

DR. D. MARTYN LLOYD-JONES (1899-1981): A PERSONAL APPRECIATION

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PART 1¹

On St. David's Day, Sunday morning, March 1, 1981 as Big Ben chimed 7:30 in the City of Westminster, London, Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, the minister of Westminster Chapel for thirty years, went to be with his Lord. His death marked the end of an era. Under God, "the Doctor," as he was affectionately known, had become the catalyst that released again the mighty forces of Reformation truth in Great Britain.

Dr. Lloyd-Jones was always extremely reluctant to reveal details of his personal life to people. Not one ray of the glory of his Saviour must be bent to shine upon himself.² This writer knows little of his early life and upbringing in his native South Wales. At the age of ten, he was thrown through the window of his burning home and was caught by some men in the street below. How he was converted to the Lord, and at what time in his life I do not know. In his Lectures given at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, U.S.A. in the Spring of 1969, he mentioned that prior to his entrance into church membership he had never heard a truly convincing evangelistic sermon. "I was received into the church because I could give the right answers to various set questions; but I was never questioned in an experimental sense."³

MEDICAL TRAINING

As a medical doctor — M.D., M.R.C.P. — Lloyd-Jones had shown outstanding ability and promise. He appeared to be on the edge of a distinguished medical career. He served as First Assistant Physician to Lord Horder (the Physician to Queen Mary, King George V and Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother) at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. On January 8, 1927 he was married in London to another practitioner of medicine Dr. Bethan Phillips. Undoubtedly this medical training gave a unique cast to his entire ministry. However, like many gifted preachers and pastors before him, the Doctor never took any formal theological training. Nevertheless, his later contributions to the Christian Medical Fellowship, a section of the Graduate Fellowship of Inter-Varsity, demonstrated his lifelong concern to supply *biblical* medicine for the salvation needs of man. In *Conversions: Psychological and Spiritual* (1959), he drew on his medical knowledge to refute a behaviouristic "explanation" of Christian conversion by the British psychiatrist, Dr. William Sargent. In particular his insight into the complex interaction at work in the mental, physical and spiritual make-up of man enabled him to give a most helpful diagnosis and pastoral remedy for spiritual depression in the sermons later published as *Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Cure* (1965).

EARLY MINISTRY: SOUTH WALES

He and his wife went from London to serve the Lord in Port Talbot, South Wales — a sprawling industrial dockland area suffering the effects of high unemployment. Inducted as minister of The Forward Movement Church, Port Talbot on February 3, 1927, Dr. Lloyd-Jones heralded the Pauline emphasis of his ministry in the first sermon preached to his people: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2). The Welsh steel workers, miners and dockers quickly recognized that God had sent them another in the mighty tradition of Welsh Calvinistic Methodists such as Daniel Rowland and Howell Harris — preachers who set men on fire for God. After eleven and a half years under his ministry, the 93 original members had so set Port Talbot ablaze with the gospel that some 530 souls were in membership when Dr. and Mrs. Lloyd-Jones left in 1938.

CALL TO WESTMINSTER CHAPEL

In September, 1938, Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister,

stepped off his plane from his ignominious talks in Munich with Hitler, clutching his worthless scrap of paper, and exultantly cried "I believe it is peace for our time." In that same month a call came from Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, the minister of Westminster Chapel in the historic City of Westminster, to Dr. Lloyd-Jones: "Why not come and join me? We will share the ministry."⁴ In this seemingly casual way, there began a London ministry which really brought the permanent peace of the gospel to countless men, women and children who lived in the London Blitz. Dr. Lloyd-Jones confidently assured Dr. Morgan, "this Chapel will not be bombed."⁵ Though the Chapel lost half its roof during a German bomb attack in 1944, the building stood intact at the end of the war.

The ministries of the two men were very dissimilar. Dr. Lloyd-Jones joined Campbell Morgan as Associate Minister in 1938, and succeeded him as the Minister of Westminster Chapel in 1943. Dr. Campbell Morgan was a gifted expositor whose strength lay in his masterly panoramic grasp of whole sweeps of Scripture. One author has said that "the singular glory of Dr. Morgan's work is its non-theological nature in the systematic sense." Overall, Morgan's sermons reflect an Arminian, pre-millennial and a dispensational theology. Morgan preached mainly in the Gospels (the Corinthians and Hebrews expositions were the exceptions in his N.T. expositions). In marked contrast, Lloyd-Jones' preaching, while it kept closely to a precise exposition of the text, continually tuned in to the great Reformed systematic theology of Luther and especially that of Calvin and his Puritan successors. Few of us currently enjoying the fruits of this revival of Reformation truth can really appreciate the debt we owe to this man. He unswervingly proclaimed the sovereign grace of a warm and thrilling Calvinism at a time when many either believed or wished that Calvinism were dead. Under his ministry, Westminster Chapel became a nuclear power station from which radiated the divine energy of Pauline theology. The effect of his consistent, heart-warming and incisive exposition of the Word of God was to restore men's faith in the all-sufficiency of Holy Scripture. It was not an academic Calvinism that had this catalytic effect. Once, speaking of the American Puritan preacher, Jonathan Edwards, the chief influence on his own ministerial life, the Doctor aptly characterized for us the form his own ministry took. "You must have the theology," he said, "but it must be theology on fire. There must be warmth as well as light."⁶

PREACHING: THE FIRE IN HIS BONES

We must turn now to what is absolutely central to a true understanding of the life and ministry of Dr. Lloyd-Jones — his preaching. The electrifying stimulus for his preaching was provided by Jonathan Edwards. Finding one day in 1929 the two volumes of Edwards' *Complete Works* in John Evans' Cardiff bookshop made him feel, he said, "like the man in our Lord's parable who found a pearl of great price. Their influence upon me I cannot put into words."⁷ Regretfully, he tells us, "I have to put him (Edwards) ahead of Daniel Rowlands and George Whitefield. Indeed I am tempted, perhaps foolishly, to compare the Puritans to the Alps, Luther and Calvin to the Himalayas, and Jonathan Edwards to Mount Everest!"⁸

Dr. Lloyd-Jones clearly distinguished preaching from lecturing. "The first and primary object of preaching is not only to give information. It is, as Edwards says, to produce an impression. It is the impression at the time that matters, even more than what you can remember subsequently." The academic accumulation of biblical knowledge was not the chief benefit to one listening to preaching. "The business of preaching is to make such knowledge *live*."⁹ If one were simply seeking information, one could always read books and get the information from them. Anything that enabled men to achieve the slightest degree of detachment from the preaching must go. His strong opposition to note-taking while he was preaching was due to this belief that nothing must come between the hearer and the kindling lightning flashes from the Holy Spirit, preacher, listener. This meant that you could never replace the immediacy of preaching with the detached act of reading sermons in cold print. He quotes approvingly Whitefield's reply to someone who asked permission to publish one of his sermons: "I have no objection if you will print the lightning, thunder and rainbow with it."¹⁰ I remember one Sunday evening when the Doctor was preaching to a packed congregation. To the amazement of all, two Jehovah's Witnesses, who had come into the Chapel, began to heckle him. He continued preaching as if nothing had happened, and then, suddenly, with his finger pointing directly at them, he let loose a piercing arrow from the Scripture text he was preaching, saying, "And this applies to you!" The two of them shrivelled up in their seats and not a murmur was heard from them for the rest of the evening.

The convicting power of his ministry was so evident that many Christians felt, almost presumptuously, that if you could only get

unbelievers in to hear the Gospel they would certainly be converted! There was never any of that hesitating reluctance to bring unbelievers, out of fear that the preacher might be riding one of his hobby horses, or speaking speculatively on some prophecy. My own experience must have been similar to that of many others. My brother Christopher had “casually” invited me a meeting one Friday night after I had spent the day purchasing books in London for the library of Maidstone College of Art where I was the Librarian. Much to my annoyance, I found myself with Christopher at 6:25 p.m. outside Westminster Chapel. Since I had not enquired what the meeting was, I consoled myself with the thought that I had endured the compulsory church parades in the British Army and the vague moralistic lectures of the chaplains I had encountered — one hour more could be endured! What did amaze me, as I went up the steps into the Chapel, was the sight of over 1,000 people, many of whom had come straight from work, all seated, waiting expectantly to hear the Word of God. A diminutive, compact figure, wearing a black Geneva gown, entered the pulpit. Although I now remember nothing of the exposition of Romans 7 that followed, one thing I shall never forget. This man not only believed what he preached, but he spoke with such an authority that I knew unmistakably that what I had heard before from the liberal preachers in the Methodist Church of my childhood was not the Truth. Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 14:24-25, about the unbeliever’s experience on coming into the Church were a living reality here: “He is convinced of all, he is judged of all; and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.”

In view of the church-going habits of people in England, the Doctor deliberately preached evangelistic sermons each Sunday evening. I have often wished that these sermons were available to the general public. Very often his introduction would seize upon some topic of current debate, for example, Bishop Robinson’s *Honest to God* attack on supernatural Christianity. The listener would be hooked into the debate by a series of questions to which he would soon find himself desiring answers. These were immediately supplied as the hearer was drawn directly into the exposition of the Scripture passage. On one occasion, the Doctor was preaching in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. A student-friend of mine who had a Ph.D. in mathematics from Temple University, Philadelphia, sat tensely on the edge of his seat, following as the

preacher ascended the ladder of Paul's logic in Romans. This unemotional mathematician, stirred to the depths by the preaching which was climaxed and driven home by the singing of the final hymn, tore out the page from the hymnbook (inserting a \$5 bill to pay for a new one!) and strode out into the night. Afterwards he told me that he had always thought the gospel was like that, but that he had never heard it preached in that way before. "As he was preaching," he told me, "he said, 'Ah, yes, but — and then he answered the but, until I had no buts left.'"

A feature of his preaching, especially his evangelistic preaching, was his custom of presenting both the positive and negative implications of a text. You could very soon tell on which side of the fence you stood — believer or unbeliever — as the characteristics of each were delineated. Once, the Doctor had given the typical unbeliever's arguments for unbelief, and then, from Scripture, had proceeded to demolish them. My younger brother Eddie, then unconverted, listed all of those negative arguments for unbelief on a sheet of paper, and tucked it into the side of my mother's dressing table mirror, clearly indicating — "that's what I believe!" The bold directness of his preaching was one of the first things that hit you. Quotations from other men's works rarely appeared in his sermons because he believed that these made preaching too literary. Preaching, for him, was not an unreal theatrical performance that could be viewed, tasted and appreciated from the vantage point of a spectator. As you listened to his exposure of the pervasive depravity of human nature there would flash into your soul one of his laser-like thrusts that penetrated into the very depths of your being. "One sinner smashes every human philosophy" was one such thrust. In one sentence, he reveals the Achilles heel of all optimistic humanistic philosophy from Greek philosophy to the nihilistic philosophies of our day.

His preaching brought men face to face with the glory of God. You left with your heart uplifted in adoration and praise. He exhorted worshippers, "Let us not stop at any benefit we may have had, and not even with the highest experiences we may have enjoyed. Let us seek to know more and more of the glory of God. That is what leads always to a true experience. We need to know the majesty of God, the sovereignty of God, and to feel a sense of awe and of wonder. Do we know this? Is there in our churches a sense of wonder and amazement?"¹¹ Such a lifting up of the glory of Christ awoke the congregation to a keen expectation of blessing whenever the gospel was preached. This sense of expectation was so palpable on many of the occasions that I heard

him preach that one hardly dared to breathe for fear of missing a word. Speaking in 1965 at the Centennial of Westminster Chapel, he said: "We in our measure know something of the feeling of the Psalmist when he was prevented from going to the house of God! — Oh, how his soul longed to be there with the people of God! Why? Well, 'Grace and Glory' had been manifested there, and he wanted to be with them. That is the wonderful thing about meeting in a place like this! You never know when God is going to be here in some unusual power. That is why I have never understood Christian people who think that they can afford to miss a single service. You may miss the greatest thing in your whole life. You never know."¹² His heart passionately sought after this manifestation of the glory of God. He longed to see the fire descend upon the altar of his preaching — that heavenly unction that convinces all men that God is in the midst of His people — and that to bless. At times — often toward the end of a sermon, he seemed to be hovering, waiting for something. Sometimes the wind of the Spirit would come sweep us and him aloft, and we would mount with wings like eagles into the awesome and felt presence of God.

Lloyd-Jones' method of preaching was the apostolic one of exposition. Besides his Friday night Romans series (Romans 1:1 — Romans 14:17) which he delivered from October 1955 to March 1968, he expounded to my knowledge, Habakkuk, Psalm 73, the Sermon on the Mount, Ephesians, the majority of Philippians and 2 Peter. For him, expository preaching was not just an excuse for presenting a series of topical sermons as he proceeded to go through a book. He aimed at bringing out the particularity of each text he expounded, thus ensuring that the hearer was ever refreshed as each new facet of Scripture truth emerged. He once said that the best way to expound the Scriptures was to keep on asking questions. He had that rare gift of asking the right questions. In typical Puritan fashion, however, the Doctor was never content with simply explaining Scripture. His applications covered a multitude of needs. Many, many times, people went to the service with a particular problem, only to have the solution supplied in the preaching. For him, preaching, not counselling was the heart of the ministry. "The preacher does not need to know these particular detailed facts about the people because he knows that there is this common general need... He knows that all the people in front of him are suffering from the same disease which is sin — every one of them."¹³ He took particular delight in the fact that children could understand his preaching. He

did not believe in separate "Junior Churches" for children. His winsome way with children on the personal level was beautifully demonstrated one day when he passed my brother Eddie who was sitting by the winding staircase that led to the prayer meeting room. "Who was 'sitting at the receipt of custom'?" he asked him. On receiving the correct answer, "Matthew, Sir," he rewarded him with half a crown.

THE PASTOR'S HEART

Our reference to the centrality of preaching in his ministry should not lead the reader to deduce that the pastoral side of his ministry was lacking. Many have glibly repeated the criticism that Westminster Chapel under his ministry was just a preaching centre. That was really very far from the truth. In the pulpit announcements, and in the cards placed in each pew, the invitation was extended: "Dr. Lloyd-Jones will be glad to see any members of the congregation and visitors at the close of Public Worship in the Minister's Vestry." After each of the services on Friday night and on Sunday, his waiting room resembled the full waiting room of a medical clinic, as men and women from all walks of life, and in various spiritual conditions, waited to pour out their hearts to him. Who can forget the contrast? There in the pulpit he looked like a flaming Old Testament prophet. Here in his vestry, it was like drawing up a chair to a warm fireside. His face wreathed in a smile of welcome, the Doctor would put you at your ease, and then would apply the balm of Gilead. His parting prayer left you with the consciousness of being seated in the heavenlies with Christ. Beyond his vestry, his pastoral care was extended by means of a worldwide ministry by correspondence. Letters came to him from ministers seeking his counsel on difficult pastoral problems. Others wrote seeking help to initiate similar conferences to the annual Puritan (later Westminster) Conferences.

From Westminster, under his leadership, and that of his deacons, there went out each Sunday, a host of young men to preach the gospel in churches, missions and chapels in London and other parts of the United Kingdom. The scriptural pattern of discerning gifts being exercised by various individuals in the local church was followed. The young men were encouraged to read the Scriptures and lead in prayer at the two Sunday prayer meetings before the public worship. The Doctor was usually present at the evening prayer meeting. He also met for prayer before the services with his deacons. I recall one of them

telling me of an American — John — who became an unofficial visitor to these prayer meetings, too. The deacons raised their eyebrows a little at this, but did nothing to prevent him. “We all felt rebuked at the Doctor’s response,” my deacon friend told me, “when one day John announced — ‘This is my last Sunday at the Chapel. I am going back to the States to do Christian broadcasting’.” The Doctor looked up and said quietly, “We’ll miss you John. May God bless you.”

FELLOWSHIP AT THE CHAPEL

Westminster Chapel is situated in one of those places that most modern church planners would deprecate. It is located in the middle of government and commercial office buildings on Buckingham Gate. On the other side of the street are the walls of Wellington Barracks. A short walk away is Buckingham Palace, the home of the British Monarchy. Close by on the Thames Embankment are the Houses of Parliament. Inevitably, the vast majority of the congregation must come from areas quite distant from the Chapel. The efforts to promote a lively fellowship with such unpromising surroundings ought to be noted. Many members and friends brought food up to the Chapel so as to spend the whole Sunday there. So long as the Doctor didn’t go too far beyond his normal preaching time, their roast potatoes in the Chapel ovens were safe! In good weather, some would have picnic lunches in nearby St. James Park, while discussing the morning sermon. Sunday afternoons would be filled with the study of God’s Word. At 3 p.m. the Church would gather in the School Halls for the Children’s Sunday School, the Young People’s Bible Class, and the Women’s Bible Class led by Mrs. Lloyd-Jones. There was also Bible Study with discussion in the Institute Hall, often led by the Associate Minister. Once a month this class would vote on a topic they would like to examine, for example, capital punishment. Whoever spoke was required to justify his or her points from Scripture. The biblical fellowship nurtured at the Chapel generated a whole host of Bible Studies in the homes of Westminster Chapeliens. The annual “At Home” gatherings at the Chapel enabled the Doctor and his wife and two daughters, Elizabeth and Ann, to have fellowship with the members of the church, associate members, and the “Friends of Westminster Chapel.” These occurred in September, after their vacations. The Doctor’s reports of the “vacations” were invariably accounts of the prevailing spiritual conditions and his own extensive preaching whether in

rural England, Greece, the U.S.A. and Canada, or some other country! Mrs. Lloyd-Jones' warm and unobtrusive support of the Doctor's ministry encouraged all that knew her. Her shared interest with the Doctor in the promotion of true biblical fellowship led her to translate from her native Welsh, *The Experience Meeting* (1973) — an introduction to the Welsh Societies of the Evangelical Awakening by the eighteenth century Welsh hymn-writer and preacher, William Williams.

PART 2¹⁴

AGENCIES FOR REFORMATION

What were the agencies under God by which the Doctor and others were stimulated and nourished in the theology of the Reformers and the Puritans? He himself said that the foundational part was played by the Evangelical Library. In 1939, Mr. Geoffrey Williams, the founder of the Library (1931) was introduced to the Doctor, who immediately grasped the significance of this treasure house of Reformation and Puritan literature, and urged the removal of its 15 tons of books from Beddington, Surrey to London. Doctor Lloyd-Jones writing to Mr. Williams at the time, exulted, "Having spent some two and a half hours inspecting the contents, I felt that I was in the precise position of the Queen of Sheba on the occasion of her visit to Solomon."¹⁵ His reading of church history proved a great source of refreshment and encouragement to him: "We have been called to live through this barren, arid era in which we find ourselves. Well, the thing that keeps me going so often is to look back and see these men who have gone before us, who lived in days sometimes that were even worse, but God sustained them and they were doing more than they knew." He urged ministers and students to read Christian biography to keep that necessary theological balance. "I am sure that it will stimulate you, it will search you and humble you." Yet there was, as always, the essential caution: "We must therefore be very careful not to follow slavishly anything that has been taught in the past. We are as responsible to God as the Reformers were, and it is our business to interpret Scripture, as much as it was their duty to do so. We are not merely to be gramophone records of anyone who has lived in the past however august he may have been."¹⁶ How many mistakes in our current Reformed and Evangelical controversies would have been avoided, had this advice been heeded!

The Banner of Truth formally came into existence in July 1957.

Already the issues of *The Banner of Truth Magazine*, from 1955 on, had provoked widespread interest in the Reformed truth. The Doctor did all he could to encourage this new agency for the spread of full-orbed and evangelistic Calvinism. Westminster Chapel provided the Banner's first stockroom, until the Banner appropriately took up its quarters at 78B Chiltern Street, London — right underneath 78A, the home of The Evangelical Library — the arsenal of the New Reformation with its over 100,000 volumes of classic Reformed and Puritan literature. Dr. Lloyd-Jones' own *magnum opus* on Romans was published by the Banner. He was also responsible for some of the introductions to volumes the Banner published, and took every opportunity to whet the appetites of all who would listen, to urge them to buy Banner books. Earlier in 1950 the Puritan Conference came into existence under the chairmanship of Dr. Lloyd-Jones. There, papers on the Reformers, the Puritans, and individuals involved in the Evangelical Awakening were read and discussed. The quality of the debate at the Conference I attended was superb. The Doctor proved a very firm Chairman who very jealously guarded the time given over to the examination of the practical and pastoral implications that arose from the papers. Woe betide anyone who spoke without knowledge or premeditation! These conferences, together with the Westminster Ministers Fraternal, which met monthly under the guiding hand of Dr. Lloyd-Jones at Westminster Chapel, did much to open men's eyes and minds to the dynamic power of Reformation truth.

During the stormy years of World War II, the Doctor was elected President of Inter-Varsity Fellowship (1940-1942) and again in 1951-1952, and 1963-1964. At a time when Neo-Orthodoxy was making inroads into Evangelicalism, he sounded a clear alarm, calling men back to the inerrant Scriptures. In March 1958, the Inter-Varsity Press published the first of their much-used pocket books. *Authority* by Dr. Lloyd-Jones showed the Evangelical churches that Scripture alone was the impregnable rock on which the Church could stand. His uncompromising stand for the truth was an inspiration to countless Christian undergraduates who heard him speaking at the annual Inter-Varsity conferences, the theological students' conferences, and the university missions. In evaluating the revival of Reformed truth, the Doctor mentioned the role of Inter-Varsity Press in publishing Bible commentaries and books on apologetics although, speaking in 1966, he felt that the Inter-Varsity Press did not really address the theological

situation as did the Evangelical Library through its making available the outstanding Reformed and Evangelical classics.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The Doctor's concern for university students and the theological students in particular, arose from his realization that under God's hand the future direction of the Evangelical churches lay with these men. On May 10, 1958 he preached to the students of the London Bible College, London, England, at the opening of their new building, from the text, 2 Timothy 2:14-15. With his characteristic forthrightness, he quoted to them the warning in Dean Inge's dictum "all institutions tend to produce their opposite." He would quote this same warning, to yet another Evangelical institution, Inter-Varsity Fellowship in 1969.¹⁷ On October 6, 1977, the Doctor addressed the new London Theological Seminary which had come into being as a result of the general dissatisfaction with the theological training available in the United Kingdom. Concern had been expressed about the existence of ecumenical colleges where liberals and Roman Catholics joined hands with "Evangelicals" to teach a common course. We who live in Toronto know only too well that in the Toronto School of Theology it is only too possible for a student at a Presbyterian-founded college to receive lectures in Reformation history from a Jesuit priest! The Doctor urged the congregation meeting in the Kensit Memorial College (now combined with the London Theological Seminary) that

the greatest need is not for teaching or lecturing; it is for preaching. What is preaching? Preaching is proclamation; it is the powerful presentation of the great message of the Bible. It includes evangelism of course. The preacher should be an evangelist, and should know how to bring people to conviction of sin and to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Apostle Paul tells us he always did (Acts 20:21). He reminds the Ephesians that what he did amongst them was to tell them about "the repentance that is toward God and the faith that is toward the Lord Jesus Christ." We need men who are able to do this with great power; but at the same time they must be able to build up the saints. I have often affirmed that the main function of the preacher is inspirational. It is not merely to dole out information, or lecture on the books of

the Bible, or lecture on doctrine. He can tell people where they can read this. He does so up to a point of course, but his supreme task is to inspire the people. The people are reading the Bible, but they do not see much in it. The business of the preacher is to bring the Bible alive to them, to show them what is in it, to thrill them as they hear it from him, and then as they read it for themselves. He is to move people.¹⁸

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

Over his long life of forty-one years in the ministry, we may say that the great issue which continually engaged his attention was the nature of the Christian Church. The twentieth century will almost certainly go down in history as the “Ecumenical Era” — the era in which Liberals, Roman Catholics, and Evangelicals were supposed to unite on the basis not of doctrine, but experience, into the one world-wide Church. There was clearly a development in his attitude toward Evangelicals who remained within the large denominations where heresy was tolerated. He had seen the tragedy resulting from Evangelical ministers drawing members, even converts to their churches only to leave them to the “mercy” of ministers who occupied their pulpits when the Evangelical ministers moved on to other churches.

The idea that Evangelicals can infiltrate any established Church — above all, the Church of Rome — and reform it, and turn it into an Evangelical body, is midsummer madness. No institution has ever been truly reformed. The Puritan movement and 1662 bear eloquent testimony to that fact. This is the verdict of history. Neutrality at a time like this is cowardice, it is temporising where it is not sheer ignorance of the facts. What then are we as Evangelicals to do in this situation? I reply by saying that we must heed a great injunction in Revelation 18:4: “Come out of her, my people!” “Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Come out of it! But come together also; come into fellowship with all like-minded Christian people. Come into an association such as this British Evangelical Council that stands for the truth and against compromise, hesitations, neutrality, and everything that ministers to the success of the plans of Rome and the Ecumenical Movement.

Come out; come in! And then look back at old Martin Luther and say with him: "Here I stand, I can do no other; so help me God!" and trust in Him. What do numbers matter, what do sarcasm and scorn and derision matter; what does it matter though we be despised and laughed at?¹⁹

This stirring appeal delivered at Westminster Chapel to over 2,500 people attending the British Evangelical Council Conference, on November 1, 1967, was made to remind men of the valiant stand for truth that Martin Luther had taken exactly 450 years previously, and to urge them to do the same as the situation demanded.

In 1965, the Doctor presented what I believe to be his most useful and radical analysis of the church situation for Evangelicals today. I personally met one Presbyterian minister who found his reading of this seminal paper to be the decisive influence in constraining him to leave his denomination after all attempts at reformation from within had proved fruitless. The paper entitled *Ecclesiola in Ecclesia* ("little church in the Church") examined the idea that since one could never entirely reform the Church, one should form a "little church in the Church"²⁰ — a small nucleus of genuine Christians who would have a spiritual influence on the nominal Christians. In a brief historical survey, the Doctor showed that all but one of these attempts (the exception, he noted, being an "inner mission" within the Lutheran Church of Norway) had failed. As he pointed out, those Evangelicals who remain within the denominations which tolerate error have historically done so by majoring on the important matter of sound practical holiness and spiritual experience, and by neglecting to engage in the vital battle to maintain the fundamental doctrines of the Church by means of church discipline. Many argue, he says, that they should "'stay in' in order to infiltrate and influence in an evangelical direction — 'in it to win it' as someone has put it."²¹ One pertinent answer he gives to such an optimistic view is that "we have evidence before our very eyes that our staying amongst such people does not seem to be converting them to our view but rather to a lowering of the spiritual temperature of those who are staying amongst them and an increasing tendency to doctrinal accommodation and compromise."²² The frequent appeal by Evangelicals to the argument of men like the saintly and robust Anglican Evangelical of the nineteenth century — Bishop J.C. Ryle — "Stay in the denomination until it throws out the 'Articles' (or

Confession of Faith)”— was met by the Doctor’s reminder that a Confession that was not binding in any way was a worthless scrap of paper in practice. Neville Chamberlain’s “peace” document commands little respect from us today, because we know that the signatories to it had no intention of obeying it. Thus one may have excellent statements of faith, but unless there is a real intention to abide by them, they are simply “museum pieces” reflecting the faith that was once believed. Some Evangelicals did not agree with the Doctor’s analysis, and as a result some painful breaks occurred. One of the casualties was the Puritan and Reformed Studies Conference which lost Dr. J.I. Packer and others. In April 1967, the Doctor, exemplifying his own teaching, led Westminster Chapel out of the Congregational Union of England and Wales to join the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches.

The relationships between Calvinists and Arminians were also another area in which he sought to give leadership. He made it very clear that as a Calvinist he did not dispute that a “man might be an Arminian in his understanding of salvation and be a believer.” In his view “there were some forms of co-operation possible between Evangelicals who were divided on these doctrines.” However, he asked, “Could it be right in principle for preachers and teachers of the Word to be united at the Church level with those whose belief is Arminian?”²³ He was realistic in recognizing that in practice there is a tremendous gulf between a “self-help” salvation and a salvation by grace alone. What thrilled him above all in Calvinism was the stability of God’s grace. “Calvinism leads to assurance, and assurance of necessity leads to joy. You cannot be assured quietly and unmoved by the fact that your sins are forgiven and that you are a child of God, and that you are going to Heaven; it is impossible. Assurance must lead to joy. Not only that; knowing this leads to prayer. God is my Father. I am adopted. I know Him. I have an entrance, and I want to go there. I want to speak to Him and I want to know Him. This is true Calvinism.”²⁴

The function of the Church was very frequently misunderstood according to the Doctor.

There are so many people trying to diagnose the human situation; and they come to the conclusion that man is sick, man is the victim of circumstances... but I suggest that that is too superficial a diagnosis of the condition of man, and that man’s real trouble is that he is a rebel against God and con-

sequently under the wrath of God.... The primary task of the church is not to educate man, is not to heal him physically or psychologically. It is not to make him happy. I will go further; it is not even to make him good... It is rather to put man into the right relationship with God, to reconcile man to God.”²⁵

As he looked at the contemporary Evangelical churches, the one thing that disturbed him greatly was that she was frequently far too healthy, too self-congratulatory and self-satisfied.

When did you last see someone weeping because of sinfulness? Is there evidence of brokenness of spirit amongst us, and humility? We are all so healthy, we are so glib... The result is that you get a mechanical performance of duties; and people are taught to evangelize and to do ‘personal work’ almost by numbers, and are drilled to pray. Everything is organized and arranged, you pass examinations in them, and so all these duties are done in an external mechanical manner instead of rising out of the heart.²⁶

Westminster Chapel under his leadership took a vital interest in world-wide missions. Little of this activity was known to the Evangelical world. However, in the June 1967 *Supplement to The Westminster Record* which was available to church members only, and which gave missionary reports from the field, there is recorded the financial support which was extended to some fifty-nine missionary agencies and individuals. Two missionaries of the Borneo Evangelical Mission, Dr. and Mrs. W.C. Lees had so evidently been blessed and stimulated by the ministry at Westminster that they named their Tri-Pacer missionary aircraft, “Westminster Chapel”!

SOME DOCTRINAL DISTINCTIVES

From his prolific reading of Church history, the Doctor nurtured his greatest desire for the Church of God — a heaven-sent revival. “Who cannot but grieve to see Zion powerless and poverty-stricken and so unworthy of her great Lord and Master? What can be more pitiful than to see the Body of Christ reduced to no more than a number of committees and conferences without the Spirit and without power... Oh to see Christians on their knees in repentance and earnest prayer

that God should visit us once again in His grace!” Revival, as he repeatedly affirmed, was not the same thing as an evangelistic crusade organized by men, in which people were called upon to make a decision. Citing Acts 3:19 he said,

“these times of refreshing... from the presence of the Lord”...are periods of revival, as if Peter’s message was this: “Well now, here you have had the first great sample of the Spirit’s power and blessing. This is going to keep on recurring until the time of the restitution of all things”... In I Thess. 1:5 Paul says, “Our gospel came not unto you in work only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.” What was it that turned the ancient world upside down? Was it just theological teaching? Was it mere enunciation of correct doctrine? Over and above that there was this mighty “demonstration of the Spirit and of power.”²⁷

His analysis of contemporary solutions to the effete condition of the Church did not lead him to place much confidence in apologetics or pre-evangelism.

An apologetic which fails to put supreme emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit is doomed to be a complete failure. But this is what we have been doing. We have brought out an apologetic which is highly philosophical and argumentative. We have argued about modern art, modern literature, modern drama, politics and social views as if this is what is needed. What is needed is an effusion, an outpouring of the Spirit; and any apologetic which does not finally bring us to the need of such an outpouring will ultimately be useless. I believe we are again in much the same position as that which obtained before those great things happened in the 30s of the eighteenth century. The Boyle lectures had been instituted in the previous century to provide an apologetic, and to defend religion and the Gospel. And we have been doing the same with such assiduity. Not only so, Bishop Butler’s famous *Analogy* had appeared in defence of the Gospel in a different manner. But these were not the factors that changed the entire situation. It was revival; and our only hope is revival.²⁸

In recent years, the Doctor's views on the work of the Holy Spirit have been the subject of much critical attention. His teaching respecting assurance and the "sealing" or "baptism of the Spirit" (he equated these latter two aspects of the Spirit's work) was, I believe, largely determined by his reading of the Puritan divines, especially that of Thomas Goodwin, the one-time Chaplain to Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Protector of England. Goodwin, like other Puritans, distinguished a logical step by step time sequence in the various acts by which a man appropriates salvation. Justifying faith was seen as an act separated in time from a second reflective act by which you logically deduced that you were a believer. Further, there was an immediate assurance of the Holy Spirit, not given to all Christians, which was received in an "intuitive" manner. In his exposition of Romans 8:14-16, the Doctor speaks of three different levels of assurance:

- 1st *Deductive* — this is a logical inference that you are a Christian, based on observing in yourself the activities which are peculiar to a Christian (prayer, Scripture reading, love of the brethren, etc.).
- 2nd *Elemental* — that sense of sonship which spontaneously wells up in the heart of a believer whereby he cries, "Abba, Father"!
- 3rd *The Witness of the Spirit* — this "witness of the Spirit" is the same thing as the "sealing" or "baptism of the Holy Spirit." While all Christians may have the "deductive assurance, he argues, they do not all have the "elemental" assurance or the highest peak of assurance given by the "witness of the Spirit." In this latter experience, "the Spirit Himself comes alongside the witness of my spirit and Himself bears His witness and His testimony. The peculiar characteristic," he asserts, is that "it is a direct and immediate witness of the Spirit Himself" that imparts great joy and an overwhelming sense of the love of God to the believer's heart. He argues against the traditional interpretation that Romans 8:14-16 is describing that which happens in the case of all Christians, by insisting that it is obvious that not all Christians do indeed possess this conscious, powerful and immediate awareness of the Spirit's testimony that they are personally God's children.²⁹

In evaluating this view of the Doctor's, I would say that one cannot dissect or prescribe the psychology of the salvation experience in the precise way that theologians and pastors have been accustomed to do.

The *conscious* experience on which Dr. Lloyd-Jones insisted is present in all believers at conversion, for even the weakest and most ill-instructed Christians must have had *sufficient* assurance to trust Christ alone for their justification. As the Doctor himself admitted, there are different degrees of conscious assurance among Christians. Sometimes, the teaching they have received on justification by faith alone has been hazy or has even been omitted altogether. At other times, Christians have experienced “desertions” (as the Puritans called them) — periods when the consciousness of God’s presence and blessing has departed, usually because they have sinned and grieved the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). In the context, Romans 8:9 clearly indicates that Paul is referring to the whole body of Christians — these all possess the Spirit. Romans 8:14f refers to the adopting, Spirit-borne witness to all believers that they are the children of God. The passage is descriptive, not prescriptive. In summing up this aspect of his teaching, I submit that the basic problem with the Doctor’s exegesis here is the adoption of a Puritan step-by-step *ordo salutis* (order of salvation) which views the one saving act of God as a series of distinct, separate acts — acts separated by time or by logical priority. Our Lord’s teaching in John 3:8 forcibly reminds us that we cannot logically analyze the salvation diamond in this manner — we can only turn it around in our minds and see the splendour of each wonderful facet.

That the Doctor was not a slavish follower or “gramophone record” of notable Reformers or Puritans of the past is to be seen in his willingness to come to the view, unpopular in Reformed Circles, that the man in Romans 7 was not a regenerate man, but a man experiencing the process of the conviction of sin. Recently, the Dutch Reformed theologian H.N. Ridderbos and others have also rejected the traditional Reformed interpretation held by men like the late Professor John Murray. Ridderbos argues on different grounds from those of the Doctor, namely from redemptive historical considerations, that the man in Romans 7 is not a Christian.

The Doctor’s views on the gifts of the Spirit reflect the complexity of an issue, which in the still current Charismatic debate, has often been oversimplified. He saw two main responses to “faith-healing” (and the other charismatic gifts). There are first, “those who are over-impressed by the occurrence of certain phenomena.” He mentions Dr. John A. Mackay who has sponsored the Pentecostalist David Du Plessis in the ecumenical circles of the World Council of Churches. These men were

virtually saying: "What does theology matter as long as you see this kind of thing happening?" The fact that Roman Catholic charismatics assure us that the "gift of the Spirit" has served to increase their veneration for Mary should surely compel us to urgently re-think these matters. Second, there is the group of those who tend to reject the revival of miraculous gifts "in toto". He divided this latter group into three. There are those who dismiss them as having been propounded by persons suffering from certain psychological aberrations. Then there are those who reject them on scientific grounds — "Nature is a closed system... Miracles are impossible." And finally there is the "biblical" group who adopt B.B. Warfield's argument that miracles ceased with the closing of the canon of Scripture and the accompanying authentication of the apostles. "That view has always seemed to me to be extremely dangerous" he wrote, "because it means that you are introducing a kind of new dispensationalism. What parts of the Scripture apply to us?... In other words, I believe that those wedded to this view have been guilty unconsciously of introducing a new kind of Deism. We have tended to exclude God from present day activity." Evangelicals must surely all agree that one cannot keep God in a box, even if openness means that one cannot always give a decisive refutation when confronted with certain unusual phenomena. Lloyd-Jones refers us to Matthew 24:24 — we can expect "great signs and wonders," but these will not ultimately deceive the elect. Further, he gives several helpful principles to guide Christians:

1. Believe that "miracles can happen at any moment in the will and sovereignty of God" while maintaining "our healthy and sceptical and critical attitude to everything that is reported to us."
2. Most important of all, "we must not allow our doctrine to be determined by the phenomena." Phenomena, such as claims to miraculous healing *may* be explained by spontaneous cures, the tremendous power of suggestion, etc.
3. No biblical miracles are "announced several days beforehand," and there are no "reports of failures in the book of the Acts." The effect of miracles was to fill people "with a sense of awe, and at times of fear." There was no laughter or jocularity as is often witnessed today.
4. "Spiritists *can* produce certain results," so we must warn people not to submit again to the power of evil spirits.

The over-riding concern that marked all the Doctor's ministry surfaces here. He desired to give people practical help solidly grounded on the Scriptures. Christians should continue to "use the usual means in the treatment of sickness and disease... In answer to 'the prayer of faith' He may choose to answer apart from ordinary means." Typically, he concluded, we are not to "abandon our biblical positions because of any phenomena. We are to try and test them all... But we are still to believe that 'with God, all things are possible.'"³⁰

As one surveys the eighty-two years of his life and ministry, it becomes obvious that one over-riding apostolic note rang through it all — boldness! Just as the apostles after the Spirit was poured out at Pentecost feared the faces of no men, so Dr. Lloyd-Jones preached fearlessly and with apostolic authority, the same "Truth, unchanged, unchanging" before the great and the lowly. In an age which dislikes authority, he unhesitatingly *declared* the gospel to all. The apostle Paul, aware of the attacks which inevitably follow bold leadership, wrote to his Corinthian gainsayers: "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand" (2 Corinthians 1:24). Lloyd-Jones knew that the only medicine which would do needy sinners good was the Word of God, preached not apologetically, but with authority. He thereby helped many souls into an experience of joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The poetic lift and lilt of his native Welsh tongue came through in his preaching in English, and provided a natural vehicle for the sunbursts of eloquent doxology and joy that escaped his lips in preaching. The joyful music of Zion filled the services at Westminster Chapel. Hymns brought theology into the hearts of his people. They were carefully chosen to convey the great New Testament truths he was expounding. In the Communion Services, the congregation lifted up its voice in grateful praise to the Saviour, singing no.375 of *Congregational Praise* — "He loved me, and gave Himself for me" — to the tune *Consolation* by Mendelssohn. Come! Let us sing the last stanza with all the redeemed:

*O when I stand 'mid yonder shining throng,
And on fair Canaan's coast my Saviour see,
I'll add this chorus to my swelling song,
"He loved me, and gave Himself for me."*

Doctor David Martyn Lloyd-Jones was a man who spoke "from the heart to the heart; not however, as a dying man to dying men, but as a man who will never die to men who also will never die."³¹ **E**

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ENDNOTES

1 Article originally published in *The Gospel Witness*, 60, No.2 (April 9, 1981), 8-11 (here printed with slight modifications).

2 Iain Murray's excellent biography, *David Martyn Lloyd-Jones* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1982-1990) supplies the information that was not available in 1981, the date of the original version of this article.

3 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), 152.

4 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, "The Centenary of Westminster Chapel, 1865-1965" in *Knowing the Times: Addresses Delivered on Various Occasions, 1942-1977* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1989), 238.

5 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, "The Centenary of Westminster Chapel 1865-1965," 239.

6 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, "Jonathan Edwards and the Crucial Importance of Revival" in *The Puritan Experiment in the New World* (London: Westminster Conference, 1976), 119.

7 Lloyd-Jones, "Jonathan Edwards and the Crucial Importance of Revival," 106.

8 Lloyd-Jones, "Jonathan Edwards and the Crucial Importance of Revival," 108.

9 Lloyd-Jones, "Jonathan Edwards and the Crucial Importance of Revival," 112.

10 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, "John Calvin and George Whitefield" in *Able Ministers of the New Testament* (London: Puritan and Reformed Studies Conference, December 1964), 92.

11 Lloyd-Jones, "Jonathan Edwards and the Crucial Importance of Revival," 120.

12 Lloyd-Jones, "The Centenary of Westminster Chapel 1865-1965," 245.

13 Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, 234.

14 Article originally published in *The Gospel Witness*, 60, No.3 (April 23, 1981), 7-11.

15 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, "On his First Sight of the Evangelical Library," in D. Martyn-Lloyd Jones, *Letters 1919-1981* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1994), 53.

16 D.M. Lloyd-Jones. The author regrets that the first published version of the article failed to include the bibliographical references, and he has been unable to locate this one.

17 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, "How to Safeguard the Future," in *Knowing the Times: Addresses Delivered on Various Occasions, 1942-1977*, 280. see further Iain H. Murray, *David Martyn*

Lloyd-Jones: The Fight of Faith 1939-1981 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1990), 309-311.

18 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, *Training for the Ministry Today* (London: London Theological Seminary, 1983), 6.

19 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, "Luther and his Message for Today" in *Unity in Truth: Addresses given by Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones at meetings held under the auspices of the British Evangelical Council* (Darlington: Evangelical Press, 1991), 43.

20 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, "Ecclesiola in Ecclesia" in *Approaches to Reformation of the Church* (London: Puritan and Reformed Studies Conference, 1965), 57.

21 Lloyd-Jones, "Ecclesiola in Ecclesia," 69.

22 Lloyd-Jones, "Ecclesiola in Ecclesia," 71.

23 D.M. Lloyd-Jones. Please see endnote 16 above for the same situation regarding this quote.

24 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, "William Williams and Welsh Calvinistic Methodism" in *The Puritans: their Origin and Successors; Addresses Delivered at the Puritan and Westminster Conferences 1959-1978* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1987), 211.

25 Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, 27, 30.

26 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, "Sandemanianism" in the *Puritans: their Origin and Successors*, 188.

27 D.M. Lloyd-Jones. Please see endnote 16 above for the same situation regarding this quote.

28 Lloyd-Jones, "Jonathan Edwards and the Crucial Importance of Revival," 118.

29 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, "Romans: an Exposition of Ch. 8:5-17" in *The Sons of God* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1975 (1974)], 148-399.

30 D.M. Lloyd-Jones, *The Supernatural in Medicine* [London: C.M.F. Publications, 1972 (1971)], 4-5, 10-11, 18-19, 21-23.

31 Author's revision and recasting of Richard Baxter's famous saying.