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# The Fraternal.

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## THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS.

*(Presidential Address to the East Midland Baptist Association.)*

TO realise one's part and privilege in Christian work, one must have a clear conception of what one ought to do, and ought to be. What is the nature and function of Christian living? In what sense is every Christian a priest? What authority is there in the New Testament for such a view of our witness and service?

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In seeking an answer to such questions we turn with a fresh zest to the study of the first and basic document of the Early Church, the New Testament. As we ponder the origin and history of long-existing and honoured institutions, we soon discover the tremendous significance of certain words, and the critical importance right interpretation of these words plays in the life and thought of communities.

Words have a glorious or tragic heritage. They grow or diminish in value as the people who are familiar with them develop or decay in character. The word "priest" has too long a history, too great a significance in the religious world, to perish out of our language or thought.

As Free Churchmen we fight extremely shy of the term. We know too well its sad story in the struggle for religious liberty. From the Reformation period right on to our time, we have almost allowed it to pass into complete silence, and to die of neglect. But it is a word that will not die, and cannot die. Like all gigantic words, it is ever open to abuse, liable to suffer from misinterpretations, taken to mean and to imply what was never meant to mean and to imply, still such perils

do not justify its neglect. It is a mine of gold which we as diggers must learn to delve with more skill and courage.

1. *New Testament Believers Regarded the Whole Church as a Priesthood.*

That is, not one particular individual, nor a particular group of individuals, in a fellowship, but the whole fellowship, and the whole of all the Christian fellowships then in existence. They were untroubled about questions of lineal descent or apostolic succession, because they had firmly grasped a more essential dignity. They were co-heirs with Christ, and therefore shared in His ministry of reconciliation.

*What is the Work of a Priest?*

The work of a priest is to represent man to God, to act as mediator and go-between. Generally this was done by means of sacrifices both in Hebrew and pagan religion. The word "*ieretus*" means one who offers sacrifice.

The New Testament disciples had no quarrel with that word, but they gave it an infinitely deeper, wider and more spiritual meaning, than any official priesthood has ever given to it. They applied it as a description of the whole of Christian living, and not merely as the work of an exclusive class in an exclusive fashion in Temple or Synagogue.

Those of you who like Scriptural verification of such statements may well reflect on 1 Peter 2.9, "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy people." To whom is the apostle writing? According to the epistle 1.1 "To the strangers scattered through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia." He is certainly not writing to a class or selected body or grade of officials.

Again in Rev. 1. 5 and 6 we read of "Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father." This is a still stronger passage informing us that we derive our Christian priesthood from Jesus Christ Himself—surely something far more valid and imposing than apostolic succession and episcopal ordination.

2. *What are the Values of this Priesthood?*

(a) *Access to God.*

This Priesthood gives us immediate access to God, for Calvary has opened the way for ever to the Holiest, and this priesthood also makes the whole of our life a continual spiritual

sacrifice of praise, prayer, surrender of self, and intercession for others with prevailing power, 1 Peter 2.5, "You also as living stones, are built up a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

Some would argue that in retaining so faithfully the symbolic words "priest" and "priesthood" the New Testament writers were anxious to conciliate Jewish readers. But pagan converts would have just as much veneration for material altars and sacrifices. I prefer to believe the word and office involve in their ideas of reconciliation and mediation fundamental aspects of Christian living. To leave those aspects out is to impoverish our witness and experience.

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(b) *Intensified Worship.*

Till Christ had made a living way to God by His death and going to the Father, the approach of the worshipper had been veiled and difficult. The Temple feasts were few, costly and burdensome. The synagogues were supervised by those who were chiefly concerned about tithing mint, anise and cummin. But after Calvary and Pentecost all believers have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us," Heb. 10, 19-20.

To people so familiar with the offering of sheep and oxen before worship could be acceptable, to those who had seen the whole system of offerings debased into graft and money-making, until Christ Himself had to call His Father's house a "den of thieves" (Matt. 21, 13); we can imagine what a freedom, what a release from bondage, weariness and delusion it was to discover in the death, ascension and continued intercession of our Lord a glorious immediate, unhampered, living way to God.

The early believer realised his indebtedness to Christ so vividly and so forcefully that his daily life was an emulation of the priestly sacrifice of the Master. His ideal became this: "By Christ let us offer the sacrifice of praise continually," Heb. 13, 15.

No author perhaps has equalled the Apostle Paul for the clarity and splendour of his conception of the priestly character of Christian living as he renders it in Romans 12. 1: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

(c) *A Most Brotherly Fellowship.*

Among the qualifications of our Lord for His priestly work emphasis is laid upon His compassion and sympathetic understanding. He is "touched with the feelings of our infirmities. He has been tempted in all points like as we are. He has learnt obedience by the things He suffered. He has offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears." Cf. Chaps. 4 and 5 in Hebrews.

The little bands of Christians soon exemplified in their conduct those great notes of the Master's life. Compassion for the weak, poor, down-trodden, crippled, maimed and erring was as characteristic of them as of their Lord. They knew what it was to make intercession for all men. Stephen, when dying could intercede like His Saviour: "Lay not this sin to their charge," Acts 7, 30. Another fine illustration of their full oneness with their fellows in every need was their lofty, spontaneous, though short-lived attempt to make the Jerusalem church a community sharing both spiritual and temporal blessings to the full. It is awe inspiring to read of that assembly: "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. Neither was there any among them that lacked," Acts 4, 32-34. This daring and challenging programme is far in advance of anything attempted by any denomination in our time, except in a few small groups. This sharing is always explained away as transitory and ill-conceived, and not as a momentary height to which the Early Church arose in a flash of revelation. And so, the problem of poverty remains to this day unsolved by the Christian Church.

Some of us, of course, may see little connection between the priestly work of the Church and the redemption of the social order. Indeed, some of us would not be willing to admit preaching the Gospel involves at all the reclamation of the created order of things, as well as the reclamation of the soul of the individual from sin.

Yet Jesus taught in the parable of the Good Samaritan, that the Priest and the Levite had neglected their religious duty in their failure to render social service, and in their failure to see in the wounded brother a plea for divine and human mercy.

Even at the doors of the Temple, almsgiving was permitted, and it is really idle for us or for any people to imagine

that priest and temple, sacrament and altar are separated by any mysterious gulf from the demands and pressure of everyday life.

Christ's own antagonism to the priests of His day was grounded on the very fact that they were *false* to one of the deepest elements in the priestly character—oneness and sympathy with the men to whom they ministered.

*(To be concluded.)*

W. H. JONES  
(Nottingham).

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### SWEET REASONABLENESS.

*(The writer of this short paper is a deacon of Myrtle Street Church, Liverpool, and is one of the best-known business men on Merseyside. The article is based on an address given to the Western District of the Lancashire and Cheshire Baptist Association, and is printed here to give ministers some idea of what the best type of layman in our churches is thinking upon matters of religion to-day.)*

I WONDER how true is our estimate of our responsibilities as members of Christ's Church? Are we satisfied with the position which the Church holds in the world? If not, what are the questions we ask ourselves? Is Christianity for us a rule of life that can be set down in so many words and paragraphs, or is Christ to us the Spirit of life? If the Spirit of life, then how is that Spirit working in and through all the multitudinous activities that go to make up life?

Can there be any dispute as to what is the content of this Christ Spirit?

Dare I venture, for the sake of emphasis, to change the terminology regarding the Christian virtues, and bring Faith, Hope, Love, Patience, Meekness and all the other Christian virtues under the one head of sweet reasonableness—because all these virtues are essentially and fundamentally reasonable; and then will you proceed to bring some outstanding modern tendencies to the arbitrament of this sweet reasonableness.

All phases of life have their own appropriate means of expression. There can be no life without a means of expression. These various forms of expression, such as you find in music, art, literature and so on, become languages, which, definitely, to avoid confusion, must have grammar. Grammar

is for the regulation of language by rules, or usage, and as such is sweetly reasonable.

What is our grammar of life? In other words, how are we and our actions regulated.

Now, for a moment, cast your minds about on the world at large, and see if you can agree upon what some of the modern tendencies are. What is the meaning of all this revolt against old authorities, old sanctions and prohibitions? Is there a realm in which it is not evident? Take art, poetry, sculpture, architecture, literature, music and politics, and tell me whether all the old standards have not gone, or are rapidly going, by the board? You will say that it is a good job, too, that many of them have gone. I might agree, but the whole point is what have you to put in their place? Many modern forms of expression, more or less seem to be without grammar, to the point of being meaningless.

There is no sweet reasonableness in making modern drama a thinly-veiled defence of real vice. There is no sweet reasonableness in modern writers making heroes and heroines out of mental and moral degenerates. There is no sweet reasonableness in many modern films, with their blatant appeal to all that is primitive and unhealthy. There is no sweet reasonableness in that form of modern music, which consistently avoids the usage of the old masters, and startles our ears with a language which is all noise and inflection, so that even experts admit that they cannot find its meaning.

Politics is rapidly becoming a matter of a coloured shirt—the shirt may be reasonable enough, but it is the colour that is unreasonable when you try to discover what it symbolises.

You might say, what has all this got to do with the Church and her message? Well, we must remember that all our young people, in some way or another, are being brought into contact with this new spirit of so-called freedom. It is colouring all that they see and hear.

Study some of the fiction which many of our young people are surreptitiously reading, and then say whether there is not some room for a careful adaptation of the Christian message and the Christian life, to meet the particular and urgent need of our times. If there is a case for adapting the Christian message, there is also one for adapting our Christian life so that it becomes part of the message.

I am not sure that the Oxford Group Movement is adapted to the times. I venture this with diffidence, because I have never attended its meetings, but if I can believe what I read and am told, it may be that this Movement is only another manifestation of that revolt against old standards, and the desire to escape repressions and so-called bondage.

Now, in a very sketchy way, chiefly by the method of asking questions, I have drawn an outline of what may be, and I think is, an angle of life largely dominating, though perhaps often unconsciously, the minds of many of our young people to-day.

I am not a student, in the sense that I can have so many hours a day in the study. I am a business man, in touch every day with working humanity. I have asked questions, but I am leaving each one of you to answer for yourselves. Suffice it to say, that I believe that for the ordinary Christian man and woman, there never was a time when example was more needed to impress our young people. Their ears are full of alluring voices, their heads are full of clever arguments. We may easily be beaten in mere argument, but there is no reply to a well-lived life.

Let our Ministers and students use their genius in the adaptation of the Christian message, to the special needs of the times, and thus seize opportunities that seem to me to be especially unique at the present time. But for us, who have other work to do, let us cultivate that grammar of life that will stand being brought to the test of sweet reasonableness.

I believe that this phase of untrammelled freedom and license, this bringing up into the realm of unregulated expression, of all the submerged urges and desires, is but a passing one. For many, it is an unprepared-for adventure into the unknown, where everything is strange and new, and therefore fascinating. It may even be only the old, old search for the "philosophic absolute" being conducted in very strange places; and when these searchers discover that finality will always evade them, and that they have lost what anchorage they ever had, they must inevitably fall back on authority. And it is then that they will look to reasoned Christian authority for a safe anchorage.

If we can but keep in mind the glorious nature of our task—the stupendous eternal forces, to which we are allied there will be no faint-heartedness. Life's trivialities, its



cloying selfishness, its blinding formalities, will be forgotten. We shall rise above all these, as from a valley mist, into the light of God's own day, with a conception of His purposes to-us-ward, and a vision of the meaning and goal of all things, that shall beget in us that irresistible, divine dynamic, upon which the Almighty Creator of all things is depending for His own very omnipotence and glory.

W. E. ELLIOTT  
(Wallasey).

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#### DR. C. C. TORREY'S NEW TRANSLATION OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.

THE language of Jesus and his disciples was Aramaic. The oral traditions and original documents which preserved his words and discourses, and the earliest accounts of his life, were in that language. What relation do these primitive records bear to the Four Gospels, which have come down to us in Greek? This interesting question is discussed by Dr. C. C. Torrey, Professor of Semitic Languages in Yale University, in his recently published book: *The Four Gospels, A New Translation* (Hodder & Stoughton, 10s. 6d.)

In a scholarly essay which is appended to the translation, Dr. Torrey contends that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and John were composed in Aramaic on the basis of popular documents, widely circulated in Palestine, and that they were by others translated into Greek. Also, that Luke employed only Semitic sources, which he himself arranged and translated.

The evidence for this theory lies mainly in the peculiar character of the Greek of the Gospels, which differs from that of other parts of the New Testament, and is of no literary type, nor does it represent any spoken dialect. The language is Greek, but the idiom is Aramaic. This does not mean that the writers were ungrammatical, or imperfectly acquainted with vernacular Greek. Each of the four is master of an extensive and varied vocabulary; all sorts of terms are used with accuracy, each word yielding precisely the shade of meaning intended. This means, of course, that they were thoroughly familiar with the language they used. There can be no wide and exact use of words without a corresponding knowledge of idioms. Why then should these writers, who were manifestly quite at home in the use of Greek, deliberately adopt a Semitic idiom, and

write in an uncouth jargon, half Greek, half Aramaic? The natural assumption is that they were translating from Aramaic, and that they felt constrained by a sense of loyalty to the text of their documents, to produce a translation which, while it could be understood by Greek readers, would give a faithful rendering of every word and idiom of the original.

“Two of the evangelists have given us extensive specimens of Greek quite different in character from the mixed idiom of the Gospels. In Luke’s second treatise, *The Acts of the Apostles*, the awkward Aramaic Greek is continued from i, 1, to xv, 35, and then the language suddenly changes to vernacular Greek of excellent literary quality, which in the remaining thirteen chapters is free and flowing, with no noteworthy Semitisms. In the brief introduction to the Gospel also (i, 1-4) the pure idiom is utterly different from that which follows from verse 5 to the end of the book. It would seem that in the Gospel, and in the first part of Acts, Luke was under some sort of compulsion. When this was removed, he was free to write his own language.”

“The author of the Greek of the Fourth Gospel writes chapter 21 in a style which has no counterpart in the preceding twenty chapters. There are a few Semitisms, seemingly repeated from former passages in the book; but in all the four Gospels there is no portion, of anything like the extent of this, which for purity of idiom could be compared to it. The same writer composed the First Epistle of John in simple, transparent Greek.”

Dr. Torrey illustrates his argument that the Greek of the Gospels is translation-Greek by reference to the LXX, which exhibits essentially the same curious linguistic mixture; and quotes the criticisms of Conybeare and Stock in *Selections from the Septuagint*, that in the LXX “the genius of the Greek language is entirely ignored,” and that “the LXX is, on the whole, a literal translation, that is to say, it is only half a translation—the vocabulary has been changed, but seldom the construction. We have therefore to deal with a work of which the vocabulary is Greek and the syntax Hebrew.” The same can be said with equal truth of the language of the Gospels; with this difference, that (aside from the first two chapters of Luke and the quotations from the O.T. which are Hebrew) the syntax throughout is Aramaic. “These Greek-Semitic writings constitute a class of literature which has its own

definite characteristics. It does not at all represent the speech of the common people, but is a learned product with a long tradition. Bilingual in its essence, it very frequently needs bilingual interpretation."

The translation of the Gospels which Dr. Torrey offers is based upon these assumptions. "The attempt is made to give an English rendering which takes constant account of the original Semitic text, everywhere closely reproduced in the Greek. The invariably mechanical word-for-word method of turning Semitic into Greek, employed at this early time, combined with the ambiguities inherent in a script which presented only consonants, leaving the vowels to be conjectured, made a certain amount of error unavoidable. The causes of such error, and therefore the correct interpretation, can usually be seen without difficulty, when the Semitic equivalents of the Greek are carefully studied. The translation which is here offered follows the Greek closely, diverging from it only where it seems probable, or certain, from recognition of the underlying Semitic idiom, that the Greek rendering causes misunderstanding." The language of the English R.V. has been largely used. Archaic forms of speech are modernised, but "distinctly modern idioms and colloquialisms are studiously avoided." "Some circumlocutions belonging to the Semitic idiom, which are imitated in the Greek, may be avoided without loss; for example, instead of 'And he answered and said unto them' it seems often better to write simply 'He answered,' or even 'He said,' where the words spoken were not an answer.

The result is a vivid translation, in dignified English, easy to understand, and wonderfully illuminating in many passages of which exegetes have previously failed to give satisfactory explanation.

Reference may be made to a few of the most striking examples. According to the Greek of Luke xxii, 60, Peter, on being challenged as a follower of Jesus, replied: "Man, I know not what thou sayest." Retranslated into Aramaic, the sentence may then be rendered without a letter being changed: "I do not know the man of whom you speak."

Peter was not pretending to misunderstand; he was denying his Lord.

In Mark xiv, 38, and parallel passages, the R.V. rendering is "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." Dr. Torrey shows that the words in Aramaic corresponding to the

phrase "enter into temptation" represent a popular idiom meaning "fail, succumb, or yield under trial." He therefore renders the passage: "Awake, and pray not to fail in the trial." In the petition of the Lord's Prayer, where another form of the same verb is employed, he reads: "Let us not yield to temptation." A rendering which solves a long felt difficulty.

In Aramaic there is usually no interrogative particle; the interpretation being left to the reader. In several cases by rendering a declarative sentence interrogatively new light is thrown upon the passage, e.g. Luke xvi, 8, 9, is rendered: "Did the lord of the estate praise his faithless manager, because he had acted shrewdly? . . . and do I say to you, Gain friends for yourselves with base lucre, so that when it is gone, you may be received into the eternal abodes?" The question is evidently ironical.

The R.V. rendering of Mark ix, 49, 50, presents a medley of disconnected sentences which defy reasonable interpretation. Dr. Torrey translates: "Whatever would spoil is salted. Salt is good; but if it should lose its saltness, with what could you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and pass it on to your fellows."

Many other obscure passages are made clear by Dr. Torrey's renderings, e.g. John i, 51, "The angels of God ascending and descending in the service of the Son of Man." John xi, 10, "But he who walks by night stumbles, for in it there is no light." Luke vii, 47, "She whose many sins are forgiven will love much." Matthew v, 48, "Be therefore all-including (in your good will), even as your heavenly Father includes all." Compare Luke vi, 36, "Be warm-hearted, as your Father is warm-hearted."

In a few instances, where there seems to be good reason for amending the Greek text, Dr. Torrey's renderings are illuminating, e.g. John xi, 16, "Let us also go, to mourn with him." John xviii, 5, 6, "Now Judas, His betrayer, stood there with them; and when he said to them, I am he, he (Judas) drew back and fell to the ground."

Altogether there are about 250 new renderings of passages which Dr. Torrey believes to have been mistranslated. Notes are added at the end of the book explaining and justifying the emendations. Much other valuable information concerning the sources of the Gospels will be found in the essay to which reference has been made.

The book is one of outstanding importance, which every Minister should possess and study. It will certainly prove fruitful in suggestions for sermons, and will (as Prof. C. H. Dodds says) "confirm the belief that whatever may be the truth about the date and composition of our Greek Gospels, they preserve materials still bearing plainly the stamp of their origin in the environment of primitive, Aramaic-speaking, Palestinian Christianity, and therefore standing very near to the historical life and teaching they record."

W. G. ANDERSON.

(Weston-by-Weedon).

### FEAR AND THE GODS.

RELIGION is a growth; and the origin of religion is a legitimate field of enquiry. The attempt to understand the conditions of its development is by no means synonymous with the attempt to explain religion away. The validity of religious experience is another question.

Various definitions of religion have been offered. Speaking in general terms, religion may be defined, perhaps, as the service of the spiritual order. The central conception of religion is that of man as a spiritual being, and member of a spiritual order. And the development of religion consists, broadly, in the growing clarity and fuller content which this conception gains for man. Development here, however, is not merely a matter of the speculative intellect; its permanent basis is the emotional and practical response of human nature.

It is not possible to say, with any certainty, how religious development begins. The character and conditions of really primitive belief are not known. But it seems that we are on safe ground in asserting that the driving forces in the development of religion are the same throughout. With man's richer conception of the spiritual, the character of his emotional response undergoes a corresponding change; his feelings, that is to say, are refined and more completely organised. But the basis of man's religious response to the conception of the spiritual is not, itself, fundamentally changed.

For those who, like Lucretius, identify religion with superstition, the well-known line of Petronius, *primus in orbe fecit deos timor*, supplies a ready-made theory of the origin of religion. Now, without question, fear is a *vera causa* of religion in its earlier stages, but it is at no stage a sufficient reason.

The origin of religion cannot be explained quite so simply or rapidly. There are distinguishable several elements in primitive thought which are contributory to religion, as, for example, the conception of the separable quasi-material spirit, the imagery of myth and creation-story, the sense of the mysterious and the dreadful, the fear of the dead. But none of these elements is itself a religion. They constitute the *materia divina* of the primitive mind, and from their combination a true religion may arise.

The "fear theory" of the origin of religion is, however, not without some truth. The movement by which the materials of religion are brought together seems, normally, to follow a line of development connected with the fear of the dead. A fear of the dead is widespread amongst primitive peoples. It is commonly expressed in the abandonment of the corpse and place of death, and the destruction of the personal belongings of the deceased. The dead are feared, because of the terror associated with death. But the dead are also revered and loved, because of the warm human relations which existed in life. The kindlier feelings tend to predominate, until fear is subdued into awe, and emotion prompts to acts of homage and devotion. Gifts are made to the dead—food and raiment. Thus, on an emotional basis, a belief is erected—a belief that the dead are there, and are gratified by gifts. The cult of the dead acquires a definite meaning and purpose. This, according to the evidence available, is the normal form of that which may fairly be called religious belief and practice in early society.

There may also take place a parallel development of a fear and regard for natural objects. These may be treated as alive, and so come to be thought of as alive. Thus a belief in spiritual beings may be engendered—spiritual beings whose goodwill must be gained if man is to be safe.

These are the two forms of true cult which are prevalent among the simplest peoples. We are here at the stage of the animistic conception of spirit. Animism may be regarded as the first definite form of religion.

It must be granted that fear is a powerful factor operative in the animistic stage of religion; but it must also be granted that fear does not operate alone. Gratitude as well as fear, love as well as awe, hope as well as anxiety, are expressed in the natural actions which give rise, in the mental twilight of primitive thought, to the confused notion of spirit.

A step forward is made when religion recognises gods who stand above the animate spirit. The distinction between a spirit and a god is not easily drawn. A god, however, may be distinguished from a spirit as being endowed with a distinct personality; he is the object of a cult as exercising superhuman functions in nature or in human life. Spirits become gods by various transitional processes. The greater gods are conceived as human—distinct from that which they control and out of which the conception of them is evolved. Often traces of their descent cling to them. The hawk-headed and ibis-headed gods of Egypt are good examples. But with the advance of religion, the gods become more distinctively human; and in becoming human, they also become superhuman. They are invested with greater powers, with longer life, perhaps they are held to be immortal.

We reach, here, the beginning of idealism. This is the final condition which the spirit must fulfil in order to become a god. The gods of Polytheism are great gods; they control large provinces of nature, or they are national gods, or they preside over one or more of the main human functions. It is obvious that other factors besides that of fear are at work in the emergence of the gods of Polytheism. The conceptions which underlie the gods of Polytheism contain the rudiments of a higher unity; they constitute an approach to order in the religious basis of life. The tendency finds increasing expression in the anthropomorphizing genealogies and hierarchies by which the many gods are brought into subjection to one supreme god and ruler of all.

The "fear theory" is inadequate to account for the origin of religion. It rests upon a partial view. It is not supported by the facts of religious development. It is not psychologically intelligible that the motive of fear should work in abstraction from other motives; the element of fear must be connected with elements derived from the active or conative side of consciousness. Religion implies a positive as well as a negative attitude; and the available evidence concerning the early development of religion reflects a feeling after unity, an outreaching endeavour towards a spiritual ideal. The significance of fear in the primitive religious response bears a close relation to the low intellectual level attained: with intellectual advance, the element of fear falls into the background.

Religion has a history; religion is a growth. But religion, on the practical side of its convictions, like morality, is more concerned with ends than with beginnings. In any event, the origin of religion has nothing to do with the validity of religion. The validity of religious truths lies in their ability to satisfy the religious consciousness of men in the quest for life's meaning and purpose. The religious interpretation of life is relative to the general level of thought. As the scope of thought widens, and the differentiation of its categories takes place, the conception of the spiritual becomes increasingly refined. The spirits of animism give way before the gods of polytheism, and the gods of polytheism give way before the one God of monotheism. The movement throughout is towards unity and the conception of God as pure spirit; the incarnation of all that is understood of the spiritual order. The basis of religious conviction, therefore, is found in the adequacy of religious truth to answer the desires of men, at each stage of intellectual enlightenment, in the sphere of spiritual values and spiritual interests. So that, finally, religious conviction is a matter of the experience of the individual, and, as such, it is normally remote from the question of the origin of religion.

A. G. HILL,  
(Watford).

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### THE ESSENTIALS OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP.

OUR acceptance of Christian Discipleship must be through the Cross of Christ, first in its Redemptive Power, by which we receive the Gift of Eternal Life and are born into the Spiritual Kingdom, and then through the experience of that Cross in the development of Christian character. As sinners we are invited to the Cross of Christ for Salvation, as Disciples we are bidden to take up that Cross and make it our own. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me," Matthew xvi, 24.

Christian Discipleship then implies such a personal association with the Cross of Christ on my part as to make that cross my own, not only as something which I must bear, but that upon which "I have been crucified with Christ." Salvation is "without money and without price," but our Lord never ceased to emphasise the *cost* of Discipleship. He who accepts Christ as Saviour must also accept His conditions of Discipleship.



The New Testament interpretation of Discipleship as found in the teaching of Jesus in the Gospels is confirmed by the teaching of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles. We are to "follow His steps." We are to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ."

The Essentials of Christian Discipleship are discovered through a study of Christ's objective in calling His Disciples; that objective is to create a Body of Living Witnesses in union with Himself as their Head, through whom He may reach the utmost parts of the earth with His Gospel of Redemption. Always the method seems to be to reach the multitude through His Disciples. The Feeding of the Five Thousand serves to illustrate this method. "He gave the loaves to His Disciples and the Disciples to the multitude," Matthew xiv, 19. Discipleship implies a definite act of consecration to Jesus Christ as Lord, a response to His call to sacrifice and service—a constraint of love on the part of those who have counted the cost. Our Lord antagonises the popular notions, superficial motives and mistaken ideas of Christian Discipleship, and demands certain essentials for the discharge of so high a responsibility.

What then are the Essentials of Christian Discipleship?

1. The Leadership of an External Authority. A Disciple is a Follower.
2. The Loyalty of a Personal Attraction. A Disciple is a Friend.
3. The Fellowship of a Corporate Experience. A Disciple is a Friend of every other Disciple.

*First.*—Discipleship and the Finding of Life.

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it," Matthew xvi, 25. The Self-Centred Life may be usual but it is not normal. We are none of us sufficient of ourselves. Our interdependence upon one another is only part of the solution. We each and we all need God, hence Christian Discipleship is always in the nature of a discovery. "We have found Him" represents the conscious or unconscious quest of the awakened Soul. To find Christ is to find Life. Discipleship is conversion of so radical a nature as to change the very springs of our being. It is a New Creation. We are no longer self centred but Christ centred. It is "No longer I but Christ."

Christian Discipleship is the answer to the Soul's quest:  
(1) for an adequate Authority which is at once final yet pro-

gressive; (2) for an inward Experience which is at once satisfying yet alluring; (3) for a Revelation of God and an Interpretation of the Universe which is at once an Assurance and an Inspiration, a Direction and a Dynamic. "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." "Jesus saith . . . Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known Me? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." The Faith which responds to Christ's command "Follow Me" has found the answer to the Soul's demand for Leadership.

Christian Discipleship is a Discovery and a Destination. To answer Christ's Call to Discipleship is the end of a quest and the beginning of an adventure. It is to arrive and rest—to begin and to dare.

*Second.*—Christian Discipleship and the Fulfilment of Life. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Life can only be fulfilled through death. The attraction of the Person of Christ began in the wonder of His Cross. The Marks of the Lamb were there before the Offering was made on Golgotha. Intelligible to the heart though not understood by the mind—the Message of the Forerunner "Look, there is God's Lamb" won the first Disciples. The expectation of Faith was evidently in the direction of the Perfect Sacrifice. Nothing less could satisfy the longing of the ages. Nothing less would have fulfilled the Promises of God. The cry of the whole human family is "Where is the Lamb for a Burnt Offering?" The wood and the fire are nothing without the Lamb. Christian Discipleship begins with the attraction which the Cross of Christ and the Christ of the Cross have for us. "I if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto Me."

The second word of Discipleship is Loyalty born of Love. "The Son of God Who loved me and gave Himself for me." The grip which Christ has on our lives is due to the wounds in His Hands. "By His stripes we are healed."

The Fulfilment of Life for the Christian is bound up with:—

(a) His Devotion to Christ as the Risen Lord. The Challenge to Sacrifice and to Service comes to us on the Easter side of the Cross. "Lovest thou Me?" "Feed My sheep." The Call is renewed by the old Lake but with new meaning in the Light of the Risen Redeemer. It is now Imperious—Sacrificial—Sovereign and more testingly personal and individual than ever. "What is that to thee? Follow thou Me."

(b) The Vision of His Cross prepares us for our own, "and whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My Disciple," Luke xiv, 27. It is the vocation of the Christian Disciple to bear his own cross—not by compulsion but devotion. Discipleship is Discipline. We are now face to face with out antagonisms—the World, the Flesh and the Devil. The fulfilment of life always comes through death and our Spiritual education is not in theory but in practice. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed . . . perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. "For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh," 2 Cor. iv, 8-11.

The Doctrines of Grace are the outcome of the Experience of the Saints. In their distress they discovered God "in other forms" and always more than equal to the occasion. We must tread the road for ourselves if these Doctrines are to become experimental. "We are more than conquerors" is the Battle Song of the Church. No man can learn *that* song but those "who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth."

(c) The Fulfilment of the Christian Life is Likeness to Christ. "I shall be satisfied when I awake with His Likeness." The end of Discipline is Transfiguration.

The central fact of Discipleship is not confession or service—but the fact that we are "not our own" but "His Own." Jesus Christ chooses His Disciples that they may be with Him—here on the Battlefield—hereafter, in His Kingdom. "Then, "we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is."

*Third.*—Christian Discipleship and the Fellowship of Life. Christian Discipleship is peculiarly individual, yet essentially social. Isolation is fatal to Reason—it is foreign to Christianity. The Fundamental Law of Christian Discipleship is Friendship. "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." Christ sets the seal of His Presence upon the Fellowship of His Disciples. Every Disciple of Christ has an instinct for discovering other Disciples without a formal introduction.

Our relationship to our Lord is personal and individual. Our fellowship demands the Unity of the Body. Our Service for Christ is corporate action. "We then as workers together

with God." The Lord's Supper is the visible presentation of the invisible and spiritual unity of all the redeemed. "The assembling of ourselves together" is perfectly natural to us who are one in experience and in Grace.

Christian Discipleship creates the Fellowship it demands, in the common experience of the Redeemed. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God."

A. J. KELLAM

(Bootle).

#### THE MINISTER'S BOOKSHELF.

DURING the recent years there has been a spate of books on Psychology, many of them written by those who have but a passing acquaintance with this the newest of the sciences. But when an acknowledged expert like Dr. William Brown issues a book on this important subject it is a publishing event not to be passed over. Dr. Brown's latest work is *Psychology and Psychotherapy* (Edward Arnold, 12s. 6d.), and those who are familiar with his previous books, such as *Suggestion and Mental Analysis* and *Mind and Personality*, will know what to expect. Dr. Brown is not simply an academic psychologist; he is a physician and a philosopher as well. He believes that a sound working knowledge of the human mind is an essential part of the equipment of all educated people—it is certainly to be included in the equipment of the minister. Dr. Brown covers a good deal of ground already familiar to students of psychology, but he writes with vigour and insight and with the knowledge of the expert; and all through he illustrates the various topics from his own extensive experience as a psychotherapist. Especially interesting is his treatment of psychology in relation to war and alcoholism and the problems of adolescence. Dr. Brown regards psychology as a very important science, but he does not make the mistake of some of regarding the psychologist as the man "with whom wisdom will die." He stresses the fact that man is a spiritual being and that "ultimately the forces at work in the patient's mind are spiritual forces." There are important and suggestive chapters on "Suggestion, Hypnotism and Faith," "The Psychology of Personal Influence," and "Psychical Research: The Eternal Values." It is really a great book and should not be missed by any who seek to understand both human nature and some of the problems of to-day.

Another of our great psychologists has recently added to the number of his works. Dr. William McDougall has collected a number of scattered essays into one volume under the title of *Religion and Sciences of Life* (Methuen, 8s. 6d.). It is superfluous to praise Dr. McDougall's writings, since everything he writes is so well worth reading. But this book has a peculiar interest for ministers and students of religion. Three or four years ago the American Behaviourists were sneering "Dr. McDougall returns to religion." Dr. McDougall is not ashamed of the fact that he has found his way out of his earlier agnosticism to a "position more favourable to religion"; and in the opening essay of this book he gives us both a record and a justification of "a sceptic's progress" towards religion. The fifteen essays, though in a sense miscellaneous, have one connecting thread, viz. the thought of man's place in the universe; and the various topics discussed fall under the four heads of religion, evolution, psychical research and eugenic reform. The chapters on "Mechanism, Purpose, and the New Freedom," "The Need for Psychical Research," "World Chaos—the Responsibility of Science as Cause and Cure," and the "Ethics of Nationalism" are particularly valuable; but the whole book is a mental tonic, an encouragement to faith in God and man, and a treasure-house of solid thinking.

It is said that often "knowledge comes but wisdom lingers," but this does not apply to Dr. Herbert Gray. He is a wise, as well as a learned, man; and he also knows how to write about intimate things in a plain, yet dignified, manner. His latest book is *About People* (Student Christian Movement Press, 3s. 6d.) and it is written out of his wide and deep experience both as a minister and as a counsellor of souls. In this book he writes on the phases and difficulties of the religious life, and on sex and some of its problems, and he has a final short section addressed specially to ministers. As a guide, philosopher and friend, Dr. Gray is in the first class. In this book he keeps close to life, and considers some of the most pressing problems and difficulties of ordinary people. The chapters are short and the treatment concise, but Dr. Gray knows how to get to the heart of a problem in very short time, and what he says is both wise and beautiful. It is a book to read ourselves and to recommend to others. There will be many people who will thank God for it.

Dr. W. Adams Brown is known to us all as an erudite and competent theologian. For more than forty years he has been teaching theology to successive batches of students and in addition has played a leading part in American Church life. His books, such as *Christian Theology in Outline*, *Beliefs that Matter*, *The Essence of Christianity* and *Pathways to Certainty*, are to be found in most manse libraries. His most recent book, *God at Work* (Student Christian Movement Press, 8s. 6d.) is a fitting successor to its predecessors, and was chosen as the monthly selection of the American Religious Book Club. The book falls into four parts. The first deals with the idea of the supernatural, its relation to religion, and its place in human life. The second considers the life of faith, its basis in the nature of man, and the facts which make faith difficult. The third is concerned with the values that faith finds in God, especially mystery and sufficiency. The last section is given over to a consideration of the Protestant ideal of sainthood and of the helps in the cultivation of the saintly life. All through the idea of the miraculous and the supernatural shines out, while the treatment of every topic is bold, sane and understandable. The value of this excellent volume is enhanced by a very suggestive bibliographical appendix.

Is the world a soulless mechanism? Is it the outcome of blind, purposeless chance? Is the materialistic conception of the universe the true interpretation? These are the questions that are dealt with by the authors of a very imposing symposium entitled *The Great Design* (Duckworth, 8s. 6d.), edited by Frances Thompson. The contributors include some of the best-known men of science to-day and is an appropriate rejoinder to the secularists who are so fond of asserting that all men of science are atheists. There are fourteen writers in all. Sir J. Arthur Thompson contributes the introduction and the closing chapter on "The Wonder of Life." Prof. C. Lloyd Morgan writes on "The Ascent of Mind," Dr. E. W. MacBride on "The Oneness and Uniqueness of Life," Sir Oliver Lodge on "Design and Purpose in the Universe," Sir Francis Young-husband on "The Mystery of Nature," and Prof. Hans Driesch on "The Breakdown of Materialism." The other writers are perhaps not so well known to the general public, but each one has made a worthy contribution to a volume of unusual interest. The reading of science here offered shows it as a "pedagogue"

leading men to God," and we cannot conceive any stronger presentation of the case for a rational universe. I should not be surprised to discover that this book eventually proves a "publisher's boon"; it will certainly be a boon to intelligent people who are seriously concerned with the alleged conflict between science and religion.

Another symposium of unusual interest is *Orthodoxy Sees it Through* (Barker, 8s. 6d.) edited by Sidney Dark. It is specifically concerned with the new trends of thought in so many departments at the present time, and seeks to show how traditional Christian teaching meets the challenge which these new trends have flung down to it. There are nine writers in all, and every one of them is either a Roman Catholic or an Anglican. Arnold Lunn (who has recently "gone over to Rome") writes on "Orthodoxy and the New Religions," Father D'Arcy on "Orthodoxy and the New Morality," Dr. Kirk on "Orthodoxy and the New Psychology." There are other chapters dealing with the New Economics, the New Theories of the Universe, the New Societies, the New Music, the New History, and the New Novel. There is a good deal of vigorous writing in this volume; and the writers are not afraid to carry the war into the enemies' camp. They are not at all ashamed of their orthodoxy, and for the most part make out a very good case for their own position. Even those who feel that they cannot go all the way with the writers will appreciate their trenchant treatment of the various aspects of contemporary thought. It will certainly be recognised that the authors have something vital to say to an age "where novelty has become a fetish and where people are constantly running after something new and strange."

Our own Publication Department has just issued *An Adventure for God* (paper covers, 1s., and cloth boards, 2s.) by "Rekabas." It is the story of five of our younger ministers who have been engaging in evangelistic work in their own county of Essex. The story is certainly well told, and the book makes very interesting reading. It should prove a great help in connection with the Discipleship Campaign. The spirit and some of the technique of the Oxford Group Movement are clearly indicated throughout the book.

The Carey Press has just issued at 3d. an outline study of the life of *William Carey* by Gwenyth Hubble and Ernest A. Payne. It is exceedingly well done and should be very useful in preparation for the Carey Centenary Celebrations in the autumn.

One of our most esteemed Welsh ministers, the Rev. E. K. Jones, of Cefnmawr, has published *The Story of Education in a Welsh Border Parish* (Smith, 2s.), and the book is already enjoying the prestige of a "second edition." Despite its entire local colour, the story as Mr. Jones tells it should prove of real interest to all who are concerned with education; and what minister is not?

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JOHN PITTS.