27	Jeremiah 29:1-32	A letter sent to Babylon
January 28	Jeremiah 30:1-24	Jacob's trouble and Israel's glory
January 29	Jeremiah 31:1-40	The nation's return and the everlasting hope
January 30	Jeremiah 32:1-44	A real estate deal: faith in the future
January 31	Jeremiah 33:1-26	The coming seige; hope of a bright future

Jeremiah (Part 1)

Alexander McEachern

Our study this month takes us to the book of Jeremiah. Since Jeremiah is a long book we will be spending two studies on it. This month we will think a little of the author and place the book in its historical context. Next month we will glance at its contents.

Charles Feinberg says in the introduction of his commentary on Jeremiah that one of Jeremiah's greatest contributions to posterity was his personality. Jeremiah was "by birth a priest; by grace a prophet; by the trials of life a bulwark for God's truth; by daily spiritual experience one of the greatest exponents of prophetic faith in his unique relation to God; by temperament gentle and timid; yet constantly contending against the forces of sin; and by natural desire a seeker after the love of a companion, his family, friends, and above all, his people—which were all denied him." Such is the human instrument behind this panoramic prophecy.

Jeremiah was called to his ministry in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign or 626 B.C. He continued to preach in Jerusalem until the fall of Judah in 586 B.C. Jeremiah's ministry saw the declension of the nation of Egypt as the world power, and the rise of the Babylonian empire. Eventually of course it would be Babylon who would carry the children of Israel into captivity for 70 years. Within Israel the ministry of Jeremiah began shortly after the wicked reign of Manasseh had come to an end. The glorious revival under Hezekiah had been all undone and the people were debased in immorality and idolatry. However, God raised up king Josiah and Jeremiah with him, and spiritual reforms began again in Israel. But although Jeremiah wholeheartedly supported the efforts of Josiah, the people's wicked ways were deeply entrenched. Shortly after Josiah died, Jehoiakim took the throne and Israel plunged into rampant sin

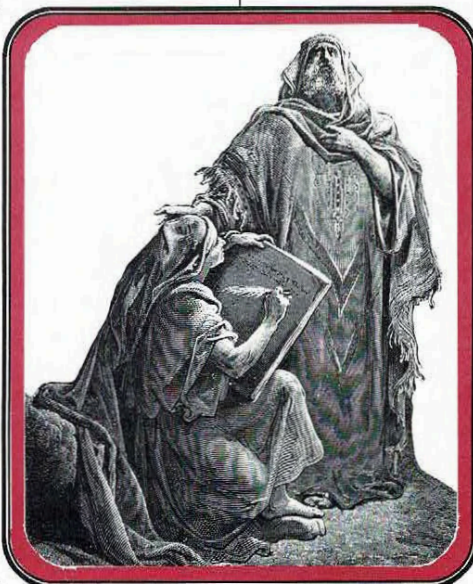
again. Against this tide stood Jeremiah. He exhorted the people with all the strength and emotion he could muster to turn from their sin. His reward was the animosity of the people and the wrath of the king. So enraged was Jehoiakim with Jeremiah that he cut the scroll of his prophecy to pieces and Jeremiah was forced to flee from the king. During Jehoiakim's reign the judgment Jeremiah had predicted began to fall and Nebuchadnezzar launched his first invasion of Israel.

Three months after Jehoiakim came Zedekiah. He was not as bitterly opposed to Jeremiah but Jeremiah still did not fare very well. His message was to accept the invasion of Israel as God's hand of judgment upon the nation. Needless to say it did not receive a welcome response from the people. Jeremiah's emotional appeals went largely unheeded and he finished his life in Egypt having seen the hand of God in destructive judgment on Israel and Jerusalem.

Observe the resemblances between our Lord Jesus Christ and Jeremiah. Even the Jews of the Lord's day recognized

similarities (Matthew 16:14). In the historical settings of their lives they lived in days of spiritual apostasy in Israel. As a result the impending judgment of God loomed near. The nation would fall to foreign armies and Jerusalem and the temple laid to waste. Both the Lord and Jeremiah condemned the commercialism of the temple and rebuked it in much the same fashion (Jer. 7:11; Matt. 21:13). Both were accused of treason, tried, persecuted, and imprisoned. Both foretold the destruction of the temple. Both wept over Jerusalem (Jer. 9:1; Luke 19:41). And they both experienced the depths of loneliness (Jer. 15:10; Isaiah 53:3).

May we be as Jeremiah was—faithful to the message of God no matter what the response or opposition; and Christlike in our life and demeanor.



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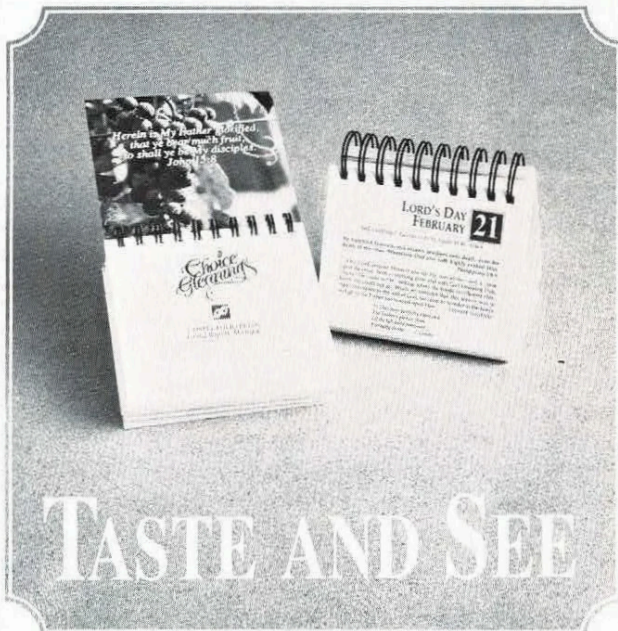
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Thou Remainest *John Hawthorn*

We pass through the year with chastened hearts. Sorrow has touched many in the past days. From many homes the light has gone out. New problems and difficulties present themselves, and the darkness of the last days deepens around us. The kingdoms of the world are being shaken, to be finally replaced with that "abomination of desolation" (Mt. 24:15), and no hope or comfort can be drawn from man's ever changing, earthborn hopes.

We turn therefore to the assurance that "Thou remainest" (Heb. 1:11). He who spoke the universe into being, who holds the earth in the hollow of His hand, who gives to all life, and who spared not His Son but delivered Him up for us, is our Father. He changes not. He neither slumbers nor sleeps. He makes the wrath of man to praise Him. With Christ He will freely give us all things. His gifts forbid us to doubt His love, His Divine purposes display His wisdom, and His longsuffering reveals His patience. He will perfect that which concerns us. The good work begun in us will be complete in the Day of Jesus Christ.

This knowledge brings with it rest, a rest prepared for us, and which we are invited to share (Heb. 4:9). Rest, the outcome of ceasing from our own struggles, of casting ourselves on Him by faith. Rest, the result of putting our life's cares and burdens in His hands. Rest, the enjoyment of which depends on our learning of Him who is meek and lowly in heart, and who found it His food and chief delight to do the will of His Father.