

A BENJAMIN WARFIELD COLLECTION

by Benjamin B. Warfield

A collection of theological writings by Princeton Seminary professor B.B. Warfield, including his statement of the Reformed faith and other works defending orthodox Calvinist theology, biblical inspiration, and the doctrines of grace.

26 Chapters

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A Brief and Untechnical Statement of the Reformed Faith

A Brief and Untechnical Statement of the Reformed Faith

Benjiman B. Warfield

I believe that my one aim in life and death should be to glorify God and enjoy him forever; and that God teaches me how to glorify him in his holy Word, that is, the Bible, which he had given by the infallible inspiration of this Holy Spirit in order that I may certainly know what I am to believe concerning him and what duty he requires of me.

I believe that God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and incomparable in all that he is; one God but three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, my Creator, my Redeemer, and my Sanctifier; in whose power and wisdom, righteousness, goodness and truth I may safely put my trust.

I believe that the heavens and the earth, and all that is in them, are the work of God hands; and that all that he has made he directs and governs in all their actions; so that they fulfill the end for which they were created, and I who trust in him shall not be put to shame but may rest securely in the protection of his almighty love.

I believe that God created man after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, and entered into a covenant of life with him upon the sole condition of the obedience that was his due; so that it was by willfully sinning against God that man fell into the sin and misery in which I have been born.

I believe, that, being fallen in Adam, my first father, I am by nature a child of wrath, under the condemnation of God and corrupted in body and soul, prone to evil and liable to eternal death; from which dreadful state I cannot be delivered save through the unmerited grace of God my Savior.

I believe that God has not left the world to perish in its sin, but out of the great love wherewith he has loved it, has from all eternity graciously chosen unto himself a multitude which no man can number, to deliver them out of their sin and misery, and of them to build up again in the world his kingdom of righteousness; in which kingdom I may be assured I have my part, if I hold fast to Christ the Lord.

I believe that God has redeemed his people unto himself through Jesus Christ our Lord; who, though he was and ever continues to be the eternal Son of God, yet was born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem them that are under the law: I believe that he bore the penalty due to my sins in his own body on the tree, and fulfilled in his own person the obedience I owe to the righteousness of God, and now presents me to his Father as his purchased possession, to the praise of the glory of his grace forever; wherefore renouncing all merit of my own, I put all my trust only in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ my redeemer.

I believe that Jesus Christ my redeemer, who died for my offences was raised again for my justification, and ascended into the heavens, where he sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty, continually making intercession for his people, and governing the whole world as head over all things for his Church; so that I need fear no evil and may surely know that nothing can snatch me out of his hands and nothing can separate me from his love.

I believe that the redemption wrought by the Lord Jesus Christ is effectually applied to all his people by the Holy Spirit, who works faith in me and thereby unites me to Christ, renews me in the whole man after the image of God, and enables me more and more to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness; until, this gracious work having been completed in me, I shall be received into glory; in which great hope abiding, I must ever strive to perfect holiness in the fear of God.

I believe that God requires of me, under the gospel, first of all, that , out of a true sense of my sin and misery and apprehension of his mercy in Christ, I should turn with grief and hatred away from sin and receive and rest upon Jesus Christ alone for salvation; that, so being united to him, I may receive pardon for my sins and be accepted as righteous in God's sight only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to me and received by faith alone; and thus and thus only do I believe I may be received into the number and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.

I believe that, having been pardoned and accepted for Christ's sake , it is further required of me that I walk in the Spirit whom he has purchased for me, and by whom love is shed abroad in my heart; fulfilling the obedience I owe to Christ my King; faithfully performing all the duties laid upon me by the holy law of God my heavenly Father; and ever reflecting in my life and conduct, the perfect example that has been set me by Christ Jesus my Leader, who has died for me and granted to me his Holy Spirit just that I may do the good works which God has afore prepared that I should walk in them.

I believe that God has established his Church in the world and endowed it with the ministry of the Word and the holy ordinances of Baptism, the Lord's Supper and Prayer; in order that through these as means, the riches of his grace in the gospel may be made known to the world, and, by the blessing of Christ and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them, the benefits of redemption may be communicated to his people; wherefore also it is required of me that I attend on these means of grace with diligence, preparation, and prayer, so that through them I may be instructed and strengthened in faith, and in holiness of life and in love; and that I use my best endeavors to carry this gospel and convey these means of grace to the whole world.

I believe that as Jesus Christ has once come in grace, so also is he to come a second time in glory, to judge the world in righteousness and assign to each his eternal award; an I believe that if I die in Christ, my soul shall be at death made perfect in holiness and go home to the Lord; and when he shall return to his majesty I shall be raised in glory and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity: encouraged by which blessed hope it is required of me willingly to take my part in suffering hardship here as a good soldier of Christ Jesus, being assured that if I die with him I shall also live with him, if I endure, I shall also reign with him. And to Him, my Redeemer, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, Three Persons, one God, be glory forever, world without end, Amen, and Amen.

Authority, Intellect, Heart

Authority, Intellect, Heart by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921) The following short essay was originally published in *The Presbyterian Messenger*, Jan. 30, 1896, p. 7 f. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed. The exact nature of the intimate relation between religion and theology is not always perceived. Sometimes religion is made the direct product of theology; more frequently theology is conceived as directly based on religion. The truth is that while they react continually upon each other, neither is the creation of the other. They are parallel products of the same body of truths in different spheres. Religion is the name we give to religious life; theology is the name we give to the systematized body of religious thought. Neither is the product of the other, but both are products of religious truth, operative in the two spheres of life and thought. Neither can exist without the other. No one but a religious man can be a true theologian. No one can live religiously who is innocent of all theological conceptions. Man is a unit; and the religious truth which impinges upon him must affect him in all his activities, or in none. But it is in their common cause-religious truth-that religion and theology find their deepest connection. The truth concerning God, his nature, his will, his purposes is the fundamental fact upon which both religion and theology rest. The truth of God is, therefore, the greatest thing on earth. On it rest our faith, our hope, and our love. Through it we are converted and sanctified. On it depends all our religion, as well as all our theology.

There are three media or channels through which the truth of God is brought to man and made his possession, that it may affect his life and so make him religious, or that it may be systematized in his thinking and so issue in a theology. These three media or channels of communication may be enumerated briefly as authority, the intellect, and the heart. They are not so related to one another that any one of them may be depended upon to the exclusion of the others. In any sound religion and in any true religious thinking, that is theology, all three must be engaged, and must work harmoniously together as the proximate sources of our religion and of our knowledge. The exaltation of any one of the three to the relative exclusion of the others will, therefore, mar our religious life and our religious thought alike, and make both one-sided and deformed. We cannot have a symmetrical religious life or a true theology except through the perfect interaction of all three sources of communication of the truth.

It may, indeed, be plausibly pleaded that the three reduce ultimately to one; and this one channel of truth may, with almost equal plausibility-, be found in each of the three in turn. Thus it may be urged that our confidence in the processes of our intellects and in the deliverances of our feelings, rests ultimately on the trustworthiness of God; so that, after all, authority is the sole source of our information concerning God. We know only what and as God tells us. Similarly it may be argued that all the dicta of authority are addressed to the intellect, which, also, is the sole instrument for ascertaining the implications of the feelings; so that all our sources of knowledge reduce at last to this one source--the intellect. We know only what our intellect grasps and formulates for us. Still again, it may be contended that not the logical reason but the facts of life, our upward strivings, our feelings of dependence and responsibility, supply the points of contact between us and God,

without which all the thunders of authority and all the excursions of thought into the realm of divine things, would be as unintelligible to us and as inoperative upon us as a babbling of colors would be to a blind man. There is truth in each of these representations; but they do not avail to show that we have but one means of access to divine things, but rather emphasize the fact that the three sources so interlace and interact that one may not be exaggerated to the exclusion of the others as our sole channel of knowledge concerning God and divine things.

The exaggeration of the principle of authority to the discrediting of the others would cast us into traditionalism, and would ultimately deliver us bound hand and foot to the irresponsible dogmatism of a privileged caste. This is the pathway which has been trodden by the Church of Rome, and we have as the result a nerveless submission to the dicta, first of an infallible church, then of an infallible class, and lastly of an infallible person. Here neither the heart nor the intellect is permitted to speak in the presence of lordly authority; but men are commanded docilely to receive, on authority alone, even what contradicts their most primary intuitions (as in the doctrine of transubstantiation) or what outrages their most intimate feelings (as in the use of indulgences).

The exaggeration of the principle of intellect to the discrediting of the others would bring us to rationalism, and leave us helplessly in the grasp of the merely logical understanding. This pathway has been followed by the rationalists, and we have as the result any number of a priori systems built up on the sole credit of the reasoning faculty. Here neither revelation nor the conscience is permitted to raise a protest against the chill processes of intellectual formulae, but all things are reconstructed at the bidding of a priori fancies, and men are required to reject as false all for which they have not a demonstration ready even though God has spoken to assert its truth (as in the doctrine of the Trinity) or the heart rises up and answers, I have felt (as in original sin).

The exaggeration of the principle of the heart to the discrediting of the others would throw us into mysticism, and deliver us over to the deceitfulness of the currents of feeling which flow up and down in our souls. This pathway has been traveled by the mystics, and we have as the result the clash of rival revelations, and the deification of the most morbid of human imaginations. Here neither the objective truth of a revealed word nor adherence to rational thinking is allowed to check the wild dreaming of a soul that fancies itself divine, or the confusion of our weakest sentiments with the strong voice of God; and men are forbidden to clarify their crude fancies by right reason (as in the doctrine of absorption in God), or to believe God's own testimony to his real nature (as with reference to his personality).

Thus authority, when pressed beyond its mark and becoming traditionalism, intellect when puffed up into rationalism, and the heart when swamped in mysticism, alike illustrate the danger of one-sided construction. Authority, intellect, and the heart are the three sides of the triangle of truth. How they interact is observable in any concrete instance of their operation. Authority, in the Scriptures, furnishes the matter which is received in the intellect and operates on the heart. The revelations of the Scriptures do not terminate upon the intellect. They were not given merely to enlighten the mind. They were given through the intellect to beautify the life. They terminate on the heart. Again, they do not, in affecting the heart, leave the intellect untouched. They cannot be fully understood by the intellect, acting alone. The natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God. They must first convert the soul before they are fully comprehended by the intellect. Only as they are lived are they understood. Hence the phrase, "Believe that you may understand," has its

fullest validity. No man can intellectually grasp the full meaning of the revelations of authority, save as the result of an experience of their power in life. Hence, that the truths concerning divine things may be so comprehended that they may unite with a true system of divine truth, they must be: first, revealed in an authoritative word; second, experienced in a holy heart; and third, formulated by a sanctified intellect. Only as these three unite, then, can we have a true theology. And equally, that these same truths may be so received that they beget in us a living religion, they must be: first, revealed in an authoritative word; second, apprehended by a sound intellect; and third, experienced in an instructed heart. Only as the three unite, then, can we have a vital religion.

Darwin's arguments against Christiaity & Religion

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Science has not broken with religion. But a large number of the scientific thinkers of our generation have. When we ask why, the reason returned is apt to be colored by the personal feelings of the answerer. One attributes it to the bondage into which what he speaks of as "so-called modern science" has fallen, to materialistic philosophy, or even to Satanic evil-heartedness. Another finds its explanation in the absorption of scientific workers, in this busy age, in a kind of investigation which deadens spiritual life and spiritual aspirations within them, and totally unfits them for estimating the value of other forms of evidence than that obtained in the crucible or under the microscope. Others suppose that it is the crude mode in which religion is presented to men's minds, in these days of infallible popes and Salvation Armies, which insults the intelligence of thoughtful men and prevents their giving to the real essence of faith the attention which would result in its acceptance. Others, still, conceive that it is advancing knowledge itself which in science has come to blows in religion with the outworn superstitions of a past age. In such a Babel of discordant voices it is a boon to be able to bend our ear and listen to one scientific worker, honored by all, as he tells us what it was that led him to yield up his Christian faith, and even, in large measure, that common faith in a God which he shared not with Christians only but with all men of thought and feeling.

A rare opportunity of this sort has been afforded us by the publication of the Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, by his son, in which is incorporated a very remarkable passage, extracted from some autobiographical notes written by this great student of nature, as late as 1876, with the special purpose of tracing the history of his religious views. Certainly no one will hesitate to accord to him a calm hearing; and we cannot but be instructed by learning by what processes and under the pressure of what arguments so eminently thoughtful a mind was led to desert the faith in which he was bred, and gradually to assume a position toward the problem of the origin of the world which he can call by no more luminous name than that of agnosticism.

The history of the drift by which Mr. Darwin was separated from faith in a divine order in the world, divides itself into two well-marked periods. The first of these, which was completed at about the time when he reached his fortieth year, ends with the loss of his Christianity. During the second, which extended over the remainder of his life, he struggled, with varying fortunes, but ever more and more hopelessly, to retain his standing at least as a theist. At the end of the first he no longer believed that God had ever spoken to men in his Word; at the end of the second he more than doubted whether the faintest whisper of his voice could be distinguished in his works. He was never prepared dogmatically to deny his existence; but search as he might he could not find him, and he could only say that if he existed he was, verily, a God that hides himself.

Let us take up the matter in the orderly form which Mr. Darwin has himself given it, and inform ourselves seriously what were the objections to Christianity and the difficulties in the way of a reasoned theism which led him to such sad conclusions.

His account of his loss of Christianity takes the shape of a personal history. He gives us not so much an argument against Christianity as a record of the arguments which led him to discard it. These fall into two classes: in the first stands the single decisive argument that really determined his anti-Christian attitude; while in the second are gathered together the various supporting considerations which came flocking to buttress the conclusion when once it was attained. The palmary argument depends for its weight on a twofold peculiarity of his personal attitude. He had persuaded himself not only that species originated by a process of evolution, but also that this process was slow, long continued, and by a purely natural development. And he held, with dogmatic tenacity, the opinion that the Book of Genesis teaches that God created each species by a separate, sudden, and immediate fiat. If both these positions were sound, it followed necessarily that either his theory or Genesis was in error; and to him, in his naturally enthusiastic advocacy of his theory, this meant that Genesis must go. Now he was ready for another step. Genesis is an integral part of the Old Testament, and the Old Testament is not only bound up with the New Testament in a single volume, but is in such a sense a part of Christianity-as its groundwork and basis-that Christianity cannot be true if the Old Testament record is untrustworthy. To give up Genesis is, therefore, to give up Christianity. Thus his chief argument against Christianity reduces itself to a conflict between his theory of evolution and his interpretation of Genesis, about the accuracy of both of which there are the gravest of doubts. Here is the form in which he himself describes the process: "I had gradually come by this time, that Isaiah, 1836 to 1839, to see that the Old Testament was no more to be trusted than the sacred books of the Hindus. The question then continually rose before my mind, and would not be banished: is it credible that if God were now to make a revelation to the Hindus he would permit it to be connected with the belief in Vishnu, Siva, etc., as Christianity is connected with the Old Testament? This appeared to me as utterly incredible."

It was impossible, however, to deal with Christianity as if it came claiming our acceptance uncommended by evidence of its own. The assumed conflict with Genesis would be fatal to the theory of evolution if the Christianity in vital connection with Genesis were confessed to be truth demonstrated by its own appropriate historical evidence. Mr. Darwin could not, therefore, rest in this short refutation without calling to its aid other more direct arguments, such as would suffice to place Christianity at least on the defensive and thus allow the palmary argument free scope to work its ruin. Thus we read further: "By further reflecting that the clearest evidence would be requisite to make any sane man believe in the miracles by which Christianity is supported, and that the more we know of the fixed laws of nature the more incredible do miracles become; that the men at that time were ignorant and credulous to a degree almost incomprehensible by us; that the Gospels cannot be proved to have been written simultaneously with the events; that they differ in many important details, far too important, as it seemed to me, to be admitted as the usual inaccuracies of eye-witnesses-by such reflections as these . . . I gradually came to disbelieve in Christianity as a divine revelation. The fact that many false religions have spread over large portions of the earth like wildfire had some weight with me."

This is Mr. Darwin's arraignment of the Christian evidences. A close scrutiny will reveal the important place which miracles occupy in it. It may almost be said that Mr. Darwin concerns himself with no other of the evidences of Christianity, except miracles. It looks as if, in his objection to Christianity, arising from the conflict that existed in his opinion between Genesis and his theory

of evolution, he felt himself faced down by the force of the miracles by which, as he says, "Christianity is supported," and felt bound to throw doubt on this evidence or yield up his theory. In one word, he felt the force of the evidence from miracles. It is instructive to observe how he proceeds in the effort to break the weight of their evidence. He does not shortly assert, as some lesser scientific lights are accustomed to assert, that miracles are impossible. He merely says that they need clear evidence of their real occurrence to make us believe in them, and that this is increasingly true as the reign of law is becoming better recognized. And then he tries to throw doubt on the evidence of their occurrence: they profess to have been wrought in a credulous age; the documents in which they are recorded cannot be proved to be contemporaneous with their asserted occurrence, and are marred by internal contradictions in detail which lessen their trustworthiness; and it is not necessary to assume the miraculous origin of Christianity in order to account for its rapid spread. In a word, Mr. Darwin deserts the metaphysical and what may be called the "scientific" objections to miracles, in order to rest his case on the historical objections. He does not say miracles cannot have occurred; he merely says that the evidence on which they are asserted to have occurred falls something short of demonstration.

Were our object here criticism rather than exposition, it would be easy to show the untenableness of this position: it was not in the field of the historical criticism of the first Christian centuries that Mr. Darwin won his spurs. There are also many more sources of evidence for Christianity than its miracles. It is enough for our present purpose, however, to take note of the form which the reasoning assumed in his own mind. It has a somewhat odd appearance, and was about as follows: The miracles by which Christianity is supported are not demonstrably proved to have really occurred; therefore the conflict of my theory with Genesis, and through Genesis with Christianity, is not a conflict with miraculous evidence; therefore my theory may as well be true as Christianity. The validity of the inference seems to rest on the suppressed premise that none but miraculous evidence would suffice to set aside his theory. And there is a droll suggestion that his state of mind on the subject was not very far from this: "I was very unwilling to give up my belief," he writes; "I feel sure of this, for I can well remember often and often inventing day-dreams of old letters between distinguished Romans, and manuscripts being found at Pompeii or elsewhere, which confirmed in the most striking manner all that was written in the Gospels. But I found it more and more difficult, with free scope given to my imagination, to invent evidence which would suffice to convince me. Thus unbelief crept on me at a very slow rate, but was at last complete. The rate was so slow that I felt no distress." Nothing short of a miracle would, then, have convinced him; and nothing short of a miracle could have convinced him of a miracle. Surely a man in such a state of mind would be refused as a juror in any case. In lesser causes we should speak of him as under bondage to an invincible prejudice; in this great one we are certainly justified in saying that his predilection for his theory of the origin of species, and that in the exact form in which he had conceived it, lay at the root of his rejection of Christianity. If both Christianity and it could not be true, why then Christianity certainly could not be true, and a full examination of the evidence was unnecessary.

It was some years after his giving up of Christianity before his belief in the existence of a personal God was shaken. But as time went on this also came. The account given in his autobiography of this new step in unbelief is not thrown into the form of a history so much as of ordered reasoning. So that we have, strangely enough, as part of a brief body of autobiographical notes, a formal

antitheistic argument. The heads of theistic proof, which Mr. Darwin treats in this remarkable passage, are the following: (1) "The old argument from design in nature as given by Paley"; (2) "the general beneficent arrangement of the world"; (3) "the most usual argument for the existence of an intelligent God at the present day, drawn from the deep inward conviction and feelings which are experienced by most persons"; and (4) the argument "from the extreme difficulty or rather impossibility of conceiving this immense and wonderful universe, including man with his capacity of looking far backwards and far into futurity, as the result of blind chance or necessity." The full development of these propositions, while it would be far, no doubt, from exhausting the argument for the existence of God, would afford quite a respectable body of theistic proof. In offering a refutation of, them, one by one, Mr. Darwin evidently feels that he is sufficiently treating the whole fabric of theistic argumentation; and he draws an agnostic conclusion accordingly. It will be very instructive to note his answers to them, in as much detail as space will allow.

To the first—the argument from design as developed, say, by Paley—he replies that it "fails, now that the law of natural selection has been discovered." "We can no longer argue," he adds, "that, for instance, the beautiful hinge of a bivalve must have been made by an intelligent being, like the hinge of a door by man. There seems to be no more design in the variability of organic beings and in the action of natural selection than in the course which the wind blows." By this he means that the adaptations of means to ends, as observed in nature, are the necessary result of the interaction of the purely mechanical forces of nature, and would result from them whether there is a God or not; and that therefore they cannot be pleaded as a proof that there is a God. This conception of the working of nature is the result of the stringency with which he held to his theory of evolution by natural selection, in the exact naturalistic form in which he first conceived it. The second argument, that drawn "from the general beneficent arrangement of the world," he meets by a reference to the great amount of suffering in the world. As a sound evolutionist he believes that happiness decidedly prevails over misery; but he urges that the existence of so much suffering is an argument against the existence of an intelligent first cause; "whereas the presence of much suffering agrees well with the view that all organic beings have been developed through variation and natural selection," which he appears to assume to be a necessarily antitheistic conception. In treating the third argument, derived from man's "deep inward conviction and feelings" that there is a God, to whom his aspirations go out, on whom he is dependent and to whom he is responsible, Mr. Darwin confuses the "conviction" with the "feelings," and sets the whole aside as no more valid an argument for the existence of God than "the powerful, though vague, and similar feelings excited by music." He sorrowfully recalls the time when he too had such feelings rise within him in the presence of grand scenery, for instance: when he could not adequately describe the "higher feelings of wonder and admiration and devotion which filled and elevated his mind;" but confesses that they no more visit him, and that he might truly be said to be like a man who has become colorblind and whose loss of perception is therefore of no value as evidence against the universal belief of men. But he denies that the "conviction of the existence of one God" (why "one" God?) is universal among men; and hints that he believes that all these feelings can be reduced to the "sense of the sublime," which, could it only be analyzed, might be shown not to involve the existence of God any more than the similar emotions raised by music. The confusion here is immense confusion of a conviction that accompanies, or rather begets and governs, feelings with the feelings themselves—confusion of the analysis of an emotion into its elements with the discovery of its cause, and the like. But the confusion and Mr. Darwin's method of seeking relief

from his puzzlement, are characteristic traits which may teach us somewhat of the value of his testimony as to the scientific aspects of faith. The fourth argument, that which rests upon our causal judgment, is the only one to which he ascribes much value. He does not hesitate to speak of the "impossibility of conceiving this immense and wonderful universe as the result of blind chance or necessity." But the question arises: Impossibility to whom? And here again Mr. Darwin's theory of the origin of man, by a purely natural process of development from brute ancestors, entered in to void the unavoidable conclusion. "But then," he adds, "arises the doubt. Can the mind of man, which has, as I fully believe, been developed from a mind as low as that possessed by the lowest animals, be trusted when it draws such grand conclusions?" Or, as he writes later, after having again confessed to "an inward conviction that the universe is not the result of chance." "But then with me the horrid doubt always arises whether the convictions of man's mind, which has been developed from the mind of the lower animals, are of any value or at all trustworthy. Would anyone trust in the convictions of a monkey's mind, if there are any convictions in such a mind?" Thus the last and strongest theistic proof fails, not because of any lack in its stringent validity to the human mind, but because so brute-bred a mind as man's is no judge of the validity of proof.

We are tempted to turn aside and ask, Why, then, are the theistic proofs so carefully examined by Mr. Darwin? Why is so much validity assigned to the judgment of his human mind as to the value of the argument from design, for instance? Why does he trust that brute-bred mind through all the devious reasonings by which the theory of development by natural selection, on the basis of which the value of its conclusions are now challenged, was arrived at? In a word, is it not certain, if man's mind is so brutish that its causal judgment is not trustworthy when it demands a sufficient cause for this universe, that it is equally untrustworthy in all its demands for a sufficient cause, and that thus all the fabric of our knowledge tumbles about our ears, all our fine theories, all our common judgments by which we live? When Mr. Darwin chokes down this "inward conviction" and refuses to believe what he confesses to be "impossible" to him not to believe, he puts the knife at the throat of all his convictions, even of his conviction that he exists and his conviction that a world lies about him, such as he sees with his eyes and theorizes about with his "bestial" mind; and there necessarily goes out into the blackness of nescience all thought, all belief, all truth.

But we remember that we are not now criticizing, but only trying to understand Mr. Darwin's reasons for refusing to believe in "what is called a personal God." This much is plain, that the root of his agnosticism, as of his rejection of Christianity, was his enthusiastic acceptance of his own theory of evolution, in the mechanical naturalistic sense in which he conceived it. We raise no question whether this was an inevitable result; there have been many evolutionists who have been and have remained theists and Christians. But this was the actual course of reasoning with him. It was because he conceived of each organic form as liable to indefinite variation in every direction, and to development into other forms by the natural reaction of the environment on these variations, through the struggle for existence, that he denied that the hand of God could be traced either in the line of variation or in the selection of the types to live. It was because he included all organic phenomena, mental and moral as well as physical, in this natural process, that he found himself unable to trust the convictions of the mind of man, which was after all nothing but the brute's mind beaten and squeezed into something of a new form by an unmoral struggle for existence stretching through immemorial ages. In a word, Mr. Darwin's rejection of Christianity and loss of faith in a personal God were simply the result of his enthusiastic adoption of a special

theory of the origin of organic differentiation, and of ruthless subjection of all his thought to its terms.

And now, returning to our original query, we are prepared to answer why one scientific man broke with faith. Mr. Darwin was honest in deserting the faith of his childhood and the theistic convictions of his manhood. But was he logically driven to it? He himself, despite himself, confesses that he was not. To the end his "conviction" remained irreconcilable with his "conclusion." Yet he was logical, if the evidence in favor of the extremely naturalistic form of the evolutionary hypothesis is more convincing than that for God and the Bible; but logical with a logic which strips the very logic on which we are depending for our conclusion of all its validity, and leaves us shiveringly naked of all belief and of all trustworthy faculty of thought. If we are to retain belief in our own existence, Mr. Darwin himself being witness, we must believe also in that God who gave us life and being. We can only account for Mr. Darwin's failure to accept the guidance of his inextinguishable conviction here, by recognizing that his absorption in a single line of investigation and inference had so atrophied his mind in other directions that he had ceased to be a trustworthy judge of evidence. Whatever may be true in other cases, in this case the defection of a scientific man from religion was distinctly due to an atrophy of mental qualities by which he was unfitted for the estimation of any other kind of evidence than that derived from the scalpel and the laboratory, and no longer could feel the force of the ineradicable convictions which are as "much a part of man as his stomach or his heart."

Heresy & Concession

Heresy & Concession by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

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In Dr. G. P. Fisher's recently issued *History of Christian Doctrine* there is a very suggestive passage in which he tells us how heresies usually originate, and gives us an insight into their nature. He says:

When Christianity is brought into contact with modes of thought and tenets originating elsewhere, either of two effects may follow. It may assimilate them, discarding whatever is at variance with the gospel, or the tables may be turned and the foreign elements may prevail. In the latter case there ensues a perversion of Christianity, an amalgamation with it of ideas discordant with its nature. The product then is a heresy. But to fill out the conception, it seems necessary that error should be aggressive and should give rise to an effort to build up a party, and thus to divide the Church. In the Apostles' use of the term, "heresy" contains a factious element.

He then proceeds to remark that " 'heresy' meant originally 'choice'; then an opinion that is the product of choice or of the will, instead of being drawn from the divine Word"; that it is, in a word, "a man-made opinion" as distinguished from a divinely taught doctrine.

It does not require the wide and detailed acquaintance with the history of religious thought which Dr. Fisher has at his command to enable the reader to appreciate the aptness of this generalization. Possibly Dr. Fisher would not himself present it as the formula by which every heresy has been compounded. It obviously fairly describes, however, the origin of most of the greater heresies which have vexed the Church. The early gnostic systems were but varied attempts to baptize oriental pantheistic and dualistic speculations. Each of the christological constructions of the ante-Chalcedonian Church was but an effort to pour the teachings of the Scriptures as to the person of the Redeemer into the molds of some human philosophy. The Pelagian exaltation of human ability and consequent denial of the necessity of the inner work of the Holy Ghost was but (as Hefele says) "the rehabilitation of that heathen view of the world," in accordance with which Cicero declared that men do indeed thank God for gold and lands, but never for their virtues; and Jerome accordingly speaks of it accurately as "the heresy of Pythagoras and Zeno." The subsequent semi-Pelagianism which has stained the thought of the whole Latin Church, and the Arminianism which has sapped the purity of so large a section of Protestant thought, are but less acute forms of the same exaggeration of human rights and powers as over against the sovereign right and absolute power of the Ruler of the universe. And just as the pagan considers his idol as his property, and requires of it the services which he asks of it-beating it when it fails to give according to his desires, and destroying it when it no longer fulfils his expectations-so modern "thinkers," still considering themselves Christians, look upon their God as the product of their intellection, keep him strictly to the activities for which they have invented

him, and require at his hands all that they have made him for. So poor Heine was sure of forgiveness, for, as he said, "that is what God is for"; and so our new Kantians acknowledge God only so far as they have need of him to harmonize their intellectual difficulties or solve their moral doubts. Like the idols of the heathen, he is the work of their hands, and exists only to serve their ends. They never imagine that they are the work of his hands and exist only to serve his ends.

Let us look a little more closely, however, at Dr. Fisher's fruitful description of how heresy arises.

True Christian doctrine is the pure teaching of the divine Word. Whatsoever is revealed in that Word the Christian believes to be true for the authority of God himself speaking in it. There may be other sources of knowledge from which he may learn what is true, but there is no source of knowledge which will rank with him in authority above the written Word of God, or to which he can appeal with superior confidence. It is a mark of the Christian man that the Word is his source and norm of truth, and wherever it has spoken he asks no further evidence, nor can he admit any modification whatever of its deliverances, no matter from what quarter they may be drawn.

But Christianity is immersed in the world. And the world has its own modes of thought and its own teachings, which are their products. And the Christian man necessarily comes into contact with them. What attitude shall he assume with reference to them? What welcome shall he accord them? Of one thing certainly he is sure-that all truth is God's. All truth comes forth from him; all truth leads back to him. No one should greet truth from whatever source with more readiness and more enthusiasm than he. And it is only simple justice to say that in all the history of thought no one has ever shown himself more hospitable to truth in every sphere, more eager to seek and embrace it, than the Christian man. Zeal in investigation, success in wresting nature's secrets from her, unwearied diligence in the study of the past-these are marked characteristics of Christian civilization.

An attitude of eager hospitality toward the researches of the world is becoming in the Christian man; he serves the God of truth. Such an attitude is safe for him; he has in his hands the norm of truth, in the Word of God. This is the Ariadne clue by means of which he can thread his way through the labyrinths of the world's thought; this is the touchstone by the art of which he may choose the good and refuse the evil. So long as he clings to it he will build up the temple of truth, whencesoever he quarries the stones. When he loses hold of it, however, he descends into the arena and takes his hap with other men; and going his own way, it is not strange that he is often found with his back turned to God. The condition of right thinking-or "orthodoxy"-is, therefore, that the Christian man should look out upon the seething thought of the world from the safe standpoint of the sure Word of God. The fertile source of wilful thinking-or "heresy"-is that, on the contrary, he is often found looking at the teachings of God's Word from the standpoint of the world's speculations.

It is to be observed that it is to the very prevalent habit of "concession" to the world's thinking, that Dr. Fisher's words point us, as the fruitful mother of heresy. And it must be admitted that the temptation to "concession" is often very strong.

For one thing, the world is very confident of its own conclusions, and it is very sure of the infallibility of its own methods of research. It does not call its tenets "opinions," "views," "conjectures." It dignifies them in the mass by the abstract names of "philosophy," "science,"

"learning," "scholarship." It does not offer them to the Christian for testing and trial; it thrusts them upon him as the perfect expression of final knowledge. He is not requested to subject them to his touchstone, the Word of God, or sift from them the good and reject the bad. He is required to substitute them for the teachings of the Word of God as the only really solid basis of all his thinking.

For another thing, the Christian teacher is very anxious to conciliate the world. His primary interest is in the souls of men. May he not smooth the passage of many to the ark of safety by clothing himself in the garments of their thought? And, after all, why should he distrust either their methods or their conclusions? Would it not be better to take up a position shoulder to shoulder with them, stand on their platform, and concede to their demand everything which can be conceded while yet the central citadel be held? Has not the minimum of assertion after all its own strength? and is it not better to claim no more than we must? In any event, what is the use of flinging into the face of an unbelieving world as truth that which the consensus of scholarship or of scientific investigation proclaims impossible? Let Tertullian, if he will, "believe because it is impossible," and such paradoxists as Sir Thomas Browne train their faith by posing it with incredible things. We cannot expect men of common sense to look upon such procedure with allowance. Nay, as men of common sense ourselves, we cannot profess to nourish a faith strong enough to believe to be true what all science or all philosophy or all criticism pronounces unbelievable.

For still another thing-let us confess it with what shame we may-the Christian man is often painfully aware that he himself, that the Christian community, is no match for the world in varied knowledge, in power of dialectic, in diligence of literary production; and so feels too weak to hold his position in the face of the world's assaults. Had not an apostle foretold to us that not many wise would be called, and warned us that the wisdom of men would be arrayed against the truth of the gospel, we might indeed be often dismayed, if not beaten down, by the superior vigor, brightness, acumen, force of the world's thinking. As it is, we are often puzzled; and good men have sometimes thought it necessary, as they account for the unapproachable majesty and calm security of the apostolic writings by the inspiration of God, so to call in an evil inspiration to account for the brilliancy of the world's attack on the religion of Christ. Thus good John Newton suggests that evil men must be credited with what he calls a "black inspiration."

"After making the best allowance I can," he writes, "both for the extent of human genius and the deplorable evil of the human heart, I cannot suppose that one-half of the wicked wit, of which some persons are so proud, is properly their own. Perhaps such a one as Voltaire would neither have written, or have been read or admired so much, if he had not been the amanuensis of another hand in his own way."

Whatever account we may give, however, of the power of the world's thought over Christian men, it seems pretty clear that the "concessive" attitude which leads men to accept the tenets which have originated elsewhere than in the Scriptures as the foundation of their thinking, and to bend Scripture into some sort of conciliation with them, is the ruling spirit of our time, which may, therefore, be said to be dominated by the very spirit of "heresy." "Modern discovery" and "modern thought" are erected into the norm of truth, and we are told that the whole sphere of theological teaching must be conformed to it. This is the principle of that reconstruction of religious thinking which we are now constantly told is going on resistlessly about us, and which is to transform all

theology. What is demanded of us is just to adjust our religious views to the latest pronouncements of philosophy or science or criticism. And this is demanded with entire unconsciousness of the fundamental fact of Christianity-that we have a firmer ground of confidence for our religious views than any science or philosophy or criticism can provide for any of their pronouncements. It is very plain that he who modifies the teachings of the Word of God in the smallest particular at the dictation of any "man-made opinion" has already deserted the Christian ground, and is already, in principle, a "heretic." The very essence of "heresy" is that the modes of thought and tenets originating elsewhere than in the Scriptures of God are given decisive weight when they clash with the teachings of God's Word, and those are followed to the neglect or modification or rejection of these.

It probably requires to be confessed that the form which has been taken by much recent apologetics has played into the hands of this "concessive" habit, and may therefore be held responsible for some of the "heresy" in the Church of the day. Apologetics is in its nature a conciliatory science, and it is often the best apologetics to find and stand on the minimum. This is often the best apologetics, we say, but not always; and it can never be good apologetics to lead men to suppose that the minimum is all, or all that is worth defending, or all that is capable of defense. Yet it is undeniable that some recent apologetics has left on the minds of men some such impression. Perhaps we may even say that some recent apologists have been emphatic in proclaiming that this minimum is the entirety of defensible Christianity. At its best, however, this method of apologetics needs to be warily used; when it becomes a fixed habit of mind, it is very liable not only to be abused but to prove the prolific parent of many evils.

For one thing, it is found, in practice, that he who is accustomed to defend only the minimum is singularly apt to come to undervalue the undefended maximum. A truth not worth defending very soon comes to seem to him not worth professing. For another thing, the maximum left undefended is very apt to be also forgotten, and the defended minimum pieced out into some sort of apparent completeness, with scraps borrowed from the tenets elsewhere originating than in the Word of God; and so "a perversion of Christianity" arises, "an amalgamation with it of ideas discordant with its nature." For still another thing, he who only defends the minimum renounces the strongest and best of all the evidences of Christianity. That great demonstration of the truth of Christianity which springs at once from an apprehension of it as a whole, as a perfect and perfectly consistent system of truth: the evidence of the gospel itself as the grandest scheme of thought ever propounded to the world, is entirely lost. So that it may not unnaturally happen sometime that the defense of the minimum alone will turn out to be the minimum defense of the gospel. Finally and above all, there may easily enter into the habit of defending a minimum of the gospel alone a certain unfaithfulness to the truth committed to us, which may go far to forfeit the testimony of the Holy Spirit, which needs to attend all defense of the gospel if it is to prevail with men. After all, God wishes a large trust in him and in his power, and will honor those who are not afraid to make great drafts upon him. In this sphere, too, it may well prove true that he who speaks boldly in God's name all the truth that has been entrusted to him will have cause to admire God's power. Here too, mayhap, he is saying to us:

O, that my people would hearken unto me; That Israel would walk in my ways! I should soon subdue their enemies, And turn my hands against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord should submit themselves unto him.

In a time deeply marked by "concession," at all events, it is worth our while to remember on the one hand that "concession" is the high road to "heresy," and that "heresy" is "willfulness in doctrine"; and on the other, that God has revealed his truth to us to be held, confessed, and defended, and that, after all, he is able to defend and give due force to the whole circle of revealed truth. And surely it is worth our while to recognize the most outstanding fact in the conflicts of our age-this, namely, that the line of demarcation between the right-thinking and the wilfully-thinking lies just here-whether a declaration of God is esteemed as authoritative over against all the conjectural explanations of phenomena by men, or whether, on the contrary, it is upon the conjectural explanations of phenomena by men that we take our stand as over against the declaration of God. In the sphere of science, philosophy, and criticism alike, it is the conjectural explanations of phenomena which are put forward as the principles of knowledge. It is as depending on these that men proclaim science, philosophy, and criticism as the norm of truth. We are "orthodox" when we account God's declaration in his Word superior in point of authority to them, their interpreter, and their corrector. We are "heretical" when we make them superior in point of authority to God's Word, its interpreter, and its corrector. By this test we may each of us try our inmost thought and see where we stand-on God's side or on the world's.

The Prodigal Son

The Prodigal Son

by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

The following sermon was preached in the Chapel of Princeton Seminary on the text of Luke 15:11-32, somewhere between 1910-1913. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed.

I wish to speak to you to-day of the parable of the prodigal son, or, as it is becoming very common to call it, perhaps with greater exactness, the parable of the lost son. I shall not read it to you again. It has already been read in the lesson for the day. And in any event it is too familiar to require that you should be reminded even of the minuter details of the narrative. Probably no passage of the Scriptures is more widely known or more universally admired. The conversation and literature of devotion are full of allusions to it. And in the conversation and literature of the world it has far from an unhonoured place.

It owes the high appreciation it has won, no doubt, in large part to the exquisiteness of its literary form. From this point of view it fully deserves not only the, measured praise of a Grotius, but the enthusiastic exclamations of a Trench. It is "the finest of Christ's parables, filled with true feeling, and painted in the most beautiful colours." It is "the pearl and crown of all the parables of Scripture." Nothing could exceed the chaste perfection of the narrative, the picturesque truth of its portraiture, the psychological delicacy of its analysis. Here is a gem of story-telling, which must be pronounced nothing less than artistically perfect, whether viewed in its general impression, or in the elaboration of its details. We must add to its literary beauty, however, the preciousness of the lesson it conveys before we account for the place it has won for itself in the hearts of men. In this setting of fretted gold, a marvel of the artificer, there lies a priceless jewel; and this jewel is displayed to such advantage by its setting that men cannot choose but see and admire.

Indeed, we may even say that the universal admiration the parable commands has finished by becoming in some quarters a little excessive. The message which the parable brings us is certainly a great one. To lost sinners like you and me, assuredly few messages could appeal with more overwhelming force. Our hearts are wrung within us as we are made to realize that our Father in heaven will receive our wandering souls back with the joy with which this father in the parable received back his errant son. But it is an exaggeration to represent this message as all the Gospel, or even as the core of the Gospel; and to speak of this parable therefore, as it has become widely common to speak of it, as "the Gospel in the Gospel," or even as the summation of the Gospel. It is not that. There are many truths which it has no power to teach us that are essential to the integrity of the Gospel: nay, the very heart of the Gospel is not in it. And, therefore, precious as this parable is to us, and priceless as is its message, there are many other passages of Scripture more precious still, because their message enters more deeply into the substance of the Gospel. Take this passage for example: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only

begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have ever lasting life." Or this passage: "God, being rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, quickened us together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved), and raised us up with Him and made us sit with Him in the heavenly places with Christ Jesus." Or even this short passage: "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." All these are more precious passages than the parable of the lost son, not merely because they tell us more fully what is contained in the Gospel, but because they uncover to us, as it does not, what lies at the heart of the Gospel.

It is important that we should recognize this. For the exaggerated estimate which has been put upon this parable has borne bitter fruit in the world. Beginning with an effort to read into it all the Gospel, or at least the essence of the Gospel, it has ended by reading out of the Gospel all that is not in the parable. And thus this parable, the vehicle of a priceless message, has been transformed into the instrument of a great wrong. The worst things are often the corruption of the best: and the attempt to make the parable of the lost son the norm of the Gospel has resulted, I will not say merely in the curtailment of the Gospel, - I will say rather in the evisceration of the Gospel. On this platform there take their stand today a growing multitude the entire tendency and effect of all of whose efforts it is to eliminate from Christianity all that gives it value in the world, all that makes it that religion which has saved the world, and to reduce it to the level of a merely natural religion. "The Christianity of the prodigal son is enough for us," they declare: and they declare this with gusto because, to put it briefly, they do not like the Christianity of the Bible or the Christianity of Christ, and are happy not to find them in the parable of the lost son.

Now, let us recognize frankly at the outset, that the reason why these new teachers of an unchristian Christianity do not find Christianity in the parable of the lost son is, briefly, because this parable does not set forth Christianity, but only a small fragment of Christian teaching. The turn they have given to affairs is therefore merely the nemesis that treads on the heels of the mistaken attempts to read a full Christianity into this parable. The parable was not given to teach us Christianity, in its essence or its sum. It was given to teach us one single truth: a truth of the utmost value, not only full of emotional power, but, when placed in its relation to other truths, of the highest doctrinal significance; but not in itself sufficient to constitute Christianity, or even to embody its essence. How little what this parable teaches us can be conceived as of itself Christianity may easily be made plain by simply enumerating some of the fundamental elements of Christianity which receive no expression in it: and this negative task seems to be made incumbent on us at the outset of any study of the parable by the circumstance of its perversion to the uses of the propaganda of unbelief.

We observe, then, in the first place, that there is no atonement in this parable. And indeed it is precisely because there is no atonement in this parable that it has been seized upon by the modern tendency to which we have alluded, as the norm of the only Christianity it will profess. For nothing is more characteristic of this new type of Christianity than that it knows and will know nothing of an atonement. The old Socinians were quick to perceive this feature of the parable, and to make use of it in their assault upon the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction for sin. See, they cried, the father in the parable asks no satisfaction before he will receive back his son: he rather sees him afar off and runs to meet him and gives him a free and royal welcome. The response is no doubt just that other Scriptures clearly teach the atonement of which no hint is given here; and that

we have no "right to expect that every passage in Scripture, and least of all these parables, which exist under necessary limitations in their power of setting forth the truth, shall contain the whole circle of Christian doctrine." This answer is sufficient against the Socinian who appealed to Scripture as a whole and required to be reminded that we "must consider not what one Scripture says, but what all." But it scarcely avails against our modern enthusiast who either professedly or practically would fain make this parable the embodiment of all the Christianity he will profess. For him, Christianity must do without an atonement, because it is quite obvious that there is no atonement in this parable.

Nor is that more than the beginning of the matter. It must do without a Christ as well. For, we must observe, the parable has as little of Christ in it as it has of an atonement. The Socinians neglected to take note of this. In their zeal to point out that there is no trace in the parable of a satisfaction offered to the Father by which alone He might be enabled to receive back the sinner, they failed to note that neither is there trace in it of any mission of a Son at all-even merely to plead with the wanderer, make known the Father's continued love to him, and win him back to his right relation to the Father. That much of a mission of Christ they themselves confessed. But it is as absent from the parable as is the expiating Christ of the Evangelicals. In truth, there is in the parable no trace whatsoever of a Christ, in any form of mission. From all that appears from the narrative, the errant son was left absolutely alone in his sin, until, wholly of his own motion, he conceived the idea of returning to the Father. If its teaching is to be the one exclusive source of our Christianity we must content ourselves therefore with a Christianity without Christ.

Nor is even this by any means all. For, as has no doubt been noted already, there is as little trace of the saving work of the Holy Spirit in the parable as of that of Christ. The old Pelagians were as quick to see this as were the Socinians later to observe the absence of any hint of a sacrificial atonement. See, they said, the prodigal moves wholly of his own power: there is no efficient grace here, no effectual calling, no regeneration of the Spirit. And there is not. If this parable is to constitute our Christianity, then our Christianity must do without these things.

And doing without these things, it must do without a Holy Spirit altogether. For there is not the slightest hint of a Holy Spirit in any conceivable activity he may be thought to employ in the whole parable. Reduce the mode and effect of His operation to the most attenuated possible. Allow Him merely to plead with men from without the penetralium of their personality, to exercise influences upon them only of the nature of persuasion, such as men can exercise upon one another-still there is no hint of such influences here. From all that appears, the prodigal suo motu turned to the Father and owed to no one so much as a suggestion, much less assistance, in his resolve or its execution. If our Christianity is to be derived from this parable only, we shall have to get along without any Holy Spirit.

And even this is only the beginning. We shall have to get along also without any God the Father. What you say, - the whole parable concerns the father But what a father is this? It is certainly not the Father of the Christian revelation and not the Father of the Christian heart. He permits his son to depart from him without apparent emotion; and so far as appears he endures the absence of his son without a pang, - making not the slightest endeavour to establish or maintain communication with him or to recover him either to good or to himself. If he manifests joy at the happy return of the son after so many days, there is not the least evidence that in all the intervening time he had

expended upon him so much as a single message, much less brought to bear upon him the smallest inducement to return. In other words, what we know as the "seeking love of God" is absolutely absent from the dealing of the father with the son as here depicted: that is, the love of God which most nearly concerns you and me as sinners is conspicuous only by its absence. In this respect the parable stands in its suggestions below the companion parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin. When the shepherd lost his sheep, he left the ninety and nine in the wilderness and went after the lost one until he found it. When the woman lost her coin, she lit a candle and swept the house and sought diligently until she found it. But in the parable of the lost son, the father is not pictured as doing anything of the sort. The son leaves him and the son returns to him; and meanwhile the father, so far as appears, goes about his own affairs and leaves the son to go about his. So clear is it that this parable was not intended to embody the whole Gospel and does not contain even its essence. For what is the essence of the Gospel if it is not the seeking love of God?

The commentators, of course, have not left it so. Determined to get the Gospel out of the parable, they diligently go to work first to put it in. Thus one, in depicting the father's state of mind, grows eloquent in his description of his yearning love. "He has not forgotten his son, though he has forgotten him. He has been thinking of him during the long period of his absence. Probably he often cast glances along the road to see if perchance the erring one was returning, thinking he saw him in every stranger who made his appearance. He has continued looking, longing, till hope deferred has made the heart sick and weary to despair." Now no doubt the father felt all this.

Only the parable does not tell us so. And it would not have omitted to tell us so, if this state of mind on the father's part entered into the essence of its teaching. The fact is that this commentator is rewriting the parable. He is not expounding the parable we have, but composing another parable, a different parable with different lessons. Our Lord, with His exquisitely nice adjustment of every detail of this parable to His purpose, we may be sure, has omitted nothing needed for the most poignant conveyance of the meaning He intended it to convey. That the expositor feels it necessary to insert all this merely proves that he is bent on making the parable teach something foreign to it as it stands. What he has especially in mind to make it teach proves, as we read on, to be the autonomy of the human will. The lost thing, in the case of this parable, is a man: and because he is a man, and no lifeless thing nor an unthinking beast, we are told, he cannot, like the coin and the sheep, be sought. He must be left alone, to return, if return he ever does, wholly of his own motion and accord. Therefore, for sooth, the father's solicitude can only take the form of a waiting! Seeking love can be expended on a coin or a sheep, but not, it seems, on a man. In the case of a man, waiting love is all that is in place, or is possible. Is this the Gospel? Is this the Gospel even of these three parables? When we were told of the shepherd seeking his sheep, of the woman searching for her coin, was it of sheep and coins that the Master would have His hearers think? Does God care for oxen, or was it not altogether for our sakes that these parables too were spoken?

Into such self-contradictions, to say nothing of oppositions to the very *coy cordis* of the Gospel, do we fall when we refuse to be led by the text and begin to twist -it like a nose of wax to the teaching of our own lessons. The fact is, the parable teaches us none of these things and we must not bend or break it in a vain effort to make it teach them. Even when another commentator more modestly tells us that the two earlier parables-those of the lost sheep and the lost coin-set forth mainly the

seeking love of God; while the third-that of the lost son-" describes rather the rise and growth, responsive to that love, of repentance in - the heart of man."; he has gone far beyond his warrant. Why say this parable teaches the rise and growth of repentance" responsive to the seeking love of God"? There is no seeking love of God in the parable's picture of the relation of the father to the lost son, as indeed had just been allowed, in the assignment of the teaching as to that to the preceding parables. But why say even that it describes "the rise and growth of repentance"? It does of course describe the path which one repentant sinner's feet trod as he returned to his father: and so far as the case of one may be the case of all, we may therefore be said to have here, so far as the narrative goes, a typical instance. But there is no evidence that this description was intended as normative, and certainly no ground for finding in this the purpose of the parable. That purpose the text itself places elsewhere; and our wisdom certainly lies in refusing to turn the parable into allegory, reading into it all sorts of lessons which we fancy we may see lurking in its language here and there. We are safest in strictly confining ourselves to reading out of it the lesson it was designed to teach. This lesson was certainly not "the growth and course of sin" and "the growth and course of repentance"; but simply that "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." The exquisite surety of our Lord's touch as He paints the career of the unhappy man whose fortunes He employs to point His moral may tempt us to look upon the vivid picture He draws as the normative instance of sin and repentance: and surely there is no reason why we should not recognize that the picture thus brought before us corresponds with remarkable closeness to the great drama of human sin and repentance. But one must be on his guard against being led astray here. After all, the descriptions and analyses in the parable are determined directly by the requirements of the story, not by those of the history of the sinful soul over against its God; and we must beware of treating the parable as if its details belonged less to the picture than to something else which it seems to us adapted to illustrate. The only safe course is strictly to confine ourselves to the lesson the parable was framed to teach.

This is not to say, however, that this lesson is so single and simple that we can derive no teaching from the parable beyond what is compressible into a single proposition. It undoubtedly has its main lesson; but it could not well teach that lesson without teaching along with it certain subsidiary ones, closely connected with it as corollaries and supports, or at least implicated in the manner in which it is taught. Only, we must be very wary that we do not either on the one hand confuse these subsidiary things with the main lesson of the parable, or on the other read into it lessons of our own, fancifully derived from its mere forms of expression. We may perhaps illustrate what we mean and at the same time gather the teaching we may legitimately derive from the parable by asking ourselves now seriously what we do really learn from it.

And here, beginning at the extreme circumference of what we may really affirm we learn from this parable, I think we may say that we may derive from it, in the first place, - in its context, in the way it is introduced and in its relation to the fellow-parables coupled with it - one of those subtle evidences of the deity of our Lord which are strewn through the Synoptic Gospels. Although it leads us away from our main course, it behoves us to pause and take note of this, in view of the tendency lingering in some quarters to deny to the Synoptic Gospels a doctrine of the deity of Christ, and especially to the Jesus of the Synoptics any real divine consciousness. It would seem impossible for the unprejudiced reader to glance over these parables in their setting without feeling that both the evangelist and the Master as reported by him speak here out of an underlying

consciousness of His divine claims and estate. For, note the occasion out of which these parables arose and the immediate end to which they are directed. The publicans and sinners were flocking to the gracious preaching of Jesus, and Jesus was so far from repelling them, that He welcomed them to Him and mixed in intimate intercourse with them. This the Pharisees and Scribes made the subject of unpleasant remark among themselves. And our Lord spoke these parables in defence of Himself against their attack. But now note how He defends Himself. By parables of a good shepherd seeking his lost sheep; of a distressed woman seeking her lost coin; of a deserted father receiving back his wayward child. We surely do not need to argue that the good shepherd, the distressed woman, the deserted father stands in each instance for God. Jesus Himself tells us this in His application: "I say unto you" (and we must not miss here the slight but majestic intimation of the dignity of His person) "that there shall be joy in heaven"; "Likewise, I say unto you there is joy before the angels of God." Yet these parables are spoken to vindicate not God's, but Jesus' reception of sinners. The underlying assumption that Jesus' action and God's action are one and the same thing is unmistakable: and no reader fails tacitly to recognize Jesus Himself under the good shepherd and the distressed woman and the deserted father. In Him and His action men may see how things are looked upon in heaven. The lost, when they come to Him, are received because this is heaven's way; and since this is heaven's way, how could He do otherwise? This is not a mere appeal, as some have supposed, to the sympathy of heaven: as if He would say to the objector, "I have not your sympathy in this, but heaven is on my side!" Nor is it a mere appeal to a future vindication: as if He would say, "Now you condemn, but you will see it differently after a while." It is a defence of His conduct by reference of it to its true category. These publicans and sinners-why, they are His lost ones: and does not in every sphere of life he who loses what he values welcome its recovery with joy? Throughout the whole discussion there throbs thus the open implication that He bears the same relation to these sinners that the shepherd does to the sheep lost from the flock, the woman does to a coin lost from her store, the father does to a wandering child. And what is this but an equally open implication that He is in some mysterious way that Divine Being against whom all sin is committed, away from whose smile all sinners have turned, and back to whom they come when, repenting of their sin, they are recovered to good and to God?

In these parables, then, we see Jesus teaching with authority. And His divine voice is heard in them also rebuking sin. For the next thing, perhaps, which it behoves us to take notice of is the rebuke that sounds in them of the sin of spiritual pride and jealousy. This rebuke of course culminates in the portrait of the elder son and his unsympathetic attitude towards the rejoicing over his brother's return home, which occupies the latter part of the parable of the lost son. This episode has given the expositors much trouble; but this has been occasioned solely by their failure to apprehend aright the purpose of the parable. It is in truth an integral part of the parable, without which the parable would be incomplete.

In the former two parables-those of the lost sheep and the lost coin-Jesus was directly justifying Himself for "receiving sinners and eating with them." His justification is, shortly, that it is precisely the lost who require His attention: He came to seek and to save the lost. But these parables run up into a higher declaration: the declaration that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents rather than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance. This high note then becomes the dominant note of the discourse: and it is to illustrate it and to give it vividness and

force in the consciousness of His hearers that the, third parable-that of the lost son-is spoken. This third parable has not precisely the same direct apologetic purpose, therefore, which dominates the other two. It becomes more didactic and as such more of a mirror to reflect the entire situation and to carry home to the questioners the whole involved truth. Its incidents are drawn from a higher plane of experience and the action becomes more complex, by which a more varied play of emotion is allowed and a more complicated series of lessons is suggested. It is, therefore, not content, like the former parables, merely to illustrate the bare fact that joy accompanies the finding of the lost, with the implication that as sinners are what is lost to God, it is their recovery which causes Him joy. It undertakes to take up this fact, already established by the preceding parables, and to fix it in the heart as well as in the mind by summoning to its support the deepest emotions of the human soul, relieving at the same time the free play of these emotions from all interference from the side of a scrupulous sense of justice.

It is this latter function which the episode of the elder brother subserves; and it appears therefore not as an excrescence upon the parable, but as an essential element in it. Its object is to hold up the mirror of fact to the Pharisaic objectors that they may see their conduct and attitude of mind in their true light. Their moving principle was not, as they fancied, a zeal for righteousness which would not have sin condoned, but just a mean- spirited jealousy which was incapable of the natural response of the human spirit in the presence of a great blessing. They are like some crusty elder brother, says our Lord, who, when the long-lost wanderer comes contritely home, is filled with bitter jealousy of the joyful reception he receives rather than with the generous delight that moves all human hearts at the recovery of the lost.

The effect, you see, is to place the Pharisaic objectors themselves in the category of sinners, side by side with the outcasts they had despised ; to probe their hard hearts until they recognized their lost estate also; and so to bring them as themselves prodigals back in repentance to the Father's house. That they came back the parable does not say. It leaves them in the midst of bitter controversy with the Father because He is good. And here emerges a wonderful thing. That "seeking love" which is not signaled in the parable with reference to the lost - the confessedly lost - son, is brought before us in all its beautiful appeal with reference to these yet unrepentant elder brothers. For, you will observe, the father does not wait for the elder brother to come into the house to him; he goes out to him. He speaks soothing words to him in response to his outpouring of bitterness and disrespect. When, in outrageous words, this son celebrates his own righteousness and accuses the father of hardness and neglect, refusing indeed in his wrath to recognize his relationship either with him or his: the father responds with mild entreaties, addressing him tenderly as " child," proffering unbroken intercourse with him, endowing him with all his possessions, - in a word, pleading with him as only a loving father can. Did the elder son hearken to these soft reproofs and yield to this endearing appeal? It was for the Pharisees to answer that question. Our Lord leaves it there. And the effect of the whole is to show them that, contrary to their assumption, the Father in heaven has no righteous children on earth; that His grace is needed for all, and most of all for those who dream they have no need of it. By thus skilfully dissecting, under the cover of the sour elder brother, the state of mind of the Pharisaic objectors, our Lord breaks down the artificial distinction by which they had separated themselves from their sinful brethren, and in doing so breaks down also the barriers which held their sympathies back and opens the way to full appreciation by them of the joy He would have them

feel in the recovery of the lost. Was there one among them with heart yet open to the appeal of the seeking God, surely he smote his breast as he heard these poignant closing words of the parable and cried, no longer in the voice of a Pharisee, but in the voice of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Surely, like one of their own number only a few years later, the scales fell from his eyes and he confessed himself not only a sinner, but even the chief of sinners.

It would not be quite exact perhaps to say that the parable rebukes spiritual pride and jealousy as well as proclaims the joy in heaven over the recovery of the lost. Its lesson is one; and its one lesson is only thrown into a clearer light by the revelation of the dreadfulness of its contrast in jealousy of the good fortune of the saved. Men all are in equal need of salvation, where is there room for censorious complaint of the goodness of God? This levelling effect of the parable raises the question whether there is not contained in it some hint of the universalism of the Gospel. Surely through and through its structure sounds the note of, "For there is no difference!" No difference between the publicans and sinners on the one side, and the Pharisees and the Scribes on the other. The Pharisees themselves being judges, this were equivalent to no difference between Jew and Gentile. Were not the publicans to them as heathen men? And was not "sinners" just the name by which they designated the Gentiles? If their scrupulous attention to the law did not raise them above all commerce or comparison with sinners, what profit was there in being a Jew? We certainly do not purpose to say with some that Jesus was teaching a universal religion without knowing it: and we certainly do not discover here the germ of a universal religion in this-that Jesus meant to teach that nothing lies between the sinner and his recovery to God but an act of the sinner's own will, an act to which every sinner is ever competent, at all times and in all circumstances. And yet it seems not improper to perceive in the levelling effect of the implied inclusion of the Pharisees themselves - in the one great class of sinners a hint of that universalism which Jesus gave His Gospel when He proclaimed Himself the Saviour of all who believe on Him.

But, however this may be, we approach nearer to the great lesson of the parable when we note that there is certainly imbedded in its teaching that great and inexpressibly moving truth that there is no depth of degradation, return from which will not be welcomed by God. A sinner may be too vile for any and every thing else; but he cannot be too vile for salvation. We observe at any rate that our Lord does not hold His hand when He comes to paint the degradation of sinners, through His picture of the degradation into which the lost son had sunk. No depths are left beneath the depths which He here portrays for us. This man had dealt with his inheritance with the utmost recklessness. He had wasted the whole of it until he was left stripped bare of all that he had brought from his father's house. Nor was there anything to take its place. The country in which he had elected to dwell was smitten, throughout its whole extent, with a biting famine. In all its length and breadth there was nothing on which a man might live. The prodigal was reduced to "bend and pray and fawn at the feet of a certain citizen of that dread land and was sent by him out into the barren fields - to feed swine! To a Jew, degradation could not be more poignantly depicted. Yes, it could: there was one stage worse and that stage was reached. The lost son not only herded the swine; he herded with them. "He was fain to fill his belly from the husks that the swine did eat." Not with the same quality of food, observe, but from the swine's own store - for" no man gave unto him." In this terrible description of extreme degradation there may be a side glance at the actual state of the publicans, our Lord's reception of and association with whom was such an offence to the Jewish consciousness. For did not they not merely serve against their own people those

swines of Gentiles but actually feed themselves at their trough? But however this may be, it is clear that our Lord means to paint degradation in its depths. He does not spare the sinners with whom He consorted. His defence for receiving them does not turn upon any failure to recognize or feel their true quality; any representation of them as not so bad after all; as if they had been painted blacker than they were, and were nice enough people to associate with if only we were not so fastidious. He says rather that they are bad past expression and past belief. His defence is that they can be saved; and that He is here to save them. Lost? Yes, they are lost; and there is no reason why we should not take the word at the top - or rather at the bottom-of its meaning: this is the parable of the lost son. But Jesus is the Saviour of the lost; and there is none so lost that he may not be found by Him, and, being found by Him, be also found in Him. Oh, no! Jesus does not rejoice in sinners: it is not sin He loves nor sinners as sinners. What He rejoices in is the rescue of sinners from their sin. And the deeper the sin the greater the rescue and the greater the joy. "I say unto you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." "I say unto you, there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, rather than over ninety and nine just persons, such as have no need of repentance."

It is in this great declaration that the real purport of the parable is expressed. This parable was spoken to teach us, to put it briefly, that God in heaven rejoices over the repentance of every sinner that repents. It is a commentary therefore on those great passages which tell us that God would have no man perish, but all to come to Him and live; and it is more than a commentary on these passages, inasmuch as it throws the emphasis upon the positive side and tells us of the joy that God feels at the repentance of every sinner who repents. To the carrying of this great message home to our hearts all the art of the parable is directed, and it is our wisdom to read it simply to this end. We need not puzzle ourselves over the significance, then, of this detail or that, as if we were bound or indeed permitted to discover, allegorically, some spiritual meaning in each turn of the story. The most of these find their account in the demands of the story itself and enter into its lesson only as contributory details, adding vividness and truth to the illustration.

Thus, for instance, if we ask why there are only two sons in the parable, while there were ten pieces of silver in the preceding one, and a hundred sheep in the first one; the answer is that just two sons were needed to serve Jesus' purpose of illustrating the contrast between the Pharisees and Scribes on the one side and the publicans and sinners on the other; his purpose not being at all to indicate proportion of numbers, but difference in status and conduct. In the former parables the suggestion of comparative insignificance was requisite to bring out the full lesson; in this, the contrast of character serves His purpose. If again it is asked why it is the younger son who becomes a prodigal, the answer is that the propriety of the story demands it. It would be inconceivable that the older son, who according to custom was the co-possessor and heir of the fundamental estate, should have asked or received an inheritance apart from it. But the thing was not unnatural, and doubtless not unusual, in a younger son, who was to be portioned off in any event in the end, and was only asking that he might not wait on his father's death, but might be permitted to "set up for himself" at once. We cannot therefore with confidence discover the beginnings of the prodigal's downfall in his request that his inheritance might be told off to him, or wonder overmuch why the father so readily granted this request. It is tempting, no doubt, to see in the wish of the son to "set up for himself" a hint of a heart already little at one with the law and custom of the father's house. But such allegorizing is dangerous, especially when not suggested

by any hint in the language of the narrative or necessarily contained in the situation depicted. It is customary to speak of the younger son as a young man. It may be so. But the narrative does not say so. He may have been in middle life; and it may well have seemed to all concerned that a desire on his part to begin to build up his own house was altogether right and fitting. The separation of his goods from his father's at all events appears in the parable only as the precedent condition of his spending them, not as the beginning of his downfall.

We need not go further, however, into detail. Enough that the story has a single point. And that point is the joy of the father at the return of the son, a joy which is the expression, not of the natural love of the father for a son, but of the overwhelming emotion of mingled relief and thankfulness and overmastering rapture which fills the heart of a father on the recovery of a lost son. The point of the narrative is not, then, that this prodigal is a son, though that underlies and gives its verisimilitude to the picture. The point is that this son is a prodigal. It is because he has been lost and is now found that the joy of the father is so great. The elder son is a son too; and the father loves him also. Let him who doubts it read again the exquisite narrative of the father's tender and patient dealings with him. There is not in all literature a more beautiful picture of parental affection pleading with unfilial passion. This father knew perfectly how to fulfil the injunction later laid down by the apostle Paul: "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." From this point of view that soothing admonition, "Child, thou" (the emphasis on the "thou" must not be neglected) "art always with me; and all that is mine is thine; but it was meet to make merry and be glad, because this thy brother was dead and is alive, and was lost and is found" - is simply perfect. So clear is it that the lesson of the parable does not turn on the prodigal's being a son, but on this son being a prodigal.

In other words, its lesson is not that God loves His children, but that God loves sinners. And thus this parable is seen ranging with the preceding ones. The lost sheep, the lost coin, the lost son, have only this one thing in common, that they are lost ; and the three parables unite in commending the one common lesson to us, that as men rejoice in the recovery of what is lost, so God rejoices in the recovery of sinners since sinners are the things that to Him are lost. We must not, then, use this parable to prove that God is a father, or draw inferences from it as if that were its fundamental teaching. It does not teach that. What it teaches is that God will receive the returning sinner with the same joy that the father in the parable received the returning prodigal; because as this son was to that father's heart above all other things that he had lost, his lost one, and his return was therefore above all other things that might have been returned to him his recovery ; so sinners are above all else that God has lost in the world His lost ones, and their return to Him above all other restorations that may be made to Him His recovery. The vivid picture of the father not staying to receive the returning son, but, moved with compassion as he spied him yet a great way off, running out to meet him and falling on his neck and kissing him in his ecstasy again and again; cutting short his words of confession with the command that the best robe be brought to clothe him, and shoes for his blistered feet, and a ring for his finger, and the order that the fatted calf be killed and the feast be spread, and the music and the dance be prepared because, as he says, "This my son was dead and is alive, was lost and is found " - all this in the picture is meant to quicken our hearts to some apprehension of the joy that fills God's heart at the return of sinners to Him.

O brethren, our minds are dulled with much repetition, and refuse to take the impression our Lord would make on them. But even we-can we fail to be moved with wonder to-day at this great message, that God in heaven rejoices - exults in joy like this human father receiving back his son-when sinners repent and turn to Him? On less assurance than that of Jesus Christ Himself the thing were perhaps incredible. But on that assurance shall we not take its comfort to our hearts? We are sinners. And our only hope is in one who loves sinners; and has come into the world to die for sinners. Marvel, marvel beyond our conception; but, blessed be God, as true as marvellous. And when we know Him better, perhaps it may more and more cease to be a marvel. At least, one of those who have known Him best and served Him most richly in our generation, has taught us to sing thus of His wondrous death for us:

That He should leave His place on high,

And come for sinful man to die,

You count it strange ?-so do not I,

Since I have known my Saviour.

Nay, had there been in all this wide

Wide world no other soul beside

But only mine, then He had died

That He might be its Saviour;

Then had He left His Father's throne,

The joy untold, the love unknown,

And for that soul had given His own,

That He might be its Saviour!

Is that too high a flight for us-that passion of appropriation by which the love of Jesus for me-my own personal soul-is appreciated so fully that it seems natural to us that He, moved by that great love that was in Him for me - even me - should leave His throne that He might die for me, - just me, - even were there none else beside? At least we may assent to the dispassionate recognition that in the depths of our parable is hidden the revelation of that fundamental characteristic of Jesus Christ by virtue of which He did become the Saviour at least of sinners. And seeing this and knowing ourselves to be sinners, we may acknowledge Him afresh to-day as our Saviour, and at least gratefully join in our passionate sinner's prayer:

And oh! that He fulfilled may see

The travail of His soul in me,

And with His work contented be,

As I am with my Saviour!

Yea, living, dying, let me bring

My strength, my solace from this spring,
That He who lives to be my King,
Once died to be my Saviour!

The Risen Jesus

The Risen Jesus

by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

The following sermon was preached in the Chapel of Princeton Seminary on the text of 2 Ephesians 2:8, somewhere between 1910-1913. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed. The opening verses of the second chapter of the Second Epistle to Timothy are in essence a comprehensive exhortation to faithfulness. The apostle Paul was lying imprisoned at Rome, with expectation of no other issue than death. The infant Church had fallen upon perilous times. False teachers were assailing the very essence of the Gospel. Defection had invaded the innermost circle of the apostle's companions. Treachery had attacked his own person. Over against all these dreadful manifestations of impending destruction, he strenuously exhorts his own son in faith, Timothy, to steadfast faithfulness. Faithfulness to himself, faithfulness to the cause he had at heart, faithfulness to the truth as he preached it, faithfulness to Jesus Christ, their common Redeemer and Lord.

The temptations to unfaithfulness by which Timothy was assailed were very numerous and very specious. Many good men had fallen and were falling victims to them. The perverted teachings of the errorists of the day were urged with a great show of learning and with eminent plausibility. And they were announced with a fine scorn which openly declared that only dull wits could rest in the crude ideas with which Paul had faced the world-and lost. The sword of persecution had been ruthlessly unsheathed, and sufferings and a cruel death watched in the way of those who would fain walk in the path Paul had broken out. It seemed as if the whole fabric which the apostle had built up at such cost of labour and pain was about to fall about his ears.

Paul does not for a moment, however, lose courage, either for himself, or for his faithful followers. But neither does he seek to involve Timothy unwittingly in the difficulties and dangers in which he found himself. He rather bids him first of all to count the whole cost. And then he points him to a source of strength which will supply all his needs. We called the passage an exhortation. We might better call it, more specifically, an encouragement. And the encouragement culminates in a very remarkable sentence. This sentence is pregnant enough to reveal at once the central thought of Paul's Gospel and the citadel of his own strength. Amid all the surrounding temptations, all the encompassing dangers, Paul bids Timothy to bear in mind, as the sufficing source of abounding strength, the great central doctrine, - or rather, let us say, the great central fact-of his preaching, of his faith, of his life. And he enunciates this great fact, in these words: Jesus Christ raised from the dead, of the seed of David.

It is, of course, to the glorified Jesus that Paul directs his own and Timothy's gaze. Or, to be more specific, it is to the regal lordship of the resurrected Jesus that he points as the Christian's strength and support. The language is compressed to the extremity of conciseness. It is difficult to convey its full force except in diluted paraphrase. Paul bids Timothy in the midst of all the besetting

perplexities and dangers which encompassed him to strengthen his heart by bearing constantly in remembrance, not Jesus Christ simpliciter, but Jesus Christ conceived specifically as the Lord of the Universe, who has been dead, but now lives again and abides for ever in the power of an endless life; as the royal seed of David ascended in triumph to His eternal throne. It is not from the exaltation of Jesus alone, let us observe, that Paul draws and would have Timothy draw strength to endure in the crisis which had fallen upon their lives. It is to the contrast between the past humiliation and the present glory of the exalted Lord that he directs his eyes. He does not say simply, "Bear in mind that Jesus Christ sits on the throne of the universe and all things are under His feet," although, of course, it is the universal dominion of Jesus which gives its force to the exhortation. He says, "Bear in mind that Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead, of the seed of David—that it is He that died who, raised from the dead, sits as eternal king in the heavens." No doubt a part of the apostle's object in his allusion to the past humiliation of the exalted Lord is to constitute a connection between Jesus Christ and his faithful followers, that they may become imitators of Him. They, the viatores, may see in Him, the consummator, one who like them had Himself been viator, and may be excited to follow after Him that they too may in due time become consummatores. But the nerve of the exhortation, obviously, does not lie in this, as the very language in which it is couched sufficiently avouches. How could Timothy imitate our Lord in being of the seed of David? How could he imitate Him by ascending the throne of the universe? Fundamentally the apostle is pointing to Christ not as our example, but as our almighty Saviour. He means to adduce the great things about Him. And the central one of the great things he adduces about Him is that He has been raised from the dead.

It is not to be overlooked, of course, that Paul adverts to the resurrection of Christ here with his mind absorbed not so much in the act of His rising as in its issues. "Bear in mind," he says, "Jesus Christ as one who has been raised from the dead": that is to say, as one who could not be holden of the grave, but has burst the bonds of death, and lo! He lives for evermore. But neither can it be overlooked that it is specifically to the resurrection, which is an act, that he adverts; and that he adverts to it in such a manner as to make it manifest that the fact of the resurrection of Christ held a place in his Gospel which deserves to be called no-thing less than central. The exalted Christ is conceived by him distinctly as the resurrected Jesus; and it is clear that, had there been no resurrection of Jesus, Paul would not have known how to point Timothy to the exalted Christ as the source of his strength to face with courage the hardships and defeats of life. From this great fact, he derives, therefore, the very phraseology with which he exhorts Timothy, with rich reference to all that is involved in Christ our Forerunner, to die with his Lord that he might also live with Him, to endure with Him that he might also reign with Him. To Paul, it is clear, the resurrection of Christ was the hinge on which turned all his hopes and all his confidence, in life and also in death.

Now, there is a sense in which it is of no special importance to lay stress on the place which the resurrection of Christ held in Paul's thought and preaching. In this sense, to wit: that nobody doubts that it was central to Paul's Gospel. It would seem impossible, in fact, to read the New Testament and miss observing that not only to Paul, but to the whole body of the founders of Christianity, the conviction of the reality of Christ's bodily resurrection entered into the very basis of their faith. The fact is broadly spread upon the surface of the New Testament record. Our Lord Himself deliberately staked His whole claim to the credit of men upon His resurrection. When asked for a sign He pointed to this sign as His single and sufficient credential. The earliest

preachers of the Gospel conceived witnessing to the resurrection of their Master to be their primary function. The lively hope and steadfast faith which sprang up in them they ascribed to its power. Paul's whole gospel was the gospel of the Risen Saviour: to His call he ascribed his apostleship; and to His working, all the manifestation of the Christian faith and life. There are in particular two passages in Paul's Epistles, which reveal, in an almost startling way, the supreme place which was ascribed to the resurrection of Christ by the first believers in the Gospel.

In a context of very special vigour he declares roundly that "if Christ hath not been raised" the apostolic preaching and the Christian faith are alike vanity, and those who have believed in Christ lie yet unrelieved of their sins. His meaning is that the resurrection of Christ occupied the centre of the Gospel which was preached alike by him and all the apostles, and which had been received by all Christians. If, then, this resurrection should prove to be not a real occurrence, the preachers of the Gospel are convicted of being false witnesses of God, the faith founded on their preaching is proved an empty thing, and the hopes conceived on its basis are rendered void. Here Paul implicates with him the whole Christian community, teachers and taught alike, as suspending the truth of Christianity on the reality of the resurrection of Christ. And so confident is he of universal agreement in the indispensableness of this fact to the integrity of the Christian message, that he uses it for his sole fulcrum for prying back the doctrine of the resurrection of believers into its proper place in the faith of his sceptical readers. "If dead men are not raised, neither hath Christ been raised," is his sole argument. And he plies this argument with the air of a man who knows full well that no one who calls himself a Christian will tolerate that conclusion. The fact that Christ has been raised lay firmly embedded in the depths of the Christian consciousness.

In some respects even more striking are the implications of such phraseology as meets us in another passage. Here the apostle is contrasting all the "gains" of the flesh with the one great "gain" of the spirit-Christ Jesus the Lord. As over against "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, his Lord," he declares that he esteems "all things" as but refuse, - the heap of leavings from the feast which is swept from the table for the dogs, - if only he may "gain Christ and be found in Him," if only, he repeats, he may "know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed into His death; if by any means he may attain to the resurrection from the dead." The structure of the sentence requires us to recognize the very essence of the saving efficacy of Christ as resident in "the power of His resurrection." It is through the power exerted by His resurrection that His saving work takes effect on men. That is to say, Paul discovers the centre of gravity of the Christian hope no less than of the Christian faith in the fact of the resurrection of Christ. And of the Christian life as well. From the great fact that Christ has risen from the dead, proceed all the influences by which Christians are made in life and attainments, here and hereafter, like Him.

In the face of such evidence, spread broadcast over the New Testament, no one has been able to question that the founders of Christianity entrenched themselves in the fact of Christ's resurrection as the central stronghold of their hope, faith, and proclamation. We do not need to lay stress, therefore, on this implication in such a passage as that before us, as if we were seeking proof for a doubtful or even for a doubted fact. The importance of our laying stress on its implication here and its open assertion throughout the New Testament, is that we may be able to estimate the real significance of a very wide-spread tendency which has arisen in our own time to question the importance of this event on which the founders of Christianity laid such great emphasis, and to

which they attached such palmary consequence. If nobody doubts that the first preachers of the Gospel esteemed the resurrection of Christ the foundation-stone of their proclamation, the chief stay of their faith and hope alike, there are nevertheless many who do not hesitate to declare roundly that the first preachers of the Gospel were grossly deceived in so esteeming it. This is an inevitable sequence, indeed, of the chariness with respect to the supernatural which so strongly characterizes our modern world. The "unmiraculous Christianity" which has, in one or another of its modes of conception, grown so fashionable in our day, as it could scarcely allow that the most stupendous of all miracles really lay at the basis of Christianity in its historical origins, so cannot possibly allow that confidence in the reality of this stupendous miracle lies to-day at the foundation of the Christian's life and hope. To allow these things would be to confess that Christianity is through and through a supernatural religion - supernatural in its origin, supernatural in its sanctions, supernatural in its operations in the world. And then, - what would become of "unmiraculous Christianity"?

Accordingly, we have now for more than a whole generation, been told over and over again, and with ever-increasing stridency of voice, that it makes no manner of difference whether Jesus rose from the dead or not. The main fact, we are told, is not whether the body that was laid in the tomb was resuscitated. Of what religious value, we are asked, can that purely physical fact be to any man? The main fact is that Jesus-that Jesus who lived in the world a life of such transcendent attractiveness, going about doing good, and by His unshaken and unshakable faith in providence revealed to men the love of a Father-God, this Jesus, though He underwent the inevitable experience of change which men call death, yet still lives. Lives ! - lives in His Church; or at least lives in that heaven to which He pointed us as the home of our Father, and to which we may all follow Him from the evils of this life; or in any event lives in the influence which His beautiful and inspiring life still exerts upon His followers and through them in the world. This, this, we are told, is the fact of real religious value; the only fact upon which the religious emotions can take hold; by which the religious life can be quickened; and through which we may be impelled to religious effort and strengthened in religious endurance.

The beauty of the language in which these assertions are clothed and the fervour of religious feeling with which it is suffused, must not be permitted to blind us to the real issue that is raised by them. This is not whether our faith is grounded in a mere resuscitation of a dead man two thousand years ago; or rather in a living Lord reigning in the heavens. It is not the peculiarity of this new view that it focuses men's eyes on the glorified Jesus and bids them look to Him for their inspiration and strength. That is what the apostles did, and what all, since the apostles, who have followed in their footsteps, have done. Paul did not say to Timothy merely, "Remember that Jesus Christ, when He died, rose again from the dead, "- although to have said that would have been to have said much. Directing Timothy's eyes to the glorified Jesus, reigning in power in the heavens, he said, "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David." It is not, then, the peculiarity of this new view that it has discovered the living and reigning Christ. The living and reigning Christ has always been the object of the adoring faith of Christians. It is its peculiarity that it neglects or denies the resurrected Christ.

It does not pretend that in neglecting or denying the resurrected Christ it does not break with the entirety of historical Christianity. It freely allows that the apostles firmly believed in a resurrected Christ, and that, following the apostles, Christians up to today have firmly believed in a resurrected

Christ. And it freely allows that this firm belief in a resurrected Christ has been the source of much of the enthusiasm of Christian faith and of the Christian propaganda through all the ages. But it hardily affirms that this emphasis on the resurrected Christ nevertheless involves a gross confusion - no less a confusion than that of the kernel with the husk. And it stoutly maintains that the time has come to shell off the husk and keep the kernel only. Religious belief, we are told, cannot possibly rest on or be inseparably connected with a mere occurrence in time and space. What others have seen in a different age from ours-what is that to us? That Jesus rose from the dead two thousand years ago and was seen of men - how can that concern us to-day? All that can possibly be of any significance to us is that He was "not swallowed up in death, but passed through suffering and death to glory, that is, to life, power, and honour." "Faith has nothing to do with the knowledge of the form in which Jesus lives, but only with the conviction that He is the living Lord."

Here now is a brand-new conception of the matter, standing in express contrast, and in expressly acknowledged contrast, with the conception of the founders, and hitherto of the whole body of the adherents, of Christianity. It is the outgrowth, as we have already hinted, of a distaste for the supernatural. To get rid of the supernatural in the origins of Christianity, its entire historical character is surrendered. The Christianity now to be proclaimed is to be confessedly a "I new Christianity" - a different Christianity from any which has ever heretofore existed on the face of the earth. And its novelty consists in this, that it is to have no roots in historical occurrences of any kind whatsoever. Religious belief, we are told, must be independent of all mere facts.

We must not forget that the professed purpose of this new determination of the relation of Christianity to fact is to save Christianity. If Christianity is independent of all historical facts, why, it is clear that it cannot be assailed through the medium of historical criticism. Let criticism reconstruct the historical circumstances which have been connected with its origin as it may; it cannot touch this Christianity which stands out of relation with all historical occurrences whatever. Doubtless it would be a great relief to many minds to be emancipated from all fear of historical criticism. But it is certainly a great price we are asked to pay for this emancipation. The price indeed is no less an one than Christianity itself. For the obvious effect of the detachment of Christianity from all historical fact is to dismiss Christianity out of the realm of fact.

Christianity is a "historical religion," and a "Christianity" wholly unrelated to historical occurrences is just no Christianity at all. Religion, - yes, man may have religion without historical facts to build upon, for man is a religious animal and can no more escape from religion than he can escape from any other of his persistent instincts. He may still by the grace of God know something of God and the soul, moral responsibility and immortality. But do not even the heathen know the same? And what have we more than they? We may still call by the name of "Christianity" the tattered rags of natural religion which may be left us when we have cast away all the facts which constitute Christianity, - the age-long preparation for the coming of the Kingdom of God; the Incarnation of the Son of God; His atoning death on the Cross; His rising again on the third day and His ascension to heaven; the descent of the Spirit on the Pentecostal birthday of the Church. But to do so is to outrage all the proprieties of honest nomenclature. For "Christianity" is not a mere synonym of "religion," but is a specific form of religion determined in its peculiarity by the great series of historical occurrences which constitute the redemptive work of God in this sinful world, among which occurrences the resurrection of Christ holds a substantial and in some respects the

key position.

The impossibility of sustaining anything which can be called "Christianity" without embracing in it historical facts, may be illustrated by the difficulty in carrying out their programme which is experienced by men who talk of freeing Christianity from its dependence on facts. For do they not bid us to abstract our minds, indeed, from that imagined resuscitation that occurred in Palestine (if it occurred at all) two thousand years ago, but to focus them nevertheless on the living Jesus, who has survived death and still lives in heaven? Do they forget that when they say "Jesus" they already say "history"? Who is this "Jesus" who still lives in heaven, and the fact of whose still living in heaven, having passed through death, is to be our inspiration? Did He once live on earth? And, living on earth, did He not manifest that unwavering faith in providence which reveals the Father-God to us? Otherwise what is it to us that He "still" lives in heaven? To be free from the entanglements of history; to be immune from the assaults of historical criticism; it is not enough to cease to care for such facts as His resurrection: we must cease to care for the whole fact of Jesus. Jesus is a historical figure. What He was, no less than what He did, is a matter of historical testimony. When we turn our backs on historical facts as of no significance to our, "Christianity," we must turn our backs as well on Jesus-any Jesus we choose to rescue for ourselves from the hands of historical criticism. He who would have a really "unhistorical Christianity" must know no Jesus whether on earth or in heaven. And surely a Christianity without Jesus is just no Christianity at all.

Christianity then stands or falls with the historical facts which, we do not say merely accompanied its advent into the world, but have given it its specific form as a religion. These historical facts constitute its substance, and to be indifferent to them is to be indifferent to the substance of Christianity. In these circumstances it is a dangerous proceeding to declare this or that one of them of no significance to the Christian religion. Especially is it a dangerous proceeding to single out for this declaration, one in which the founders of Christianity discovered so much significance as they discovered in the resurrection of Christ. When Paul says to us, not "Remember Jesus Christ enthroned in heaven," but "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David," we surely must pause before we allow ourselves to say, "It is of no importance whether He rose from the dead or not." And if we pause and think but a moment, we certainly shall not fail to set our seal to Paul's judgment of the significance of His rising from the dead to the Christian religion. For once let us cast our minds over the real place which the resurrection of Christ holds in the Christian system and we shall not easily escape the conviction that this fact is fundamental to its entire message.

Let us recall in rapid survey some of the various ways in which the resurrection of Jesus evinces itself as lying at the basis of all our hope and of all the hope of the world.

It is natural to think, first of all, of the place of this great fact in Christian apologetics. Opinions may conceivably differ whether it would have been possible to believe in Christianity as a supernaturally given religion if Christ had remained holden of the grave. But it is scarcely disputable that the fact that He did rise again, being once established, supplies an irrefragable demonstration of the supernatural origin of Christianity, of the validity of Christ's claim to be the Son of God, and of the trust worthiness of His teaching as a Messenger from God to man. In the light of this stupendous miracle, all hesitation with respect to the supernatural accompaniments of the life that preceded it, or of the succeeding establishment of the religion to which its seal had

been set, nay, of the whole preparation for the coming of the Messenger of God who was to live and die and rise again, and of the whole issue of His life and death and resurrection-becomes at once unreasonable and absurd. The religion of Christ is stamped at once from heaven as divine, and all marks of divinity in its preparation, accompaniments, and sequences become at once congruous and natural. From the empty grave of Jesus the enemies of the cross turn away in unconcealable dismay. Christ has risen from the dead! After two thousand years of the most determined assault upon the evidence which establishes it, that fact stands. And so long as it stands, Christianity too must stand as the one supernatural religion. The resurrection of Christ is the fundamental apologetical fact of Christianity.

But it holds no more fundamental place in Christian apologetics than in the revelation of life and immortality which Christianity brings to a dying world. By it the veil was lifted and men were permitted to see the reality of that other world to which we are all journeying. The whole relation they bore to life and death, and the life beyond death, was revolutionized to those who saw Him and companied with Him after He had risen from the dead. Death had no longer any terrors for them: they no longer needed to believe, they knew, that there was life on the other side of death, that the grave was but a sojourning place, and, though their earthly tentdwelling were dissolved, they had a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

And we who have come later may see with their eyes and handle with their hands the Word of Life. We can no longer speak of a bourne from which no traveller e'er returns. The resurrection of Christ has broken the middle wall of partition down and only a veil now separates earth from heaven. That He who has died has been raised again and ever lives in the completeness of His humanity is the fundamental fact in the revelation of the Christian doctrine of immortality.

Equally fundamental is the place which Christ's resurrection occupies relatively to our confidence in His claims, His teachings, and His promises. The Lord of Life could not succumb to death. Had he not risen, could we have believed Him when He "made Himself equal with God"? By His resurrection He set a seal on all the instructions which He gave and on all the hopes which He awakened. Had the one sign which He chose failed, would not His declarations have all failed with it? Is it nothing to us that He who said, "Come unto Me and I will give you rest who has promised to be with those who trust Him always even unto the end of the world"; who has announced to us the forgiveness of sins; has proved that He has power to lay down His life and to take it again? Whether is it easier to say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," or "I will arise and walk"? That He could not be holden of death, but arose in the power of a deathless life, gives us to know that the Son of Man has power to forgive sins.

And there is a yet deeper truth: the resurrection of Christ is fundamental to the Christian's assurance that Christ's work is complete and His redemption is accomplished. It is not enough that we should be able to say, "He was delivered up for our trespasses." We must be able to add, "He was raised for our justification." Else what would enable us to say, He was able to pay the penalty He had undertaken? That He died manifests His love and His willingness to save. It is His rising again that manifests His power and His ability to save. We cannot be saved by a dead Christ, who undertook but could not perform, and who still lies under the Syrian sky, another martyr of impotent love. To save, He must pass not merely to but through death. If the penalty was fully paid, it cannot have broken Him, it must needs have been broken upon Him. The resurrection of

Christ is thus the indispensable evidence of His completed work, of His accomplished redemption. It is only because He rose from the dead that we know that the ransom He offered was sufficient, the sacrifice was accepted, and that we are His purchased possession. In one word, the resurrection of Christ is fundamental to the Christian hope and the Christian confidence.

It is fundamental, therefore, to our expectation of ourselves rising from the dead. Because Christ has risen, we no more judge that "if one died for all, then all died," "that the body of sin might be done away," than that having died with Him "we shall also live with Him." His resurrection drags ours in its train. In His rising He conquered death and presented to God in His own person the first-fruits of the victory over the grave. In His rising we have the earnest and pledge of our rising: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will He bring with Him." Had Christ not risen could we nourish so great a hope? Could we believe that what is sown in corruption shall be raised in incorruption; what is sown in dishonour shall be raised in glory; what is sown in weakness shall be raised in power; what is sown a body under the dominion of a sinful self shall be raised a body wholly determined by the spirit of God?

Last of all, to revert to the suggestion of the words of Paul with which we began, in the resurrection of Christ we have the assurance that He is the Lord of heaven and earth whose right it is to rule and in whose hands are gathered the reins of the universe. Without it we could believe in His love: He died for us. We could believe in His continued life beyond the tomb: who does not live after death? It might even be possible that we should believe in His victory over evil: for it might be conceived that one should be holy, and yet involved in the working of a universal law. But had he not risen, could we believe Him enthroned in heaven, Lord of all? Himself subject to death; Himself the helpless prisoner of the grave; does He differ in kind from that endless procession of the slaves of death journeying like Him through the world to the one inevitable end? If it is fundamental to Christianity that Jesus should be Lord of all; that God should have highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess Him Lord: then it is fundamental to Christianity that death too should be subject to Him and it should not be possible for Him to see corruption. This last enemy too He must needs, as Paul asserts, put under His feet; and it is because He has put this last enemy under His feet that we can say with such energy of conviction that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, - not even death itself: and that nothing can harm us and nothing take away our peace.

O the comfort, O the joy, O the courage, that dwells in the great fact that Jesus is the Risen One, of the seed of David; that as the Risen One He has become Head over all things; and that He must reign until

He shall have put all things under His feet. Our brother, who has like us been acquainted with death, -He it is who rules over the ages, the ages that are past, and the ages that are passing, and the ages that are yet to come. If our hearts should fail us as we stand over against the hosts of wickedness which surround us, let us encourage ourselves and one another with the great reminder: Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David!

A Review of Lewis Sperry Chafer's

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"He That Is Spiritual" by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921) The following review appeared in The Princeton Theological Review, Vol. XVII, No. 2 (April, 1919). The electronic edition of this article was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed. The photograph of Warfield to the right was taken in 1890.

Mr. Chafer is in the unfortunate and, one would think, very uncomfortable condition of having two inconsistent systems of religion struggling together in his mind. He was bred an Evangelical, and, as a minister of the Presbyterian Church, South, stands committed to Evangelicalism of the purest water. But he has been long associated in his work with a coterie of "Evangelists" and "Bible Teachers," among whom there flourishes that curious religious system (at once curiously pretentious and curiously shallow) which the Higher Life leaders of the middle of the last century brought into vogue; and he has not been immune to its infection.

These two religious systems are quite incompatible. The one is the product of the Protestant Reformation and knows no determining power in the religious life but the grace of God; the other comes straight from the laboratory of John Wesley, and in all its forms modifications and mitigations alike remains incurably Arminian subjecting all gracious workings of God to human determining. The two can unite as little as fire and water.

Mr. Chafer makes use of all the jargon of the Higher Life teachers. In him, too, we hear of two kinds of Christians whom he designates respectively "carnal men" and "spiritual men," on the basis of a misreading of 1 Corinthians 2:9 ff (pp. 8, 109, 146); and we are told that the passage from the one to the other is at our option, whenever we care to "claim" the higher degree "by faith" (p. 146). With him, too, thus, the enjoyment of every blessing is suspended on our "claiming it" (p. 129).

We hear here, too, of "letting" God (p. 84), and, indeed, we almost hear of "engaging" the Spirit (as we engage, say, a carpenter) to do work for us (p. 94); and we do explicitly hear of "making it possible for God" to do things (p. 148), a quite terrible expression. Of course, we hear repeatedly of the duty and efficacy of "yielding" and the act of "yielding ourselves" is quite in the customary manner discriminated from "consecrating" ourselves (p. 84), and we are told, as usual, that by it the gate is opened into the divinely appointed path (pp. 91, 49). The quietistic phrase "not by trying but by a right adjustment," meets us (p. 39), and naturally such current terms as "known sin" (p. 62), "moment by moment triumph" (pp. 34, 60), "the life that is Christ" (p. 31), "unbroken walk in the Spirit" (pp. 53, 113), "unbroken victory" (p. 96), even Pearsall Smith's famous "at once": the Christian may realize at once the heavenly virtues of Christ" (p. 30, the italics his). It is a matter of course after this that we are told that it is not necessary for Christians to sin (p. 125) the emphasis repeatedly thrown on the word "necessary" leading us to wonder whether Mr. Chafer remembers that according to the Confession of Faith to which, as a Presbyterian minister, he gives his

adhesion, it is in the strictest sense of the term not necessary for anybody to sin, even for the "natural man" (ix, 1).

Although he thus serves himself with their vocabulary, and therefore of course repeats the main substance of their teaching, there are lengths, nevertheless, to which Mr. Chafer will not go with his Higher Life friends. He quite decidedly repels, for example, the expectation of repetitions of the "Pentecostal manifestations" (p. 47), and this is the more notable because in his expositions of certain passages in which the charismatic Spirit is spoken of he has missed that fact, to the confusion of his doctrine of the Spirit's modes of action. With equal decisiveness he repels "such man-made, unbiblical terms as 'second blessing,' 'a second work of grace,' 'the higher life,' and various phrases used in the perverted statements of the doctrines of sanctification and perfection" (pp. 31, 33), including such phrases as "entire sanctification" and "sinless perfection" (pp. 107, 139). He is hewing here, however, to a rather narrow line, for he does teach that there are two kinds of Christian, the "carnal" and the "spiritual," and he does teach that it is quite unnecessary for spiritual men to sin and that the way is fully open to them to live a life of unbroken victory if they choose to do so.

Mr. Chafer opens his book with an exposition of the closing verses of the second and the opening verses of the third chapters of I Corinthians. Here he finds three classes of men contrasted, the "natural" or unregenerated man, and the "carnal" and "spiritual" men, both of whom are regenerated, but the latter of whom lives on a higher plane. "There are two great spiritual changes which are possible to human experience," he writes (p. 8), "the change from the 'natural' man to the saved man, and the change from the 'carnal' man to the 'spiritual' man. The former is divinely accomplished when there is a real faith in Christ; the latter is accomplished when there is a real adjustment to the Spirit. The 'spiritual' man is the divine ideal in life and ministry, in power with God and man, in unbroken fellowship and blessing." This teaching is indistinguishable from what is ordinarily understood by the doctrine of a "second blessing," "a second work of grace," "the higher life."

The subsequent expositions only make the matter clearer. In them the changes are rung on the double salvation, on the one hand from the penalty of sin, on the other from the power of sin "salvation into safety" and "salvation into sanctity" (p. 109). And the book closes with a long-drawn-out "analogy" between these two salvations. This "analogy" is announced with this statement: "The Bible treats our deliverance from the bond-servitude to sin as a distinct form of salvation and there is an analogy between this and the more familiar aspect of salvation which is from the guilt and penalty of sin" (p. 141). It ends with this fuller summary:

"There are a multitude of sinners for whom Christ has died who are not now saved. On the divine side, everything has been provided, and they have only to enter by faith into His saving grace as it is for them in Christ Jesus. Just so, there are a multitude of saints whose sin-nature has been perfectly judged and every provision made on the divine side for a life of victory and glory to God who are not now realizing a life of victory. They have only to enter by faith into the saving grace from the power and dominion of sin. . . Sinners are not saved until they trust the Saviour, and saints are not victorious until they trust the Deliverer. God has made this possible through the cross of His Son. Salvation from the power of sin must be claimed by faith" (p. 146).

No doubt what we are first led to say of this is that here is the quintessence of Arminianism. God saves no one He only makes salvation possible for men. Whether it becomes actual or not depends absolutely on their own act. It is only by their act that it is made possible for God to save them. But it is equally true that here is the quintessence of the Higher Life teaching, which merely emphasizes that part of this Arminian scheme which refers to the specific matter of sanctification. "What He provides and bestows is in the fullest divine perfection; but our adjustment is human and therefore subject to constant improvement. The fact of our possible deliverance which depends on Him alone, does not change. We will have as much at any time as we make it possible for Him to bestow" (p. 148).

When Mr. Chafer repels the doctrine of "sinless perfection" he means, first of all, that our sinful natures are not eradicated. Entering the old controversy waged among perfectionists between the "Eradicationists" and "Suppressionists," he ranges himself with the latter, only preferring to use the word "control." "The divine method of dealing with the sin-nature in the believer is by direct and unceasing control over that nature by the indwelling Spirit" (p. 134). One would think that this would yield at least a sinlessness of conduct; but that is to forget that, after all, in this scheme the divine action waits on man's. "The Bible teaches that, while the divine provision is one of perfection of life, the human appropriation is always faulty and therefore the results are imperfect at best" (p. 157). God's provisions only make it possible for us to live without sinning. The result is therefore only that we are under no necessity of sinning. But whether we shall actually sin or not is our own affair. "His provisions are always perfect, but our appropriation is always imperfect." "What he provides and bestows is in the fullest divine perfection, but our adjustment is human. . . . The fact of our possible deliverance, which depends on Him alone, does not change. We will have as much at any time as we make it possible for Him to bestow" (pp. 118, 149).

Thus it comes about that we can be told both that "the child of God and citizen of heaven may live a superhuman life, in harmony with his heavenly calling by an unbroken walk in the Spirit," that "more Christians may realize at once the heavenly virtues of Christ" (p. 39); and that, in point of fact, he does nothing of the kind, that "all Christians do sin" (p. 111). A possibility of not sinning which is unillustrated by a single example and will never be illustrated by a single example is, of course, a mere postulate extorted by a theory. It is without practical significance a universal effect is not accounted for by its possibility.

Mr. Chafer conducts his discussion of these "two general theories as to the divine method of dealing with the sin-nature in believers" on the presumption that "both theories cannot be true, for they are contradictory" (p. 135). "The two theories are irreconcilable," he says (p. 139). "We are either to be delivered by the abrupt removal of all tendency to sin and so no longer need the enabling power of God to combat the power of sin, or we are to be delivered by the immediate and constant power of the indwelling Spirit." This irreducible "either-or" is unjustified. In point of fact, both "eradication" and "control" are true. God delivers us from our sinful nature not indeed by "abruptly" but by progressively eradicating it, and meanwhile controlling it. For the new nature which God gives us is not an absolutely new "somewhat" alien to our personality, inserted into us, but our old nature itself remade a veritable recreation, or making of all things new. Mr. Chafer is quite wrong when he says: "Salvation is not a so-called 'change of heart.' It is not a transformation of the old; it is a regeneration, or creation, of something wholly new, which is possessed in conjunction with the old so long as we are in the body" (p. 113). That this furnishes out each

Christian with two conflicting natures does not appal him. He says, quite calmly: "The unregenerate have but one nature, while the regenerate have two" (p. 116). He does not seem to see that thus the man is not saved at all; a different, newly created, man is substituted for him. When the old man is got rid of and that the old man has to be ultimately got rid of he does not doubt the saved man that is left is not at all the old man that was to be saved but a new man that has never needed any saving.

It is a temptation to a virtuoso in the interpretation of Scripture to show his mettle on hard places and in startling results. Mr. Chafer has not been superior to this temptation. Take but one example. "All Christian love," he tells us (p. 40) "according to the Scriptures, is distinctly a manifestation of divine love through the human heart" a quite unjustified assertion. But Mr. Chafer is ready with an illustration. "A statement of this is found," he declares, "at Romans 5:5, because 'the love of God is shed abroad (lit., gushes forth) in our hearts by (produced, or caused by) the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us.'" Then he comments as follows: "This is not the working of the human affection; it is rather the direct manifestation of the 'love of God' passing through the heart of the believer out from the indwelling Spirit. It is the realization of the last petition of the High Priestly prayer of our Lord: 'That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them' (John 17:26). It is simply God's love working in and through the believer. It could not be humanly produced, or even imitated, and it of necessity goes out to the objects of divine affection and grace, rather than to the objects of human desire. A human heart cannot produce divine love, but it can experience it. To have a heart that feels the compassion of God is to drink of the wine of heaven."

All this bizarre doctrine of the transference of God's love, in the sense of His active power of loving, to us, so that it works out from us again as new centres, is extracted from Paul's simple statement that by the Holy Spirit which God has given us His love to us is made richly real to our apprehension! Among the parenthetical philological comments which Mr. Chafer has inserted into his quotation of the text, it is a pity that he did not include one noting that ekgeo is not eiskeo, and that Paul would no doubt have used eiskeo, had he meant to convey that idea.

A haunting ambiguity is thrust upon Mr. Chafer's whole teaching by his hospitable entertainment of contradictory systems of thought. There is a passage near the beginning of his book, not well expressed it is true, but thoroughly sound in its fundamental conception, in which expression is given to a primary principle of the Evangelical system, which, had validity been given to it, would have preserved Mr. Chafer from his regrettable dalliance with the Higher Life formulas. "In the Bible," he writes, "the divine offer and condition for the cure of sin in an unsaved person is crystallized into the one word, 'believe'; for the forgiveness of sin with the unsaved is only offered as an indivisible part of the whole divine work of salvation. The saving work of God includes many mighty undertakings other than the forgiveness of sin, and salvation depends only upon believing. It is not possible to separate some one issue from the whole work of His saving grace, such as forgiveness, and claim this apart from the indivisible whole. It is, therefore, a grievous error to direct an unsaved person to seek forgiveness of his sins as a separate issue. A sinner minus his sins would not be a Christian; for salvation is more than subtraction, it is addition. 'I give unto them eternal life.' Thus the sin question with the unsaved will be cured as a part of, but never separate from, the whole divine work of salvation, and this salvation depends upon believing" (p. 62).

If this passage means anything, it means that salvation is a unit, and that he who is united to Jesus Christ by faith receives in Him not only justification salvation from the penalty of sin but also sanctification salvation from the power of sin both "safety" and "sanctity." These things cannot be separated, and it is a grievous error to teach that a true believer in Christ can stop short in "carnality," and, though having the Spirit with him and in him, not have Him upon him to use a not very lucid play upon prepositions in which Mr. Chafer indulges.

In his attempt to teach this, Mr. Chafer is betrayed (p. 29) into drawing out a long list of characteristics of the two classes of Christians, in which he assigns to the lower class practically all the marks of the unregenerate man. Salvation is a process; as Mr. Chafer loyally teaches, the flesh continues in the regenerate man and strives against the Spirit he is to be commended for preserving even to the Seventh Chapter of Romans its true reference but the remainders of the flesh in the Christian do not constitute his characteristic. He is in the Spirit and is walking, with however halting steps, by the Spirit, and it is to all Christians, not to some, that the great promise is given, "Sin shall not have dominion over you," and the great assurance is added, "Because ye are not under the law but under grace."

He who believes in Jesus Christ is under grace, and his whole course, in its process and in its issue alike, is determined by grace, and therefore, having been predestined to be conformed to the image of God's Son, he is surely being conformed to that image, God Himself seeing to it that he is not only called and justified but also glorified. You may find Christians at every stage of this process, for it is a process through which all must pass; but you will find none who will not in God's own good time and way pass through every stage of it. There are not two kinds of Christians, although there are Christians at every conceivable stage of advancement towards the one goal to which all are bound and at which all shall arrive.

Princeton.

Benjamin B. Warfield.

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Calvinism

Calvinism

The Meaning And Uses of the Term by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

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CALVINISM is an ambiguous term in so far as it is currently employed in two or three senses, closely related indeed, and passing insensibly into one another, but of varying latitudes of connotation. Sometimes it designates merely the individual teaching of John Calvin. Sometimes it designates, more broadly, the doctrinal system confessed by that body of Protestant Churches known historically, in distinction from the Lutheran Churches, as "the Reformed Churches" (see "Protestantism"); but also quite commonly called "the Calvinistic Churches" because the greatest scientific exposition of their faith in the Reformation age, and perhaps the most influential of any age, was given by John Calvin. Sometimes it designates, more broadly still, the entire body of conceptions, theological, ethical, philosophical, social, political, which, under the influence of the master mind of John Calvin, raised itself to dominance in the Protestant lands of the post-Reformation age, and has left a permanent mark not only upon the thought of mankind, but upon the life-history of men, the social order of civilized peoples, and even the political organization of states. In the present article, the term will be taken, for obvious reasons, in the second of these senses. Fortunately this is also its central sense; and there is little danger that its other connotations will fall out of mind while attention is concentrated upon this.

On the one hand, John Calvin, though always looked upon by the Reformed Churches as an exponent rather than as the creator of their doctrinal system, has nevertheless been both THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume V, page 354

reverenced as one of their founders, and deferred to as that particular one of their founders to whose formative hand and systematizing talent their doctrinal system has perhaps owed most. In any exposition of the Reformed theology, therefore, the teaching of John Calvin must always take a high, and, indeed, determinative place. On the other hand, although Calvinism has dug a channel through which not merely flows a stream of theological thought, but also surges a great wave of human life -filling the heart with fresh ideals and conceptions which have revolutionized the conditions of existence -- yet its fountain-head lies in its theological system; or rather, to be perfectly exact, one step behind even that, in its religious consciousness. For the roots of

Calvinism are planted in a specific religious attitude, out of which is unfolded first a particular theology, from which springs on the one hand a special church organization, and on the other a social order, involving a given political arrangement. The whole outworking of Calvinism in life is thus but the efflorescence of its fundamental religious consciousness, which finds its scientific statement in its theological system.

2. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

The exact formulation of the fundamental principle of Calvinism has indeed taxed the acumen of a long series of thinkers for the last hundred years (e.g., Ullmann, Semisch, Hagenbach, Ebrard, Herzog, Schweizer, Baur, Schneckenburger, Guder, Schenkel, Schoberlein, Stahl, Hundeshagen; for a discussion of the several views cf. H. Voigt, "Fundamentaldogmatik," Gotha, 1874, pp. 397-480; W. Hastie, "The Theology of the Reformed Church in its Fundamental Principles," Edinburgh, 1904, pp. 129-177). Perhaps the simplest statement of it is the best: that it lies in a profound apprehension of God in His majesty, with the inevitably accompanying poignant realization of the exact nature of the relation sustained to Him by the creature as such, and particularly by the sinful creature. He who believes in God without reserve, and is determined

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that God shall be God to him in all his thinking, feeling, willing -- in the entire compass of his lifeactivities, intellectual, moral, spiritual, throughout all his individual, social, religious relations - - is, by the force of that strictest of all logic which presides over the outworking of principles into thought and life, by the very necessity of the case, a Calvinist. In Calvinism, then, objectively speaking, theism comes to its rights; subjectively speaking, the religious relation attains its purity; soteriologically speaking, evangelical religion finds at length its full expression and its secure stability. Theism comes to its rights only in a teleological conception of the universe, which perceives in the entire course of events the orderly outworking of the plan of God, who is the author, preserver, and governor of all things, whose will is consequently the ultimate cause of all. The religious relation attains its purity only when an attitude of absolute dependence on God is not merely temporarily assumed in the act, say, of prayer, but is sustained through all the activities of life, intellectual, emotional, executive. And evangelical religion reaches stability only when the sinful soul rests in humble, self-emptying trust purely on the God of grace as the immediate and sole source of all the efficiency which enters into its salvation. And these things are the formative principles of Calvinism.

3. RELATION TO OTHER SYSTEMS

The difference between Calvinism and other forms of theistic thought, religious experience, evangelical theology is a difference not of kind but of degree. Calvinism is not a specific variety of theism, religion, evangelicalism, set over against other specific varieties, which along with it constitute these several genera, and which possess equal rights of existence with it and make similar claims to perfection, each after its own kind. It differs from them not as one species differs from other species; but as a perfectly developed representative differs from an imperfectly developed representative of the same species. There are not many kinds of theism, religion, evangelicalism

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among which men are at liberty to choose to suit at will their individual taste or meet their special need, all of which may be presumed to serve each its own specific uses equally worthily. There is but one kind of theism, religion, evangelicalism; and the several constructions laying claim to these names differ from each other not as correlative species of a broader class, but as more or less perfect, or more or less defective, exemplifications of a single species. Calvinism conceives of itself as simply the more pure theism, religion, evangelicalism, superseding as such the less pure. It has no difficulty, therefore, in recognizing the theistic character of all truly theistic thought, the religious note in all actual religious activity, the evangelical quality of all really evangelical faith. It refuses to be set antagonistically over against any of these things, wherever or in whatever degree of imperfection they may be manifested; it claims them in every instance of their emergence as its own, and essays only to point out the way in which they may be given their just place in thought and life. Whoever believes in God; whoever recognizes in the recesses of his soul his utter dependence on God; whoever in all his thought of salvation hears in his heart of hearts the, echo of the soli Deo gloria of the evangelical profession -by whatever name he may call himself, or by whatever intellectual puzzles his logical understanding may be confused - Calvinism recognizes as implicitly a Calvinist, and as only requiring to permit these fundamental principles -which underlie and give its body to all true religion -- to work themselves freely and fully out in thought and feeling and action, to become explicitly a Calvinist.

4. CALVINISM AND LUTHERANISM

It is unfortunate that a great body of the scientific discussion which, since Max Goebel ("Die religiöse Eigentümlichkeit der lutherischen und der reformirten Kirchen," Bonn, 1837) first clearly posited the problem, has been carried on somewhat vigorously with a view to determining the fundamental THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume V, page 357

principle of Calvinism, has sought particularly to bring out its contrast with some other theological tendency, commonly with the sister Protestant tendency of Lutheranism. Undoubtedly somewhat different spirits inform Calvinism and Lutheranism. And undoubtedly the distinguishing spirit of Calvinism is rooted not in some extraneous circumstance of its antecedents or origin -- as, for example, Zwingli's tendency to intellectualism, or the superior humanistic culture and predilections of Zwingli and Calvin, or the democratic instincts of the Swiss, or the radical rationalism of the Reformed leaders as distinguished from the merely modified traditionalism of the Lutherans -- but in its formative principle. But it is misleading to find the formative principle of either type of Protestantism in its difference from the other; they have infinitely more in common than in distinction. And certainly nothing could be more misleading than to represent them (as is often done) as owing their differences to their more pure embodiment respectively of the principle of predestination and that of justification by faith. The doctrine of predestination is not the formative principle of Calvinism, the root from which it springs. It is one of its logical consequences, one of the branches which it has inevitably thrown out. It has been firmly embraced and consistently proclaimed by Calvinists because it is an implicate of theism, is directly given in the religious consciousness, and is an absolutely essential element in evangelical religion, without which its central truth of complete dependence upon the free mercy of a saving God can not be maintained. And so little is it a peculiarity of the Reformed theology, that it underlay and gave its form and power to the whole Reformation movement; which was, as from the spiritual point of view, a great revival of religion, so, from the doctrinal point of view, a great revival of Augustinianism. There was

accordingly no difference among the Reformers on this point: Luther and Melancthon and the compromising Butzer were no less jealous for absolute predestination than Zwingli and Calvin. Even Zwingli could not surpass Luther in sharp and unqualified assertion of it: and it was not Calvin but Melancthon THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume V, page 358

who gave it a formal place in his primary scientific statement of the elements of the Protestant faith (cf. Schaff, "Creeds," i. 1877, p. 451; E. F. Karl Miller, "Symbolik," Erlangen and Leipzig, 1896, p. 75; C. J. Niemijer, "De Strijd over de Leer der Praedestinatie in de IXde Eeuw," Groningen, 1889, p. 21; H. Voigt, "Fundamentaldogmatik," Gotha, 1874, pp. 469-470). Just as little can the doctrine of justification by faith be represented as specifically Lutheran. Not merely has it from the beginning been a substantial element in the Reformed faith, but it is only among the Reformed that it has retained or can retain its purity, free from the tendency to become a doctrine of justification on account of faith (cf. E. Bohl, "Von der Rechtfertigung durch den Glauben," Leipzig, 1890). Here, too, the difference between the two types of Protestantism is one of degree, not of kind (cf. C. P. Krauth, "The Conservative Reformation and its Theology," Philadelphia, 1872). Lutheranism, the product of a poignant sense of sin, born from the throes of a guilt-burdened soul which can not be stilled until it finds peace in God's decree of justification, is apt to rest in this peace; while Calvinism, the product of an overwhelming vision of God, born from the reflection in the heart of man of the majesty of a God who will not give His glory to another, can not pause until it places the scheme of salvation itself in relation to a complete world-view, in which it becomes subsidiary to the glory of the Lord God Almighty. Calvinism asks with Lutheranism, indeed, that most poignant of all questions, What shall I do to be saved? and answers it as Lutheranism answers it. But the great question which presses upon it is, How shall God be glorified? It is the contemplation of God and zeal for His honor which in it draws out the emotions and absorbs endeavor; and the end of human as of all other existence, of salvation as of all other attainment, is to it the glory of the Lord of all. Full justice is done in it to the scheme of redemption and the experience of salvation, because full justice is done in it to religion itself which underlies these elements of it. It begins, it centers, it ends with the vision of God in His glory: and it sets itself before all things to render to God His rights in every sphere of life- activity. THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume V, page 359

5. SOTERIOLOGY OF CALVINISM

One of the consequences flowing from this fundamental attitude of Calvinistic feeling and thought is the high supernaturalism which informs alike its religious consciousness and its doctrinal construction. Calvinism would not be badly defined, indeed, as the tendency which is determined to do justice to the immediately supernatural, as in the first, so also in the second creation. The strength and purity of its belief in the supernatural Fact (which is God) saves it from all embarrassment in the face of the supernatural act (which is miracle). In everything which enters into the process of redemption it is impelled by the force of its first principle to place the initiative in God. A supernatural revelation, in which God makes known to man His will and His purposes of grace; a supernatural record of this revelation in a supernaturally given book, in which God gives His revelation permanency and extension - such things are to the Calvinist almost matters of course. And, above all, he can but insist with the utmost strenuousness on the immediate supernaturalness of the actual work of redemption itself, and that no less in its application than in its imputation. Thus it comes about that the doctrine of monergistic regeneration -- or as it was

phrased by the older theologians, of "irresistible grace" or "effectual calling" -- is the hinge of the Calvinistic soteriology, and lies much more deeply embedded in the system than the doctrine of predestination itself which is popularly looked upon as its hall-mark. Indeed, the soteriological significance of predestination to the Calvinist consists in the safeguard it affords to monergistic regeneration -- to purely supernatural salvation. What lies at the heart of his soteriology is the absolute exclusion of the creaturely element in the initiation of the saving process, that so the pure grace of God may be magnified. Only so could he express his sense of man's complete dependence as sinner on the free mercy of a saving God; or extrude the evil leaven of Synergism (q.v.) by which, as he clearly sees, God is robbed of His glory and man is encouraged to think that he owes to some power, some

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act of choice, some initiative of his own, his participation in that salvation which is in reality all of grace. There is accordingly nothing against which Calvinism sets its face with more firmness than every form and degree of autosoterism. Above everything else, it is determined that God, in His Son Jesus Christ, acting through the Holy Spirit whom He has sent, shall be recognized as our veritable Saviour. To it sinful man stands in need not of inducements or assistance to save himself, but of actual saving; and Jesus Christ has come not to advise, or urge, or induce, or aid him to save himself, but to save him. This is the root of Calvinistic soteriology; and it is because this deep sense of human helplessness and this profound consciousness of indebtedness for all that enters into salvation to the free grace of God is the root of its soteriology that to it the doctrine of election becomes the *cor cordis* of the Gospel. He who knows that it is God who has chosen him and not he who has chosen God, and that he owes his entire salvation in all its processes and in every one of its stages to this choice of God, would be an ingrate indeed if he gave not the glory of his salvation solely to the inexplicable elective love of God.

6. CONSISTENT DEVELOPMENT OF CALVINISM

Historically the Reformed theology finds its origin in the reforming movement begun in Switzerland under the leadership of Zwingli (1516). Its fundamental principles are already present in Zwingli's teaching, though it was not until Calvin's profound and penetrating genius was called to their exposition that they took their ultimate form or received systematic development. From Switzerland Calvinism spread outward to France, and along the Rhine through Germany to Holland, eastward to Bohemia and Hungary, and westward, across the Channel, to Great Britain. In this broad expansion through so many lands its voice was raised in a multitude of confessions; and in the course of the four hundred years which have elapsed since its first formulation, it has been expounded in a vast

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body of dogmatic treatises. Its development has naturally been much richer and far more many-sided than that of the sister system of Lutheranism in its more confined and homogeneous environment; and yet it has retained its distinctive character and preserved its fundamental features with marvelous consistency throughout its entire history. It may be possible to distinguish among the Reformed confessions, between those which bear more and those which bear less strongly the stamp of Calvin's personal influence; and they part into two broad classes, according as they were composed before or after the Arminian defection (ca. 1618) and demanded sharper definitions on the points of controversy raised by that movement (see "Arminius, Jacobus, and Arminianism"; "Remonstrants"). A few of them written on German soil also bear traces of the

influence of Lutheran conceptions. And, of course, no more among the Reformed than elsewhere have all the professed expounders of the system of doctrine been true to the faith they professed to expound. Nevertheless, it is precisely the same system of truth which is embodied in all the great historic Reformed confessions; it matters not whether the document emanates from Zurich or Bern or Basel or Geneva, whether it sums up the Swiss development as in the second Helvetic Confession, or publishes the faith of the National Reformed Churches of France, or Scotland, or Holland, or the Palatinate, or Hungary, Poland, Bohemia, or England; or republishes the established Reformed doctrine in opposition to new contradictions, as in the Canons of Dort (in which the entire Reformed world concurred), or the Westminster Confession (to which the whole of Puritan Britain gave its assent), or the Swiss Form of Consent (which represents the mature judgment of Switzerland upon the recently proposed novelties of doctrine). And despite the inevitable variety of individual points of view, as well as the unavoidable differences in ability, learning, grasp, in the multitude of writers who have sought to expound the Reformed faith through these four centuries -- and the grave departures from that faith made here and there among them -- the great stream of Reformed dogmatics has flowed essentially THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume V, page 362

unsullied, straight from its origin in Zwingli and Calvin to its debouchure, say, in Chalmers and Cunningham and Crawford, in Hodge and Thornwell and Shedd.

7. VARIETIES OF CALVINISM

It is true an attempt has been made to distinguish two types of Reformed teaching from the beginning; a more radical type developed under the influence of the peculiar teachings of Calvin, and a (so-called) more moderate type, chiefly propagating itself in Germany, which exhibits rather the influence, as was at first said (Hofstede de Groot, Ebrard, Heppe), of Melancthon, or, in its more recent statement (Gooszen), of Bullinger. In all that concerns the essence of Calvinism, however, there was no difference between Bullinger and Calvin, German and Swiss: the Heidelberg Catechism is no doubt a catechism and not a confession, but in its presuppositions and inculcations it is as purely Calvinistic as the Genevan Catechism or the catechisms of the Westminster Assembly. Nor was the substance of doctrine touched by the peculiarities of method which marked such schools as the so-called Scholastics (showing themselves already in Zanchius, d. 1590, and culminating in theologians like Alsted, d. 1638, and Voetius, d. 1676); or by the special modes of statement which were developed by such schools as the so-called Federalists (e.g., Cocceius, d. 1669, Burman, d. 1679, Witsius, d. 1708; cf. Diestel, "Studien zur Foderaltheologie," in Jahrbucher fur deutsche Theologie, x. 1865, pp. 209-276; G. Vos, "De Verbondsleer in de Gereformeerde Theologie," Grand Rapids, 1891; W. Hastie, "The Theology of the Reformed Church," Edinburgh, 1904, pp. 189-210). The first serious defection from the fundamental conceptions of the Reformed system came with the rise of Arminianism in the early years of the seventeenth century (Arminius, Uytenbogaert, Episcopius, Limborch, Curcellaeus); and the Arminian party was quickly sloughed off under the condemnation of the whole Reformed world. The five points of its " Remonstrance" against the Calvinistic system (see "Remonstrants") THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume V, page 363

were met by the reassertion of the fundamental doctrines of absolute predestination, particular redemption, total depravity, irresistible grace, and the perseverance. of the saints (Canons of the

Synod of Dort). The first important modification of the Calvinistic system which has retained a position within its limits was made in the middle of the seventeenth century by the professors of the French school at Saumur, and is hence called Salmurianism; otherwise Amyraldism, or hypothetical universalism (Cameron, d. 1625, Amyraut, d. 1664, Placaeus, d. 1655, Testardus, d. ca. 1650; see "Amyraut, Moise"). This modification also received the condemnation of the contemporary Reformed world, which reasserted with emphasis the importance of the doctrine that Christ actually saves by His spirit all for whom He offers the sacrifice of His blood (e.g., Westminster Confession, Swiss Form of Consent).

8. SUPRALAPSARIANISM AND INFRALAPSARIANISM

If "varieties of Calvinism" are to be spoken of with reference to anything more than details, of importance in themselves no doubt, but of little significance for the systematic development of the type of doctrine, there seem not more than three which require mention: supralapsarianism, infralapsarianism, and what may perhaps be called in this reference, postredemptionism; all of which (as indeed their very names import) take their start from a fundamental agreement in the principles which govern the system. The difference between these various tendencies of thought within the limits of the system turns on the place given by each to the decree of election, in the logical ordering of the "decrees of God." The supralapsarians suppose that election underlies the decree of the fall itself; and conceive the decree of the fall as a means for carrying out the decree of election. The infralapsarians, on the other hand, consider that election presupposes the decree of the fall, and hold, therefore, that in electing some to life God has mankind as a massa perditionis in mind. The extent of the THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume V, page 364

difference between these parties is often, indeed usually, grossly exaggerated: and even historians of repute are found representing infralapsarianism as involving, or at least permitting, denial that the fall has a place in the decree of God at all: as if election could be postpositated in the ordo decretorum to the dedecree of the fall, while it was doubted whether there were any decree of the fall; or as if indeed God could be held to conceive men, in His electing decree, as fallen, without by that very act fixing the presupposed fall in His eternal decree. In point of fact there is and can be no difference among Calvinists as to the inclusion of the fall in the decree of God: to doubt this inclusion is to place oneself at once at variance with the fundamental Calvinistic principle which conceives all that comes to pass teleologically and ascribes everything that actually occurs ultimately to the will of God.

9. POSTREDEMPTIONISM

Accordingly even the postredemptionists (that is to say the Salmurians or Amyraldians) find no difficulty at this point. Their peculiarity consists in insisting that election succeeds, in the order of thought, not merely the decree of the fall but that of redemption as well, taking the term redemption here in the narrower sense of the impetration of redemption by Christ. They thus suppose that in His electing decree God conceived man not merely as fallen but as already redeemed. This involves a modified doctrine of the atonement from which the party has received the name of Hypothetical Universalism, holding as it does that Christ died to make satisfaction for the sins of all men without exception if -- if, that is, they believe: but that, foreseeing that none would believe, God elected some to be granted faith through the effectual operation of the Holy

Spirit. The indifferent standing of the postredemptionists in historical Calvinism is indicated by the treatment accorded it in the historical confessions. It alone of the "varieties of Calvinism" here mentioned has been made the object of formal confessional condemnation; and it received condemnation in every important THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume V, page 365

Reformed confession written after its development. There are, it is true, no supralapsarian confessions: many, however, leave the questions which divide supralapsarian and infralapsarian wholly to one side and thus avoid pronouncing for either; and none is polemically directed against supralapsarianism. On the other hand, not only does no confession close the door to infralapsarianism, but a considerable number explicitly teach infralapsarianism which thus emerges as the typical form of Calvinism. That, despite its confessional condemnation, postredemptionism has remained a recognized form of Calvinism and has worked out a history for itself in the Calvinistic Churches (especially in America) may be taken as evidence that its advocates, while departing, in some important particulars, from typical Calvinism, have nevertheless remained, in the main, true to the fundamental postulates of the system. There is another variety of postredemptionism, however, of which this can scarcely be said. This variety, which became dominant among the New England Congregationalist churches about the second third of the nineteenth century (e.g., N. W. Taylor, d. 1858; C. G. Finney, d. 1875; E. A. Park, d. 1900; see "New England Theology"), attempted, much after the manner of the "Congruists" of the Church of Rome, to unite a Pelagian doctrine of the will with the Calvinistic doctrine of absolute predestination. The result was, of course, to destroy the Calvinistic doctrine of "irresistible grace," and as the Calvinistic doctrine of the "satisfaction of Christ" was also set aside in favor of the Grotian or governmental theory of atonement, little was left of Calvinism except the bare doctrine of predestination. Perhaps it is not strange, therefore, that this "improved Calvinism" has crumbled away and given place to newer and explicitly anti-Calvinistic constructions of doctrine (cf. Williston Walker, in AJT, April, 1906, pp. 204 sqq.).

10. PRESENT FORTUNES OF CALVINISM

It must be confessed that the fortunes of Calvinism in general are not at present at their flood. In America, to be sure, THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume V, page 366

the controversies of the earlier half of the nineteenth century compacted a body of Calvinistic thought which gives way but slowly: and the influence of the great theologians who adorned the Churches during that period is still felt (especially Charles Hodge, 1797-1878, Robert J. Breckinridge, 1800-1871, James H. Thornwell, 1812-1862, Henry B. Smith, 1815-1877, W. G. T. Shedd, 1820-1894, Robert L. Dabney, 1820-1898, Archibald Alexander Hodge, 1823-1886). And in Holland recent years have seen a notable revival of the Reformed consciousness, especially among the adherents of the Free Churches, which has been felt as widely as Dutch influence extends, and which is at present represented in Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck, by a theologian of genius and a theologian of erudition worthy of the best Reformed traditions. But it is probable that few "Calvinists without reserve" exist at the moment in Frenchspeaking lands: and those who exist in lands of German speech and Eastern Europe appear to owe their inspiration directly to the teaching of Kohlbrugge. Even in Scotland there has been a remarkable decline in strictness of construction ever since the days of William Cunningham and Thomas J. Crawford (cf.

W. Hastie, "The Theology of the Reformed Church," Edinburgh, 1904, p. 228). Nevertheless, it may be contended that the future, as the past, of Christianity itself is bound up with the fortunes of Calvinism. The system of doctrine founded on the idea of God which has been explicated by Calvinism, strikingly remarks W. Hastie ("Theology as Science," Glasgow, 1899, pp. 97-98), "is the only system in which the whole order of the world is brought into a rational unity with the doctrine of grace. . . . It is only with such a universal conception of God, established in a living way, that we can face, with hope of complete conquest, all the spiritual dangers and terrors of our time. . . . But it is deep enough and large enough and divine enough, rightly understood, to confront them and do battle with them all in vindication of the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the world, and of the Justice and Love of the Divine Personality." See "Five Points of Calvinism."

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Christianity & Our Times

Christianity & Our Times

by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

The following short article was originally published in *The Church, the People, and the Age*, edited by Robert Scott and George W. Gilmore, 1914. The electronic edition of this article was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed. When we are asked why it is that there are so many persons who are indifferent to the claims of the Church, no doubt the safest answer to give is that it is for reasons best known to themselves. It seems, however, only a voluntary humility to profess to be ignorant of the fundamental basis of this indifference; an indifference, let it be well borne in mind, which is in no sense "modern," but has characterized ever greater numbers as we go back in the history of the Church to the very beginning. It lies in a weak sense of sin and the natural unconcern of men who do not feel themselves sinners with respect to salvation from sin. For Christianity addresses itself only to sinners. Its Founder himself declared that he did not come to call the righteous but sinners; and its chief expounder declared with energetic emphasis that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. When Sir Oliver Lodge announces, in words the truth of which is sufficiently avouched by the chorus of approval with which they have been greeted by those presumed spoken of, that "as a matter of fact the higher man of today is not worrying about his sins at all, still less about their punishment," he has uncovered the whole explanation of the current indifference to Christianity. He might have extended his remark, indeed, to cover the lower as well as the higher man, of other days as well as this: there have always been men in sufficient abundance, both higher and lower, who have not bothered themselves about their sins. The open secret of the indifference of men of all classes in all ages to Christianity, so far as that indifference has existed, lies in the indifference of men to sin, and their consequent indifference to salvation from sin. Christianity makes no appeal to men who do not feel the burden of sin.

And here we have already exposed the mason why no Christian Church can take up the position recommended to it on the strength of a declaration attributed to Abraham Lincoln. This declaration is to the effect that a simple requirement of love to God and our neighbor constitutes a sufficient foundation for a church, and the churches would profit by making the profession of such love, or of the wish or purpose to cherish such love, their sole qualification for membership. The moment a church took up such a position, however, it would cease to be a Christian Church: the core of Christianity is its provision for salvation from sin. No doubt by the adoption of such a platform many would be recovered to the Church who now stand aloof from it. But this would be not because the world had been brought into the Church, but because the Church had been merged into the world. The offense of Christianity has always been the cross; as of old, so still today, Christ crucified is to Jews a stumbling-block and to Greeks foolishness. It would be easy to remove the offense by abolishing the cross. But that would be to abolish Christianity. Christianity is the cross; and he who makes the cross of Christ of none effect eviscerates Christianity. What

Christianity brings to the world is not the bare command to love God and our neighbor. The world needs no such command; nature itself teaches the duty. What the world needs is the power to perform this duty, with respect to which it is impotent. And this power Christianity brings it in the redemption of the Son of God and the renewal of the Holy Ghost. Christianity is not merely a program of conduct: it is the power of a new life.

It is a matter of complete indifference how much debated the constitutive doctrines of Christianity are, or how "controversial" they may be. Everything important is debated, and everything that is precious will certainly be dragged into controversy. If we are to hold to nothing that is questioned, we shall hold to nothing at all: we shall be as the beasts which are beyond good and evil. The very "brief statement" which is proposed as a sufficient creed bristles with questions which are sharply debated and are in the highest degree controversial. If any one thinks it does not, let him ask Friedrich Nietzsche, or if that seems going too far afield, even J. M. E. McTaggart; or let him ask merely the man in the street whom he may haply find in some doubt whether it is better to do righteousness or to "do" his neighbor. What is important with respect to the doctrines which we lay at the basis of our church life and make the animating principles of our church organizations, is not that they shall be incapable of being debated and cannot raise "controversial" questions, but that they are sound, "wholesome," for the soul's health, the indispensable foundations for a life of service here to the God whose very name is holy and of communion with him and of rejoicing in him forever. Of course, they must be true. But that does not mean that they must be nothing but rational axioms which are intrinsically incapable of being denied, or ethical common-places to which all moral beings must assent, however far they may be from obeying them. They may — or, rather, they must — embody the great historical occurrences in which the God of grace has intervened in the life of sinful men for the purpose of redeeming men from their sins and restoring in their dead hearts the love of God and of their neighbor.

Since these great historical verities are constitutive of Christianity, wherever they are rejected or neglected Christianity has ceased to exist. This used to be well understood and candidly acknowledged. When a David Friedrich Strauss, for example, had drifted away from these great historical verities and sought the support of his religious life elsewhere, he asked himself straightforwardly, "Are we still Christians," and frankly answered, "No." Nowadays this seems to be all changed. Men cheerfully abandon the whole substance of Christianity, but will hardly be persuaded to surrender the name. Thus, Rudolf Eucken asks, "Can we still be Christians?" and answers with emphasis, Of course we can; providing only that by Christianity we do not mean — Christianity. Thus also Ernst Troeltsch declares himself still a Christian (a "free Christian"), though his "Christianity" has been so "refashioned" that it has become nothing more than an "immanent theism," the quintessential extract of the religious development of mankind, still holding to the name of Jesus only because it needs a rallying point for its worship and a name to conjure with. It is no doubt a tribute to the significance of Christianity in the world that men who are quite out of harmony with it should manifest such reluctance to surrender the name. But it certainly is very misleading to insist on calling by this name, which should have a definite content, the various congeries of notions each several man has picked up from the surface of the stream of modern thought as it flows by him and wishes to substitute for the thing itself to which the name really belongs as the substance of his religion.

If the term "Christianity" is to be as fluid as this, it has become in the strictest sense of the words an empty name. It no longer has any content of its own. It has become a purely formal designation for whatever may chance, in any age or company, to be thought the sum of the conclusions commended by the science, philosophy, or scholarship of the day. This is what it really comes to when it is demanded, as it so frequently is, that theology shall be kept in harmony with what are for the moment called "the assured results" of science, philosophy, and scholarship. The thing is, of course, impossible. Science, philosophy, scholarship, represent not stable but constantly changing entities. And nothing is more certain than that the theology which is in close harmony with the science, philosophy, and scholarship of today will be much out of harmony with the science, philosophy, and scholarship of tomorrow. A theology which is to be kept in harmony with a growing science and philosophy and scholarship, breaking their way onward by a process of trial and correction, must be a veritable nose of wax which can be twisted in any direction as it may serve our temporary purpose. If it be asked, therefore, in what way "the fundamental theology of the Church" "is to be related to the literary, scientific, and philosophical certainties of our time," the answer certainly cannot be that it is to be subordinated to them and made their slave, tremblingly following their every variation as they zigzag their devious way onward toward the certainties, not "of our time," but of all time.

Theology is itself a science, with its own proper object, method and content: it has its own certainties to contribute to the sum of ascertained truth; and it dare not do other than place these certainties, established by their own appropriate evidence, by the side of any other certainties which may exist, as equally entitled with the best attested of them all to the acceptance of men. And if seeming inconsistencies appear, then there is nothing for it but patiently to await the coming of the better day when trial and correction have done their perfect work and the unity of all truth shall be vindicated by its realized harmony.

By "the fundamental theology of the Church" is meant especially the Church's confession of that series of the redemptive acts of God, by which he has supernaturally intervened in human history for the salvation of sinful man, as interpreted and given their full meaning in the revelation which he has made to his people in time past at sundry times and in divers manners through his servants the prophets, and in these last times in his Son speaking through the apostles whom he appointed as his representatives in founding his Church. This is not a mass of cunningly devised fables, but the substance of saving truth. And no message can be effective for the salvation of a lost world which does not stand for and teach in the face of all hesitation and unbelief, denial and opposition, those things which constitute the sum-total of this saving truth, as it has been set down for us in Holy Scripture. The message of Christianity concerns, not "the values of human life," but the grace of the saving God in Christ Jesus. And in proportion as the grace of the saving God in Christ Jesus is obscured or passes into the background, in that proportion does Christianity slip from our grasp. Christianity is summed up in the phrase: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world with himself." Where this great confession is contradicted or neglected, there is no Christianity.

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Christianity The Truth

Christianity The Truth by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921) The following essay was originally published in *The Bible Student*, Jan. 1901, pp.1-5, under the heading "Editorial Notes." The electronic edition of this article was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed.

It is the primary claim of Christianity that it is "the truth." Jesus Christ, its founder, calls himself significantly "the truth" (John 14:6), and sums up his mission in the world as a constant witness-bearing to "the truth" (John 18:37). It is accordingly as "the truth" that the gospel offers itself to men; and it seeks to propagate itself in the world only as "truth," and therefore only by those methods by which "truth" makes its way. Not the sword but the word is Christianity's weapon of defense and instrument of conquest. "Cut me off that old man's head" was Caliph Omar's answer to the arguments with which the aged Christian priest met him as he triumphantly entered Jerusalem: and in this scene we have revealed the contrast between Christianity and all other religions. "That old man," says Dr. James MacGregor, "with no shield but faith, no sword but the word, setting himself alone to stem the then raging lava-torrent of fanaticism, with its brutish alternative of the Koran or death, is typical of the fact that Christianity is an apologetic religion." Confident that it is the only reasonable religion, it comes forward as pre-eminently the reasoning religion. The task it has set itself is no less than to reason the world into acceptance of the "truth."

If the world were only as eager to receive the truth as the truth is to win the world, the function of Christian men might well be summed up in the one word, proclamation. But the typical responses of the world to the proclaimed truth are the cynical sneer of Pilate, "What is truth?" and the brutal commend of Omar, "Cut me off that old man's head!" So, proclamation must needs pass into asseveration, and asseveration into contention, that the truth may abide in the world. "Bear witness to the truth"; "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints": these are the twin exhortations by which every Christian man's duty is declared for him. How early did the Christian proclamation produce its double fruitage of martyrdom and controversy! The old Greek word "martyr," "witness" soon took on a specific Christian meaning, and became more and more confined to those who had sealed their testimony with their blood; and everywhere the irritated world complained of these persistent reasoners that they were turning the world upside down.

"Martyrdom" and "controversy!" If the collocation sounds strange in our ears it can only be because we have failed to realize how inevitable is their connection, how necessarily they appear as twin fruits of the one fair tree of faithfulness. There never was a martyrdom save as the result of controversy. The spirit which would still contention for the truth never yet went to the stake. There is a sentiment abroad indeed which decries controversy. The same sentiment should certainly decry martyrdom also. An anemic Christianity which is too little virile to strive for the truth can never possess the nerve to die for it. And the contradiction of loving the one and hating the other is glaring. Says Dr. Mandell Creighton strikingly: "The age of the martyrs has a powerful attraction

even to the casual reader; the age of the heresies leaves him bewildered and distressed. Yet the agents in both were discharging an equally necessary function. Both were upholding the truth of the gospel; the one against the power of the world, the other against the wisdom of the world. The martyrs had this advantage, that the force of their testimony was concentrated in one supreme moment, was expressed in one heroic act, which commands universal sympathy. The controversialists had to live through a protracted struggle and are judged by all their utterances, and all their human weaknesses which the conflict remorselessly revealed."

The spirit of the martyr and the spirit of the controversialist are therefore one. Both alike are the sport of the indifferent, and the scorn of the worldly-wise to whom opportunism is the last word of wisdom, and "convictions" the disease of fools. "Conviction," cries the "Master-Devil" of Gilbert Parker's *The Seats of the Mighty*—"conviction is the executioner of the stupid. When a man is not great enough to let change and chance guide him he gets convictions and dies a fool." Christian men may call him a martyr: but the world at best a fanatic, at worst a well-punished disturber of the peace. The issue does not seem to the world worth fighting for and certainly not worth dying for. If it did, the verdict would assuredly be different. At least whenever the issue seems to it worth fighting and dying for, even the worldly-wise can find ground enough for admiration and praise of that spirit of faithfulness, by which it is that the martyr and the controversialist alike are dominated. We find this anecdote in General Sir John Adye's *Recollections of a Military Life*: "An English soldier coming on duty was heard to say to his comrade, 'Well, Jim, what's the orders at this post?' Jim replied, 'Why, the orders is you're never to leave it till you're killed, and if you see any other man leaving it, you're to kill him.' " There burns (in its own coarse form) the spirit both of the martyr and of the controversialist—or, to put it in one word, the spirit of the faithful man ready to do his duty, all his duty, and his duty to the end. Let us permit one who himself trod the thorny path to its goal make for us the application. "In Tynedale, where I was born, not far from the Scottish border," writes Nicholas Ridley, "I have known my countrymen watch night and day in their harness, such as they had, that is, in their jacks, and their spears in their hands (you call them northern gads), especially when they had any privy warning of the coming of the Scots. And so doing, although at every such bickering some of them spent their lives, yet by such means, like pretty men, they defended their country. And those that so did, I think that before God they died in a good quarrel, and their offspring and progeny, all the country loved them the better for their fathers' sakes. And in the quarrel of Christ our Savior, in the defense of his own divine ordinances, by the which he giveth us life and immortality, yea, in the quarrel of faith and Christian religion, wherein resteth our everlasting salvation, shall we not watch? Shall we not go always armed, ever looking when our adversary (which, like a roaring lion, seeketh whom he may devour) shall come upon us by reason of our slothfulness? Yea, and woe be unto us, if he can oppress us unawares, which undoubtedly he will do, if he find us sleeping."

Nicholas Ridley would fain persuade us then, of the duty of controversy. He walked in that path himself and it led him to the stake. Was he a "martyr?" Or, as many prudent men of his day declared, only an inextinguishable firebrand? It is greatly to be feared that today also he would be judged by the wise among us merely "a stirrer up of strife." It is certain that there are many in our midst who fear controversy more than error. These assuredly do not stay to remember that Christianity's sole weapon is reasoning, its supreme effort to reason itself into the acceptance of the world. What then will happen if it renounces the duty of reasoning? To be sure constant

reasoning is a weariness to the flesh, and the temptation lies very close to purchase longed-for and needed peace by calling a halt for a time and resting on what is already attained. This were much like seeking rest from the labors of life by ceasing to breathe for a season. Let us learn here from a remark of Coleridge's. "For a nation to make peace only because it is tired of war," he says, "in order just to take breath is in direct subversion to the end and object of the war, which was its sole justification. 'Tis like a poor waysore foot-traveler getting up behind a coach that is going the contrary way to his." Christianity is in its very nature an aggressive religion; it is in the world just in order to convince men; when it ceases to reason, it ceases to exist. It is no doubt the truth; but the truth no longer proclaimed and defended rots quickly down. The lawyers have a very instructive maxim which it will do us all no harm to heed: "A lie well stuck to," they say, "is better than the truth abandoned." "I have often asked my Radical friends," Mr. Froude writes in one of his latest books, "what is to be done if out of every hundred enlightened voters two-thirds will give their votes one way but are afraid to fight, and the remaining third will not only vote but will fight too if the poll goes against them. Which has the right to rule? I can tell them," he adds, "which will rule. ... The brave and resolute minority will rule. The majority must be prepared to assert their Divine Right with their hands, or it will go the way that other Divine Rights have gone before." Mr. Froude is dealing with political matters, and speaks of that strife with the sword which the Christian religion has renounced. But strife it has not renounced: and whenever it shall have renounced strife against its perennial foe with its own appropriate weapon—the Word—it will have renounced hope of ruling over the hearts and thoughts of men. Controversy is in this sense and to this degree the vital breath of a really living Christianity.

Are there then to be no limits set to the controversial spirit? Assuredly there are. These limits are, however, not to be sought in motives of convenience or prudence. Christianity thrives on controversy, and exists only by virtue of it—it is in the world to reason the world into acceptance of itself, and it would surely be vain to expect the world to take its reasonings without reply. "It is the native property of the divine word," says Calvin, rather "never to make its appearance without disturbing Satan, and rousing his opposition. This is the most certain and unequivocal criterion by which it is distinguished from false doctrines, which are easily broached since they are heard with general attention and received with the applause of the world." "If the presence of controversy," therefore, adds Vinet, "is not in itself the criterion of the truth of a doctrine, a doctrine which arouses no contradiction lacks one of the marks of truth." And surely subjective motives cannot exonerate us from bearing our witness to the truth. Indeed it may be fairly argued that even subjective considerations would rather bid us advance valiantly to the defense of the truth, if it be at all the case as Dr. Hort tells us it is, that "smooth ways" in this sphere too "are like smooth ways of action ... truth is never reached or held fast without friction and grappling." And surely we will give quick assent to the same writer's dictum that "there are other and better kinds of victory than those that issue in imperial calm." Even a certain amount of heat in controversy may thus find its justification—in the consideration, to wit, that it is not merely the chill logical intellect which may well be enlisted in this war. The poet's line, "And God's calm will was their burning will," is no libel on the spirit of God's true martyrs and saints.

The limits of controversy for the saving truth of God must be sought then solely in objective considerations. Aristotle perhaps as well as another, lays down the principles which should govern the matter. "It is not necessary," he remarks, in his formal manner, "to examine every proposition

or every thesis; but only those concerning which there really exists doubt in someone's mind, so that it is instruction and not rather rebuke or sense that is needed; for (for example)," he adds, "it is rebuke that is needed when doubt is expressed whether the gods should be served, and it is sense that is lacking when doubt is expressed as to whether snow is white." His meaning is apparently that there are some opinions which are so senseless that those who broach them proclaim themselves by that very fact beyond the reach of argument; and some so immoral that those that broach them exhibit in them an evil heart beyond the cure of reason: with these controversy may well be declined because from the outset useless. But whenever opinions are broached which do not argue utter depravity or utter senselessness—they claim, of right, instruction from those who are in the world for the express purpose of bearing witness to the truth. Questions beyond this concern only the manner of controversy and the tone of controversy: they cannot touch the duty of controversy. He that declines controversy "on principle," or from motives of convenience or prudence, has thereby renounced his confidence in the truth—that truth of which it has been truly said, that it is "like a torch, the more it's shook, it shines."

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06 Mind Cure Patristic and Mediaeval Marvels As over against the effort made more especially by Anglican writers to confine genuine ecclesiastical miracles to the first, and in their view the purest and most authoritative, centuries of Christianity, the Romish theologians boldly declare that God has been pleased in every age to work a multitude of evident miracles in His church. Before this assertion, as we have seen, the Anglican theory is helpless, on the ground whether of fact or of principle. Of fact, because the evidence for the later miracles, which it denies, is very much greater in volume and cogency than that for the earlier miracles, which it accepts. Of principle, because the reason which it gives for the continuance of miracles during the first three centuries, if valid at all, is equally valid for their continuance to the twentieth century. What we shall look upon as the period of the planting of the church is determined by our point of view. If the usefulness of miracles in planting the church were sufficient reason for their occurrence in the Roman Empire in the third century, it is hard to deny that it may be sufficient reason for the repetition of them in, say, the Chinese Empire in the twentieth century. And why go to China? Is not the church still essentially in the position of a missionary church everywhere in this world of unbelief? When we take a really "long view" of things, is it not at least a debatable question whether the paltry two thousand years which have passed since Christianity came into the world are not a negligible quantity, and the age in which we live is not still the age of the primitive church? We must adjudge, therefore, that the Romish theory is the more consistent and reasonable of the two. If we are to admit that the

miracles of the first three centuries happened, slightly and only generally witnessed as they are, we should in all reason go on and admit that the much more numerous and much better attested miracles of the fourth century happened too—and those of the fifth, and of the sixth and of every subsequent century down to our day. The force of this reasoning is interestingly illustrated by the conversion by it of Edward Gibbon, in his youth, to Roman Catholicism. Sir James Fitzjames Stephen gives a somewhat caustic account of the circumstances. "At Oxford," he says 1[*Horæ Sabbaticæ*, vol. II, pp. 413 ff.], " 'the blind activity of idleness' impelled him to read Middleton's *Free Inquiry*. Yet he could not bring himself to follow Middleton in his attack on the early Fathers, or to give up the notion that miracles were worked in the early church for at least four or five centuries. 'But I was unable to resist the weight of historical evidence that within the same period most of the leading doctrines of Popery were already introduced in theory and practice; nor was the conclusion absurd that miracles are the test of truth, and that the church must be orthodox and pure which was so often approved by the visible interposition of the Deity.'

"From the miracles affirmed by Basil, Chrysostom, Augustine and Jerome, he inferred that celibacy was superior to marriage, that saints were to be invoked, prayers for the dead said, and the real presence believed in; and while in this frame of mind he fell in with Bossuet's *Exposition* and his *History of the Variations*. 'I read,' he says in his affected way, 'I applauded, I believed'; and he adds with truth in reference to Bossuet, 'I surely fell by a noble hand.' 'In my present feelings it seems incredible that I ever should have believed in transubstantiation; but my conqueror oppressed me with the sacramental words, and dashed against each other the figurative half-meanings of the Protestant sects. . . .'

"No one, we will venture to say, has been converted in the nineteenth century by a belief that, as a fact, miracles were worked in the early church, and that, as a consequence, the doctrines professed at the time must be true. As a rule the doctrines have carried the miracles. . . . The fact that the process began at the other end with Gibbon is characteristic both of the man and of the age; but it is put in a still stronger light by the account which he gives of his reconversion. . . . The process from first to last was emphatically an intellectual one. . . . Gibbon himself observes: 'I still remember my solitary transport at the discovery of a philosophical argument against the doctrine of transubstantiation: that the text of Scripture which seems to inculcate the real presence is attested only by a single sense—our sight; while the real presence itself is disproved by three of our senses—the sight, the touch, and the taste.'"

Only a brief account will be necessary of the state of the case for the fourth and later centuries. When we pass from the literature of the first three into that of the fourth and succeeding centuries, we leave at once the region of indefinite and undetailed references to miraculous works said to have occurred somewhere or other—no doubt the references increase in number and definiteness as the years pass—and come into contact with a body of writings simply saturated with marvels. And whereas few writers were to be found in the earlier period who professed to be eyewitnesses of miracles, and none who wrought them were named to us, in the later period everybody appears to have witnessed any number of them, and the workers of them are not only named but prove to be the most famous missionaries and saints of the church. Nor must we imagine that these marvels are recounted only by obscure and otherwise unknown hero worshippers, whose only claim to be remembered by posterity is that they were the over enthusiastic admirers of the great ascetics of their time. They are rather the outstanding scholars, theologians, preachers, organizers

of the age. It is Jerome, the leading biblical scholar of his day, who wrote the distressing lives of Paul, Hilarion and Malchus; Gregory of Nyssa, one of "the three great Cappadocians," who narrates the fantastic doings of his thaumaturgic namesake 2[Gregory's Panegyric on Gregory Thaumaturgus is described and characterized, and its true character shown, by Th. Trede, (Wunderglaube im Heidentum und in der alten Kirche, 1900, pp. 144 ff.): "Our declaimer attains the climax of rhetorical fire-works in his Christian Panegyric on Gregory Thaumaturgus." In this connection Trede makes some very illuminating remarks on the transference into the church of the bad traditions of the heathen rhetorical schools in which so many of the Christian leaders had their training]; the incomparable Athanasius himself, who is responsible for the life of Antony. And not to be left behind, the greatest preacher of the day, Chrysostom; the greatest ecclesiastic, Ambrose; the greatest thinker, Augustine,—all describe for us miraculous occurrences of the most incredible kind as having taken place within their own knowledge. It will be not only interesting but useful for our purpose, as well, if a specimen instance be brought before us of how these great men dealt with miracles.

Augustine no doubt will serve our purpose here as well as another. In the twenty-second book 3[Cap. 8] of the City of God, he has circumstantially related to us a score or more of miracles which had come under his own observation, and which he represents as only a tenth of those he could relate. A considerable number of these were wrought by the relics of "the most glorious martyr, Stephen." The bones of Stephen had come to light in Jerusalem in 415. Certain portions of them were brought into Africa and everywhere they were taken miracles were wrought. Somewhere about 424 Hippo obtained its fragments and enshrined them in a small chapel opening into the cathedral church, on the archway of which Augustine caused four verses to be cut, exhorting worshippers to ascribe to God all miracles wrought upon Stephen's intercession. Almost seventy miracles wrought at this shrine had been officially recorded in less than two years, while incomparably more, Augustine tells us, had been wrought at the neighboring town of Calama, which had received its relics earlier. "Think, beloved," he cries, in the sermon which he preached on the reception of the relics, "what the Lord must have in store for us in the land of the living, when He bestows so much in the ashes of the dead." Even the dead were raised at these shrines, with great promptness and facility. Here are some of the instances recorded by Augustine with complete confidence 4[The confidence which Augustine reposed in these narratives is perhaps most strongly shown in such an incidental remark as meets us in the City of God, 22:28. He is speaking of Plato and Cornelius Labeo, and reporting what they say of resuscitations. He remarks: "But the resurrection which these writers instance resembles that of those persons whom we have ourselves known to rise again, and who came back indeed to this life, but not so as never to die again." Augustine supposes himself to have actually known people once dead to have come back to this life; he has no doubt of it at all].

"Eucharius, a Spanish priest residing at Calama, was for a long time a sufferer from stone. By the relics of the same martyr (Stephen) which the bishop Possidius brought him, he was cured. Afterward the same priest sinking under another disease, was lying dead, and already they were binding his hands. By the succor of 'the same martyr he was raised to life, the priest's cloak having been brought from the oratory and laid upon the corpse. . . . Audurus is the name of an estate where there is a church that contains a memorial shrine of the martyr Stephen. It happened that, as a little boy was playing in the court, the oxen drawing a wagon went out of the track and

crushed him with the wheel, so that immediately he seemed at his last gasp. His mother snatched him up and laid him at the shrine, and not only did he revive but also appeared uninjured. A religious female who lived at Caspaliun, a neighboring estate, when she was so ill as to be despaired of, had her dress brought to this shrine, but before it was brought back she was gone. However, her parents wrapped her corpse in the dress, and, her breath returning, she became quite well. At Hippo, a Syrian called Bassus was praying at the relics of the same martyr for his daughter, who was dangerously ill. He too had brought her dress with him to the shrine. But as he prayed, behold, his servants ran from the house to tell him she was dead. His friends, however, intercepted them and forbade them to tell him, lest he should bewail her in public. And when he returned to his house which was already ringing with the lamentations of his family, and had thrown on his daughter's body the dress he was carrying, she was restored to life. There, too, the son of a man, Irenæus, one of the tax gatherers, took ill and died. And while his body was lying lifeless, and the last rites were being prepared, amidst the weeping and mourning of all, one of the friends who were consoling the father suggested that the body should be anointed with the oil of the same martyr. It was done and he was revived. Likewise, Eleusinus, a man of tribunitian rank among us, laid his infant son, who had died, on the shrine of the martyr, which is in the suburb where he lived, and, after prayer, which he poured out there with many tears, he took up his child alive" 5[Raising the dead, so common an occurrence in Augustine's day, seems later to have passed somewhat out of fashion. John of Salisbury, at all events, when speaking of the miracles wrought at the tomb of Thomas à Becket (1170), includes this among them, but speaks of it as something new to experience: "And (a thing unheard of from the days of our fathers) the dead are raised" (E. A. Abbott, *St. Thomas of Canterbury*, 1898, I, p. 227, cf. II, p. 17, and, in general, the Index sub voc., "Death, Restoration from"). Later, however, this miracle recovered its popularity. No less than fourteen instances of it are attributed to Francis Xavier—although he himself, unfortunately, died without knowledge of them. Andrew D. White (*The Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, ed. 1896, vol. II, p. 17) sums up the facts thus: "Although during the lifetime of Xavier there is neither in his own writings, nor in any contemporary account any assertion of a resurrection from the dead wrought by him, we find that shortly after his death such stories began to appear. A simple statement of the growth of these may throw some light on the evolution of miraculous accounts generally. At first it was affirmed that some people at Cape Comorin said that he had raised one person; then it was said that he had raised two persons; then in various authors—Emmanuel Acosta, in his commentaries written as an afterthought nearly twenty years after Xavier's death, De Quadros, and others—the story wavers between one and two cases; finally in the time of Tursellinus, four cases had been developed. In 1622, at the canonization proceedings, three were mentioned; but by the time of Father Bonhours there were fourteen, all raised from the dead by Xavier himself during his lifetime, and the name, place, and circumstances are given with much detail in each case." The references to Bonhours are given thus: *The Life of St. Francis Xavier*, by Father Dominic Bonhours, translated by James Dryden, Dublin, 1838, pp. 69, 82, 93, 111, 218, 307, 316, 321. For the repeated occurrence of raisings of the dead in mediaeval legend, see H. Günther, *Die christliche Legende des Abendlandes*, 1910, pp. 25, 32, 43, 47, 191; it is, in spite of John of Salisbury's ignorance of it, of common occurrence in the legends. An instructive instance is repeated to us by H. Delehaye, *Les Légendes Hagiographiques*, 1905, p. 101: "When St. Bernard was preaching the crusade in the diocese of Constance, an archer in the following of the Duke of Zähringen jeered at his preaching and at the

preacher himself, saying, 'He cannot work miracles any more than I can.' When the saint proceeded to lay his hands on the sick, the mocker saw it, and suddenly fell over as if dead; he remained a considerable time without consciousness. Alexander of Cologne adds: 'I was close to him when the thing happened. . . . We called the Abbé, and this poor man could not get up until Bernard came, made a prayer and lifted him up.' No single eye witness says a word which can make us think of a resuscitation of a dead man. Yet, a century later, Herbert, author of a collection of the miracles of St. Bernard, Conrad, author of the *Exordium*, and Cesar of Heisterbach, affirm that the archer was dead and the saint restored him to life." Delehaye refers to G. Hüffer, *Der heilige Bernard von Clairvaux*, vol. I (Münster, 1886), pp. 92, 182]. Not all the miracles which Augustine includes in this anthology were wrought, however, by the bones of Stephen. Even before these bones had been discovered, miracles of the most astonishing character had occurred within his own personal knowledge. He tells us, for example, of the restoration of a blind man to sight at Milan—"when I was there," he says—by the remains of the martyrs Protasius and Gervasius, discovered to Ambrose in a dream. And he tells us with great circumstantiality of a miraculous cure of fistula wrought in Carthage—"in my presence and under my own eyes," he says—when he, and Alypius had just returned from Italy. A special interest attaches to these early instances, because Augustine, although an eyewitness of them, and although he insists on his having been an eye witness of them as their attestation, does not seem to have recognized their miraculous character until long afterward. For Augustine's hearty belief in contemporary miracles, illustrated by the teeming list now before us, was of slow growth. It was not until some years after his return to Africa that it became easy to him to acknowledge their occurrence. He arrived in Africa in 388, but still in his treatises, *On the True Religion*, which was written about 390, and *On the Usefulness of Believing*, written in 391 or 392, we find him speaking on the hypothesis that miracles no longer happened. "We perceive," he writes in the former of these treatises 6[25:47], "that our ancestors, by that measure of faith by which the ascent is made from temporal things to eternal, obtained visible miracles (for thus only could they do it); and through them it has been brought about that these should no longer be necessary for their descendants. For when the Catholic Church had been diffused and established through the whole world, these miracles were no longer permitted to continue in our time, lest the mind should always seek visible things, and the human race should be chilled by the customariness of the very things whose novelty had inflamed them." Similarly, in the latter treatise, after enumerating the miracles of our Lord, he asks 7[§ 34: *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. III, p. 364], "Why do not these things take place now?" and answers, "Because they would not move unless they were wonderful, and if they were customary they would not be wonderful." "Even the marvels of nature, great and wonderful as they are," he continues, "have ceased to surprise and so to move; and God has dealt wisely with us, therefore, in sending his miracles once for all to convince the world, depending afterward on the authority of the multitudes thus convinced."

Subsequently at the close of his life, reviewing these passages in his *Retractations*, he supposes it enough to say that what he meant was not that no miracles were still wrought in his own day, but only that none were wrought which were as great as those our Lord wrought, and that not all the kinds our Lord wrought continued to be wrought 8[I, 14, 5]. "For," says he 9[I, 13, 7], "those that are baptized do not now receive the Spirit on the imposition of hands, so as to speak in the tongues of all the peoples; neither are the sick healed by the shadow of the preachers of Christ falling on them as they pass; and other such things as were then done, are now manifestly

ceased." What he said, he insists 10[Ibid.], is not to be taken as meaning that no miracles at all were to be believed to be performed still in Christ's name. "For I myself, when I wrote that book"—the book *On the True Religion*—"already knew that a blind man had been given his sight at Milan, by the bodies of the martyrs in that city; and certain other things which were done at that time in numbers sufficient to prevent our knowing them all or our enumerating all we knew." This explanation seems scarcely adequate; but it suggests that the starting point of Augustine's belief in contemporary miracles is to be sought in Milan—although it appears that some time was required after he had left Milan for the belief to ripen in his mind. A sufficiently odd passage in one of his letters—written in 404—seems to illustrate at once the Milanese origin of his miracle-faith and the process of its growth to maturity 11[Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. I, p. 346]. There had been a scandal in the household; one member of it had accused another of a crime, and Augustine was in doubt which of the two was really at fault. "I fixed upon the following as a means of discovering the truth," he writes., "Both pledged themselves in a solemn compact to go to a holy place, where the awe-inspiring works of God might much more readily make manifest the evil of which either of - them was conscious, and compel the guilty to confess, either by judgment or through fear of judgment." God is everywhere, it is true; and able to punish or reward in secret as He will. "But," continues Augustine, "in regard to the answers of prayer which are visible to men, who can search out the reasons for appointing some places rather than others to be the scenes of miraculous interpositions?" The grave of a certain Felix suggested itself to him as a suitable place to send his culprits. True, no supernatural events had ever occurred there. But, he writes, "I myself knew how, at Milan, at the tomb of the saints, where demons are brought in a most marvelous and awful manner to confess their deeds, a thief, who had come thither intending to deceive by perjuring himself, was compelled to own his thefts and restore what he had taken away." "And is not Africa also," he asks, "full of the bodies of holy martyrs?" "Yet we do not know of such things being done here," he confesses. "Even as the gift of healing and the gift of discerning of spirits," he explains, "are not given to all saints, as the Apostle declares; so it is not at all the tombs of the saints that it has pleased Him who divides to each severally as He will, to cause such miracles to be wrought." As late as 404, then, there were as yet no miracle working shrines in Africa. Augustine, however, is busily at work producing them. And twenty years later we see them in full activity.

It was naturally a source of embarrassment to Augustine that the heretics had miracles to appeal to just like his own; and that the heathen had had something very like them from time immemorial. The miracles of the heretics he was inclined to reject out of hand. They never happened, he said. On the other hand, he did not dream of denying the actual occurrence of the heathen miracles. He only strained every nerve to put them in a different class from his own. They stood related to his, he said, as the marvels wrought by Pharaoh's magicians did to Moses' miracles. Meanwhile, there the three sets of Oracles stood, side by side, apparently just alike, and to be distinguished only by the doctrines with which they were severally connected. A passage in the thirteenth tractate on John on Donatist miracles (he calls them "miracle-ettes"), is very instructive. This tractate seems to have been delivered subsequently to 416, and therefore represents Augustine's later views. "Let no one tell you fables, then," he cries 12[Tract. in Joh., 13, (15): Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. VII, p. 93. When he says: "Contra istos, ut sic loquar, mirabiliarios cautum me fecit Deus meus, he is obviously using a Contemptuous term], "saying, 'Pontius wrought a miracle, and Donatus prayed and God answered him from heaven.' In the first place, either they are deceived

or they deceive. In the last place, grant that he removes mountains: 'And have not charity,' says the Apostle, 'I am nothing.' Let us see whether he has charity. I would believe that he had, if he had not divided unity. For against those whom I may call marvel workers, my God has put me on my guard, saying, 'In the last times there shall arise false prophets doing signs and wonders, to lead into error, if it were possible, even the elect. Lo, I have foretold it to you.' Therefore the Bridegroom has cautioned us, that we ought not to be deceived even by miracles." Similarly the heathen and Christian miracles are pitted against one another, and decision between them sought on grounds lying outside the miracles themselves. "Which, then, can more readily be believed to work miracles? They who wish themselves to be reckoned gods by those on whom they work miracles, or those whose sole object in working any miracles is to induce faith in God, or in Christ also as God? . . . Let us therefore believe those who both speak the truth and work miracles" 13[City of God, 22, 10, at the end]. It is not the empirical fact which counts—there were all too many empirical facts to count—but the truth lying behind the empirical fact 14[On Augustine's doctrine of miracles, see especially, Friedrich Nietzsche, *Augustinus' Lehre vom Wunder*, 1865; especially pp. 32-35 on the "Continuance of Miracles in the Church," and pp. 35-37, "Miracles outside the limits of the Revelation history and the Church"].

What now are we to think of these miracles which Augustine and his fellows narrate to us in such superabundance?

We should perhaps note at the outset that the marvelous stories do not seem to have met with universal credence when first published. They seem indeed to have attracted very little attention. Augustine bitterly complains that so little was made of them 15[City of God, 22, 8]. Each was known only in the spot where it was wrought, and even then only to a few persons. If some report of it happened to be carried to other places no sufficient authority existed to give it prompt and unwavering acceptance. He records how he himself had sharply rebuked a woman who had been miraculously cured of a cancer for not publishing abroad the blessing she had received. Her physician had laughed at her, she said; and moreover she had not really concealed it. Outraged, however, on finding that not even her closest acquaintances had ever heard of it, he dragged her from her seclusion and gave the utmost publicity to her story. In odd parallelism to the complaint of his somewhat older contemporary, the heathen historian Ammianus Marcellinus, who in wistful regret for the portents which were gone, declared stoutly that they nevertheless still occurred, only "nobody heeds them now" 16[Cf. T. R. Glover, *Life and Letters in the Fourth Century*, 1901, pp. 40, 287], Augustine asserted that innumerable Christian miracles were constantly taking place, only no notice was taken of them 17[How little the abounding miracles of the lives of the saints were noted—or we should better say, known—in mediaeval times, we may learn from a remark of H. Günter's (*Legenden-Studien*, 1906, pp. 176 f.): "For the proper estimate of these things we must bear in mind that contemporary profane history very essentially corrects the literature of the Lives: the very names which here seem to move the world, scarcely receive bare mention there: of the flood of miracles in the Lives there is not even a trace. The Chronicles and Annalists were nevertheless children of those times, and receptive enough for everything that was miraculous. The notion which might occur to one, that the Chronicles, the newspapers of the day, purposely left the domain of the saints to biography and romance, is clearly untenable. He who reads Widukind's *History of the Saxons*, the *Continuatio Regionis*, the *Chronicle of Thietmar of Merceberg*, will not fail to learn of the saints of the Saxon period. Thietmar's description of the

saint-bishop and ascetic Eido of Meissen (VIII, c. 25) is a true classic. But saints in the same sense of the legend, these figures are not"].

It was not merely indifference, however, which they encountered, but definite disbelief. Many (plurimi) shook their heads at what Sulpitius Severus told in the second book of his Dialogues of the deeds of Martin of Tours—so many that he felt constrained carefully to give his authorities in the next book for each miracle that he recorded. "Let them accept," he says in announcing his purpose to do so 18[Dial., III, 5], "the evidence of people still living, and believe them seeing that they doubt my good faith." In the first book of his Dialogues 19[Dial., I, 26], indeed, he represents his collocutor—his Gallic friend Postumianus—as saying to him frankly: "I shudder to tell what I have lately heard—that a miserable man (I do not know him) has said that you have told many lies in that book of yours"—that is, in his Life of Martin. The reason Postumianus gives for his shuddering, however, is what most interests us. It is that doubt of the actual occurrence of these miracles is a constructive assault upon the credibility of the Gospels. "For," Postumianus argues, "since the Lord Himself testified that such works as Martin's were to be done by all the faithful, he who does not believe that Martin did them simply does not believe that Christ uttered such words." In point of fact, of course, Christ did not utter these words; the appeal is to the spurious "last twelve verses of Mark." We see, however that the belief that Christ uttered these words was a powerful co-operating cause inducing belief in the actual occurrence of the alleged marvels. It seemed an arraignment of Christ to say that His most distinguished followers did not do the works which Christ had promised that all His followers should do. The actual occurrence of the miracles was proved quite as much by the fancied promise of the Gospel as by ocular evidence 20[Cf. T. R. Glover, as cited, p. 289: "Sulpicius says, and it is not improbable that he is presenting Martin's view, as well as his own, that to doubt these marvels of healing, etc., is to diminish the credibility of the gospel, 'for when the Lord Himself testified that such works as Martin did were to be done by all the faithful, he who does not believe Martin did them, does not believe Christ said so.' Perhaps the logic is not above suspicion, but it is clear that it was held Martin's miracles were proven no less by the words of the gospel than by ocular evidence." J. H. Newman had already made much the same remark, Two Essays on Scripture Miracles and on Ecclesiastical, p. 209: "Sulpicius almost grounds his defense of St. Martin's miracles on the antecedent force of this text." It would be a curious and not unprofitable study to ascertain how large a part this spurious text has had in producing spurious miracles in all ages of the church].

It is a very disturbing fact further that the very Fathers who record long lists of miracles contemporary with themselves, yet betray a consciousness that miracles had nevertheless, in some sense or other, ceased with the Apostolic age. When Ambrose, for example, comes to speak of the famous discovery of the bodies of the two martyrs, Protasius and Gervasius, at Milan, and the marvels which accompanied and followed their discovery, he cannot avoid expressing surprise and betraying the fact that this was to him a new thing. "The miracles of old time," he cries 21[Ephesians 22:9; Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, p. 438], "are come again, when by the advent of the Lord Jesus a fuller grace was shed upon the Earth." Augustine, in like manner, in introducing his account of contemporaneous miracles which we have already quoted, begins by adducing the question: "Why do not those miracles take place now, which, as you preach, took place once?" "I might answer," he replies, "that they were necessary before the world believed, that it might believe," and then he goes on to say, as we have seen, that "miracles were wrought in

his time, but they were not so public and well attested as the miracles of the Gospel." Nor were the contemporary miracles, he testifies, so great as those of the Gospels, nor did they embrace all the kinds which occur there. So Chrysostom says 22[Hom. on 1 Corinthians 6:2; 1 Corinthians 6:3 (Hom. 6, vol. X, p. 45)]: "Argue not because miracles do not happen now, that they did not happen then. . . . In those times they were profitable, and now they are not." Again 23[Hom. 8, in Col. No. 5 (vol. XI, p. 387)]: "Why are there not those now who raise the dead and perform cures? . . . When nature was weak, when faith had to be planted, then there were many such; but now He wills not that we should hang on these miracles but be ready for death." Again: "Where is the Holy Spirit now? a man may ask; for then it was appropriate to speak of Him when miracles took place, and the dead were raised and all lepers were cleansed, but now. . . ." Again: "The Apostles indeed enjoyed the grace of God in abundance; but if we were bidden to raise the dead, or open the eyes of the blind, or cleanse lepers, or straighten the lame, or cast out devils and heal the like disorders. . . ." Chrysostom fairly teems with expressions implying that miracle working of every kind had ceased 24[Cf. e.g. Hom. 24 in Joan. (vol. VIII, p. 138); Hom. in Iscr. Act. (vol. III, p. 60)]; he declares in the crispest way, "Of miraculous powers, not even a vestige is left" 25[De. Sacerd., lib. 4; Opera, ed. Sav., vol. VI, p. 35]; and yet he records instances from his day! Isodore of Pelusium similarly looks upon miracles as confined to the Apostolic times, adding 26[Ephesians 4:80]: "Perhaps miracles would take place now, too, if the lives of the teachers rivaled the bearing of the Apostles; though even if they did not, such a life would suffice for the enlightenment of those who beheld it." The same significant distinguishing of times follows us down the years. Thus Gregory the Great at the end of the sixth century, though the very type of a miracle lover, nevertheless, writing on Mark 16:17, says 27[In Evang., 2, 29]: "Is it so, my brethren, that because ye do not these signs, ye do not believe? On the contrary, they were necessary in the beginning of the church; for, that faith might grow, it required miracles to cherish it withal; just as when we plant shrubs, we water them until we see them to thrive in the ground, and as soon as they are well rooted we cease our irrigation." He proceeds to say that the wonders of grace are greater than miracles. Isodore of Seville at the opening of the next century writes in precisely the same spirit 28[Isid. Hispal. Sententiarum lib. I, cap. 27; ed. Col. Agripp., 1617, p. 424]. "The reason why the church does not now do the miracles it did under the Apostles," he explains, "is, because miracles were necessary then to convince the world of the truth of Christianity; but now it becomes it, being so convinced, to shine forth in good works. . . . Whoever seeks to perform miracles now as a believer, seeks after vainglory and human applause. For it is written: 'Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not.' Observe, a sign is not necessary for believers, who have already received the faith, but for unbelievers that they may be converted. For Paul miraculously cured the father of Publius of a fever for the benefit of unbelievers; but he restores believing Timothy when ill, not by prayer, but by medicine; so that you may clearly perceive that miracles were wrought for unbelievers and not for believers." Even in the thirteenth century, Bernard, commenting on Mark 16:17, asks 29[Serm. i. de Ascens., 2]: "For who is there that seems to have these signs of the faith, without which no one, according to this Scripture, shall be saved?" and answers just as Gregory did, by saying that the greatest miracles are those of the renewed life. The common solution of this inconsistent attitude toward miracles, that the ecclesiastical miracles were only recognized as differing in kind from those of the Scripture, while going a certain way, will hardly suffice for the purpose. Ecclesiastical miracles of every conceivable kind were alleged. Every variety of miracle properly so-called Chrysostom declares to

have ceased. It is the contrast between miracles as such and wonders of grace that Gregory draws. No doubt we must recognize that these Fathers realized that the ecclesiastical miracles were of a lower order than those of Scripture. It looks very much as if, when they were not inflamed by enthusiasm, they did not really think them to be miracles at all 30[The Patristic citations in this paragraph have been taken largely, without verification, from Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 135 ff., 208, and W. Goode, *The Modern Claims to the Possession of the Extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit*, 1834, pp. 4 ff., 275 ff. Cf. also A. Tholuck, *Vermischte Schriften*, I, pp. 35 ff. Such passages abound. H. Günter, *Legenden-Studien*, 1906, pp. 77 ff., very naturally raises the question whether the legends of the Middle Ages really wished to be believed, and whether they were believed. His conclusion is that there can be no doubt that they were put forth as literal facts, but that the credit accorded to them by men of independent mind left certainly something to be desired. "No one of the theologians of importance," he remarks (p. 82), "ever made an attempt to support scientific speculations by appeals to legendary tales as historical evidence, no matter how near at hand an illustration from them lay." Cf. what he says in *Legenden-Studien*, 1906, p. 132: "I think it is not by accident, when Cassian observes that the monks of his time—he died in 435—were no longer subjected to the power of the demons as the 'Fathers' were. Similarly Gregory the Great later finds that miracles do not manifest themselves now as in the past (*Dial.*, I, c. 12). And the same reflection is repeated dozens of times in the literature of the Middle Ages. Is there not a sufficient suggestion in this"?.]

It is observable further that, throughout the whole patristic and mediaeval periods at least, it is difficult to discover any one who claims to have himself wrought miracles. It may seem somewhat remarkable," says Gibbon 31[*The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. Smith, 1887, vol. II, p. 180, note 81], "that Bernard of Clairvaux, who records so many miracles of his friend, St. Malachi, never takes any notice of his own, which in their turn, however, are carefully related by his companions and disciples. In the long series of ecclesiastical history, does there exist a single instance of a saint asserting that he himself possessed the gift of miracles?" There is certainly a notable phenomenon here which may be brought to its sharpest point by recalling along with it two facts. First, Christ and His Apostles present a strong contrast with it. Our Lord appeals to His own works, and Paul to his own, in proof of their mission. Secondly, Bernard, for example, not only does not claim to have worked miracles himself, but, as we have seen, seems to speak at times as if he looked upon miracles as having ceased with the Apostles.

It is very instructive to observe how J. H. Newman endeavors to turn the edge of Gibbon's inquiry. "I observe then, first," he says 32[*Op. cit.*, p. 220], "that it is not often that the gift of miracles is even ascribed to a saint. In many cases miracles are only ascribed to their tombs or relics; or where miracles are ascribed to them when living, these are but singular or occasional, not parts of a series." "Moreover," he adds as his second answer, "they are commonly what Paley calls tentative miracles, or some out of many which have been attempted, and have been done accordingly without any previous confidence in their power to effect them. Moses and Elijah could predict the result; but the miracles in question were scarcely more than experiments and trials, even though success had been granted to them many times before. Under these circumstances, how could the individual men who wrought them appeal to them themselves? It was not till afterward, when their friends and disciples could calmly look back upon their life, and review the various actions and providences which occurred in the course of it, that they would be able to put

together the scattered tokens of divine favor, none or few of which might in themselves be a certain evidence of a miraculous power. As well might we expect men in their lifetime to be called saints as workers of miracles." There still remains in reserve a third argument, which amounts to saying that the workers of ecclesiastical miracles were modest men, "as little inclined to proclaim them aloud as to make" a boast of their graces." The whole tenor of this representation of the relation of the miracle workers of the patristic and mediaeval church to their miracles is artificial. It is nothing less than ludicrous to speak of the miracles ascribed to a Martin of Tours or a Gregory Thaumaturgus as "tentative," or as attempted with incomplete confidence. It is equally ludicrous to represent incomplete assurance on the part of a saint with respect to his miracles before they were wrought as prolonging itself throughout his life, after they were wrought. Meanwhile the fact remains that throughout the history of the church miracles have rather been thrust upon than laid claim to by their workers 33[Among the many anomalies of the legends of the saints, the question asks itself why the saints, many of whom had severe sufferings to undergo, many of whom were lifelong invalids, never rescued or healed themselves by the exercise of their miraculous powers? Bernard of Clairvaux, for example, when in extremities, needed to be saved from without—by the intervention of Mary, who gave him her breast. Christina Mirabilis, it is true, nourished herself with her own virgin milk; but this is an exception to the general rule. It is a proverb, "Physician, heal thyself "; yet even the most diseased of the saints did not do it—and all of them apparently died. That the Martyr heroes of the Martyr aretalogies ultimately succeeded in dying is a standing wonder. They are delivered apparently from every imaginable, and often unimaginable, peril, at the cost of every imaginable, and often unimaginable, miracle fire will not burn them, nor steel cut their flesh; the sea will not drown them, nor will chains bind them. They bear a charmed life and walk unscathed through every conceivable danger. And then suddenly their heads are simply chopped off as if it were the most natural thing in the world—and they are dead. The reader catches his breath and cannot believe his eyes: the exceeding sang-froid with which the author kills at the end those whom nothing can harm in the meantime produces nothing less than an enormous anticlimax. Has the miracle power of the martyr given suddenly out—been all used up in its wonderful action hitherto? Or is it merely that the invention of the author has been exhausted, and he has to close thus lamely because he can think of nothing else to say? We have something of the same feeling when we contemplate sick saints healing others with wonderful facility, while apparently wholly without power to heal themselves. Is it adequate to say with Percy Dearmer (*Body and Soul*, p. 133): "And often, when they healed others they did not spare the strength to heal themselves; often they endured without thinking of themselves the infirmities which they could not bear to see unhelped in others. They thought so much of One of whom it is said, 'He saved others; Himself He cannot save.'" The suggested comparison with Christ is, of course, offensive. The sufferings of the saints are not expiatory sacrifices offered to God in behalf of a sinful world—although it must be sadly acknowledged that many of them (e.g., the Stigmatics) fancied they were. Christ could not save Himself, not because He lacked the power to do so, but because the work which He came to do was precisely suffering—to give His life a ransom for many. There was no more reason in the nature of things, on the other hand, why the saints should suffer than others. And the description which Dearmer gives of the saints is not true to life, in many instances at least. They do not seem to have borne their sufferings without thinking of them; they apparently thought a great deal of them, either to bewail them or, by a spiritual perversion, to glory in them as a mark of spiritual distinction. And how does it do to say in one sentence, "The saints have always

seemed to regard their healing works as easy things, done by the way and out of compassion"; and then in the next, "They did not spare the strength to heal themselves"? If it cost them nothing to heal—if they did it with a passing wave of the hand—why should they have not healed themselves? The sicknesses of the saints is a standing puzzle]. Nor did there ever lack those who openly repudiated the notion that any necessary connection existed between saintliness and miracle working. Richard Rolle of Hampole, who also became posthumously a miracle worker, was in his lifetime pronounced no saint because he wrought no miracles. His reply was to the effect that the inference was inconsequent. "Not all saints," he said 34[Horstman, Richard Rolle of Hampole, vol. II, p. xxviii], "do or have done miracles, neither in life nor after death; nor do all reprobates either in life or after death lack miracles; frequently the mediocre good and less perfect do miracles, and many who are seated highest in the heavens before the face of God remain quiet within" 35[Cf. H. Günter, *Die christliche Legende des Abendlandes*, 1910, p. 187, who cites the *Vita* of St. Gongolf at the end of the ninth century, and Gislebert of Sens, about 1150, as declaring that in the absence of good merit miracles are nothing, since they are performed by many evil men; as also the archdeacon Robert of Ostrevand in his life of Aybert, of the same age, who remarks that the virtue of love which belongs to the good alone is of far more worth than the virtue of miracles which belongs alike to good and evil. Cf. also the like citation from Thomas of Reuil. Günter refers on the general matter to L. Zöpf, *Das Heiligen-Leben in 10 Jahrh.* in "Beiträge z. Kulturgesch. des Mittelalters u. des Renaissance," herausgegeben von W. Götz, Heft I (1908), pp. 62 f., pp. 181 ff.]. "Many bodies," he says, "have been translated on Earth whose souls perchance have not yet attained heaven." "Saints are not carried to the supernatural seats for the reason that they have showed wonders, for some wicked men, too, have done this; but truth has desired that the more ardently one loves, the more highly shall he be elevated, the more honorably shall he be seated among the angels" 36[This is of course the established doctrine; cf. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. X, 1911, p. 351, where Benedict XIV is quoted (on Heroic Virtue, 1851, III, p. 130) to the effect that, since the gift of miracle working is a grace gratis data, it is independent of the merit of the recipient; even bad men might be granted it (for God's own purposes) and good men denied it. It forms no ground of inference then to saintliness. But do not difficulties arise then with reference to the customs of "canonization"?]. "It is not necessary now," he continues quite in the vein of Augustine, "that miracles should be shown, since throughout the whole world many abide in memory; but there is need that before the eyes of all should be shown the example of that work. . . ." In remarks like these there is manifested a certain depreciation of the value of miracles, assuredly not strange in the circumstances. And we are bound to carry this a step further and to recognize that a great mass of these miracles are alleged to have been wrought in the interest of what we must pronounce grave errors. J. H. Newman, in a passage just quoted, remarks that many miracles are ascribed to the tombs or relics of the saints, rather than to the saints themselves; and this is only an example of the uses to which they have been put. So many were wrought in connection with superstitions which grew up about the Eucharist, for instance, that "wonders wrought by the Eucharist" is made one of the main divisions of the article, "Wonders," in Smith and Cheatham's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities* 37[Vol. II, p. 2049. On miracles connected with the host, see very especially Yrjö Hirn, *The Sacred Shrine*, 1912, pp. 120 ff., with the literature given on pp. 502 ff.]. Thus, for example, "Cyprian speaks of a person who had lapsed in persecution attempting to communicate; when on opening the area or receptacle in which the consecrated bread was reserved, fire burst out from it and prevented her. Another, on attending

church with the same purpose, found that he had received from the priest nothing but a cinder" 38[Newman, as cited, p. 134]. Ambrose relates that one of his friends called Satyrus was piously inclined but not yet admitted to the sacrament. "In this state he happened to suffer shipwreck in his passage from Africa." "Says Ambrose: 'Satyrus, not being afraid of death, but to die only before he had taken of these mysteries, begged of some of the company, who had been initiated, that they would lend him the divine sacrament'" (which they carried about with them—according to the superstitious habit of the day—as an amulet or charm), "not to feed his curiosity by peeping inside the bag, but to obtain the benefit of his faith, for he wrapped up the mysteries in his handkerchief, and then tying it about his neck threw himself into the sea; never troubling himself to look out for a plank, which might help him to swim, since he wanted nothing more than the arms of his faith; nor did his hopes fail him, for he was the first of the company who got safe to the shore" 39[Middleton, as cited, vol. I, p. li]. Optatus relates that certain members of the Donatist sect once cast the Eucharistic bread of the Catholics to the dogs—which promptly went mad and bit their masters 40[Smith and Cheatham, as cited]. Sozomen tells that a woman who had received some Eucharistic bread of the Macedonians, found it turned to a stone 40A[Smith and Cheatham, as cited]. Gregory the Great narrates that a young monk who had gone to visit his parents without permission, died on the day of his return, but could not rest quiet in his grave until Benedict, his superior, had the host laid on it 40B[Smith and Cheatham, as cited]. In the time of Justinian, we are told, when it was the custom to distribute the Eucharistic bread left over after the communion to the children, it happened once that a Jewish child received and ate a fragment of it. The enraged father cast the child into a furnace, but it was miraculously preserved from harm 40C[Smith and Cheatham, as cited]. Gregory of Tours tells of a deacon of unholy life, who, carrying one day the Eucharist into a church, had the bread fly of itself out of his hand and place itself on the altar 40D[Smith and Cheatham, as cited]. According to the same writer the host on one occasion shed blood when broken 40E[Smith and Cheatham, as cited]. A bishop named Marsius is related to have let his portion of the Eucharistic bread, received from the hands of the administrator, fall into the folds of his robe because he did not wish to break his fast. It at once turned into a serpent, and wrapped itself about his waist whence it could be dislodged only by a night of prayer for him on the part of the administrator 40F[Smith and Cheatham, as cited]. This is matched by the miracle of Bolsena, which Raphael has rendered famous. A priest saying the mass—it is dated 1264—let a drop of wine fall on his corporal, and doubled up the garment upon it. It was found to have left the impression of the wafer in blood on every fold which touched it 41[Dict. des Prophéties et des Miracles (Migne), vol. I, p. 370. For the miracle of Bolsena and its significance in the historical development of the legends, see H. Günter, *Legenden-Studien*, 1906, pp. 174 ff.; cf. Yrjö Hirn, *The Sacred Shrine*, 1912, pp. 103 f.].

We have seen Augustine constrained to allow the principle that miracles alleged in the interests of false doctrines are self-condemned; that no miracle can be accepted against the truth, but is at once to be set aside if presented in the interests of error. The principle is a scriptural one 42[Deuteronomy 13:1 ff.] and has repeatedly been rationally validated. It is so validated, for example, in a solid argument by Lyman H. Atwater, speaking immediately of spiritualism 43[Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review, April, 1856, pp. 255-285, article on "Miracles and their Counterfeits"]. "A corrupt doctrine," says he suggestively, "destroys a pretended miracle just as strong counter circumstantial evidence would invalidate the testimony of a single witness." A good deal of confusion seems to be abroad on this matter. An impression appears to exist that the

proper evidence of truth—or at least of religious truth—is miracle, and that therefore there can be no decisive criterion of religious truth offered for our acceptance except miracles wrought in support of it. It is at least very commonly supposed that we are bound to examine carefully into the pretensions of any alleged miracle produced in support of any propositions whatever, however intrinsically absurd; and, if these alleged miracles cannot be at once decisively invalidated, we are bound to accept as true the propositions in support of which they are alleged. No proposition clearly perceived to be false, however, can possibly be validated to us by any miracle whatever; and the perception of the proposition as clearly false relieves us at once from the duty of examining into the miraculous character of its alleged support and invalidates any claim which that support can put in to miraculous character—prior to all investigation. A matter so clear could not be missed, of course, by Augustine, and we have his support, accordingly, in pointing out that the connection of alleged miracles with erroneous doctrines invalidates their claim to be genuine works of God.

We must not imagine, however, that ecclesiastical miracles are distinguished from the biblical miracles by nothing except the nature of the doctrines in connection with which they are alleged to be wrought. They differ from them also, fundamentally, in character. This difference is not denied. J. H. Newman, for example, describes it thus 44[As cited, p. 99]: "Ecclesiastical miracles, that is, miracles posterior to the Apostolic age, are, on the whole, different in object, character, and evidence from those of Scripture on the whole." At a subsequent point, he enlarges on this 45[Pp. 115 ff.]. "The Scripture miracles," says he, "are for the most part evidence of a Divine Revelation, and that for the sake of those who have been instructed in it, and in order to the instruction of multitudes; but the miracles which follow have sometime no discoverable or direct object, or but a slight object; they happen for the sake of individuals and of those who are already Christians, or for purposes already effected, as far as we can judge, by the miracles of Scripture. . . . The miracles of Scripture are, on the whole, grave, simple, majestic; those of ecclesiastical history often partake of what may be called a romantic character, and of that wildness and inequality which enters into the notion of romance. The miracles of Scripture are undeniably beyond nature; those of ecclesiastical history are often scarcely more than extraordinary accidents or coincidences, or events which seem to betray exaggerations or errors in the statement." In a word 46[Pp. 150 f.], "Scripture is to us a Garden of Eden, and its creations are beautiful as well as very good; but when we pass from the Apostolical to the following ages, it is as if we left the choicest valleys of the Earth, the quietest and most harmonious scenery, and the most cultivated soil, for the luxuriant wilderness of Africa or Asia, the natural home or kingdom of brute nature, uninfluenced by man." Newman labors to show that this is only a general contrast; that there are some miracles in Scripture which, taken by themselves, would find their place in the lower class; and some in ecclesiastical history which rise to the higher class; and in later life he would somewhat modify his statement of the contrast. But the admission that the contrast exists is unavoidable; some measure of recognition of it runs, as we have seen, through the literature of all the Christian ages, and it is big with significance.

I have frequently quoted in the course of this lecture Newman's essay on The Miracles of Ecclesiastical History compared with those of Scripture, as regards their nature, credibility and evidence. Indeed, I have purposely drawn a good deal of my material from it. Perhaps I owe you some account of this book, which is, perhaps, an even more famous book than Middleton's,

formerly described to you. Newman had written in 1825-6 a paper on The Miracles of Scripture, compared with those reported elsewhere, as regards their nature, credibility, and evidence. That was in his Protestant days, and in this paper he takes sufficiently strong ground against the genuineness of ecclesiastical miracles. Then came the Oxford movement of which he was the leader; and afterward his drift Romeward. As this drift was reaching its issue in his passing into the Roman church—in 1842-3—he wrote the subtle plea for the genuineness of ecclesiastical miracles with which we are now concerned, primarily as a preface for a translation of a portion of Fleury's Ecclesiastical History 47[This portion of Fleury's great *Histoire Ecclésiastique* (Paris, 1691-1720, 20 vols., quarto), from 381 to 400 AD, translated by Herbert (London, 1828), was republished in three volumes, Oxford, 1842, in a text carefully revised by Newman, and supplied with this introduction]. How well pleased he, as a Catholic, was with his performance is evidenced by his republication of the two papers together, without substantial alteration, in repeated editions after his perversion. The essay now claiming our attention is probably the most specious plea for the credibility and reality of the whole mass of ecclesiastical miracles ever penned. I say the whole mass, although Newman, with great apparent candor, admits that there is to be found among them every variety of miracle, of every degree of intrinsic credibility or incredibility, and supported by every degree of evidence or no evidence. For, after he has, under the cover of this candor, concentrated attention upon what seem to him the particular miracles most deserving to be true, and supported by the most direct and weighty evidence, he subtly suggests that, on their basis, many more in themselves doubtful or distasteful may be allowed, that insufficiency of proof is not the same as disproof, and that very many things must be admitted by us to be very likely true for the truth of which we have no evidence at all—inasmuch as we must distinguish sharply between the fact and the proof of the fact, and must be prepared to admit that failure of the latter does not carry with it the rejection of the former. The disposition of matter in this famous essay is as follows. First, the antecedent probability of the ecclesiastical miracles is estimated; then, their internal character is investigated; then, the argument in their behalf in general is presented; and finally the major portion of the essay is given to a detailed attempt to demonstrate that a few selected miracles of greater intrinsic likelihood and better attestation than the mass, actually happened—such as those of the thundering legion, the changing of water into oil by Narcissus, the alteration of the course of the Lycus by Gregory Thaumaturgus, the appearance of the cross to Constantine, the discovery of the cross by Helena, the death of Arius, the fiery eruption which stopped Julian's attempt to build the temple at Jerusalem, the cure of blindness by relics, and the speech of the African confessors without tongues. Everywhere the reader is charmed by the delightful style, and everywhere he is led on by the hand of a master reasoner bending facts and reason alike to follow the path appointed for them. The opening argument runs as follows. Although there may be a certain antecedent probability against this or that particular miracle, there can be no presumption whatever against miracles generally after the Apostles, because inspiration has borne the brunt of any such antecedent prejudice, and, in establishing the certainty of the supernatural histories of the Scriptures, has disproved their impossibility in the abstract. The skilfulness of this is beyond praise. By keeping his reader's attention fixed on the possibility of miracles in the abstract, Newman quite distracts it from the decisive question in the case—whether the scriptural histories of miracles do not themselves raise a presumption against the alleged miracles succeeding them. At a later point, to be sure, this question is raised. But only in a special form, namely, whether the difference between the biblical and ecclesiastical miracles is not so

great that the latter become improbable if the former be admitted. A difference is allowed; but its implications are avoided by an appeal to the analogy of nature, in professed imitation of Joseph Butler. It is argued, namely, that the case is very much like that of a man familiar only with the noblest animals, which have been subjected to human dominion, who is suddenly introduced into a zoological garden and, perceiving the great variety of animal nature, the hideousness and uselessness of much of it, is led to deny that all could have come from God. Thus, says Newman, one accustomed to only the noble miracles of Scripture may be pardoned some doubt when introduced into the jungles of ecclesiastical history. But doubt here too should pass away with increasing knowledge and a broadening outlook on the divine power and works. This is the argument of the second section, on the "internal character of ecclesiastical miracles." But the real grounds of the presumption against ecclesiastical miracles are never adverted to namely that Scripture represents miracles to be attached to the Apostles, the vehicles of revelation, as their signs, and thus raises an antecedent presumption against any miracles having occurred after their age; that on the testimony of history miracles accordingly ceased with the Apostolic age, and only after an interval are heard of again; that, when heard of again, they are the apparent progeny of the apocryphal miracles of the Gnostic and Ebionitic romances of the second and third centuries and not of the miracles of the New Testament; that they accordingly differ not only *toto caelo* from the miracles of the Scripture in kind, but are often wrought in support of superstitions not only foreign to the religion of the Bible, but in contradiction to it. Of all this Newman says not a word, and he manages to carry the reader so along with him by an exhibition of candor when candor is harmless that there is danger of its being forgotten that of all this anything ought to be said. The section on the state of the argument begins polemically, but soon returns to the main point, namely that the case is to be settled on the ground of antecedent probability. This is then at once resolved into the question of the doctrine of the church. Newman, it is true, expresses himself as if what he was handling was the reality of Christianity. He warns us that skepticism here may, nay, must, be at bottom "disbelief in the grace committed to the church." He suggests that those who realize that the bodies of the saints in life are the Temples of the Highest ought not to feel offense if miracles are wrought by these bodies after death. Finally, he enunciates the proposition that "it may be taken as a general truth that, where there is an admission of Catholic doctrines, there no prejudice will exist against ecclesiastical miracles; while those who disbelieve in the existence among us of the hidden Power will eagerly avail themselves of every plea for explaining away its open manifestation" 48[P. 188]. This again is very skillfully put. But there is no reason why the judgment expressed should not be concurred in without debate. A Catholic, believing first in the divinity of the church as the organ of the Holy Ghost, in which He is made a deposit for the whole world, and from which alone He can be obtained; and believing, next, in the truth of all the distinctive teachings of this church, as to monasticism and asceticism, relics and saints, transubstantiation, and the like, in honor of which the alleged miracles are performed—will naturally be predisposed to believe these miracles real. A Protestant, believing none of these things, but looking upon them as corruptions of the Gospel, will as naturally be predisposed to believe them spurious. In this sense, every Protestant must deny the existence of "the hidden Power among us" which Newman affirms, and hence cannot either expect or allow "open manifestations" of it. We believe in a wonder working God; but not in a wonder working church. Thus the effect of Newman's argument, when once it is probed, is to uncover the root of the matter, and to make clear just what the presumption against ecclesiastical miracles is. It matters not that he proceeds to cite the last twelve verses of

Mark and to build an argument upon the promise included in them. The spuriousness of the passage evacuates the argument. It is a meaningless excrescence, however, upon his argument in any case. That ultimately comes merely to the historical *causa finita est: ecclesia locuta est*. The examination of the evidence for selected miracles which is presented at the end of the volume is an interesting piece of work, but is unconvincing for the main matter. That the conclusion in each case lacks cogency may be shown in one way or another; but it is not necessary to do this. Newman himself allows that the general conclusion reached rests on the antecedent presumption; and that that depends on our attitude to Roman doctrine. For its inherent interest, however, we may glance for a moment at the last, and perhaps th

Election

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"By grace have ye been saved," says Paul to the Ephesians (Ephesians 2:5, Ephesians 2:8); and so important does it seem to him that his readers shall understand this and bear it on their hearts that he says it twice in the course of four verses. He says it in such a way, moreover, as to throw a tremendous emphasis on the word "grace," and therefore on the manner in which they had been saved, as distinguished from the salvation itself. He is not assuring the Ephesians that they had been saved. They knew that for themselves, and were rejoicing in this wonderful thing which had come to them. What he is eagerly repeating to them, intent on fixing it so firmly in their hearts that they cannot escape from it for a moment, is that it is just "by grace" that they have been saved.

He is engaged in this context in reminding his readers of the greatness of their salvation. They had been dead in their trespasses and their sins, children of wrath by nature, like the rest of men. But God is rich in mercy and has loved them mightily. Because of this his great love for them, he has come to them, lying helplessly dead in their sins, and has made them alive in Christ. Here the apostle breaks in on himself to cry, for the first time, "By grace have ye been saved"! God has raised them with Christ and seated them with him in the heavenly places, for no other reason than that he might show forth in the ages to come the surpassing riches of his grace, as manifested in this his kindness to them in Christ Jesus, for—the apostle now adds with iterant emphasis—"by grace have ye been saved."

We see that the apostle is most eager to impress on his readers this one fact, asserted and reasserted as the one thing needful for them to keep fully in mind, that it is by grace that they have been saved; that it is by grace, and nothing else than grace, that they have been saved. In this reiterated phrase we have in effect the heart of the heart of his gospel, to know which is our prime necessity if we are to know what that gospel is. The whole gospel turns as upon its hinge on this fact, that salvation is of pure grace.

There are, especially, three ideas which are conveyed by the word "grace," all of which must be given full validity if we are to understand what the apostle was impressing with such earnestness upon the Ephesians.

The first of them is the idea of power. Grace is power. And it is only because grace is power that it can save, save dead men, men dead in trespasses and sins. If men were not dead, possibly they might be saved by something else than power. By good advice, say; by pointing out to them something, some good thing, to do, by which they might inherit eternal life. That is what the law does. And that is why the law cannot save, cannot, that is, save dead men. The law tells us what we ought to do. Because the law is the law of God, perfect and holy and just and good, it tells us

perfectly what we ought to do. But it is of no avail to tell dead men what they ought to do. Dead men cannot do anything. They need not instruction but life; not good counsel but power. That is the reason why Paul, when he is assuring the Romans that the salvation which had been begun in them should certainly be completed, hangs it all on the fact that they were not under law but under grace. "Sin shall not have dominion over you," he promises them--and what a great promise that is!--"sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace" (Romans 6:14). If they were under law, sin certainly would have dominion over them. Law can do nothing but tell us what is right and what is wrong; and after that there is nothing that it can do. It cannot enable us to do the right and refuse the wrong which it has made known to us. But grace is power. It does not instruct, it energizes; and what dead men need is energizing, such energizing as raises the dead. Only God's grace, which is almighty power, can do that. It is, says Paul (Ephesians 1:19-20), the same "working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." This is the first idea which is conveyed by the word "grace," when we are told that it is by grace that we have been saved. Grace is power, and because it is God's grace, it is almighty power.

The second idea conveyed by it is the idea of love. Grace is power. But it is not bare power; "wild" power, as we say; power operating without direction, producing any variety of effects. It is power directed by love. That is the fundamental meaning of the word "grace"--favor, love, yearning desire. And that is what grace always means, when it is spoken of in the New Testament with reference to God. It always expresses the idea of good will, kindness, favor, love. Power, in itself considered, may blast as well as bless. The power that grace is, always blesses, because grace is love. The grace of God is the power of God, exerted in kindness; it is the love of God acting, according to its nature, in blessing. And therefore, in the passage from Ephesians which has been in our mind (Ephesians 2:1-10), it is because he is telling his readers that it was due only to the riches of God's mercy and "his great love wherewith he loved us" that we are saved, that Paul is led to interject suddenly in explanation of it all, "By grace have ye been saved." To be saved in the riches of God's mercy because of the greatness of his love--that is what it is to be saved by grace. For the same reason, when Paul comes to speak, a little later, of the manifestation of the exceeding riches of God's grace in our salvation, he explains that the precise thing in which these exceeding riches of God's grace are manifested, is "kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." Grace is manifested in kindness: to deal kindly with us is to deal graciously with us. The second idea which is conveyed by the word "grace," when we are told that it is by grace that we are saved, then, is that we owe our salvation purely to the love of God. Grace is love; and because it is God's grace by which we are saved, our salvation is a pure product of the love of God.

The third idea conveyed by the word "grace" is the idea of gratuitousness. Grace is gratuitous just because it is love, that is, because it is the "love of benevolence," as we say, the love that is good will, kindness, favor. It is the very nature of the love that is good will, kindness, favor, that it is gratuitous. We might do something, perhaps, to attract to ourselves, to secure, to deserve the "love of complacency," that is to say, the kind of love that seeks and finds gratification for itself in its object, rather than is intent only on benefiting its object; that seeks its own pleasure in its object rather than purely seeking to do it good. But that is not the kind of love that grace is. Grace is the love that is good will, kindness, favor, and the love that is good will, kindness, favor is in the nature of the case gratuitous. At all events this is what the Bible speaks of when it speaks of the grace of

God. Paul, for instance, is at great pains to make it clear that the grace of God is not earned by us, is not secured by us, is not obtained by us; but is just given to us, comes to us purely gratuitously. What is of grace, he tells us, is by that very fact not of works; if it be in any way, in the slightest measure, earned, by that very fact it ceases to be of grace (Romans 11:6). He carries the idea, indeed, to its extreme height. Grace, with him, is not only pure kindness, kindness which has not been earned (had it been earned, it would have ceased to be kindness), but kindness to the undeserving in the positive sense, kindness to the ill-deserving. Grace is very distinctly and very emphatically love to the ill-deserving. This is the third idea which is conveyed by the word "grace" when we are told that it is by grace that we have been saved. Our salvation is a pure gratuity from God. We have not earned it; we have not secured it; we have not obtained it. God has fixed upon us in the riches of his mercy and the greatness of his unconstrained love, pouring out upon us in the exceeding riches of his grace his pure kindness in Christ Jesus.

This is then what Paul means when he tells us with reiterated emphasis that it is by grace, by grace and nothing else than grace, that we have been saved. He means that we have not saved ourselves. It is God who has saved us, God and God alone. If we had saved ourselves, or supplied anything whatever which entered into our salvation as in any measure its procuring cause, it would not have been distinctively by grace that we have been saved; and Paul's strong emphasis on the assertion that it is "by grace," that it is by nothing else than grace, that we have been saved would be misplaced. We were in point of fact dead in our trespasses and sins and therefore utterly unable to move hand or foot to seek salvation. We were helplessly and hopelessly "lost." We owe our salvation wholly to God's kindness, to his undeserved love, to his "grace." It is all from him, in its beginning and middle and end: all from him. Just as Lazarus was called out of the grave by the sheer power of the God who raises the dead, we have been called out of our death in trespasses and sins by the sheer grace of God, the grace which is the power of God, working under the direction of his ineffable love, poured out in gratuitous kindness upon ill-deserving sinners. We have not made the first step in knowledge of the salvation of God until we have learned, and made the very center of our thought of it, this great fact: that it is by the pure grace of God, by that and that alone, that we are saved. That, as we have said, is the heart of the heart of the gospel.

Now, of course, no one will imagine that God, who saves us thus by his almighty grace, has saved us by the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward according to that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, inadvertently, without meaning to do so. Of course he has meant to save us, just as he does save us, by his pure grace; and has meant thus to save us all along. It is this, his meaning to save us by his grace before he actually does so, which we call "election." Election, we thus see, is but the first moving of God's grace looking to our salvation; and therefore Paul calls it "the election of grace" (Romans 11:5), the election, that is, which has its origin in the grace of God toward us, which proceeds from it, comes out of it as its appropriate manifestation. It is the first step of God's love, as he prepares to save us by his grace, the setting of his love upon us, that in its own good time and way it may work its will on and in us. It is nothing, in other words, but God's purpose to save us, a purpose which he must, of course, form before he saves us, and a purpose which equally of course he fulfills in saving us. What God purposes he certainly performs, no purpose of his is idle or ineffective. This, his purpose of salvation, therefore becomes the sure beginning and pledge of our actual salvation

and draws in its train all else that enters into our salvation.

Read Romans 8:29-30, and see "the golden chain" which, as a fine old divine, John Arrowsmith, puts it, "God lets down from heaven that by it he may draw up his elect thither." "For whom he foreknew"--that is election, the setting upon his people with distinguishing preoccupation and love, according to the pregnant use of "know" in such a passage say, as Amos 3:2, "You only have I known out of all the families of the earth" --"for whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son"--this is the high destiny prepared for us!--"that he might be the firstborn among many brethren: and whom he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Count these five golden links, all acts of God's own, working our salvation, and note how they are welded together in one unbreakable chain, so that all who are set upon in God's gracious distinguishing view are carried on by his grace, step by step, up to the great consummation of that glorification which realizes the promised conformity to the image of God's own Son. It is "election," you see, that does all this; for "whom he foreknew, . . . them he also glorified." That fine old divine to whom we have just referred tells us further that "election, having once pitched upon a man, will find him out and call him home, wherever he be. Zacchaeus out of cursed Jericho; Abraham out of idolatrous Ur of the Chaldeans; Nicodemus and Paul out of the college of the Pharisees, Christ's sworn enemies; Dionysius and Damaris, out of superstitious Athens. In whatever dunghill God's jewels be hid, election will both find them out there and fetch them out from thence." "Rejoice," our Savior cried (Luke 10:20), "rejoice in this- that your names are written in heaven," in, that is, the Lamb's book of life (Revelation 21:27), which the same fine old divine counsels us always to remember, is "a book of love-the writing of our names in which is the firstborn of all God's favors."

That God has set upon just us in this his electing grace, must ever be to us a matter of adoring wonder. Certain it is, that there was nothing in us, whether quality or deed, which could attract his favorable notice, much less make him partial to us, and, moreover, there is no respect of persons with God. We were dead, dead in trespasses and sins, even as others, and therefore the children of wrath even as they (Ephesians 2:1-3). "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Romans 1:18); and surely there has been enough ungodliness and unrighteousness in us. That God has chosen just us from among our fellows to be saved from this wrath, 1 Thessalonians 5:9, finds no explanation in us. We can only say, "Yea, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight" (Matthew 11:26). It has all hung upon his mere good pleasure, and he has given us this unspeakable blessing for no other reason than that he has chosen to give it to us in the unsearchable counsels of his own gracious will. For, as our fine old divine reminds us, we are "predestinated after the counsel of his own will, not after the good inclinations of ours." We had no good inclinations of will; men dead in trespasses and sins have no good inclinations. All that is good in us, in the inclinations of our wills as in the conduct of our lives, is from him, the product of his electing grace, and cannot be its cause. It is only because God has set upon us in his inexplicable love, and has predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son, that, through his calling, and justifying, and sanctifying grace -all in execution of his gracious election-any good is formed in us. It is not "of works," says Paul (Ephesians 2:9-10), that we are saved but "for good works"; and he adds that, in order that we may do these good works, we have needed to be made over, and that by so profoundly revolutionary a change that we can be looked upon as nothing less than a new creation- "for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for

good works," the good works which God has afore prepared that we should walk in them.

The very good works which we do, then, have been prepared for us by God in his electing grace, that we should walk in them. We are not chosen because we are good; we are chosen that we may be good. That is precisely what we are elected to--goodness, holiness. And that again is what is meant by the declaration that we have been predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son: we can become like him only as we become holy. Accordingly we are told with the richest fullness of expression (Ephesians 1:3-4), that God chose us "in Christ . . . before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before him . . . having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace." It is all here--the rooting of all our goodness in the elective decree of God, and the rooting of that decree in God's mere good pleasure. Everything else hangs on election, election itself on God alone. But what is especially emphasized is that what God has chosen us to, in this electing decree, is that we should be holy.

It follows, therefore, that those whom God has set upon in his electing grace, certainly shall be holy. This is what he has chosen them to--that they shall be holy. And, having chosen them to be holy, he has not left them to themselves, but, in his infinite grace, has taken them in hand to make them holy. That is why he has predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son, and then in pursuance of this destination of them, called them and justified them and sanctified them, yea, and will glorify them. These are the several processes through which he frames them into the holiness to which he has chosen them. They are not shallow processes, moving only on the surface and depending on our independent cooperation to produce their effects, and therefore liable to fail because of our weaknesses and sins. In these processes God remakes us and therefore we emerge from them his workmanship, created unto the good works which he has "afore prepared that we should walk in them." It is wholly of God that we are in Christ Jesus (1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:18); and being in Christ Jesus, we are new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17), the old things have passed away and all things have become new. As, under the molding hand of God, we are being thus renewed in the spirit of our minds, we put off more and more the old man and "put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth"

(Ephesians 4:24), we rejoice with trembling, because surely we see that the Lord is in this place. Full of joy, because we perceive the hand of God upon us, working in us both the willing and the doing, we "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling" (Php_2:12)--that is to say, not with hesitation and doubt lest it may not be real, but with overmastering awe that it should be so with us, that God should be the impulsive cause of all of both our willing and doing.

It is precisely in this that we have the salvation of our God. For it is in this that the salvation to which we have been chosen consists: that we should be God's workmanship, created unto the good works which God has "afore prepared that we should walk in them"; that we should be holy; that we should be conformed to the image of God's Son. Of course, when we are like Christ we are saved men. Certainly we do not yet see all that is included in this high destiny. But we already know that when he shall be manifested, "we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2). And having this hope in us, we purify ourselves, "even as he is pure" (1 John 3:3). Our eyes are set on the goal; and we run with steadfastness the race that is set before us, "looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter

of our faith" (Hebrews 12:1), looking unto him not only as he who has framed the faith in us by which we live in him, and who will perfect it to the end, but also as the model to which we shall be conformed. For what we shall attain to in this salvation is nothing less than "the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." The glory that he has shall be ours. And the way we shall attain to it is "in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." For this, says Paul (2 Thessalonians 2:13), is what God chose us to from the beginning--"salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." And to this, he adds, God also called us--"to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." All that is contained in this glory which Christ possesses, and which we shall in him obtain, who can tell? No doubt we must cast our eyes forward to the world to come to see it all. When he shall be manifested, "we shall be like him." But when we obtain it all, it is still the salvation to which God chose us from the beginning, "in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." These are the means through which that is reached.

Clearly God has not chosen us to sloth. The salvation to which he has chosen us is a salvation "in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." We have not been chosen to any salvation which does not stand in sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. If we do not believe the truth, if we are not being sanctified by the Spirit, we have been chosen to no salvation. What we have been chosen to is that we should be holy and without blemish before God. We cannot profess to be chosen of God, then, unless we are becoming holy and without blemish before him. It is not possible that there should be an "elect race" which is not also a "holy nation"--a holy nation which shows forth the excellencies of him who has called us "out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). Seeing that predestination is conformity to the image of God's Son, we are not predestinated unless we are being conformed to the image of God's Son. Unless we are like Christ, we cannot share in his glory. It is idle then to dream, profanely, that, being elected to bliss, we may be careless of good works. Precisely what God has prepared for his elect is good works that they shall walk in them, whereunto, in his grace, he has created them. Precisely what he requires of them who believe his gracious assurances, is, therefore, that they "be careful to maintain good works," in order that they may give a good account of themselves in the world (Titus 3:8). Faith and good works are the characteristics of God's elect, and where faith and good works are not, there are no elect.

There is no election, then, to the rewards of glory which does not include in itself, as the indispensable means to this end, election to the works of grace. We are not elected in order to dispense us from the necessity of being good. We are elected to make it possible for us to be good, yea, rather, to make it certain that we shall be good, not apart from but through our own efforts. We are not elected that we may not have to fight the good fight, but to secure that we shall fight it to the end, fight it successfully, and so finish the course; not that we may not require to keep the faith, but that we may, that we shall, keep it triumphantly and receive the crown. We are not released by our election from the duties and struggles and strifes, not even from the trials and sufferings, of life: we are elected to be sustained in them and carried safely through them all. Another good old divine, John Davenant, therefore wisely instructs us that "Whosoever understandeth this doctrine aright, understandeth withal that he was elected not straight to be carried unto heaven on a bed of down, but to become conformable to the Head of the elect, Christ Jesus, as well in the cross as in the crown, and first in the cross, after in the crown." Yea, he adds, "afflictions therefore do not only not tire the patience of the elect, but they beget within them a

secret spiritual joy. For, being afflicted, they rejoice and, as Luther says, 'embrace their sufferings like relics consecrated by the touch of Christ.' "

Accordingly, Peter exhorts us (2 Peter 1:10), to make our "calling and election sure" precisely by diligence in good works. He does not mean that by good works we may secure from God a decree of election in our behalf. He means that by expanding the germ of spiritual life which we have received from God into its full efflorescence, by "working out" our salvation, of course not without Christ but in Christ, we can make ourselves sure that we have really received the election to which we make claim. The salvation of God, being a "salvation in sanctification of the Spirit," ought, when worked out, to manifest itself in such forms as faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly love, love. By working out the salvation which we have received into such a symphony of good works we make sure that it is the very salvation to which God has chosen his people. Good works become thus the mark and test of election, and, when taken in the comprehensive sense in which Peter is here thinking of them, they are the only marks and tests of election. We can never know that we are elected of God to eternal life except by manifesting in our lives the fruits of election -faith and virtue, knowledge and temperance, patience and godliness, love of the brethren, and that essential love which does not put limits to its object. He that gives diligence to cultivating such things in his life will not stumble in the way, for it is with such things in their hands that men enter the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It is idle to seek assurance of election outside of holiness of life. Precisely what God chose his people to before the foundations of the world was that they should be holy. Holiness, because it is the necessary product, is therefore the sure sign of election. All holy people are the elect of God and are sure of eternal life.

It is folly, therefore, to fancy that a sincere lover of Jesus Christ who trusts in him as his Savior and lovingly obeys him as his Lord, can possibly lack the election of God. It is only because he is one of God's elect that he can believe in Christ for the salvation of his soul, and follow after Christ in the conduct of his life. This is precisely what election brings with it-the calling to Christ which cannot fail, justification which frees us from our guilt, and sanctification which conforms us to Christ, and all that that implies. It marks out those in the loving prevision of God whom his almighty grace shall raise out of their death in sin, to the powers of that new life in which and in which alone they embrace Jesus Christ as their all-sufficient Savior and live in and for him. It is impossible that a believer in Christ should not be elected of God, because it is only by the election of God that one becomes a believer in Christ. Election is nothing but the preparation of grace, and grace is nothing but the loving operation of God unto salvation. Wherever there is salvation, then, there is, of course, grace, since grace alone can save, and wherever there is grace there is of course election, since grace hangs on election. We need not, we must not, seek elsewhere for proof of our election: if we believe in Christ and obey him, we are his elect children.

Certainly it is equally true that where no election is, neither is there salvation. Since all the salvation there is, is of grace, and grace is of election, there is of course no salvation where there is no election. But this does not mean that election excludes from salvation. What election does and all that election does, is to bring into salvation. It is not where it is, but only where it is not, that salvation fails. Wherever it is, there salvation is -certain, sure, complete salvation. Salvation is its sole work. When Christ stood at the door of Lazarus' tomb and cried, "Lazarus, come forth!" only Lazarus, of all the dead that lay in the gloom of the grave that day in Palestine, or throughout the

world, heard his mighty voice which raises the dead, and came forth. Shall we say that the election of Lazarus to be called forth from the tomb consigned all this immense multitude of the dead to hopeless, physical decay? It left them no doubt in the death in which they were holden and to all that comes out of this death. But it was not it which brought death upon them, or which kept them under its power. When God calls out of the human race, lying dead in their trespasses and sins, some here, some there, some everywhere, a great multitude which no man can number, to raise them by his almighty grace out of their death in sin and bring them to glory, his electing grace is glorified in the salvation it works. It has nothing to do with the death of the sinner, but only with the living again of the sinner whom it calls into life. The one and single work of election is salvation.

We may ask, no doubt, why God does not extend his saving grace to all; and why, if he sends it to some only, he sends it to just those some to whom he sends it rather than to others. These are not wise questions to ask. We might ask why Christ raised Lazarus only of all that lay dead that day in Palestine, or in the world. No doubt reasons may suggest themselves why he raised Lazarus. But why Lazarus only? If we threw the reins on the neck of imagination, we might possibly discover reasons enough why he might well have raised others, too, with Lazarus, perhaps many others, perhaps all the dead throughout the whole world. Doubtless he had his reasons for doing on that great day precisely what he did. No doubt God has his reasons, too, for doing just what he does with his electing grace. Perhaps we may divine some of them. No doubt there are others which we do not divine. Better leave it to him, and content ourselves, facing, in the depths of our ignorance and our sin-bred lack of comprehension, these tremendous realities, with the O altitudo of Paul: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!" Or may we not even rise to the great consenting "Yea!" which Christ has taught us: "Yea, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight!" After all, men are sinners and grace is wonderful. The marvel of marvels is not that God, in his infinite love, has not elected all of this guilty race to be saved, but that he has elected any. What really needs accounting for--though to account for it passes the powers of our extremes" flights of imagination--is how the holy God could get the consent of his nature to save a single sinner. If we know what sin is, and what holiness is, and what salvation from sin to holiness is, that is what we shall feel.

That is the reason why meditation on our eternal election produces such blessed fruits in our hearts and lives. That God has saved me, even me, sunk in my sin and misery, by the marvels of his grace, can only fill me with adoring praise. That he has set upon me from all eternity to save me, wretched sinner that I am--how can I express the holy joy that fills my heart at every remembrance of it! This is the foundation of all my comfort, the assurance of all my hope. "Sure I am," says John Arrowsmith movingly, just to the point, "Sure I am that our blessed Savior once said to his disciples, 'In this rejoice, that your names are written in heaven'; and that nothing cloth more inflame a Christian's love than a firm belief of his personal election from eternity, after he has been able to evidence the writing of his name in heaven by the experience he hath had of an heavenly calling and an heavenly conversation. When the Spirit of God hath written the law of life in a Christian's heart, and therewith enabled him to know assuredly that his name is written in the book of life, he cannot then but melt with flames of holy affection, according to the most emphatic speech of Bernard--'God deserveth love from such as he hath loved long before they could deserve it'; and, 'his love to God will be without end, who knoweth that God's love to him was

without any beginning." For this is the beginning and middle and end of the whole matter: that the election of God is but the beginning of God's manifestation of love to lost sinners, a beginning which must go before all other manifestations of his love because the purpose must precede the execution, and which carries all other manifestations with it because God never repents of his purposes but executes them.

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Faith & Life

Faith & Life by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

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A recent writer opens his book with the words: "The present generation is impatient of theological distinctions." He lets the cat out of the bag when he begins the next paragraph with the words: "There is a good deal of common sense in this reaction against the theological hair-splitting of former times." He has, perhaps not unnaturally, mistaken his own opinion for the general judgment of the day. The truth is that the world, even in this generation, is made up of a good many people; and a good many varying points of view may be found represented among them. Some are very impatient of theological distinctions, and some are very patient of them: the most are patient to a fault with those they themselves wish to make, and quite impatient of those made by others. The fact is, of course, that everybody makes and must make theological distinctions. Men differ only as they make sound or unsound distinctions, and through these distinctions embrace and live by truth or error.

It is easy to say: "We refuse to believe that a man's opinions on the minute details of history or metaphysics are sufficient either to admit or to exclude him from the Kingdom of grace and glory." But when we have said that, we have already expressed a portentous opinion. We have also made a tremendous theological distinction; we have made it most unsoundly; and, as a consequence, we have cast ourselves into the arms of the grossest error, which must mar all our life. The truth is that a man's opinions on matters of historical fact or of metaphysical truth—call them opinions on minute details or not, as you choose—are absolutely determinative of his whole life. It is a matter of metaphysical opinion whether there is a God or not; or whether there is such a thing as right or such a thing as wrong. We cannot adopt even so simple a maxim as David Crockett's famous "Be sure you are right and then go ahead," without having committed ourselves to many very deeply cutting metaphysical opinions, and many of these are capable of being represented as opinions on very minute details. It is a matter of metaphysical opinion whether we worship a fragment of bone or the God of heaven and earth; what separates the fetish-worshipper from the Christian here is a little matter of metaphysical opinion. It is a matter of historical opinion whether such a person as Jesus Christ ever existed, and surely whether any given man ever existed or not is a very small historical detail. And if we are of the opinion that he existed, it is still a matter of historical opinion whether he was the Son of God who came into the world on a mission of mercy to lost men, and died for our sins and rose again for our justification; or was merely a man who suggested to us as his opinion, which it was his opinion it would be well that we also should adopt, that God is a good fellow, and it is all right with the world. We cannot get along without metaphysical delimitations and historical judgments. We cannot go one step without them. And what we call Christianity is bound up with a very definite set of both.

He who adopts this definite set of metaphysical and historical opinions is so far on his way to being a Christian. He who rejects them, or treats them as indifferent, is not even on his way to being a Christian. This is not to say that Christianity is just a body of metaphysical and historical opinions. But it is to say that Christianity is, among other things, a body of metaphysical and historical opinions. It is absurd to say that a man can be a Christian who is of the opinion that there is no God; or that no such person as Jesus ever lived: or who does not believe very many very definite things about the really existing God and the actually living Jesus. Some of these things may be represented as very "minute details." Gibbon, for example, made himself merry, or made himself miserable, as the case may have been, over the spectacle of Christianity split to its foundations in violent dispute over a mere diphthong—whether Christ should be said to be homo-ousios or only homoiousios with God: whether, that is, he should be conceived as all that God is, or only in some greater or less degree, more or less like God. The whole substance of Christianity was involved, however, in this controversy; the issue was nothing less than whether the world should be Christian or heathen. To represent it as a dispute over a "minor detail," a mere diphthong, were as sensible as to say that as "gold" and "god" differ in but a single letter, it cannot be of importance whether we serve God or mammon;; and there surely can be no reason (despite what Jesus says) why we should not serve both.

No less a man than John Wesley is appealed to, however, to support this minimizing of the value of truth. And certainly John Wesley did say—he surely was speaking unadvisedly with his lips—something which lends itself too readily to this bad use. "I am sick of opinions," he writes; "I am weary to bear them; my soul loathes the frothy food. Give me solid substantial religion; give me a humble gentle lover of God and man, a man full of mercy and good fruits, a man laying himself out in the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labor of love. Let my soul be with those Christians wheresoever they be and whatsoever opinions they are of." John Wesley's righteous soul had evidently been vexed by men who had nothing but "opinions" to show for their Christianity. But did he ever see such a man as he here paints for us: "a humble gentle lover of God and man, a man full of mercy and good fruits, a man laying himself out in the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labor of love," who was without the opinion that there is a God to love? No man can have faith, or hope, or love, who is not consciously in the presence of an object on which his faith and hope and love can rest. He must be of the opinion that the object exists, and that it is such as to justify or even to command his faith, hope, or love. It sounds very well to rail at "opinions" in contrast with "solid substantial religion." Did "solid substantial religion" ever exist apart from the "opinions" which lie at its basis? A man who is of the opinion that there is no God will not manifest "solid substantial religion" in his life. A man who is of the opinion that Christ, if he ever existed—which he may doubt or deny—was a mere man among men, a peasant of Galilee of the first century of the era absurdly called Christian, who still sleeps his unbroken sleep beneath the Syrian sky, will not entrust his soul's welfare to his keeping. "Faith" in Jesus—in his blood (Romans 3:27) and his righteousness (2 Peter 1:1) —cannot possibly get itself born except on the basis of quite a body of very definite and very definitely held "opinions." No man can live a Christian life who is not first of "the Christian persuasion."

That is the reason why Christianity is propagated by preaching. There may be other ways in which other religions are spread. The propagation of Christianity has been very definitely committed to "the foolishness of preaching"—not to foolish preaching, however, which is something very different.

It is fundamentally "faith"; and faith implies something to be believed and therefore comes of hearing; while hearing implies something presented to the apprehension of the intelligence- the "Word of God." Whatever we may say of a so-called Christianity which is nothing but "opinions," there is no Christianity which does not begin with opinions, which is not formed by opinions, and which is not the outworking of these opinions in life. Only we would better call them "convictions." Convictions are the root on which the tree of vital Christianity grows. No convictions, no Christianity. Scanty convictions, hunger-bitten Christianity. Profound convictions, solid and substantial religion. Let no man fancy it can be otherwise. Ignorance is not the mother of religion, but of irreligion. The knowledge of God is eternal life, and to know God means that we know him aright..

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John Calvin The Theologian

John Calvin The Theologian

by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

This essay appeared in a booklet published by the Presbyterian Board of Education in 1909. The electronic edition of this article was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed. The subject of this address is "John Calvin the Theologian," and I take it that what will be expected of me is to convey some idea of what manner of theologian John Calvin was, and of his quality as a theological thinker.

I am afraid I shall have to ask you at the outset to disabuse your minds of a very common impression, namely, that Calvin's chief characteristics as a theologian were on the one hand, audacity--perhaps I might even say effrontery--of speculation; and on the other hand, pitilessness of logical development, cold and heartless scholasticism. We have been told, for example, that he reasons on the attributes of God precisely as he would reason on the properties of a triangle. No misconception could be more gross. The speculative theologian of the Reformation was Zwingli, not Calvin. The scholastic theologian among the early Reformers was Peter Martyr, not Calvin. This was thoroughly understood by their contemporaries. "The two most excellent theologians of our times." remarks Joseph Scaliger, "are John Calvin and Peter Martyr, the former of whom has dealt with the Holy Scriptures as they ought to be dealt with--with sincerity, I mean, and purity and simplicity, without any scholastic subtleties....Peter Martyr, because it seemed to fall to him to engage the Sophists, has overcome them sophistically, and struck them down with their own weapons."

It is not to be denied, of course, that Calvin was a speculative genius of the first order, and in the cogency of his logical analysis he possessed a weapon which made him terrible to his adversaries. But it was not on these gifts that he depended in forming and developing his theological ideas. His theological method was persistently, rigorously, some may even say exaggeratedly, a posteriori. All a priori reasoning here he not only eschewed but vigorously repelled. His instrument of research was not logical amplification, but exegetical investigation. In one word, he was distinctly a Biblical theologian, or, let us say it frankly, by way of eminence "the Biblical theologian of his age." Whither the Bible took him, thither he went:where scriptural declarations failed him, there he stopped short. It is this which imparts to Calvin's theological teaching the quality which is its prime characteristic and its real offence in the eyes of his critics--I mean its positiveness. There is no mistaking the note of confidence in his teaching, and it is perhaps not surprising that this note of confidence irritates his critics. They resent the air of finality he gives to his declarations, not staying to consider that he gives them this air of finality because he presents them, not as his teachings, but as the teachings of the Holy Spirit in His inspired Word. Calvin's positiveness of tone is thus the mark not of extravagance but of sobriety and restraint. He even speaks with impatience of speculative, and what we may call inferential theology, and he is accordingly himself spoken of with impatience by modern historians of thought

as a "merely Biblical theologian," who is, therefore, without any real doctrine of God, such as Zwingli has. The reproach, if it be a reproach, is just. Calvin refused to go beyond "what is written"--written plainly in the book of nature or in the book of revelation. He insisted that we can know nothing of God, for example, except what He has chosen to make known to us in His works and Word; all beyond this is but empty fancy, which merely "flutters" in the brain. And it was just because he refused to go one step beyond what is written that he felt so sure of his steps. He could not present the dictates of the Holy Ghost as a series of debatable propositions.

Such an attitude towards the Scriptures might conceivably consist with a thoroughgoing intellectualism, and Calvin certainly is very widely thought of as an intellectualist a outrage. But this again is an entire misapprehension. The positiveness of Calvin's teaching has a far deeper root than merely the conviction of his understanding. When Ernest Renan characterised him as the most Christian man of his generation he did not mean it for very high praise, but he made a truer and much more profound remark than he intended. The fundamental trait of Calvin's nature was precisely--religion. It is not merely that all his thinking is coloured by a deep religious sentiment; it is that the whole substance of his thinking is determined by the religious motive. Thus his theology, if ever there was a theology of the heart, was distinctively a theology of the heart, and in him the maxim that "It is the heart that makes the theologian" finds perhaps its most eminent illustration.

His active and powerful intelligence, of course, penetrated to the depths of every subject which he touched, but he was incapable of dealing with any religious subject after a fashion which would minister only to what would seem to him the idle curiosity of the mind. It was not that he restrained himself from such merely intellectual exercises upon the themes of religion, the force of his religious interest itself instinctively inhibited them.

Calvin marked an epoch in the history of the doctrine of the Trinity, but of all great theologians who have occupied themselves with this soaring topic, none have been more determined than he not to lose themselves in the intellectual subtleties to which it invites the inquiring mind; and he marked an epoch in the development of the doctrine precisely because his interest in it was vital and not merely or mainly speculative. Or take the great doctrine of predestination which has become identified with his name, and with respect to which he is perhaps, most commonly of all things, supposed to have given the reins to speculative construction and to have pushed logical development to unwarrantable extremes. Calvin, of course, in the lucid clearness and incorruptible honesty of his thought and in the faithfulness of his reflection of the Biblical teaching, fully grasped and strongly held the doctrine of the will of God as the *prima causa rerum*, and this too was a religious conception with him and was constantly affirmed just because it was a religious conception--yes, in a high and true sense, the most fundamental of all religious conceptions. But even so, it was not to this cosmical predestination that Calvin's thought most persistently turned, but rather to that soteriological predestination on which, as a helpless sinner needing salvation from the free grace of God, he must rest. And therefore Ebrard is so far quite right when he says that predestination appears in Calvin's system not as the *decretum Dei* but as the *electio Dei*.

It is not merely controversial skill which leads Calvin to pass predestination by when he is speaking of the doctrine of God and providence, and to reserve it for the point where he is speaking of salvation. This is where his deepest interest lay. What was suffusing his heart and

flowing in full flood into all the chambers of his soul was a profound sense of his indebtedness as a lost sinner to the free grace of God his Saviour. His zeal in asserting the doctrine of two-fold predestination is grounded in the clearness with which he perceived--as was indeed perceived with him by all the Reformers--that only so can the evil leaven of "synergism" be eliminated and the free grace of God be preserved in its purity in the saving process. The roots of his zeal are planted, in a word, in his consciousness of absolute dependence as a sinner on the free mercy of a saving God. The sovereignty of God in grace was an essential constituent of his deepest religious consciousness. Like his great master, Augustine--like Luther, Zwingli and Butzer (Bucer), and all the rest of those high spirits who brought about that great revival of religion which we call the Reformation--he could not endure that the grace of God should not receive all the glory of the rescue of sinners from the destruction in which they are involved, and from which, just because they are involved in it, they are unable to do anything towards their own recovery.

The fundamental interest of Calvin as a theologian lay, it is clear, in the region broadly designated soteriological. Perhaps we may go further and add that, within this broad field, his interest was most intense in the application to the sinful soul of the salvation wrought out by Christ,--in a word in what is technically known as the *ordo salutis*. This has even been made his reproach in some quarters, and we have been told that the main fault of the *Institutes* as a treatise in theological science, lies in its too subjective character. Its effect, at all events, has been to constitute Calvin pre-eminently the theologian of the Holy Spirit.

Calvin has made contributions of the first importance to other departments of theological thought. It has already been observed that he marks an epoch in the history of the doctrine of the Trinity. He also marks an epoch in the mode of presenting the work of Christ. The presentation of Christ's work under the rubrics of the three-fold office of Prophet, Priest and King was introduced by him; and from him it was taken over by the entirety of Christendom, not always, it is true, in his spirit or with his completeness of development, but yet with large advantage. In Christian ethics, too, his impulse proved epoch-making, and this great science was for a generation cultivated only by his followers.

It is probable however that Calvin's greatest contribution to theological science lies in the rich development which he gives--and which he was the first to give--to the doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit. No doubt, from the origin of Christianity, everyone who has been even slightly imbued with the Christian spirit has believed in the Holy Spirit as the author and giver of life, and has attributed all that is good in the world, and particularly in himself, to His holy offices. And, of course, in treating of grace, Augustine worked out the doctrine of salvation as a subjective experience with great vividness and in great detail, and the whole course of this salvation was fully understood, no doubt, to be the work of the Holy Spirit. But in the same sense in which we may say that the doctrine of sin and grace dates from Augustine, the doctrine of satisfaction from Anselm, the doctrine of justification by faith from Luther,--we must say that the doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit is a gift from Calvin to the Church. It was he who first related the whole experience of salvation specifically to the working of the Holy Spirit, worked it out into its details, and contemplated its several steps and stages in orderly progress as the product of the Holy Spirit's specific work in applying salvation to the soul. Thus he gave systematic and adequate expression to the whole doctrine of the Holy Spirit and made it the assured possession of the Church of God.

It has been common to say that Calvin's entire theological work may be summed up in this--that he emancipated the soul from the tyranny of human authority and delivered it from the uncertainties of human intermediation in religious things: that he brought the soul into the immediate presence of God and cast it for its spiritual health upon the free grace of God alone. Where the Romanist placed the Church, it is said, Calvin set the Deity. The saying is true, and perhaps, when rightly understood and filled with its appropriate content, it may sufficiently characterise the effect of his theological teaching. But it is expressed too generally to be adequate. What Calvin did was, specifically, to replace the doctrine of the Church as sole source of assured knowledge of God and sole institute of salvation, by the Holy Spirit. Previously, men had looked to the Church for all the trustworthy knowledge of God obtainable, and as well for all the communications of grace accessible. Calvin taught them that neither function has been committed to the Church, but God the Holy Spirit has retained both in His own hands and confers both knowledge of God and communion with God on whom He will.

The Institutes is, accordingly, just a treatise on the work of God the Holy Spirit in making God savingly known to sinful man, and bringing sinful man into holy communion with God. Therefore it opens with the great doctrine of the testimonium Spiritus Sancti--another of the fruitful doctrines which the Church owes to Calvin--in which he teaches that the only vital and vitalizing knowledge of God which a sinner can attain, is communicated to him through the inner working of the Spirit of God in his heart, without which there is spread in vain before his eyes the revelation of God's glory in the heavens, and the revelation of His grace in the perspicuous pages of the Word. And therefore, it centres in the great doctrine of Regeneration,--the term is broad enough in Calvin to cover the whole process of the subjective recovery of man to God--in which he teaches that the only power which can ever awake in a sinful heart the motions of a living faith, is the power of this same Spirit of God moving with a truly creative operation on the deadened soul. When these great ideas are developed in their full expression--with explication of all their presuppositions in the love of God and the redemption of Christ, and of all their relations and consequents--we have Calvin's theology.

Now of course, a theology which commits everything to the operations of that Spirit of God who "worketh when and where and how He pleases," hangs everything on the sovereign good--pleasure of God. Calvin's theology is therefore, predestination to the core, and he does not fail, in faithfulness to the teachings of Scripture and with clear-eyed systematizing genius, to develop its predestinarianism with fulness and with emphasis; to see in all that comes to pass the will of God fulfilling itself, and to vindicate to God the glory that is His due as the Lord and disposer of all things. But this is not the peculiarity of his theology. Augustine had taught all this a thousand years before him. Luther and Zwingli and Martin Butzer, his own teacher in these high mysteries, were teaching it all while he was learning it. The whole body of the leaders of the Reformation movement were teaching it along with him. What is special to himself is the clearness and emphasis of his reference of all that God brings to pass, especially in the processes of the new creation, to God the Holy Spirit, and the development from this point of view of a rich and full doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit.

Here then is probably Calvin's greatest contribution to theological development. In his hands, for the first time in the history of the Church, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit comes to its rights. Into the heart of none more than into his did the vision of the glory of God shine, and no one has been

more determined than he not to give the glory of God to another. Who has been more devoted than he to the Saviour, by whose blood he has been bought? But, above everything else, it is the sense of the sovereign working of salvation by the almighty power of the Holy Spirit which characterizes all Calvin's thought of God. And above everything else he deserves, therefore, the great name of the theologian of the Holy Spirit.

A Remembrance of Warfield

When I returned from Germany in 1906, I entered, as instructor in the New Testament department, into the teaching staff of Princeton Theological Seminary....Warfield was Professor of Systematic Theology (or "Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology," as the chair was then more sonorously and vigorously called). And what a wonderful man he was! His learning was prodigious. No adequate notion of its breadth can be obtained even from his voluminous collected works. Consult him on the most out-of-the-way subjects, and you would find him with the "literature" of each subject at his tongue's end and able to give you just the guidance of which you had need. Now and then, in wonderfully generous fashion, he would go out of his way to give a word of encouragement to a younger man. The old Princeton was an environment in which a man felt encouraged to do his very best.

J. Gresham Machen |

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Justification by Faith, Out of Date

Justification by Faith,

Out of Date?

by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

The following short essay was originally published in the *The Christian Irishman*, Dublin, May 1911, p. 71. The electronic edition of this article was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed.

Sometimes we are told that Justification by Faith is "out of date." That would be a pity, if it were true. What it would mean would be that the way of salvation was closed and "no thoroughfare" nailed up over the barriers. There is no justification for sinful men except by faith. The works of a sinful man will, of course, be as sinful as he is, and nothing but condemnation can be built on them. Where can he get works upon which he can found his hope of justification,, except from Another? His hope of Justification, remember—that is, of being pronounced righteous by God. Can God pronounce him righteous except on the ground of works that are righteous? Where can a sinful man get works that are righteous? Surely, not from himself; for, is he not a sinner, and all his works as sinful as he is? He must go out of himself, then, to find works which he can offer to God as righteous. And where will he find such works except in Christ? Or how will he make them his own except by faith in Christ?

Justification by Faith, we see, is not to be set in contradiction to justification by Works. It is set in contradiction only to justification by our Own Works. It is justification by Christ's Works. The whole question, accordingly, is whether we can hope to be received into God's favor on the ground of what we do ourselves, or only on the ground of what Christ does for us. If we expect to be received on the ground of what we do ourselves—that is what is called Justification by Works. If on the ground of what Christ has done for us—that is what is meant by Justification by Faith. Justification by Faith means, that is to say, that we look to Christ and to him alone for salvation, and come to God pleading Christ's death and righteousness as the ground of our hope to be received into his favor. If Justification by Faith is out of date, that means, then, that salvation by Christ is out of date. There is nothing, in that case, left to us but that each man must just do the best he can to save himself.

Justification by Faith does not mean, then, salvation by believing things instead of by doing right. It means pleading the merits of Christ before the throne of grace instead of our own merits. It may be doing right to believe things, and doing right is certainly right. The trouble with pleading our own merits before God is not that merits of our own would not be acceptable to God. The trouble is that we haven't any merits of our own to plead before God. Adam, before his fall, had merits of his own, and because he had merits of his own he was, in his own person, acceptable to God. He didn't need Another to stand between him and God, whose merits he could plead. And, therefore, there was no talk of his being Justified by Faith. But we are not like Adam before the fall; we are sinners

and have no merits of our own. If we are to be justified at all, it must be on the ground of the merits of Another, whose merits can be made ours by faith. And that is the reason why God sent his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life. If we do not believe in him, obviously we must perish. But if we believe in him, we shall not perish but have everlasting life. That is just Justification by Faith. Justification by Faith is nothing other than obtaining everlasting life by believing in Christ. If Justification by Faith is out of date, then is salvation through Christ out of date. And as there is none other name under heaven, given among men, wherein we must be saved, if salvation through Christ is out of date then is salvation itself out of date. Surely, in a world of sinful men, needing salvation, this would be a great pity.

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Mysticism & Christianity

Mysticism & Christianity

by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

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RELIGION is, shortly, the reaction of the human soul in the presence of God. As God is as much a part of the environment of man as the earth on which he stands, no man can escape from religion any more than he can escape from gravitation. But though every man necessarily reacts to God, men react of course diversely, each according to his nature, or perhaps we would better say, each according to his temperament. Thus, broadly speaking, three main types of religion arise, corresponding to the three main varieties of the activity of the human spirit, intellectual, emotional, and voluntary. According as the intellect, sensibility, or will is dominant in him, each man produces for himself a religion prevaillingly of the intellect, sensibility, or active will; and all the religions which men have made for themselves find places somewhere among these three types, as they produce themselves more or less purely, or variously intermingle with one another.

We say advisedly, all the religions which men have made for themselves. For there is an even more fundamental division among religions than that which is supplied by these varieties. This is the division between man-made and God-made religions. Besides the religions which man has made for himself, God has made a religion for man. We call this revealed religion; and the most fundamental division which separates between religions is that which divides revealed religion from unrevealed religions. Of course, we do not mean to deny that there is an element of revelation in all religions. God is a person, and persons are known only as they make themselves known — reveal themselves. The term revelation is used in this distinction, therefore, in a pregnant sense. In the unrevealed THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 650

religions God is known only as He has revealed Himself in His acts of the creation and government of the world as every person must reveal himself in his acts if he acts at all. In the one revealed religion God has revealed Himself also in acts of special grace, among which is included the open Word.

There is an element in revealed religion, therefore, which is not found in any unrevealed religion. This is the element of authority. Revealed religion comes to man from without; it is imposed upon him from a source superior to his own spirit. The unrevealed religions, on the other hand, flow from no higher source than the human spirit itself. However much they may differ among themselves in

the relative prominence given in each to the functioning of the intellect, sensibility, or will, they have this fundamental thing in common. They are all, in other words, natural religions in contradistinction to the one supernatural religion which God has made.

There is a true sense, then, in which it may be said that the unrevealed religions are "religions of the spirit" and revealed religion is the "religion of authority." Authority is the correlate of revelation, and wherever revelation is—and only where revelation is — is there authority. Just because we do not see in revelation man reaching up lame hands toward God and feeling fumblingly after Him if haply he may find Him, but God graciously reaching strong hands down to man, bringing him help in his need, we see in it a gift from God, not a creation of man's. On the other hand, the characteristic of all unrevealed religions is that they are distinctly manmade. They have no authority to appeal to, they rest solely on the deliverances of the human spirit. As Rudyard Kipling shrewdly makes his "Tommy" declare:

The heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone,

He don't obey no orders unless they is his own.

Naturally it makes no difference in this respect whether it is the rational, emotional, or volitional element in the activities of the human spirit to which appeal is chiefly made. In no case are the foundations sunk deeper than the human spirit itself, and nothing appears in the structure that is THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 651

raised which the human spirit does not supply. The preponderance of one or another of these activities in the structure does, however, make an immense difference in the aspect of that structure. Mysticism is the name which is given to the particular one of these structures, the predominant place in which is taken by the sensibility. It is characteristic of mysticism that it makes its appeal to the feelings as the sole, or at least as the normative, source of knowledge of divine things. That is to say, it is the religious sentiment which constitutes for it the source of religious knowledge. Of course mystics differ with one another in the consistency with which they apply their principle. And of course they differ with one another in the account they give of this religious sentiment to which they make their appeal. There are, therefore, many varieties of mystics, pure and impure, consistent and inconsistent, naturalistic and supernaturalistic, pantheistic and theistic — even Christian. What is common to them all, and what makes them all mystics, is that they all rest on the religious sentiment as the source of knowledge of divine things.

The great variety of the accounts which mystics give of the feeling to which they make their appeal arises from the very nature of the case. There is a deeper reason for a mystic being "mute" — that is what the name imports — than that he wishes to make a mystery of his discoveries. He is "mute" because, as a mystic, he has nothing to say. When he sinks within himself he finds feelings, not conceptions; his is an emotional, not a conceptual, religion; and feelings, emotions, though not inaudible, are not articulate. As a mystic, he has no conceptual language in which to express what he feels. If he attempts to describe it he must make use of terms derived from the religious or philosophical thought in vogue about him, that is to say, of non-mystical language. His hands may be the hands of Esau, but his voice is the voice of Jacob. The language in which he describes the reality which he finds within him does not in the least indicate, then, what it is; it is merely a concession to the necessity of communicating with the external world or with his own

more external self. What he finds THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 652

within him is just to his apprehension an "unutterable abyss." And Synesius does himself and his fellow mystics no injustice when he declares that "the mystic mind says this and that, gyrating around the unutterable abyss."

On the brink of this abyss the mystic may stand in awe, and, standing in awe upon its brink, he may deify it. Then he calls it indifferently Brahm or Zeus, Allah or the Holy Spirit, according as men about him speak of God. He explains its meaning, in other words, in terms of the conception of the universe which he has brought with him, or, as it is more fashionable now to phrase it, each in accordance with his own world-view. Those who are held in the grasp of a naturalistic conception of the world will naturally speak of the religious feeling of which they have become acutely conscious as only one of the multitudinous natural movements of the human soul, and will seek merely, by a logical analysis of its presuppositions and implications, to draw out its full meaning. Those who are sunk in a pantheistic world-view will speak of its movements as motions of the subliminal consciousness, and will interpret them as the surgings within us of the divine ground of all things, in listening to which they conceive themselves to be sinking beneath the waves that fret the surface of the ocean of being and penetrating to its profounder depths. If, on the other hand, the mystic chances to be a theist, he may look upon the movements of his religious feelings as effects in his soul wrought by the voluntary actions of the God whom he acknowledges; and if he should happen to be a Christian, he may interpret these movements, in accordance with the teachings of the Scriptures, as the leadings of the Holy Spirit or as the manifestations within him of the Christ within us the hope of glory.

This Christian mysticism, now, obviously differs in no essential respect from the parallel phenomena which are observable in other religions. It is only general mysticism manifesting itself on Christian ground and interpreting itself accordingly in the forms of Christian thought. It is mysticism which has learned to speak in Christian language. The phenomena THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 653

themselves are universal. There has never been an age of the world, or a form of religion, in which they have not been in evidence. There are always everywhere some men who stand out among their fellows as listeners to the inner voice, and who, refusing the warning which Thoas gives to Iphigenia in Goethe's play, "There speaks no God: thy heart alone 'tis speaks," respond like Iphigenia with passionate conviction, "'Tis only through our hearts the gods e'er speak." But these common phenomena are, naturally, interpreted in each instance, according to the general presuppositions of each several subject or observer of them. Thus, for example, they are treated as the intrusion of God into the soul (Ribet), or as the involuntary intrusion of the unconscious into consciousness (Hartmann), or as the intrusion of the subconscious into the consciousness (Du Prel), or as the intrusion of feeling, strong and overmastering, into the operations of the intellect (Goethe).

According to these varying interpretations we get different types of mysticism, differing from one another not in intrinsic character so much as in the explanations given of the common phenomena. Many attempts have been made to arrange these types in logical schemes which shall embrace all varieties and present them in an intelligible order. Thus, for example, from the point of view of the

ends sought, R. A. Vaughan distinguishes between theopathic, theosophic, and theurgic mysticism, the first of which is content with feeling, while the second aspires to knowledge, and the third seeks power. The same classes may perhaps be called more simply emotional, intellectual, and thelematic mysticism. From the point of view of the inquiry into the sources of religious knowledge four wellmarked varieties present themselves, which have been given the names of naturalistic, supernaturalistic, theosophical, and pantheistic mysticism.

The common element in all these varieties of mysticism is that they all seek all, or most, or the normative or at least a substantial part, of the knowledge of God in human feelings, which they look upon as the sole or at least the most trust THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 654

worthy or the most direct source of the knowledge of God. The differences between them turn on the diverging conceptions which they entertain of the origin of the religious feelings thus appealed to. Naturalistic mysticism conceives them as merely "the natural religious consciousness of men, as excited and influenced by the circumstances of the individual." Supernaturalistic, as the effects of operations of the divine Spirit in the heart, the human spirit moving only as it is moved upon by the divine. Theosophical mysticism goes a step further and regards the religious feelings as the footprints of Deity moving in the soul, and as, therefore, immediate sources of knowledge of God, which is to be obtained by simple quiescence and rapt contemplation of these His movements. Pantheistic mysticism advances to the complete identification of the soul with God, who is therefore to be known by applying oneself to the simple axiom: "Know thyself."

Clearly it is the type which has been called supernaturalistic that has the closest affinity with Christianity. Christian mysticism accordingly, at its best, takes this form and passes insensibly from it into evangelical Christianity, to which the indwelling of the Holy Ghost — the Christ within — is fundamental, and which rejoices in such spiritual experiences as are summed up in the old categories of regeneration and sanctification — the rebegetting of the soul into newness of life and the leading of the new-created soul along the pathway of holy living. From these experiences, of course, much may be inferred not only of the modes of God's working in the salvation of men but also of the nature and character of God the worker.

The distinction between mysticism of this type and evangelical Christianity, from the point of view which is now occupying our attention, is nevertheless clear. Evangelical Christianity interprets all religious experience by the normative revelation of God recorded for us in the Holy Scriptures, and guides, directs, and corrects it from these Scriptures, and thus molds it into harmony with what God in His revealed Word lays down as the normal Christian life. The mystic, on THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 655

the other hand, tends to substitute his religious experience for the objective revelation of God recorded in the written Word, as the source from which he derives his knowledge of God, or at least to subordinate the expressly revealed Word as the less direct and convincing source of knowledge of God to his own religious experience. The result is that the external revelation is relatively depressed in value, if not totally set aside.

In the history of Christian thought mysticism appears accordingly as that tendency among professing Christians which looks within, that is, to the religious feelings, in its search for God. It

supposes itself to contemplate within the soul the movements of the divine Spirit, and finds in them either the sole sources of trustworthy knowledge of God, or the most immediate and convincing sources of that knowledge, or, at least, a coordinate source of it alongside of the written Word. The characteristic of Christian mysticism, from the point of view of religious knowledge, is therefore its appeal to the "inner light," or "the internal word," either to the exclusion of the external or written Word, or as superior to it and normative for its interpretation, or at least as coordinate authority with it, this "inner light" or "internal word" being conceived not as the rational understanding but as the immediate deliverance of the religious sentiment. As a mere matter of fact, now, we lack all criteria, apart from the written Word, to distinguish between those motions of the heart which are created within us by the Spirit of God and those which arise out of the natural functioning of the religious consciousness. This substitution of our religious experience — or "Christian consciousness," as it is sometimes called — for the objective Word as the proper source of our religious knowledge ends therefore either in betraying us into purely rationalistic mysticism, or is rescued from that by the postulation of a relation of the soul to God which strongly tends toward pantheizing mysticism.

In point of fact, mysticism in the Church is found to gravitate, with pretty general regularity, either toward rationalism or toward pantheism. In effect, indeed, it appears to THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 656

differ from rationalism chiefly in temperament, if we may not even say in temperature. The two have it in common that they appeal for knowledge of God only to what is internal to man; and to what, internal to man, men make their actual appeal, seems to be determined very much by their temperaments, or, as has been said, by their temperatures. The human soul is a small thing at best; it is not divided into water-tight compartments; the streams of feeling which are flowing up and down in it and the judgments of the understanding which are incessantly being framed in it are constantly acting and reacting on one another. It is not always easy for it to be perfectly clear, as it turns within itself and gazes upon its complex movements, of the real source, rational or emotional, of the impressions which it observes to be crystallizing within it into convictions. It has often been observed in the progress of history, accordingly, that men who have deserted the guidance of external revelation have become mystics or rationalists, largely according as their religious life was warm or cold. In periods of religious fervor or in periods of fervid religious reactions they are mystics; in periods of religious decline they are rationalists. The same person, indeed, sometimes vibrates between the two points of view with the utmost facility.

It is, however, with pantheism that mysticism stands in the closest association. It would not be untrue, in fact, to say that as a historical phenomenon mysticism is just pantheism reduced to a religion, that is to say, with its postulates transformed into ends. Defenses of mysticism against the inevitable (and true) charge of pantheizing usually, indeed, stop with the announcement of this damaging fact. "Lasson," remarks Dean Inge as if that were the conclusion of the matter instead of, as it is, the confession of judgment, "says well, in his book on Meister Eckhart, 'Mysticism views everything from the standpoint of teleology, while pantheism generally stops at causality.'" What it is of importance to observe is that it is precisely what pantheism, being a philosophy, postulates as conditions of being that mysticism, being a religion, proposes as objects of attainment. Mysticism is simply, therefore, pantheism expressed in the terms of religious aspiration. THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 657

This is as true within the Christian Church as without it. All forms of mysticism have no doubt from time to time found a place for themselves within the Church. Or perhaps we should rather say that they have always existed in it, and have from time to time manifested their presence there. This must be said even of naturalistic mysticism. There are those who call themselves Christians who yet conceive of Christianity as merely the natural religious sentiment excited into action by contact with the religious impulse set in motion by Jesus Christ and transmitted down the ages by the natural laws of motion, as motion is transmitted, say, through a row of billiard balls in contact with one another. Yet it would only be true to say that mysticism as a phenomenon in the history of the Church has commonly arisen in the wake of the dominating influence in the contemporary world of a pantheizing philosophy. It is the product of a pantheizing manner of thinking impinging on the religious nature, or, if we prefer to phrase it from the opposite point of view, of religious thought seeking to assimilate and to express itself in terms of a pantheizing philosophy.

The fullest stream of mystical thought which has entered the Church finds its origin in the Neoplatonic philosophy. It is to the writings of the Pseudo — Dionysius that its naturalization in the Eastern Church is usually broadly ascribed. The sluice-gates of the Western Church were opened for it, in the same broad sense, by John Scotus Erigena. It has flowed strongly down through all the subsequent centuries, widening here and there into lakelets. The form of mysticism which is most widely disturbing the modern Protestant churches comes, however, from a different source. It takes its origin from the movement inaugurated in the first third of the nineteenth century by Friedrich Schleiermacher, with the ostensible purpose of rescuing Christianity from the assaults of rationalism by vindicating for religion its own independent right of existence, in a region "beyond reason." The result of this attempt to separate religion from reason has been, of course, merely to render religion unreasonable; even Plotinus, warned us long ago that "he who would rise above reason falls outside of it." THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 658

But what we are immediately concerned to observe is the very widespread rejection of all "external authority," which has been one of the results of this movement, and the consequent casting of men back upon their "religious experience," corporate or individual, as their sole trustworthy ground of religious convictions. This is, of course, only "the inner light" of an earlier form of mysticism under a new and (so it has been hoped) more inoffensive name; and it is naturally, therefore, burdened with all the evils which inhere in the mystical attitude. These evils do not affect extreme forms of mysticism only; they are intrinsic in the two common principles which give to all its forms their fundamental character — the misprision of "external authority," and the attempt to discover in the movements of the sensibilities the ground or norm of all the religious truth which will be acknowledged.

"Mystics," says George Tyrrell, "think they touch the divine when they have only blurred the human form with a cloud of words." The astonishing thing about this judgment is not the judgment itself but the source from which it comes. For Tyrrell himself as a "Modernist" held with our "experientialists," and when he cast his eye into the future could see nothing but mysticism as the last refuge for religion. "Houtin and Loisy are right," he writes; "the Christianity of the future will consist of mysticism and charity, and possibly the eucharist in its primitive form as the outward bond. I desire no more." The plain fact is that this "religious experience," to which we are referred for our religious knowledge, can speak to us only in the language of religious thought; and where there is no religious thought to give it a tongue it is dumb. And above all, it must be punctually

noted, it cannot speak to us in a Christian tongue unless that Christian tongue is lent it by the Christian revelation. The rejection of "external authority" and our relegation to "religious experience" for our religious knowledge is nothing more nor less, then, than the definitive abolition of Christianity and the substitution for it of natural religion. Tyrrell perfectly understood this, and that is what he means when he speaks of the Christianity of the future as THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 659

reduced to "mysticism and charity." All the puzzling facts of Christianity (this is his view) — the incarnation and resurrection of the Son of God and all the puzzling doctrines of Christianity — the atonement in Christ's blood, the renewal through the Spirit, the resurrection of the body — all, all will be gone. For all this rests on "external authority." And men will content themselves, will be compelled to content themselves, with the motions of their own religious sensibilities — and (let us hope) with charity.

There is nothing more important in the age in which we live than to bear constantly in mind that all the Christianity of Christianity rests precisely on "external authority." Religion, of course, we can have without "external authority," for man is a religious animal and will function religiously always and everywhere. But Christianity, no. Christianity rests on "external authority," and that for the very good reason that it is not the product of man's religious sentiment but is a gift from God. To ask us to set aside "external authority" and throw ourselves back on what we can find within us alone—call it by whatever name you choose, "religious experience," "the Christian consciousness," "the inner light," "the immanent Divine" — is to ask us to discard Christianity and revert to natural religion. Natural religion is of course good in its own proper place and for its own proper purposes. Nobody doubts — or nobody ought to doubt — that men are by nature religious and will have a religion in any event. The *sensus divinitatis* implanted in us—to employ Calvin's phrases — functions inevitably as a *semen religionis*.

Of course Christianity does not abolish or supersede this natural religion; it vitalizes it, and confirms it, and fills it with richer content. But it does so much more than this that, great as this is, it is pardonable that it should now and then be overlooked. It supplements it, and, in supplementing it, it transforms it, and makes it, with its supplements, a religion fitted for and adequate to the needs of sinful man. There is nothing "soteriological" in natural religion. It grows out of the recognized relations of creature and Maker; it is the THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 660

creature's response to the perception of its Lord, in feelings of dependence and responsibility. It knows nothing of salvation. When the creature has become a sinner, and the relations proper to it as creature to its Lord have been superseded by relations proper to the criminal to its judge, natural religion is dumb. It fails just because it is natural religion and is unequal to unnatural conditions. Of course we do not say that it is suspended; we say only that it has become inadequate. It requires to be supplemented by elements which are proper to the relation of the offending creature to the offended Lord. This is what Christianity brings, and it is because this is what Christianity brings that it so supplements and transforms natural religion as to make it a religion for sinners. It does not supersede natural religion; it takes it up in its entirety unto itself, expanding it and developing it on new sides to meet new needs and supplementing it where it is insufficient for these new needs.

We have touched here the elements of truth in George Tyrrell's contention, otherwise bizarre enough, that Christianity builds not on Judaism but on paganism. The antithesis is unfortunate. Although in very different senses, Christianity builds both on Judaism and on paganism; it is the completion of the supernatural religion begun in Judaism, and it is the supernatural supplement to the natural religion which lies beneath all the horrible perversions of paganism. Tyrrell, viewing everything from the point of view of his Catholicism and dealing in historical as much as in theological judgments, puts his contention in this form: "That Catholicism is Christianized paganism or world-religion and not the Christianized Judaism of the New Testament." The idea he wishes to express is that Catholicism is the only tenable form of Christianity because it alone is founded, not on Judaism, but on "world-religion." What is worthy of our notice is that he says "world-religion," not "world-religions." He is thinking not of the infinite variety of pagan religions — many of them gross enough, none of them worthy of humanity ("man's worst crimes are his religions," says Dr. Faunce somewhere, most strikingly) — but of the THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 661

underlying religion which sustains and gives whatever value they possess to them all.

Now mysticism is just this world-religion; that is to say, it is the expression of the ineradicable religiosity of the human race. So far as it is this, and nothing but this, it is valid religion, and eternal religion. No man can do without it, not even the Christian man. But it is not adequate religion for sinners. And when it pushes itself forward as an adequate religion for sinners it presses beyond its mark and becomes, in the poet's phrase, "procuress to the lords of hell." As vitalized and informed, supplemented and transformed by Christianity, as supplying to Christianity the natural foundation for its supernatural structure, it is valid religion. As a substitute for Christianity it is not merely a return to the beggarly elements of the world, but inevitably rots down to something far worse. Confining himself to what he can find in himself, man naturally cannot rise above himself, and unfortunately the self above which he cannot rise is a sinful self.

The pride which is inherent in the self-poised, self-contained attitude which will acknowledge no truth that is not found within oneself is already an unlovely trait, and a dangerous one as well, since pride is unhappily a thing which grows by what it feeds on. The history of mysticism only too clearly shows that he who begins by seeking God within himself may end by confusing himself with God. We may conceivably think that Mr. G. K. Chesterton might have chosen his language with a little more delicacy of feeling, but what he says in the following telling way much needs to be said in this generation in words which will command a hearing. He had seen some such observation as that which we have quoted from Tyrrell, to the effect that the Christianity of the future is to be a mere mysticism. This is the way he deals with it:

Only the other day I saw in an excellent weekly paper of Puritan tone this remark, that Christianity when stripped of its armor of dogma (as who should speak of a man stripped of his armor of bones) turned out to be nothing but the Quaker doctrine of the Inner Light. Now, if I were to say that Christianity came into the world THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 662

specially to destroy the doctrine of the Inner Light, that would be an exaggeration. But it would be very much nearer the truth. . . . Of all the conceivable forms of enlightenment, the worst is what these people call the Inner Light. Of all horrible religions the most horrible is the worship of the

God within. Anyone who knows anybody knows how it would work; anyone who knows anyone from the Higher Thought Center knows how it does work. That Jones should worship the God within him turns out ultimately to mean that Jones shall worship Jones. Let Jones worship the sun or moon, anything rather than the Inner Light; let Jones worship cats or crocodiles, if he can find any in his street, but not the God within. Christianity came into the world firstly in order to assert with violence that a man had not only to look inward, but to look outward, to behold with astonishment and enthusiasm a divine company and a divine captain. The only fun of being a Christian was that a man was not left alone with the Inner Light, but definitely recognized an outer light, fair as the sun, clear as the moon, terrible as an army with banners.

Certainly, valuable as the inner light is — adequate as it might be for men who were not sinners — there is no fate which could be more terrible for a sinner than to be left alone with it. And we must not blink the fact that it is just that, in the full terribleness of its meaning, which mysticism means. Above all other elements of Christianity, Christ and what Christ stands for, with the cross at the center, come to us solely by "external authority." No "external authority," no Christ, and no cross of Christ. For Christ is history, and Christ's cross is history, and mysticism which lives solely on what is within can have nothing to do with history; mysticism which seeks solely eternal verities can have nothing to do with time and that which has occurred in time. Accordingly a whole series of recent mystical devotional writers sublimate the entire body of those historical facts, which we do not say merely lie at the basis of Christianity — we say rather, which constitute the very substance of Christianity — into a mere set of symbols, a dramatization of psychological experiences succeeding one another in the soul. Christ Himself becomes but THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 663

an external sign of an inward grace. Read but the writings of John Cordelier. Not even the most reluctant mystic, however, can altogether escape some such process of elimination of the external Christ; by virtue of the very fact that he will not have anything in his religion which he does not find within himself he must sooner or later "pass beyond Christ."

We do not like Wilhelm Herrmann's rationalism any better than we like mysticism, and we would as soon have no Christ at all as the Christ Herrmann gives us. But Herrmann tells the exact truth when he explains in well-chosen words that "the piety of the mystic is such that at the highest point to which it leads Christ must vanish from the soul along with all else that is external." "When he has found God," he explains again, "the mystic has left Christ behind." At the best, Christ can be to the mystic but the model mystic, not Himself the Way as He declared of Himself, but only a traveler along with us upon the common way. So Miss Underhill elaborately depicts Him, but not she alone. Soderblom says of von Hugel that Jesus is to him "merely a high point in the religious development to which man must aspire." "He has no eye," he adds, "for the unique personal power which His figure exercises on man." This applies to the whole class. But much more than this needs to be said. Christ may be the mystic's brother. He may possibly even be his exemplar and leader, although He is not always recognized as such. What He cannot by any possibility be is his Saviour. Is not God within him? And has he not merely to sink within himself to sink himself into God? He has no need of "salvation" and allows no place for it.

We hear much of the revolt of mysticism against the forensic theory of the atonement and imputed righteousness. This is a mere euphemism for its revolt against all "atonement" and all

"justification." The whole external side of the Christian salvation simply falls away. In the same euphemistic language Miss Underhill declares that "nothing done for us, or exhibited to us, can have the significance of that which is done in us." She means that it has no significance for us at all. Even a William Law can say: "Christ given for us is THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 664

neither more nor less than Christ given into us. He is in no other sense our full, perfect, and sufficient Atonement, than as His nature and spirit are born and formed in us." The cross and all that the cross stands for are abolished; it becomes at best but a symbol of a general law — per aspera ad astra. "There is but one salvation for all mankind," says Law, "and the way to it is one; and that is the desire of the soul turned to God. This desire brings the soul to God and God into the soul: it unites with God, it cooperates with God, and is one life with God." If Christ is still spoken of, and His death and resurrection and ascension, and all the currents of religious feeling still turn to Him, that is because Christians must so speak and feel. The same experiences may be had under other skies and will under them express themselves in other terms appropriate to the traditions of those other times and places. That Christian mysticism is Christ mysticism, seeking and finding Christ within and referring all its ecstasies to Him, is thus only an accident. And even the functions of this Christ within us, which alone it knows, are degraded far below those of the Christ within us of the Christian revelation.

The great thing about the indwelling Christ of the Christian revelation is that He comes to us in His Spirit with creative power. Veni, creator Spiritus, we sing, and we look to be new creatures, created in Christ Jesus into newness of life. The mystic will allow, not a resurrection from the dead, but only an awakening from sleep. Christ enters the heart not to produce something new but to arouse what was dormant, what has belonged to man as man from the beginning and only needs to be set to work. "If Christ was to raise a new life like His own in every man," writes Law, "then every man must have had originally in the inmost spirit of his life a seed of Christ, or Christ as a seed of heaven, lying there in a state of insensibility, out of which it could not arise but by the mediatorial power of Christ." He cannot conceive of Christ bringing anything new; what Christ seems to bring he really finds already there. "The Word of God," he says, "is the hidden treasure of every human soul, immured under flesh and blood, till as a THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 665

day-star it arises in our hearts and changes the son of an earthly Adam into a son of God." Nothing is brought to us; what is already in us is only "brought out," and what is already in us — in every man — is "the Word of God." This is Christ mysticism; that is to say, it is the mysticism in which the divinity which is in every man by nature is called Christ — rather than, say, Brahm or Allah, or what not.

Even in such a movement as that represented by Bishop Chandler's Cult of the Passing Moment, the disintegrating operation of mysticism on historical Christianity — which is all the Christianity there is — is seen at work. Bishop Chandler himself, we are thankful to say, exalts the cross and thinks of it as a creative influence in the lives of men. But this only exemplifies the want of logical consistency, which indeed is the boast of the school which he represents. If our one rule of life is to be the spiritual improvement of the impressions of the moment, and we are to follow these blindly whithersoever they lead with no steadying, not to say guidance, derived from the great Revelation

of the past, there can be but one issue. We are simply substituting our own passing impulses, interpreted as inspirations, for the one final revelation of God as the guide of life; that God has spoken once for all for the guidance of His people is forgotten; His great corporate provision for His people is cast aside; and we are adrift upon the billows of merely subjective feeling.

We see that it is not merely Christ and His cross, then, which may be neglected, as external things belonging to time and space. God Himself, speaking in His Word, may be forgotten in "the cult of the passing moment." We are reminded that there have been mystics who have not scrupled openly to contrast even the God without them with the God within, and to speak in such fashion as to be understood (or misunderstood) as counseling divesting ourselves of God Himself and turning only to the inwardly shining light. No doubt they did not mean all that their words may be pressed into seeming to say. Nevertheless, their words may stand for us as a kind of symbol of the whole mystical conception, with the THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, Volume IX, page 666

exaggerated value which it sets upon the personal feelings and its contempt for all that is external to the individual's spirit, even though it must be allowed that this excludes all that makes Christianity the religion of salvation for a lost world the cross, Christ Himself, and the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who in His love gave His Son to die for sinners.

The issue which mysticism creates is thus just the issue of Christianity. The question which it raises is, whether we need, whether we have, a provision in the blood of Christ for our sins; or whether we, each of us, possess within ourselves all that can be required for time and for eternity. Both of these things cannot be true, and obviously tertium non datur. We may be mystics, or we may be Christians. We cannot be both. And the pretension of being both usually merely veils defection from Christianity. Mysticism baptized with the name of Christianity is not thereby made Christianity. A rose by any other name will smell as sweet. But it does not follow that whatever we choose to call a rose will possess the rose's fragrance.

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Our Seminary Curriculum

Our Seminary Curriculum

by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

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Much of the confusion into which opinion as to the proper curriculum of a theological seminary is apparently drifting, seems to arise from altering, or perhaps we would better say varying, conceptions of the functions of the ministry for which the theological seminary is intended to provide a training. A low view of the functions of the ministry will naturally carry with it a low conception of the training necessary for it. A rationalistic view of the functions of the ministry entails a corresponding conception of the training which fits for it. An evangelical view of the functions of the ministry demands a consonant training for that ministry. And a high view of the functions of the ministry on evangelical lines inevitably produces a high conception of the training which is needed to prepare men for the exercise of these high functions.

Our Episcopalian brethren are complaining bitterly of the difficulties they are experiencing in obtaining candidates for orders with anything like adequate equipment. They may enact canons galore requiring real and precise tests to be applied. What they find impossible is to convince either examiners or examined that these tests should be seriously applied. They do not see the use of it, when all that is required of the clergy is *Ut pueris placeant et declamationes fiant*. Pretty nearly anybody seems to them "to know enough to get along in a parish." Similar difficulties are not unknown to Presbyterians. All the requirements which can be stuffed into a Form of Government will not secure that a high standard of training will be maintained, if a suspicion forms itself in the minds of the administrators of this Form of Government that a minister does not need such learning. And this suspicion will inevitably form itself -- and harden into a conviction -- if the functions of the

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minister come to be conceived lowly: if the minister comes to be thought of, for example, fundamentally as merely the head of a social organization from whom may be demanded pleasant manners and executive ability; or as little more than a zealous "promoter" who knows how to seek out and attach to his enterprise a multitude of men; or as merely an entertaining lecturer who can be counted upon to charm away an hour or two of dull Sabbaths; or even -- for here we have, of course, an infinitely higher conception -- as merely an enthusiastic Christian eager to do work for

Christ. If a minister's whole function is summed up in these or such things -- we might as well close our theological seminaries, withdraw our candidates from the colleges and schools, and seek recruits for the ministry among the capable young fellows about town. The "three R's" will constitute all the literary equipment they require; their English Bible their whole theological outfit; and zeal their highest spiritual attainment.

It has not been characteristic of the rationalistic bodies to think meanly of the functions of the minister or of the equipment requisite to fit him to perform them. Their tendency has been to treat the minister rather as an intellectual than as a religious guide; and they have rather secularized than vulgarized his training. For a hundred years, now, our Unitarian friends have been urging upon us this secularized conception of the ministerial functions and of the minister's training. Ex-president Charles W. Eliot, of Harvard, for example, winningly commended it to us a quarter of a century ago in a much-talked of article in *The Princeton Review*, but was happily set right by Dr. F. L. Patton in the next number. What now attracts attention is that this secularized conception has begun to wander away from home in these last days, and to invade evangelical circles. It is a highly honored Presbyterian elder whose voice carries far over the land, who has lately told us that the proper function of the ministry is to mediate modern advances in knowledge to the people, through the churches. Were that true, the ministry would no longer be a spiritual office, but only an educational agency; and training for it should be sought not in theological seminaries, but in the universities.

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He would be the best-equipped minister who had obtained the most thorough knowledge, not of the ways of God with men and the purposes of God's grace for men, but of the most recent currents of thought and fancy which flow up and down in the restless hearts of men.

Extremes meet. Pietist and Rationalist have ever hunted in couples and dragged down their quarry together. They may differ as to why they deem theology mere lumber, and would not have the prospective minister waste his time in acquiring it. The one loves God so much, the other loves him so little, that he does not care to know him. But they agree that it is not worth while to learn to know him. The simple English Bible seems to the one sufficient equipment for the minister, because, in the fervor of his religious enthusiasm, it seems to him enough for the renovating of the world, just to lisp its precious words to man. It seems to the other all the theological equipment a minister needs, because in his view the less theology a minister has the better. He considers him ill employed in poring over Hebrew and Greek pages, endeavoring to extract their real meaning -- for what does it matter what their real meaning is? The prospective minister would, in his opinion, be better occupied in expanding his mind by contemplation of the great attainments of the human spirit, and in learning to know that social animal Man, by tracing out the workings of his social aptitudes and probing the secrets of his social movements. If the minister is simply an advance agent of modern culture, a kind of University-Extension lecturer, whose whole function it is to "elevate the masses" and "improve the social organism" -- why, of course, art and literature should take the place of Greek and Hebrew, and "sociology" the place of Theology in our seminary curriculum. If the whole function of the minister is "inspirational" rather than "instructional," and his work is finished when the religious nature of man is roused to action, and the religious emotions are set surging, with only a very vague notion of the objects to which the awakened religious

affections should turn, or the ends to which the religious activities, once set in motion, should be directed -- why, then, no doubt we may dispense with all serious study of Scripture, and

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content ourselves with the employment of its grand music merely to excite religious susceptibilities.

But, if the minister is the mouth-piece of the Most High, charged with a message to deliver, to expound and enforce; standing in the name of God before men, to make known to them who and what this God is, and what his purposes of grace are, and what his will for his people -- then, the whole aspect of things is changed. Then, it is the prime duty of the minister to know his message; to know the instructions which have been committed to him for the people, and to know them thoroughly; to be prepared to declare them with confidence and with exactness, to commend them with wisdom, and to urge them with force and defend them with skill, and to build men up by means of them into a true knowledge of God and of his will, which will be unassailable in the face of the fiercest assault. No second-hand knowledge of the revelation of God for the salvation of a ruined world can suffice the needs of a ministry whose function it is to convey this revelation to men, commend it to their acceptance and apply it in detail to their needs--to all their needs, from the moment that they are called into participation in the grace of God, until the moment when they stand perfect in God's sight, built up by his Spirit into new men. For such a ministry as this the most complete knowledge of the wisdom of the world supplies no equipment; the most fervid enthusiasm of service leaves without furnishing. Nothing will suffice for it but to know; to know the Book; to know it at first hand; and to know it through and through. And what is required first of all for training men for such a ministry is that the Book should be given them in its very words as it has come from God's hand and in the fulness of its meaning, as that meaning has been ascertained by the labors of generations of men of God who have brought to bear upon it all the resources of sanctified scholarship and consecrated thought.

How worthily our fathers thought of the ministry! And what wise provision they made for training men for it, when they set out the curriculum of their first theological seminary! This curriculum was framed with the express design that those

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who pursued it should come forth from it these five things: "a sound Biblical critic"; "a defender of the Christian faith"; "an able and sound divine"; "a useful preacher and faithful pastor"; and a man "qualified to exercise discipline and to take part in the government of the Church in all its judicatories." A well-rounded minister this, one equal to the functions which belong to a minister of the New Testament order. But that we may have such ministers, we must provide such a training for the ministry as will produce such ministers. And that means nothing less than that our theological curriculum should provide for the serious mastery of the several branches of theological science. A comprehensive and thorough theological training is the condition of a really qualified ministry. When we satisfy ourselves with a less comprehensive and thorough theological training, we are only condemning ourselves to a less qualified ministry. A Remembrance of Warfield

When I returned from Germany in 1906, I entered, as instructor in the New Testament department, into the teaching staff of Princeton Theological Seminary....Warfield was Professor of Systematic Theology (or "Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology," as the chair was then more sonorously and vigorously called). And what a wonderful man he was! His learning was prodigious. No adequate notion of its breadth can be obtained even from his voluminous collected works. Consult him on the most out-of-the-way subjects, and you would find him with the "literature" of each subject at his tongue's end and able to give you just the guidance of which you had need. Now and then, in wonderfully generous fashion, he would go out of his way to give a word of encouragement to a younger man. The old Princeton was an environment in which a man felt encouraged to do his very best.

J. Gresham Machen |

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Redeemer & Redemption

"Redeemer" & "Redemption" by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

This address was originally delivered in Miller Chapel, Princeton Theological Seminary, Sept 17, 1915. It was later published in *The Princeton Theological Review* (Vol. 14, 1916, pp. 177-201). Some sections have been omitted in this online edition. The electronic edition of this article was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed.

There is no one of the titles of Christ which is more precious to Christian hearts than "Redeemer." There are others, it is true, which are more often on the lips of Christians. The acknowledgment of our submission to Christ as our Lord, the recognition of what we owe to Him as our Saviour,--these things, naturally, are most frequently expressed in the names we call Him by. "Redeemer," however, is a title of more intimate revelation than either "Lord" or "Saviour." It gives expression not merely to our sense that we have received salvation from Him, but also to our appreciation of what it cost Him to procure this salvation for us. It is the name specifically of the Christ of the cross. Whenever we pronounce it, the cross is placarded before our eyes and our hearts are filled with loving remembrance not only that Christ has given us salvation, but that He paid a mighty price for it.

It is a name, therefore, which is charged with deep emotion, and is to be found particularly in the language of devotion. Christian song is vocal with it. How it appears in Christian song, we may see at once from old William Dunbar's invocation, "My King, my Lord, and my Redeemer sweet." Or even from Shakespeare's description of a lost loved-one as "The precious image of our dear Redeemer." Or from Christina Rossetti's,

"Up Thy Hill of Sorrows

Thou all alone,

Jesus, man's Redeemer,

Climbing to a Throne."

Best of all perhaps from Henry Vaughan's ode which he inscribes "To my most merciful, my most loving, and dearly-loved REDEEMER; the ever blessed, the only HOLY and JUST ONE, JESUS CHRIST, The Son of the living God, and the Sacred Virgin Mary," and in which he sings to "My dear Redeemer, the world's light, And life too, and my heart's delight."

Terms of affection gather to it. Look into your hymnals. Fully eight and twenty of those in our own Hymnal celebrate our Lord under the name of "Redeemer."From our earliest childhood the preciousness of this title has been impressed upon us. In *The Shorter Catechism*, as the most precise and significant designation of Christ, from the point of view of what He has done for us, it takes the place of the more usual "Saviour," which never occurs in that document. Thus there is

permanently imprinted on the hearts of us all, the great fact that "the only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ"; through whom, in the execution of His offices of a Prophet, of a Priest, and of a King, God delivers us out of the estate of sin and misery and brings us into an estate of salvation. The same service is performed for our sister, Episcopalian, communion by its Book of Common Prayer. The title "Redeemer" is applied in it to Christ about a dozen times....This constant pregnant use of the title "Redeemer" to express our sense of what we owe to Christ, has prevailed in the Church for, say, a millennium and a half.

...[Now days, unfortunately,] men who have ceased to think of the work of Christ in terms of purchasing, and to whom the whole conception of His giving His life for us as a ransom, or of His pouring out His blood as a price paid for our sins,...feel little difficulty...in still speaking of Him as our Redeemer, and of His work as a Redemption, and of the Christianity which He founded as a Redemptive Religion. The ideas connected with purchase are not so inseparably attached to these terms in their instinctive thought that the linguistic feeling is intolerably shocked by the employment of them with no implication of this set of ideas. Such an evacuation of these great words, the vehicles thus far of the fundamental Christian confession, of their whole content as such, is now actually going on about us. And the time may be looked forward to in the near future when the words "Redeemer," "redemption," and "redeem" shall have ceased altogether to convey the ideas which it has been thus far their whole function in our religious terminology to convey.

...You see, that what we are doing today as we look out upon our current religious modes of speech, is assisting at the death bed of a word. It is sad to witness the death of any worthy thing, even of a worthy word. And worthy words do die, like any other worthy thing--if we do not take good care of them. How many worthy words have already died under our very eyes, because we did not take care of them! Tennyson calls our attention to one of them. "The grand old name of gentleman," he sings, "defamed by every charlatan, and soil'd with all ignoble use." If you persist in calling people who are not gentlemen by the name of gentleman, you do not make them gentlemen by so calling them, but you end by making the word gentleman mean that kind of people. The religious terrain is full of the graves of good words which have died from lack of care--they stand as close in it as do the graves today in the flats of Flanders or among the hills of northern France. And these good words are still dying all around us. There is that good word "Evangelical." It is certainly moribund, if not already dead. Nobody any longer seems to know what it means. Even our Dictionaries no longer know. Certainly there never was a more blundering, floundering attempt ever made to define a word than The Standard Dictionary's attempt to define this word; and the Century's Dictionary does little better. Adolf Harnack begins one of his essays with some paragraphs animadverting on the varied and confused senses in which the word "Evangelical" is used in Germany. But he betrays no understanding whatever of the real source of a great part of this confusion. It is that the official name of the Protestant Church in a large part of Germany is "The Evangelical Church." When this name was first acquired by that church it had a perfectly defined meaning, and described the church as that kind of a church. But having been once identified with that church, it has drifted with it into the bog. The habit of calling "Evangelical" everything which was from time to time characteristic of that church or which any strong party in that church wished to make characteristic of it--has ended in robbing the term of all meaning. Along a somewhat different pathway we have arrived at the same state of affairs in America. Does anybody in the world know what "Evangelical" means, in our current religious speech?

The other day, a professedly evangelical pastor, serving a church which is certainly committed by its formularies to an evangelical confession, having occasion to report in one of our newspapers on a religious meeting composed practically entirely of Unitarians and Jews, remarked with enthusiasm upon the deeply "evangelical" character of its spirit and utterances.

But we need not stop with "Evangelical." Take an even greater word. Does the word "Christianity" any longer bear a definite meaning? Men are debating on all sides of us what Christianity really is. Auguste Sabatier makes it out to be just altruism; Josiah Royce identifies it with the sentiment of loyalty; D. C. Macintosh explains it as nothing but morality. We hear of Christianity without dogma, Christianity without miracle, Christianity without Christ. Since, however, Christianity is a historical religion, an undogmatic Christianity would be an absurdity; since it is through and through a supernatural religion, a non-miraculous Christianity would be a contradiction;...Christless Christianity would be--well, let us say lamely (but with a lameness which has perhaps its own emphasis), a misnomer. People who set upon calling unchristian things Christian are simply washing all meaning out of the name. If everything that is called Christianity in these days is Christianity, then there is no such thing as Christianity. A name applied indiscriminately to everything, designates nothing.

The words "Redeem," "Redemption," "Redeemer" are going the same way. When we use these terms in so comprehensive a sense--we are following Kaftan's phraseology--that we understand by "Redemption" whatever benefit we suppose ourselves to receive through Christ,--no matter what we happen to think that benefit is--and call Him "Redeemer" merely in order to express the fact that we somehow or other relate this benefit to Him--no matter how loosely or unessentially--we have simply evacuated the terms of all meaning, and would do better to wipe them out of our vocabulary. Yet this is precisely how modern Liberalism uses these terms. Sabatier, who reduces Christianity to mere altruism, Royce who explains it in terms of loyalty, Macintosh who sees in it only morality--all still speak of it as a "Redemptive Religion," and all are perfectly willing to call Jesus still by the title of "Redeemer,"--although some of them at least are quite free to allow that He seems to them quite unessential to Christianity, and Christianity would remain all that it is, and just as truly a "Redemptive Religion," even though He had never existed.

I think you will agree with me that it is a sad thing to see words like these die like this. And I hope you will determine that, God helping you, you will not let them die thus, if any care on your part can preserve them in life and vigor. But the dying of the words is not the saddest thing which we see here. The saddest thing is the dying out of the hearts of men of the things for which the words stand. As ministers of Christ it will be your function to keep the things alive. If you can do that, the words which express the things will take care of themselves. Either they will abide in vigor; or other good words and true will press in to take the place left vacant by them. The real thing for you to settle in your minds, therefore, is whether Christ is truly a Redeemer to you, and whether you find an actual Redemption in Him,--or are you ready to deny the Master that bought you, and to count His blood an unholy thing? Do you realize that Christ is your Ransomer and has actually shed His blood for you as your ransom? Do you realize that your salvation has been bought, bought at a tremendous price, at the price of nothing less precious than blood, and that the blood of Christ, the Holy One of God? Or, go a step further: do you realize that this Christ who has thus shed His blood for you is Himself your God? So the Scriptures teach

The blood of God outpoured upon the tree!
So reads the Book. O mind, receive the thought,
Nor helpless murmur thou hast vainly sought
Thought-room within thee for such mystery.
Thou foolish mindling! Do'st thou hope to see
Undazed, untottering, all that God hath wrought?
Before His mighty "shall," thy little "ought"
Be shamed to silence and humility!
Come mindling, I will show thee what 'twere meet
That thou shouldst shrink from marvelling, and flee
As unbelievable,--nay, wonderingly,
With dazed, but still with faithful praises, greet:
Draw near and listen to this sweetest sweet,--
Thy God, O mindling, shed His blood for thee!
Princeton.

Benjamin B. Warfield.

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Regeneration

Regeneration

by A.A. Hodge; revised by B.B. Warfield

The following short essay was originally published in Johnson's Cyclopaedia, 1896. The electronic edition of this article was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed.

Regeneration (from Lat. re-, again + generare, beget) is a theological term used to express the initial stage of the change experienced by one who enters upon the Christian life. It is derived from the New Testament, where the "new birth" (1 Peter 1:3, 1 Peter 1:23; Titus 3:5; John 3:3 f.) is the beginning of that "renewal" which produces the "new creature." In the history of theology the term has been used with varying latitude of meaning. Among the Jews it was employed in an external sense to express the change of relation which took place when a heathen became a Jew; from them it was adopted in this sense by many of the Fathers, and is still so used by many advocates of "baptismal regeneration." It is used in the Latin Church to express the whole real change which corresponds to this external change of relation. The Reformers separated justification by itself as something wrought on, not in, the sinner, and employed regeneration to express the whole process of inner renovation in all its stages. In the development of Protestant theology the term has been still further narrowed: first, to express the opening stage of this subjective work as distinguished from its continuance in sanctification; and then, since the seventeenth century, to express the initial divine act in this opening stage itself, as distinguished from the broader term conversion, which includes, along with the act of God, revivifying man, also the act of man in turning to God.

The nature of regeneration is of course variously conceived by different schools, according to their various views of the nature of the soul and its relation to God, of original or habitual sin, and of divine grace.

1. Pelagians, in accordance with their view of freedom and of sin, necessarily regard regeneration as a self-determined change in the general moral course of man's life, an act of the man himself, without any gracious assistance other than that involved in instruction and favorable providential conditions. This was the teaching of Pelagius in the early part of the fifth century; and although not adopted by a historical church, it has been reproduced in various combinations by Rationalists and Socinians.

2. The Semi-Pelagian doctrine taught by John Cassian (d. 440) admits that divine grace (assistentia) is necessary to enable a sinner to return unto God and live, yet holds that, from the nature of the human will, man may first spontaneously, of himself, desire and attempt to choose and obey God. They deny the necessity of prevenient but admit the necessity of co-operative grace and conceive regeneration as the product of this co-operative grace.

3. The Mediaeval and Papal doctrine, which is practically that of Thomas Aquinas, and is hence often called "Thomism," admits original sin and the necessity of prevenient grace, but places the efficacy of grace in the non-resistance of the subject.¹ But this grace is supposed to be exercised only through the instrumentality of baptism, which acts as an *opus operatum*, *ex vi actionis ipsius*, effecting regeneration and the entire removal of sin, and consequently of guilt, from every infant, and from every adult who does not willfully resist (*non ponentibus obicem*).²

4. The Arminian view of regeneration admits total depravity and consequent moral impotency, yet holds that man is not really responsible until there is redemptively bestowed upon him for Christ's sake sufficient grace to re-endow him with ability (*gracious*, substituted for natural) to do right, which grace becomes efficient when the sinner co-operates with it, and thus effects the end intended.

5. The Synergistic view was held by a party among the Lutherans under the leadership of Melancthon. At the Leipzig conference (1548) Melancthon said: "there concur three causes of a good action—the word of God, the Holy Spirit, and the human will assenting, not resisting the word of God."³

6. The Lutheran standard, the *Formula Concordiae*, teaches that: (1) human nature is spiritually dead; and (2) the Holy Ghost is the sole efficient agent who quickens the dead soul to life, without the least co-operation of the will of the subject; but the non-regeneration of the unbeliever is referred not to the absence nor to any deficiency of grace, but to the positive resistance of the man himself.⁴

7. The Reformed doctrine teaches as follows: (1) As to the nature of regeneration: (a) There are in the soul, besides its several faculties, habits or dispositions, innate or acquired, which lay the foundation for the soul's exercising its faculties in a particular way. (b) These dispositions (*moral*) are anterior to moral action, and determine its character as good or evil. (c) In creation God made the dispositions of Adam's heart holy. (d) In regeneration God recreates the governing dispositions of the regenerated man's heart holy. Regeneration is therefore essentially the communication of a new spiritual life, and is properly called a "new birth." (2) As to its efficient cause: It is effected by divine power acting supernaturally and immediately upon the soul, quickening it to spiritual life, and implanting *gracious* principles of action. (3) As to man's action: Conversion (*conversio actualis*) instantly follows, as the change of action consequent upon the change of character, and consists in repentance, faith, holy obedience, etc.⁵

What is called baptismal regeneration is held by members of the Church of England and others in various senses. (1) Some hold that the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of baptism implants a germ of spiritual life in the soul, which may long remain latent, and may be subsequently developed (in conversion) or blasted. (2) Others hold that there are two regenerations one a change of state or relation, and the other a change of nature; the first is baptismal and the second moral, though both are spiritual, since both are wrought by the Holy Ghost.

Notes

1. See the Council of Trent, sess. 6, can. 4, chs. v and vi, and sess 7, cans. 6 and 8.

2. Council of Trent, sess. 7, can. 6; Bellarmin, *De Sacramentis*, 2,1.

3. Loc. Com., p. 90.

4. Formula Concordiae, pp. 662, 666, 582, 677.

5. Thirty- nine Articles, art. 10; Canons of Synod of Dordt, ch. iii, art 3; Westminster Confession, ch. x.

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Some Thoughts on Predestination

Some Thoughts on Predestination by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

This essay was originally published in *The Christian Workers Magazine*, Dec. 1916, pp. 265-267. The electronic edition of this article was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed. A great man of the last generation began the preface of a splendid little book he was writing on this subject, with the words: "Happy would it be for the church of Christ and for the world, if Christian ministers and Christian people could be content to be disciples-learners." He meant to intimate that if only we were all willing to sit simply at the feet of the inspired writers and take them at their word, we should have no difficulties with Predestination. The difficulties we feel with regard to Predestination are not derived from the Word. The Word is full of it, because it is full of God, and when we say God and mean God—God in all that God is—we have said Predestination.

Our difficulties with Predestination arise from a, no doubt not unnatural, unwillingness to acknowledge ourselves to be wholly at the disposal of another. We wish to be at our own disposal. We wish "to belong to ourselves," and we resent belonging, especially belonging absolutely, to anybody else, even if that anybody else be God. We are in the mood of the singer of the hymn beginning, "I was a wandering sheep," when he declares of himself, "I would not be controlled." We will not be controlled. Or, rather, to speak more accurately, we will not admit that we are controlled.

I say that it is more accurate to say that we will not admit that we are controlled. For we are controlled, whether we admit it or not. To imagine that we are not controlled is to imagine that there is no God. For when we say God, we say control. If a single creature which God has made has escaped beyond his control, at the moment that he has done so he has abolished God. A God who could or would make a creature whom he could not or would not control, is no God. The moment he should make such a creature he would, of course, abdicate his throne. The universe he had created would have ceased to be his universe; or rather it would cease to exist—for the universe is held together only by the control of God.

Even worse would have happened, indeed, than the destruction of the universe. God would have ceased to be God in a deeper sense than that he would have ceased to be the Lord and Ruler of the world. He would have ceased to be a moral being. It is an immoral act to make a thing that we cannot or will not control. The only justification for making anything is that we both can and will control it. If a man should manufacture a quantity of an unstable high-explosive in the corridors of an orphan asylum, and when the stuff went off should seek to excuse himself by saying that he could not control it, no one would count his excuse valid. What right had he to manufacture it, we should say, unless he could control it? He relieves himself of none of the responsibility for the havoc wrought, by pleading inability to control his creation.

To suppose that God has made a universe-or even a single being-the control of which he renounces, is to accuse him of similar immorality. What right has he to make it, if he cannot or will not control it? It is not a moral act to perpetrate chaos. We have not only dethroned God; we have demoralized him.

Of course, there is no one that thinks at all who will imagine such a vanity. We take refuge in a vague antinomy. We fancy that God controls the universe just enough to control it, and that he does not control it just enough not to control it. Of course God controls the universe, we perhaps say-in the large; but of course he does not control everything in the universe-in particular.

Probably nobody deceives himself with such palpable paltering in a double sense. If this is God's universe, if he made it and made it for himself, he is responsible for everything that takes place in it. He must be supposed to have made it just as he wished it to be-or are we to say that he could not make the universe he wished to make, and had to put up with the best he could do?

And he must be supposed to have made it precisely as he wished it to be, not only statically but dynamically considered, that is, in all its potentialities and in all its developments down to the end. That is to say, he must be supposed to have made it precisely to suit himself, as extended not only in space but in time. If anything occurs in it as projected through time—just as truly as if anything is found in it as extended in space—which is not just as he intended it to be-why, then we must admit that he could not make such a universe as he would like to have, and had to put up with the best he could get. And, then, he is not God. A being who cannot make a universe to his own liking is not God. A being who can agree to make a universe which is not to his liking, most certainly is not God.

But though such a being obviously is not God, he does not escape responsibility for the universe which he actually makes -whether as extended in space or in time-and that in all its particulars. The moment this godling (not now God) consented to put up with the actual universe-whether as extended in space or as projected through time, including all its particulars without exception-because it was the best he could get, it became his universe. He adopted it as his own, and made it his own even in those particulars which in themselves he would have liked to have otherwise. These particulars, as well as all the rest, which in themselves please him better, have been determined on by him as not only allowable, but as actually to exist in the universe which, by his act, is actually realized.

That is to say they are predestinated by him, and because predestinated by him actually appear in the universe that is made. We have got rid of God, indeed; but we have not got rid of the Predestination, to get rid of which we have been willing to degrade our God into a godling.

We have passed insensibly from the idea of control to the idea of Predestination. That is because there is no real difference between the two ideas at bottom. If God controls anything at all, of course he has intended to control it before he controls it. Exactly the control which he exerts, of course he has intended to exert all long.

No one can imagine so inadvertent a God, that he always acts "on the spur of the moment," so to speak, with no manner of intention determining his action. Providence and Predestination are ideas which run into one another. Providence is but Predestination in its execution; Predestination is but Providence in its intention. When we say the one, we say the other, and the common idea

which gives its content to both is control.

It is purely this idea of control which people object to when they say they object to Predestination; not the idea of previousness, but purely the idea of control. They would object just as much if the control was supposed to be exercised without any previous intention at all.

They ought to object much more. For a control exercised without intention would be a blind control. It would have no end in view to justify it; it would have no meaning; it would be sheerly irrational, immoral, maddening. That is what we call Fate. Say intention, however, and we say person; and when we say person we say purpose. A meaning is now given to the control that is exercised; an end is held before it.

And if the person who exercises the control be an intelligent being, the end will be a wise end; if he be a moral being it will be a good end; if he be infinitely wise and holy, just and good, it will be an infinitely wise and holy, just and good end, and it will be wrought out by means as wise and holy, just and good as itself.

To say Predestination is to say all this. It is to introduce order into the universe. It is to assign an end and a worthy end to it. It enables us to speak of a far off divine event to which the whole creation is moving. It enables us to see that whatever occurs, great or small, has a place to fill in this universal teleology; and thus has significance given it, and a justification supplied to it. To say Predestination is thus not only to say God; it is also to say Theodicy.

No matter what we may say of Predestination in moments of puzzlement, as we stand in face of the problems of life—the problem of the petty, the problem of suffering, the problem of sin—it is safe to say that at the bottom of our minds we all believe in it. We cannot help believing in it—if we believe in God; and that, in its utmost extension, as applying to everything about us which comes to pass.

Take any occurrence that happens, great or small—the fall of an empire or the fall of a sparrow, which our Lord himself tells us never once happens "without our Father." It surely cannot be imagined that God is ignorant of its happening—nay, even if it be so small a thing as the fall of a pin.

God assuredly is aware of everything that happens in his universe. There are no dark corners in it into which his all-seeing eye cannot pierce; there is nothing that occurs in it which is hidden from his universal glance. But certainly neither can it be imagined that anything which occurs in his universe takes him by surprise. Assuredly God has been expecting it to happen, and in happening it has merely justified his anticipations.

Nor yet can he be imagined to be indifferent to its happening, as if, though he sees it coming, he does not care whether it happens or not. That is not the kind of God our God is; he is a God who infinitely cares, cares even about the smallest things. Did not our Savior speak of the sparrows and the very hairs of our heads to teach us this?

Well, then, can it be imagined that, though infinitely caring, God stands impotently over against the happenings in his universe, and cannot prevent them? Is he to be supposed to be watching from all eternity things which he does not wish to happen, coming, coming, ever coming, until at last they come—and he is unable to stop them?

Why, if he could not prevent their happening any other way he need not have made the universe; or he might have made it differently. There was nothing to require him to make this universe-or any universe at all-except his own good pleasure; and there is nothing to compel him to allow anything which he does not wish to happen, to occur in the universe which he has made for his own good pleasure.

Clearly things cannot occur in God's universe, the occurrence of which is displeasing to him. He does not stand helplessly by, while they occur against his wish. Whatever occurs has been foreseen by him from all eternity, and it succeeds in occurring only because its occurrence meets his wish.

It may not be apparent to us what wish of his it meets, what place it fills in the general scheme of things to which it is his pleasure to give actuality, what its function is in his all-inclusive plan. But we know that it could not occur unless it had such a function to perform, such a place to fill, a part to play in God's comprehensive plan.

And knowing that, we are satisfied.. Unless, indeed, we cannot trust God with his own plan, and feel that we must insist that he submit it to us, down to the last detail, and obtain our approval of it, before he executes it.

Least of all will the religious man doubt the universal Predestination of God. Why, what makes him a religious man is, among other things, that he sees God in everything.

A glass window stands before us. We raise our eyes and see the glass; we note its quality, and observe its defects; we speculate on its composition. Or we look straight through it on the great prospect of land and sea and sky beyond. So there are two ways of looking at the world. We may see the world and absorb ourselves in the wonders of nature. That is the scientific way. Or we may look right through the world and see God behind it. That is the religious way.

The scientific way of looking at the world is not wrong any more than the glass-manufacturer's way of looking at the window. This way of looking at things has its very important uses. Nevertheless the window was placed there not to be looked at but to be looked through; and the world has failed of its purpose unless it too is looked through and the eye rests not on it but on its God. Yes, its God; for it is of the essence of the religious view of things that God is seen in all that is and in all that occurs. The universe is his, and in all its movements speaks of him, because it does only his will.

If you would understand the religious man's conception of the relation of God to his world, observe him on his knees. For prayer is the purest expression of religion and in prayer we see religion come to its rights.

Did ever a man pray thus: "O God, Thou knowest that I can do as I choose and Thou canst not prevent me, Thou knowest that my fellowmen are, like me, beyond Thy control, Thou knowest that nature itself goes its own way and Thou canst but stand helplessly by and watch whither it tends"?

No, the attitude of the-soul in prayer is that of entire dependence for itself, and of complete confidence in God's all-embracing government. We ask him graciously to regulate our own spirit, to control the acts of our fellowmen, and to direct the course of the whole world in accordance with his holy and beneficent will. And we do right. Only, we should see to it that we preserve this

conception of God in his relation to his world, when we rise from our knees; and make it the operative force of our whole life.

I know, it is true, an eminent theologian who will shake his head at this. God cannot control the acts of free agents, he says, and it is folly to ask him to do so. If we go gunning with an unskillful friend, he may awkwardly shoot us; and it is useless to ask God to protect us; he simply cannot do it. If we are at work at a dangerous machine by the side of a careless companion, he may destroy us at any moment, and it is useless to ask God to avert the mishap; God cannot do it.

If this were so, we certainly would be in a parlous case. Or rather the world would long ago have broken down into chaos.

Every religious man knows full well that it is not so. Every religious man knows that God can and will and does control everything that he has made in all their actions, and that therefore-despite all adverse appearances-it is all well with the world.

All well with the world, which is moving steadily forward in its established orbit; and all well with us who put our trust in God. For has he not himself told us that all things-all things, mind you-are working together for good to those that love him? And how, pray, could that be, except that they all do his bidding in all their actions?

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The Authority & Inspiration of the Scriptures

The Authority & Inspiration of the Scriptures by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

The following short essay was originally published in the Westminster Teacher, Sept. 1889. The electronic edition of this article was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed.

Christianity is often called a book-religion. It would be more exact to say that it is a religion which has a book. Its foundations are laid in apostles and prophets, upon which its courses are built up in the sanctified lives of men; but Christ Jesus alone is its chief cornerstone. He is its only basis; he, its only head; and he alone has authority in his Church. But he has chosen to found his Church not directly by his own hands, speaking the word of God, say for instance, in thunder-tones from heaven; but through the instrumentality of a body of apostles, chosen and trained by himself, endowed with gifts and graces from the Holy Ghost, and sent forth into the world as his authoritative agents for proclaiming a gospel which he placed within their lips and which is none the less his authoritative word, that it is through them that he speaks it. It is because the apostles were Christ's representatives, that what they did and said and wrote as such, comes to us with divine authority. The authority of the Scriptures thus rests on the simple fact that God's authoritative agents in founding the Church gave them as authoritative to the Church which they founded. All the authority of the apostles stands behind the Scriptures, and all the authority of Christ behind the apostles. The Scriptures are simply the law-code which the law-givers of the Church gave it.

If, then, the apostles were appointed by Christ to act for him and in his name and authority in founding the Church--and this no one can doubt; and if the apostles gave the Scriptures to the Church in prosecution of this commission--and this admits of as little doubt; the whole question of the authority of the Scriptures is determined. It will be observed that their authority does not rest exactly on apostolic authorship. The point is not that the apostles wrote these books (though most of the New Testament books were written by apostles), but that they imposed them on the Church as authoritative expositions of its divinely appointed faith and practice. Still less does the authority of the Scriptures rest on the authority of the Church. The Church may bear witness to what she received from the apostles as law, but this is not giving authority to that law but humbly recognizing the authority which rightfully belongs to it whether the Church recognizes it or not. The puzzle which some people fall into here is something like mistaking the relative "authority" of the guide-post and the road; the guide-post may point us to the right road but it does not give its rightness to the road. It has not "determined" the road--it is the road that has "determined" the guide-post; and unless the road goes of itself to its destination the guide-post has no power to determine its direction. So the Church does not "determine" the Scriptures, but the Scriptures the Church. Nor does it avail to say in opposition that the Church existed before the Scriptures and therefore cannot depend on them. The point is, whether the Scriptures are a product of the Church, or rather of the authority which founded the Church. The Church certainly did not exist

before the authority which Christ gave the apostles to found it, in virtue of which they have imposed the Scriptures on it as law.

Apostolicity thus determines the authority of Scripture; and any book or body of books which were given to the Church by the apostles as law must always remain of divine authority in the Church. That the apostles thus gave the Church the whole Old Testament, which they had themselves received from their fathers as God's word written, admits of no doubt, and is not doubted. That they gradually added to this body of old law an additional body of new law is equally patent. In part this is determined directly by their own extant testimony. Thus Peter places Paul's Epistles beside the Scriptures of the Old Testament as equally with them law to Christians (2 Peter iii. 16); and thus Paul places Luke's Gospel alongside of Deuteronomy (1 Timothy 5:18). Thus, too, all write with authority (1 Corinthians 14:37; 2 Corinthians 10:8; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-14)--with an authority which is above that of angels (Galatians 1:7-8), and the immediate recognition of which is the test of the possession of the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 14:37; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-14). In part it is left to be determined indirectly from the testimony of the early Church; it being no far cry from the undoubting universal acceptance of a book as authoritative by the Church of the apostolic age, to the apostolic gift of it as authoritative to that Church. But by one way or another it is easily shown that all the books which now constitute our Bible, and which Christians, from that day to this, have loyally treated as their divinely prescribed book of law, no more and no fewer, were thus imposed on the Church as its divinely authoritative rule of faith and practice.

Now it goes, of course, without saying, that the apostles were not given this supreme authority as legislators to the Church without preparation for their high functions, without previous instruction in the mind of Christ, without safeguards thrown about them in the prosecution of their task, without the accompanying guidance of the Holy Spirit. And nothing is more noticeable in the writings which they have given the Church than the claim which they pervasively make that in giving them they are acting only as the agents of Christ, and that those who wrote them wrote in the Spirit of Christ. What Paul writes he represents to be "the commandments of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 14:37), which he therefore transmits in the name of the Lord (2 Thessalonians 3:6); and the gospel that Peter preached was proclaimed in the Holy Ghost (1 Peter 1:12). Every Scripture of the Old Testament is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16), and the New Testament is equally Scripture with the Old (1 Timothy 5:18); all prophecy of Scripture came from men who spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1:20) and Paul's Epistles differ from these older writings only in being "other"; that is, newer Scriptures of like kind (2 Peter 3:16). When we consider the promises of supernatural guidance which Christ made to his apostles (Matthew 10:19-20; Mark 13:11; Luke 21:14; John 14 and 16), in connection with their claim to speak with divine authority even when writing (1 Corinthians 14:37; 2 Thessalonians 3:6), and their conjunction of their writings with the Old Testament Scriptures as equally divine with them, we cannot fail to perceive that the apostles claim to be attended in their work of giving law to God's Church by prevailing superintending grace from the Holy Spirit. This is what is called inspiration. It does not set aside the human authorship of the books. But it puts behind the human also a divine authorship. It ascribes to the authors such an attending influence of the Spirit in the process of writing, that the words they set down become also the words of God; and the resultant writing is made not merely the expression of Paul's or John's or Peter's will for the churches, but the expression of God's will. In receiving these books

from the apostles as law, therefore, the Church has always received them not only as books given by God's agents, but as books so given by God through those agents that every word of them is God's word.

Let it be observed that the proof of the authority of the Scriptures does not rest on a previous proof of their inspiration. Even an uninspired law is law. But when inspiration has once been shown to be fact, it comes mightily to the reinforcement of their authority. God speaks to us now, in Scripture, not only mediately through his representatives, but directly through the Scriptures themselves as his inspired word. The Scriptures thus become the crystalization of God's authoritative will. We will not say that Christianity might not have been founded and propagated and preserved without inspired writings or even without any written embodiment of the authoritative apostolic teaching. Wherever Christ is known through whatever means, there is Christianity, and men may hear and believe and be saved. But God has caused his grace to abound to us in that he not only published redemption through Christ in the world, but gave this preachment authoritative expression through the apostles, and fixed it with infallible trustworthiness in his inspired word. Thus in every age God speaks directly to every Christian heart, and gives us abounding safety to our feet and divine security to our souls. And thus, instead of a mere record of a revelation given in the past, we have the ever-living word of God; instead of a mere tradition however guarded, we have what we have all learned to call in a unique sense "the Scriptures."

A Remembrance of Warfield

When I returned from Germany in 1906, I entered, as instructor in the New Testament department, into the teaching staff of Princeton Theological Seminary....Warfield was Professor of Systematic Theology (or "Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology," as the chair was then more sonorously and vigorously called). And what a wonderful man he was! His learning was prodigious. No adequate notion of its breadth can be obtained even from his voluminous collected works. Consult him on the most out-of-the-way subjects, and you would find him with the "literature" of each subject at his tongue's end and able to give you just the guidance of which you had need. Now and then, in wonderfully generous fashion, he would go out of his way to give a word of encouragement to a younger man. The old Princeton was an environment in which a man felt encouraged to do his very best.

J. Gresham Machen |

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The Purpose of The Seminary

The Purpose of The Seminary by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

The following essay appears in The Collected Shorter Writings of B.B. Warfield Volume One, published by Presbyterian & Reformed (Phillipsburg, NJ). This article first appeared in The Presbyterian, Nov. 22, 1917, pp. 8-9. The electronic edition of this article was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed (original pagination from the P& R edition retained for purposes of reference).

Selected Shorter Writings of B.B. Warfield, Volume 1, page 374

It is customary to say that the theological seminaries are training-schools for the ministry. Properly understood, that is the right thing to say. But it is not very difficult, and it is very common, seriously to exaggerate the function of the seminary under this definition. It is not the function of the seminary to give young men their entire training for the ministry. That is the concern of the presbytery; and no other organization can supersede the presbytery in this business. The seminary is only an instrument which the presbytery uses in training young men for the ministry. An instrument, not the instrument. The presbytery uses other instruments also in this work.

There is the academy, for example; and the university. It being once understood that the ministry is to be an educated ministry, the academy and the university become instruments which the Church uses in training young men for its ministry. And there is the local church. It is to the local church that the presbytery commits its candidates for the ministry, for moral and spiritual oversight and training. The seminary cannot properly undertake the work of these other instrumentalities. It is essential, if the ministry is to be an educated body, that the minister shall know his A B C's. It does not follow that the seminary ought to teach young men their A B C's. It is absolutely necessary, if the ministry is to be a religious body, that every minister should be a converted man. It is not therefore the function of the seminary to convert its students.

No one will suspect me of suggesting that the seminary need not be a "nursery of piety"-- any more than that it need not be a "nursery of learning." But no one ought to contend that the seminary ought to be either expected or permitted to begin with

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either piety or learning at the beginning. The illiterate and the ungodly have simply no place in the seminary. And if they actually are found there, the remedy is not that the seminary should enlarge its borders and take on the functions either of a primary school or of a confirmation class. The seminary has its own specific work to do, and that work presupposes in its pupils attainments both in literature and in piety. Young men go to it only after they have acquired the education which is common to all educated men, and have made such progress in piety as ranks them with the especially pious men of the community. Basing on this foundation, the seminary undertakes to give to candidates for the ministry the specific training which is peculiar to them as ministers;

which fits them, in a word, for the worthy prosecution of the particular work of a minister. It is, in this sense, the finishing-school of the ministry; and it must give itself strictly to those things which the deeply pious man of liberal culture still requires, in order that he may fulfil the office of a minister with credit to himself and to the advantage of the Church.

What precisely must be taught in a theological seminary will be determined by our conception of the ministry for the exercise of the functions of which it offers preparation. And that will be determined ultimately by our conception of the Church. On the sacerdotal theory of the Church, the business of the minister is to perform certain rites, by the correct performance of which the effect sought is obtained. The seminary, in this view, becomes a training-school in the exact sense of that term. It is the place where the prospective minister is trained to perform these rites properly. On the rationalistic theory, the Church is simply a club for intellectual entertainment, or, at the best, a society for ethical culture, or a benevolent organization. The function of the preacher is to be the leader of the group which he serves in such activities; and his training ought to be such as will fit him for this. Great stress will naturally be laid on literary culture, and the masters of thought will take a large place in the theological curriculum. Or, perhaps, the best course in the seminary will be one in sociology - possibly an investigation as to the housing problem in manufacturing towns,

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possibly a census of the inhabitants within a given radius of a country church.

None of these things are bad. Even the evangelical minister would do well to know how to conduct the services of the church acceptably. And it will not hurt him a bit to be on speaking terms with Plato and Emerson -- and Galsworthy and H. G. Wells and Marie Corelli! Certainly it will be of advantage to him to be at least aware of the social unrest growling around him, and of the terrible distress which it may lie within his power to do something to mitigate or relieve. But all this will not make him a good minister of the gospel of Christ. Do not even the heathen the same? Christ has sent him not to baptize, but to preach the gospel; not to ameliorate the lot of men, but to carry to them salvation. On the evangelical view, the Church is the communion of saints, gathered out of a lost world; and the business of the minister is to apply the saving gospel to lost men for their salvation from sin -- from its guilt and from its corruption and power. Palpably, what he needs for this is just the gospel; and if he is to perform his functions at all, he must know this gospel, know it thoroughly, know it in all its details, and in all its power. It is the business of the seminary to give him this knowledge of the gospel. That is the real purpose of the seminary.

It is important that we think worthily of the minister, and understand exactly what the great task which is laid upon him involves. The ministry is not a handicraft, a certain skill in the performance of which may be acquired simply by practice. It is a "learned profession": one of the three, or at the most four, learned professions which divide between them the expert care of man in his several relations. Man is a composite being, with body and soul, set in a social organism, dependent on a physical environment. He needs expert guidance in every sphere of his existence. Science mediates between him and nature. It is the lawyer who advises him in his social relations. The physician cares for his body. The minister is his guide in spiritual things.

It is possible to argue that we can do very well without any of these guides. It is easier to argue it than to practise it. The

Lord has not intended his people to hobble along in their religious living. He has appointed ministers in the churches, and given them the task of shepherding the flock. And no minister is fitted for the position he occupies, unless he is prepared to act as spiritual adviser of the community which he serves. We may talk of "the simple gospel" being enough; and we may thank God that the gospel is simple, and that it is enough. But it is no simple matter rightly to apply this simple gospel in all the varied relations of life, in the multiform emergencies which arise in the tangled business of living. Read but the Epistle to the Romans. Was the right exposition of the gospel in the conditions then obtaining at Rome, given us in the first eleven chapters of this Epistle, so simple a matter that Paul might just as well have left it to the Romans themselves to work it out? Was the application of this gospel to life at Rome in the first Christian century, added in the remaining chapters, so simple a matter that it did not need a Paul to make it rightly? Perhaps we nowhere see the minister more plainly at work than in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. These questions which the Corinthians put to Paul, and he answered with so much care -- did they really not need to be asked of him or answered by him? The minister in his place, as Paul in his, is the spiritual guide and adviser of his people.

For this, we say, he needs to know the gospel: to know it at first hand, and to know it through and through. All the work of the seminary must be directed just to this end. For one thing, the minister must learn the code in which the gospel message is written. He must be able to de-code it; to de-code it for himself. No trusting the de-coding to another! This is the message of salvation, and he is the channel by which it is conveyed to men. He cannot take it at second-hand. He must get it for himself, and convey it first-handed to those entrusted to his care. He must, in other words, know the languages in which the gospel is written; and he must be skilled in drawing out from the documents the exact meaning. And, then, he must know the message, thus drawn out, thoroughly, and all its compass, and in all its details, in its right perspective, and in its just proportions. Otherwise he cannot use it aright. Of

course, he must also be skilled in winningly presenting this message, thus thoroughly known, and in helpfully applying it, point by point, to emerging needs. These things constitute the core of the seminary's teaching. There are others that stand very close to them; so close that they cannot be dispensed with as props and stays. The minister must know how to defend the gospel he preaches. And he should know something of the history this gospel has wrought for itself in the world. These things not for themselves, but for the aid they bring him for understanding the gospel better for himself, and for commending it more powerfully to others.

Without this much equipment, the evangelical minister is robbed of his dignity and shorn of his strength. He cannot be the spiritual guide and adviser of the community, as the lawyer is the legal guide and the physician the medical adviser. He sinks into a mere handicraftsman plying a manual trade, learned by rote; or into a mere lecturer to a club or leader in benevolent activities. Of course, "the simple preaching" of the "simple gospel" will not fail of its effect. The loving lisping of the name of Jesus by the lips of a child may carry far. But that is no reason why we should man our pulpits with children lisping the name of Jesus. The foolishness of preaching is one thing: foolish preaching is another. Let us not deceive ourselves: in religion as in everything else knowledge is

power. That is a platitude. But platitudes have this to be said for them -- they are true. Nothing -- not fervor, not devotion, not zeal -- can supersede the necessity of knowledge. If knowledge without zeal is useless; zeal without knowledge is worse than useless -- it is positively destructive. This is Reformation year: let us ask ourselves why was William Farel, consumed with zeal, burning with evangelical fervor, proclaiming the pure gospel, helpless at Geneva -- until "with dreadful imprecations" he brought to his aid John Calvin: John Calvin, scholar become saint, scholar- saint become preacher of God's grace? What we need in our pulpits is scholar-saints become preachers. And it is the one business of the theological seminaries to make them.

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When I returned from Germany in 1906, I entered, as instructor in the New Testament department, into the teaching staff of Princeton Theological Seminary....Warfield was Professor of Systematic Theology (or "Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology," as the chair was then more sonorously and vigorously called). And what a wonderful man he was! His learning was prodigious. No adequate notion of its breadth can be obtained even from his voluminous collected works. Consult him on the most out-of-the-way subjects, and you would find him with the "literature" of each subject at his tongue's end and able to give you just the guidance of which you had need. Now and then, in wonderfully generous fashion, he would go out of his way to give a word of encouragement to a younger man. The old Princeton was an environment in which a man felt encouraged to do his very best.

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The Resurrection of Christ - A Historical Fact

The Resurrection of Christ:

A Historical Fact

by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

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It is a somewhat difficult matter to distinguish between Christian doctrines and facts. The doctrines of Christianity are doctrines only because they are facts; and the facts of Christianity become its most indispensable doctrines. The Incarnation of the eternal God is necessarily a dogma: no human eye could witness his stooping to man's estate, no human tongue could bear witness to it as a fact. And yet, if it be not a fact, our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins. On the other hand, the Resurrection of Christ is a fact, an external occurrence within the cognizance of men to be established by their testimony. And yet, it is the cardinal doctrine of our system: on it all other doctrines hang.

There have been some, indeed, who have refused to admit the essential importance of this fact to our system; and even so considerable a critic as Keim has announced himself as occupying this standpoint. Strauss saw, however, with more unclouded eye, truly declaring the fact of Christ's resurrection to be "the center of the center, the real heart of Christianity," on which its truth stands or falls. To this, indeed, an older and deeper thinker than Strauss had long ago abundantly witnessed. The modern skeptic does but echo the words of the apostle Paul. Come what may, therefore, modern skepticism must be rid of the resurrection of Christ. It has recognized the necessity and has bent all its energies to the endeavor.

But the early followers of the Savior also themselves recognized the paramount importance of this fact; and the records of Christianity contain a mass of proof for it, of such cogent variety and convincing power, that Hume's famous dilemma¹ recoils on his own head. It is more impossible that the laws of testimony should be so far set aside, that such witness should be mistaken, than that the laws of nature should be so far set aside that a man should rise from the dead. The opponents of revelation themselves being witnesses, the testimony of the historical books of the New Testament if the testimony of eyewitnesses is amply sufficient to establish this, to them, absolutely crushing fact. It is admitted well-nigh universally that the Gospels contain testimony for the resurrection of Christ, which, if it stand, proves that fact; and that if Christ rose from the dead all motive for, and all possibility of, denial of any supernatural fact of Christianity is forever removed.

Of course, it has become necessary, then, for the deniers of a supernatural origin to Christianity to impeach the credibility of these witnesses. It is admitted that if the Gospel account be truly the

testimony of eye-witnesses, then Christ did rise from the dead; but it is immediately added that the Gospels are late compositions which first saw the light in the second century—that they represent, not the testimony of eye-witnesses, but the wild dreams of a mythological fancy or the wilder inventions of unscrupulous forgery; and that, therefore, they are unworthy of credit and valueless as witnesses to fact. Thus, it is proclaimed, this alleged occurrence of the rising of Jesus from the dead, is stripped of all the pretended testimony of eye-witnesses; and all discussion of the question whether it be fact or not is forever set aside—the only question remaining being that which concerns itself with the origin and propagation of this fanatical belief.

It is in this position that we find skepticism entrenched— a strong position assuredly and chosen with consummate skill. It is not, however, impregnable. There are at least two courses open to us in attacking it. We may either directly storm the works, or, turning their flank, bring our weapons to bear on them from the rear. The authenticity of our Gospels is denied. We may either prove their authenticity and hence the autoptic character of the testimony they contain; or, we may waive all question of the books attacked, and, using only those which are by the skeptics themselves acknowledged to be genuine, prove from them that the resurrection of Christ actually occurred. 2

The first course, as being the most direct, is the one usually adopted. Here the battle is intense; but the issue is not doubtful. Internally, those books evince themselves as genuine. Not only do they proclaim a teaching absolutely original and patently divine, but they have presented a biography to the world such as no man or body of men could have concocted. No mythologists could have invented a divine-human Personality —assigned the exact proportions in which his divinity and humanity should be exhibited in his life, and then dramatized this character through so long a course of teaching and action without a single contradiction or inconsistency. That simple peasants have succeeded in a task wherein a body of philosophers would have assuredly hopelessly failed, can be accounted for only on the hypothesis that they were simply detailing actual facts.

Again, there are numerous evidently undesigned coincidences in minute points to be observed between the book of Acts and those Epistles of Paul acknowledged to be genuine, which prove beyond a peradventure that book to be authentic history. The authenticity of Acts carries that of the Gospel of Luke with it; and the witness of these two establishes the Resurrection.

But, aside from all internal evidence, the external evidence for the authenticity of the New Testament historical books is irrefragable. The immediate successors of the apostles possessed them all and esteemed them as the authoritative documents of their religion. One of the writers of this age (placed by Hilgenfeld in the first century) quotes Matthew as Scripture: another explicitly places Acts among the "Holy Books," a collection containing on common terms the Old Testament and at least a large part of the New: all quote these historical books with respect and reverence. There is on external, historical grounds no room left for denying the genuineness of the Gospels and Acts; and hence, no room left for denying the fact of the Resurrection. The result of a half-century's conflict on this line of attack has resulted in the triumphant vindication of the credibility of the Christian records.

We do not propose, however, to fight this battle over again at this time. The second of the courses above pointed out has been less commonly adopted, but leads to equally satisfactory results. To exhibit this is our present object. The most extreme schools of skepticism admit that the book of

Revelation is by St. John; and that Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians are genuine letters of St. Paul.³ Most leaders of anti-Christian thought admit other epistles also; but we wish to confine ourselves to the narrowest ground. Our present task, then, is, waiving all reference to disputed books, to show that the testimony of these confessedly genuine writings of the apostles is enough to establish the fact of the Resurrection. We are even willing to assume narrower ground. The Revelation is admitted to be written by an eye-witness of the death of Christ and the subsequent transactions; and the Book of Revelation testifies to Christ's resurrection. In it he is described as One who was dead and yet came to life (Revelation 2:8), and as the first-begotten of the dead (Revelation 1:5). Here, then, is one admitted to have been an eye-witness testifying of the Resurrection. For the sake of simplifying our argument, however, we will omit the testimony of Revelation and ask only what witness the four acknowledged Epistles of Paul-Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians bear to the fact that Christ rose from the dead.

It is plain on the very first glance into these Epistles that they have a great deal to say about this Resurrection. Our task is to draw out the evidential value of their references.

We would note, then, in the first place, that Paul claims to be himself an eye-witness of a risen Christ. After stating as a fact that Christ rose from the dead and enumerating his various appearances to his followers, he adds: "And last of all, as unto one born out of due time, he appeared to me also" (1 Cor. xv. 8) . And again, he bases his apostleship on this sight, saying (1 Cor. ix. 1), "Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?" His "sight" of the Lord Jesus was, therefore of such a kind that it constituted a call to the apostleship. It was not, then, a simple sight of Jesus before his crucifixion: as is also proved from the fact that it was after all the appearances which he vouchsafed after his resurrection to his other followers, that Paul saw him (1 Corinthians 15:8). It remains true, then, that Paul claims to be an eye-witness of the fact that Christ had risen. It will not do to say that Paul claims only to have had a "theophany" as it were-a "sight" of Christ's spirit living, which would not imply the resurrection of his body. As Beyschlag has long ago pointed out, the whole argument in 1 Cor. xv being meant to prove the bodily resurrection of believers from the resurrection of Christ, necessitates the sense that Paul, like the other witnesses there adduced saw Christ in the body. Nor is it difficult to determine when Paul claims to have seen Christ: it is admitted by all that it was this "sight" that produced his conversion and called him to the apostleship. According to Gal. i. 19 both calls were simultaneous.

Tracing his conversion thus to, and basing his apostleship on, the resurrection of Christ, it is not strange that Paul has not been able to keep his Epistles from bristling with marks of his intense conviction of the fact of the Resurrection. Compare, e.g., Romans 1:4; Romans 4:24-25; Romans 5:10; Romans 6:4-5, Romans 6:8-13; Romans 7:4; Romans 8:11, Romans 8:34; Romans 10:7, Romans 10:9; Romans 14:9. We cannot, therefore, without stultification deny that Paul was thoroughly convinced that he had seen the risen Jesus; and the skeptics themselves feel forced to admit this fact.

What, then, shall we do with this claim of Paul to be an eye-witness? Shall we declare his "sight" to have been no true sight, but a deceiving vision? Paul certainly thought it bodily and a sight. But we are told that Paul was given to seeing visions-that he was in fact of that enthusiastic spiritual temperament-like Francis of Assisi for instance-which fails to distinguish between vivid subjective ideas and external facts. But, while it must be admitted that Paul did see visions, all sober criticism

must wholly deny that he was a visionary. Waiving the fact that even Paul's visions were externally communicated to him and not the projections of a diseased imagination, as well as all general discussion of the elements of Paul's character, this visionary hypothesis is shattered on the simple fact that Paul knew the difference between this "sight" of Jesus and his visions, and draws the distinction sharply between them. This "sight" was, as he himself tells us, the last of all; and the only vision which on our opponents' principles can be attributed to him, that recorded in 2 Cor. xii is described by Paul in such a manner as to draw the contrast very strongly between his confidence in this "sight" and his uncertainty as to what had happened to him then. Of course, no appeal can be properly made to the "false" history of the Acts; but, if attempted, it is sufficient to say that according to Acts Paul saw Jesus after this sight of 1 Cor. xv; but that this was in a trance (Acts 22:18 ff.), and in spite of it the sight of 1 Cor. xv was the "last" time Jesus was seen. In other words, Paul once more draws a strict distinction between his "visions" and this "sight."

It is instructive to note the methods by which it is attempted to make this visionary hypothesis more credible. A graphic picture is drawn by Baur, Strauss, and Renan, of the physical and psychological condition of St. Paul. He had been touched by the steadfastness of the Christians; he was deeply moved by the grandeur of Stephen's death; had begun to doubt within himself whether the resurrection of Christ had not really occurred; and, sick in body and distracted in mind, smitten by the sun or the lightning of some sudden storm, was prostrated on his way to Damascus and saw in his delirium his- awful self-imagined vision. It would be easy to show that the important points of this picture are contradicted by Paul himself: he knows nothing of distraction of mind or of opening doubts before the coming of the catastrophe (cf. Galatians 1:13 ff.). It would be easy, again, to show that, brilliant as it is, this picture fails to account for the facts, notably for the immense moral change (recognized by Paul himself) by which he was transformed from the most bloodthirsty of fanatics to the tenderest of saints. But, it will be sufficient for our present purpose to not only that all that renders it plausible is its connection with certain facts recorded only in that "unbelievable" history, the Acts. We find ourselves, then, in this dilemma: if Acts be no true history, then these facts cannot be so used; if Acts be true history, then Paul's conversion occurred quite otherwise; and again, if Acts be true, then so is Luke's Gospel; and Acts and Luke are enough to authenticate the resurrection of Christ. In either case, our cause is won.

In regard to this whole visionary scheme we have one further remark to make: it is to be noted that even were it much more plausible than it is, it still would not be worth further consideration. For, Paul believed in the fact of the resurrection of Christ not only because he had seen the Lord, but also on the testimony of others. For, we would note in the second place that Paul introduces us to other eye-witnesses of the resurrection of Christ. He founded his gospel on this fact; and in Galatians 2:6 ff. he tells us his gospel was the same as was preached by Peter, James, and John. Peter, James, and John, then, believed with the same intensity that Christ rose from the dead. We have already seen that this testimony as to John at least, is supported by what he himself has written in the Apocalypse. In consistency with the inference, again, Paul explicitly declares in 1 Corinthians 15:3 ff., that the risen Christ was seen not only by himself but by Cephas, James, and indeed all the apostles; and that, more than once. Even more: he states that he was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, the most of whom were still living when Paul wrote this letter, and whose witness-bearing he invokes. Here, Paul brings before us a cloud of witnesses.

In respect to them the following facts are worth pointing out. These witnesses were numerous; there were at least five hundred of them. They were not a mere unknown mob: we know somewhat of several of them and know them as practical men. The most of them were still living when Paul wrote, and he could appeal to them to bear testimony to the Corinthians.

The result of all of which is that this notice in 1 Cor. is equivalent to their individual testimony. Paul is admitted to be a sober and trustworthy writer; this Epistle is admitted to be genuinely his; and he here in a contemporary document challenges an appeal to living eye-witnesses. He could not have made this confident appeal had not these men really professed, soberly and earnestly, to have seen the risen Christ. We have, then, not only Paul claiming to be an eye-witness of the Resurrection; but a large number of men, over two hundred and fifty of whom were known to be still living when he wrote. We have to account not for the claim of one man that he had seen Jesus alive after he- had died, but for the same claim put in by a multitude. Will any arguing that Paul sometimes saw visions serve our purpose here? And there is still another point which is worth remarking. The witnesses here appealed to are the original disciples and apostles of our Lord. From this, two facts follow: the one, the original disciples believed they had seen the risen Lord; and the other, they claimed to have seen him on the third day after his burial (1 Corinthians 15:4). This, according to Paul, is certain fact.

Then note once more, in the third place, that this testimony (as already pointed out) was not only absolutely convincing to the Apostle Paul, but it was so also to the whole body of Christians. Not only did Paul base the truth of all Christianity on the truth of this testimony, and found his conversion on it; but so did all Christians. He could count on all his readers being just as firmly persuaded of this fact as he was. To the Corinthians, Galatians, Romans-this is the dogma of Christianity. When Paul wishes to prove his apostleship to the Corinthians or Galatians he is not afraid to base it on the therefore admitted fact of the resurrection of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:1; Galatians 1:1): when he wishes to make our justification seem sure to the Romans, he appeals to Christ's resurrection in its proof (Romans 4:24-25). These are but specimens of his practice. Both purposed and incidental allusions are made to the Resurrection through all four of these Epistles of such character as to prove that it was felt by Paul that he could count on it above all other facts as the starting-point of Christianity in the minds of his readers. Whether he is writing to Corinthians, Galatians, or Romans, this is alike true. Now, consider the force of this. In some of these churches, it is to be remembered, there were dissensions, divisions, parties arrayed in bitter hostility against one another, parties with contumely denying the apostleship, or discarding the leadership of Paul. Yet all these parties believe in the resurrection of Christ: Paul can appeal to all alike to accept a doctrine based on that. It is to his bitterest opponents that he will prove his apostleship by claiming to have seen the risen Lord. It is plain, then, that the resurrection of Christ was in Paul's day deemed a primordial, universal, and essential doctrine of Christianity.

Again, some of Paul's readers were far removed from credulous simplicity. There was a party in the Corinthian Church, for instance, who, with all the instincts of modern philosophical criticism, claimed the right to try at the bar of reason the doctrines submitted to their acceptance. They could not accept such an absurdity as the resurrection of the bodies of those who slept in the Lord: "If the dead be raised, With what body do they come?" was but one of their argumentative queries. The same class of difficulties in regard to the resurrection of men, as would in modern times start up in the minds of scientific inquirers, was evidently before their minds. Yet they believed firmly in

the resurrection of Christ. When Paul wishes to argue with them in regard to our resurrection, he bases his argument on the therefore common ground of the resurrection of Christ. It is plain, then, that unthinking credulity will not account for the universal acceptance of this doctrine: men able and more than willing to apply critical tests to evidence were firm believers in it.

And still again, one of these letters is addressed to a church with which Paul had no personal connection. It was not founded by him; it had never been visited by him; it had not before been addressed by him. There were those in it who were opposed to his dearest teachings: there were those in it who had been humble followers of Christ while he was still raging against his Church. Yet, they all believed as firmly as he did in the resurrection of Christ. He could prove his doctrines to them best by basing on this common faith. It is plain, then, that this doctrine was not of late growth in the Church; nor had its origin from Paul. It had always been the universal belief in the Church: men did not believe it because Paul preached it only, but they and Paul alike believed it from the convincing character of the evidence. When had a belief, thus universally accepted as a part of aboriginal Christianity in A.D. 58, had an opportunity to mythically grow into being? And, if it grew, what of the testimony of those over two hundred and fifty still living eye-witnesses to the fact?

Here we may fitly pause to gather up results. It seems indisputably evident from these four Epistles of Paul: First, That the resurrection of Christ was universally believed in the Christian Church when these Epistles were written: whatever party lines there were, however near they came, yet did they not cut through this dogma. Second, That the original followers of Christ, including his apostles, claimed to be eye-witnesses of the fact of his resurrection; and, therefore, from the beginning (third day) the whole Church had been convinced of its truth. Over two hundred and fifty of these eye-witnesses were living when Paul wrote. Third, That the Church believed universally that it owed its life, as it certainly owed its continued existence and growth, to its firm belief in this dogma. What has to be accounted for, then, is: 1. Not the belief of one man that he had seen the Lord, but of something over five hundred. 2. Not the conviction of a party, and that after some time, that the Lord had risen, but the universal and immediate belief of the whole Church. 3. The effect of this faith in absolutely changing the characters and filling with enthusiasm its first possessors. And 4. Their power in propagating their faith, in building up on this strange dogma a large and fast-growing communion, all devoted to it as the first and ground element of their faith.

There are only three theories which can be possibly stated to account for these facts. Either, the original disciples of Christ were deceivers and deliberately concocted the story of the Resurrection; or, they were woefully deluded; or the Resurrection was a fact.

I. The first of these theories, old as it is (Matthew 28:11 ff.), is now admitted on all sides to be ridiculous. Strauss and Volkmar, for example, both scorn it as an impossible explanation. We may, therefore, pass it over in few words. The dead body of Christ lying in his grave ready to be produced by the Jews at any moment, of itself destroys this theory. For we must remember that the belief in the Resurrection dates from the third day. Or, if the body no longer lay in the grave, where was it? It must have been either removed by their enemies, in which case it would have been produced in disproof of the Resurrection; or stolen by the disciples themselves. We are shut up to these two hypotheses, for the only possible third one (that the body had never been buried

but thrown upon the dunghill) is out of the question, eye-witnesses expressly witnessing, according to Paul, that it was buried (1 Corinthians 15:4 f..). No one will so stultify himself in this age as to seriously contend that the disciples stole the body. Not only is it certain that they could not possibly have summoned courage to make the attempt; but the very idea of Christianity owing its life to such an act is worse than absurd. Imagine, if one can, this band of disheartened disciples assembled and coolly plotting to conquer the world to themselves by proclaiming what must have been seen to be the absurd promise of everlasting life through One who had himself died-had died and had not risen again. Imagine them not expecting a resurrection nor dreaming of its possibility, determining to steal the body of their dead Lord, pretend that he had risen, and, then, to found on their falsehood a system of the most marvelous truth-on this act of rapine a system of the most perfect morals. Imagine the body stolen and brought into their midst-who can think they could be stirred up to noble endeavor by the sight? "Can a more appalling spectacle be imagined," exclaims Dr. Nott, "than that of a dead Christ stolen from his sepulcher and surrounded by his hopeless, heaven-deserted followers? And was it here, think you, in this cadaverous chamber . . . in this haunt of sin, of falsehood, of misery, and of putrefaction, that the transcendent and immortal system of Christian faith and morals was adopted? Was this stolen, mangled, lifeless corpse the only rallying point of Christians? Was it the sight of this that . . . fortified, and filled with the most daring courage, the most deathless hopes, the whole body of the disciples?" Well have our opponents declared this supposition absurd. Christ rose from the dead, or else his disciples were a body of woefully deluded men.

II. Then, will this second theory meet the case? Is the admitted fact that Christ's earliest followers were all convinced that he rose from the dead, adequately explained by the supposition that they were the victims of a delusion? We must remember that the testimony of eye-witnesses declares that Christ rose on the third day; and that we have thus to account for immediate faith. But, then, there is the dead body of Jesus lying in the grave! How could the whole body of those men be so deceived in so momentous a matter with the means of testing its truth ready at their hand? Hence, it is commonly admitted that the grave was now empty. Strauss alone resorts to the sorry hypothesis that the appearances of the risen Christ were all in Galilee, and that before the forty days which intervened before the disciples returned to Jerusalem had passed, the site of the grave (or dunghill) had been wholly forgotten by friend and foe alike. But, there is that unimpeachable testimony of eye-witnesses that the appearances began on the third day; and the equally assured fact (Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 15:4), that the body was not thrown on a dunghill but that there was a veritable grave. So that the empty grave stares us still in the face. If Christ did not rise, how came the grave empty? Here is the crowning difficulty which all the ingenuity of the whole . . . modern critical school has not been able to lay aside. Was it emptied by Christ's own followers? That would have been imposture, and the skeptics scorn such a resort: moreover, the hypothesis that the apostles were impostors has been laid aside already (in the preceding paragraph). Was it, then, emptied by his enemies? How soon would the body have been produced, then, to confront and confound the so rapidly growing heresy! Or, if this were not possible, how soon would overwhelming proof of the removal of the body have been brought forward! Then, how was that grave emptied? Shall we say that Jesus was not really dead, and reviving from the swoon, himself crept from the tomb? This was the hypothesis of Schleiermacher. But not only is it in direct contradiction with the eye-witness testimony (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:15; Romans 14:9, et saepe), which is explicit that Christ died; but it has been felt by all the leaders of skeptical

thought to be inadequate as an explanation. Strauss has himself executed justice on it. It not only casts a stigma on the moral character of our Lord; but it is itself laden with absurdity. "It would have been impossible thus to mistake a wounded man, dying from exhaustion, for the Messiah of Jewish expectations, or then to magnify this into a resurrection from the dead." A dying man in hiding, the center of Christianity's life! This fill with enthusiasm and death-defying courage the founders of the Church! Besides all which, the hypothesis makes the apostles either knaves or fools, neither of which, as the skeptics admit, is possible truth. Hence, they themselves unite with us in rejecting as wholly absurd this dream of Schleiermacher. Once more, then, how can we account for the empty grave? We hazard nothing in asserting that this one fact is destructive to all the theories of Christ's resurrection which have been started in the nervous effort to be rid of its reality. That empty grave is alone enough to found all Christianity upon.

But, suppose for a moment, we assume the impossible, and allow to Strauss that the site of the grave was already lost. What then? The disciples were still convinced that Christ had risen. How shall we account for this invincible conviction? The only possible resort is to the worn-out vision-hypothesis. Renan draws a beautiful picture of Mary Magdalene in her love and grief fancying she saw her longed-for Lord; and a not so beautiful one of the abject and idiotic credulity of the disciples who believed her, and then, because they believed her, fancied they had seen him themselves. But will all this fine picturing of what might have been, stand the test of facts? That grave stares us in the face again: if the body was still in it, there was no place left for visions of it as living and out of it; if not in it, how came it out?

But laying aside this final argument as premised, even then the theory cannot stand. 1. There was no expectation of a resurrection, and hence no ground for visions. So far we can go here. Could we appeal to the Gospels we could go farther and show that the disciples had lost all heart and "so far was their imagination from creating the sensible presence of Jesus, that at the first they did not recognize him." Renan gains all the facts on which he founds his theory from the Gospels: let him be refuted from the same records. How could Mary Magdalene's own mind have created the vision of Jesus when she did not recognize him as Jesus when he appeared? 2. There was no time for belief in the Resurrection to mythically grow. That well-established third day meets us here. And within forty days the whole Christian community, over five hundred in number, not only firmly believed in the Resurrection, but believed, each man of them, that he had himself seen the Lord. We must account for this. 3. These five hundred are too many visionaries to create. Was all Palestine inhabited by Francises of Assisi? What might be plausibly urged of Paul or Mary loses all plausibility when urged of all their contemporaries. And thus we cannot but conclude that all attempts to explain the belief of the early followers of Christ in his resurrection as a delusion, utterly fail. If it was not founded on fraud or delusion, then, was it not on fact? There seems no other alternative: eye-witnesses in abundance witness to the fact; if they were neither deceivers nor deceived, then Christ did rise from the dead.

We must not imagine, however, that this is all the proof we have of that great fact. We have been only very inadequately working one single vein. There is another very convincing course of argumentation which might be based on the results of the resurrection of Christ-in transforming those who believed in it-in founding a Church. And, then, there is that other form of argument already pointed out which consists in the not very difficult task of vindicating the authority of our Gospels and Acts, or of the account included in them. Taking all lines of proof together, it is by no

means extravagant to assert that no fact in the history of the world is so well authenticated as the fact of Christ's resurrection. And that established, all Christianity is established too. Its supernatural element is vindicated its supernatural origin evinced. Then, our faith is not in vain, and we are not still in our sins. Then, the world has been redeemed unto our God, and all flesh can see his salvation. Then, the All-Wise is the All-Loving, too, and has vindicated his love forever. Then, the supreme song of heaven may be fitly repeated on earth: "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing." Then, we can know that nothing can separate us from his love-that even death has failed in the attempt; and that it is thus given to mortals to utter in triumph the immortal cry, "Death is swallowed up in victory!"

Notes

1. Enquiry Concerning Human Understandings, sec. 10 (1894, p. 115f.)). "No testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavors to establish."
2. Still a third method of procedure would be to waive all questions of the authenticity of the Gospels, and examine into the origin and trustworthiness of the triple or double tradition embodied in the three Synoptists or any two of them. Satisfactory results may be reached thus
3. Such individual extremists as Bruno Bauer, Pierson, and Loman need not be here taken into account.

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The Rights of Criticism

The Rights of Criticism

by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

The following article is was originally published in The Presbyterian Observer, Apr. 14, 1892, pp. 2-3. The complete title of this articles is as follows, "The Rights of Criticism and of the Church." The electronic edition of this article was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed. Although no additions have been made to this text, some sections have been omitted.

We hear a great deal nowadays of the right of Criticism, spoken with a certain air of conscious heroism, as if Criticism (with a big C, doubtless because it is "Higher"), were being dreadfully oppressed by somebody. But we know no one who denies the right of Criticism. Everybody uses it; and everybody honors it. It is the instrument by which we test truth. And in proportion as the truth is important or the claims which it makes on us are supreme, is not only the right of Criticism allowed, but its duty insisted upon. The indifference with which we allow the claim of a book to be a romance of impossible life by Mr. Rider Haggard, or a romance of impossible canon-building by Mr. Herbert E. Ryle, passes, for the student of historical politics at least, into interested alertness to the evidence when it claims to be the lost work of Aristotle on the Constitution of Athens, and for all of us into something more than interest when it claims to be the Constitution of the land in which we live, with its declaration of our rights and its safeguarding of our liberties. It ought to, and it does, rise into the keenest and the most searching critical inquiry, when the book claims, or is claimed, to be the law of God binding on all our souls, and the discovery of the only way of salvation for lost sinners. So far from the Bible being less subject to criticism than other books, we are bound to submit its unique claims to a criticism of unique rigor. Criticism is the mode of procedure by which we assure ourselves that it is what it claims to be. Who will cast his soul's eternal welfare on an uncriticized way of life? It is because we believe in criticism, and practice it with unflinching severity, that we reject the revelations of Mohammed, the book of Mormon, and the religion of Israel according to Kuenen and his fellows, and accept and rest upon the religion of Israel according to Moses and the prophets and the gospel of Christ according to the evangelists and the apostles. When such concerns are at stake, we wish to know the pure facts; and every one of us exercises all the faculties God has given him and exhausts all the tests at his command to assure himself of the facts. Criticism consists in careful scrutiny of the facts, and is good or bad in proportion to the accuracy and completeness with which the facts are apprehended and collected, and the skill and soundness with which they are marshaled and their meaning read. Deny the validity of criticism of the Bible! Nobody dreams of it. Abate the earnestness of our practice of it! At our soul's peril, we dare not. In proportion as we are awake to what the Bible means for man, will we search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so.

Whence, then, arises the plaint which we hear about us, that the right of Criticism is impugned and the rights of Criticism denied? From the ineradicable tendency of man to confound the right of

Criticism with the rightness of his own criticism. We may safely recognize this to be a common human tendency; for, as all of us doubtless know by this time, *humanum est errare*. But as soon as our attention is directed to it, the way seems to be opened to remind ourselves of a few distinctions, which it will be well for the Presbyterian Church to attend to in the crisis which is at present impending over her—a crisis the gravity of which cannot be over-estimated for a church of Christ, to which has been committed the function of being the pillar and ground of the truth.

MISLEADING METHODS OF CRITICISM

It is not to impugn the right or the duty of criticism to declare that an untrustworthy and misleading method of criticism is not right but wrong. Criticism, we are justly told, is only a method. So is mathematics only a method. But this does not vindicate the correctness of every mathematical calculation, by every hand. Neither figures nor criticism will lie; but the men that use them may manage to reach very false conclusions through them despite their incorruptible veracity. And we soon discover, as there is mathematics and mathematics, so there is criticism and criticism. Because we believe in mathematics, we do not care to trust our weight on a bridge the strain of which has been calculated by a misleading method. An eminent professor of mathematics tells me that he can prove by an unexceptional process that one is equal to two. Some of the critics seem to have learned his method. Am I impugning the right of Criticism when I politely decline to believe that their criticism is right?

What is the present situation with regard to the criticism of the Old Testament? On the credit of a method of criticism which is discredited wherever it can be tested, we are being asked to believe that a large number of the books in the Old Testament are not the product of their apparent ages or their reputed authors, but the stratified deposits of the sea of time. On this evidence, at least, we respectfully decline. We point out the inconsequence of this method of criticism elsewhere. We recall the weary shadow-dance of similar methods in the sphere of the New Testament literature, and the recession of their boasted results into the realm of shadows whenever the light is fully turned on. We point to that admirable *jeu d'esprit* of the ingenuous Mr. McRealsham by which the very same methods applied satirically to the Epistle to the Romans are shown to yield parallel results—and lo! that logically compacted epistle falls apart into four underlying documents, discriminated from one another with a sharpness and a breadth which must make the Pentateuchal critic turn green from envy. Or, if we must have a real case, which is no *jeu d'esprit* but solemn earnest, we point to Scherer's brilliant analysis of the Prologue of Faust, which distributed its parts to their proper periods of Goethe's life, on the ground of deep-reaching differences of style and internal inconsistencies, such as were thought inexplicable save on the supposition of composition at different times and subsequent combination. But Ehrich Schmidt publishes the oldest manuscript of the poem, and lo! "it is the 'young Goethe' who wrote the prologue essentially as it now stands, in a single gush; it is the same 'young Goethe' who assumes the style at the same time of an effervescent youngster and of a cynical gray-beard." We point to the thorough refutation of this method in principle and in results by such Old Testament critics as possess enough independence of scholarship and judgment not to be swayed beyond their center of gravity by the reigning faction. Or if we glance at the method itself we are led to commend the insight of one of its founders, Graf, who already pointed out the danger of its degenerating into an argument in a circle, as we perceive that it first creates the documents it finds by distributing all the elements of one kind to each, and then proves their reality by the fact of this constant difference.

We decline to be caught in this circle and whirled around until we mistake our giddiness for superior wisdom. It is not denying the right of Criticism to assert that this criticism is not right, and cannot lead to right, but only to wrong conclusions.

ANITCHRISTIC METHODS OF CRITICISM

It is not to impugn the right of Criticism to declare that such a misleading criticism, when so far pressing beyond its mark as to curtail the trustworthiness of the witness of the Truth himself as a teacher of truth, is not only a wrong but an intolerable wrong to every Christian heart. Yet the current form of Old Testament criticism trembles on the verge of this gulf. The findings of its misleading method run athwart the implications of the words of him who spake as never man spake; and instead of adjusting its theories to accord with his teachings, it thinks of adjusting the God-man to its theories. Thus we have curious sustained efforts to minimize the amount and decisiveness of his teaching; new discussions of the propriety of "accommodation" in his teaching; and a whole new crop of studies on the limitations of our Lord's knowledge as man. When such a ball is once started rolling downwards, who knows to what it may grow? Not merely as a "critic" and as an "exegete," but also as a moralist and as a religious teacher, we shall find we have lost our Lord; if we cannot trust him as to the revelation of God (of which he, the Logos, was the revealer) of the past, how can we trust him as the revealer of God for the future? Are we indeed to say with one "critic" that "interpretation is essentially a scientific function, and one conditioned by the existence of scientific means, which in relation to the Old Testament were but imperfectly at the command of Jesus," and so rid ourselves of his authority in interpreting the Old Testament? Are we to say with another "critic" that as a logician or critic he belongs to his times, and as such had "a definite restricted outfit and outlook, which could be only those of his own day and generation"? But let us go at once to the bottom. W. Hay M. H. Aiken is reported to have permitted himself recently to use such words as these: "Literary criticism is a science, and one that requires as much exercise of mind as the pursuit of mathematics. You are not surprised that Christ, in his manhood, was not the equal of Newton in mathematical knowledge; why should you be surprised if he prove not to have been the equal of Wellhausen in literary criticism? The case may be put thus: In the truth of his manhood, Christ would naturally accept the views of his contemporaries as to the authorship of the Old Testament Scripture, just as one of us would naturally accept the common view of the authorship of Shakespeare's plays in spite of recent transatlantic theories on that subject. The only thing that would induce on his part a view that was something more than the popular opinion of the period in which he lived would be an express revelation. Of course, if God specifically revealed to Christ that the Pentateuch was written by Moses, cadit quaestio, let God be true, and every critic, if not a liar, at any rate mistaken."

But is not Christ himself God? Is it true that we could not expect him to be a "critic," because criticism requires so much exercise of mind? Are we rushing down to the pit of a new and crasser unitarianism? What Christ is this that Aiken pictures before us? Not the Christ of the Bible, who is our prophet and our guide; who is the Truth itself incarnated; who is dramatized before our eyes in the length and breadth of the Gospels, not as a child of his times, limited by the mental outlook of his day, but as a teacher to his and to all times, sent from God as not more the power of God than the wisdom of God; and whose own witness to himself was, "Verily, verily I say unto you, we speak that we know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you of earthly things and ye believed not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you heavenly things?" Is it to deny

the right of Criticism, to declare that a criticism which, starting on a wrong path, rushes headlong into the very face of the Truth himself, is an intolerable wrong which no Christian heart can calmly bear? THE CHURCH'S RIGHT TO CRITICISM

It is not to impugn the right of Criticism to declare that those who adopt a misleading criticism as their guide to truth; and draw from it conclusions inconsistent with what is held as precious truth by the Church with which they are connected; and teach these conclusions in opposition to the public Confession of the Church; may not rightly continue to receive the endorsement of that Church as sound teachers of religion. The refusal of the Church to remain responsible before the world for their teaching is no blow at the right of Criticism in the abstract, or even at the freedom of these "critics" to teach their special form of criticism. It is, on the one hand, only the assertion by the Church of her right to teach only what she believes, without infringing in the least upon the right of others to teach what they please on their own responsibility and in their own names; and on the other hand the liberation of the new thinkers from whatever trammels to their thought and speech they may recognize as growing out of the pledges they may have taken to believe and teach the doctrines of the Church. Or is the Critic only to be free and the Church bound? Let him exercise freely his right to criticize; and let the Church also be free to test not only the truth of the Scriptures as he does, but also the truth of his theories of the Scriptures, and to act accordingly. What Democrat would feel that his liberty of thought and speech were infringed by the refusal of a Republican club to become or remain sponsor of his political teachings? But, you say, no Democrat would desire to become or remain a member of a Republican club. That is the strangeness of the situation. One wonders that a new Criticism involving, as we are told, a wholly reconstructed theology should find so much attraction in a "traditionalist" Church of an "outworn" creed; or should care to do business under its trademark.

Hear the parable of the thistles. Thistles certainly have beauties of their own, and many virtues, which nobody would care to deny. But they do seem out of place in a garden designed for roses, even though they proclaim themselves more beautiful than any roses in the garden. And the husbandman seems to have a duty towards thistles growing in the garden, which even their irritable *noli me tangere* ought not to deter him from executing, with all due kindness indeed, but with that firmness of touch which becomes one in dealing with thistles. Otherwise, what will he say to the Lord of the garden, whom even the more luxuriant growth of the thistles may not please, when they are tossing their bold heads in the bed intended for roses?

A Remembrance of Warfield

When I returned from Germany in 1906, I entered, as instructor in the New Testament department, into the teaching staff of Princeton Theological Seminary....Warfield was Professor of Systematic Theology (or "Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology," as the chair was then more sonorously and vigorously called). And what a wonderful man he was! His learning was prodigious. No adequate notion of its breadth can be obtained even from his voluminous collected works. Consult him on the most out-of-the-way subjects, and you would find him with the "literature" of each subject at his tongue's end and able to give you just the guidance of which you had need. Now and then, in wonderfully generous fashion, he would go out of his way to give a word of encouragement to a younger man. The old Princeton was an environment in which a man felt encouraged to do his very best.

J. Gresham Machen |

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([www.markers.com/ink\('www.markers.com/ink'\)](http://www.markers.com/ink('www.markers.com/ink'))). Refer any correspondence to Shane Rosenthal:
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The Theology of Grace

The Theology of Grace

Augustine & The Pelagian Controversy (Part 4)

by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921) The following essay (part 4 of 4) was originally published in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905, pp. 13-71). This material was made available by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed. Footnotes have not yet been made available for this section, but will be uploaded soon. The theology which Augustine opposed, in his anti-Pelagian writings, to the errors of Pelagianism, is, shortly, the theology of grace. Its roots were planted deeply in his own experience, and in the teachings of Scripture, especially of that apostle whom he delights to call "the great preacher of grace," and to follow whom, in his measure, was his greatest desire. The grace of God in Jesus Christ, conveyed to us by the Holy Spirit and evidenced by the love that He sheds abroad in our hearts, is the centre around which this whole side of His system revolves, and the germ out of which it grows. He was the more able to make it thus central because of the harmony of this view of salvation with the general principle of his whole theology, which was theocentric and revolved around his conception of God as the immanent and vital spirit in whom all things live and move and have their being. In like manner, God is the absolute good, and all good is either Himself or from Him; and only as God makes us good, are we able to do anything good.

The necessity of grace to man, Augustine argued from the condition of the race as partakers of Adam's sin. God created man upright, and endowed him with human faculties, including free will; and gave to him freely that grace by which he was able to retain his uprightness. Being thus put on probation, with divine aid to enable him to stand if he chose, Adam used his free choice for sinning, and involved his whole race in his fall. It was on account of this sin that he died physically and spiritually, and this double death passes over from him to us. That all his descendants by ordinary generation are partakers in Adam's guilt and condemnation, Augustine is sure from the teachings of Scripture; and this is the fact of original sin, from which no one generated from Adam is free, and from which no one is freed save as regenerated in Christ. But how we are made partakers of it, he is less certain: sometimes he speaks as if it came by some mysterious unity of the race, so that we were all personally present in the individual Adam, and thus the whole race was the one man that sinned; sometimes he speaks more in the sense of modern realists, as if Adam's sin corrupted the nature, and the nature now corrupts those to whom it is communicated; sometimes he speaks as if it were due to simple heredity; sometimes, again, as if it depended on the presence of shameful concupiscence in the act of procreation, so that the propagation of guilt depends on the propagation of offspring by means of concupiscence. However transmitted, it is yet a fact that sin is propagated, and all mankind became sinners in Adam. The result of this is that we have lost the divine image, though not in such a sense that no lineaments of it remain to us; and, the sinning soul making the flesh corruptible, our whole nature is corrupted, and we are

unable to do anything of ourselves truly good. This includes, of course, an injury to our will. Augustine, writing for the popular eye, treats this subject in popular language. But it is clear that he distinguished, in his thinking, between will as a faculty and will in a broader sense. As a mere faculty, will is and always remains an indifferent thing — after the fall, as before it, continuing poised in indifference, and ready, like a weathercock, to be turned whithersoever the breeze that blows from the heart ("will," in the broader sense) may direct. It is not the faculty of willing, but the man who makes use of that faculty, that has suffered change from the fall. In paradise man stood in full ability: he had the *posse non peccare*, but not yet the *non posse peccare*; that is, he was endowed with a capacity for either part, and possessed the grace of God by which he was able to stand if he would, but also the power of free will by which he might fall if he would. By his fall he has suffered a change, is corrupt, and under the power of Satan; his will (in the broader sense) is now injured, wounded, diseased, enslaved, — although the faculty of will (in the narrow sense) remains indifferent. Augustine's criticism of Pelagius' discrimination of "capacity" (*possibilitas*, *posse*), "will" (*voluntas*, *velle*), and "act" (*actio*, *esse*), does not turn on the discrimination itself, but on the incongruity of placing the power, ability in the mere capacity or possibility, rather than in the living agent who "wills" and "acts." He himself adopts an essentially similar distribution, with only this correction; and thus keeps the faculty of will indifferent, but places the power of using it in the active agent, man. According, then, to the character of this man, will the use of the free will be. If the man be holy he will make a holy use of it, and if he be corrupt he will make a sinful use of it: if he be essentially holy, he cannot (like God Himself) make a sinful use of his will; and if he be enslaved to sin, he cannot make a good use of it. The last is the present condition of men by nature. They have free will; the faculty by which they act remains in indifference, and they are allowed to use it just as they choose: but such as they cannot desire and therefore cannot choose anything but evil; and therefore they, and therefore their choice, and therefore their willing, is always evil and never good. They are thus the slaves of sin, which they obey; and while their free will avails for sinning, it does not avail for doing any good unless they be first freed by the grace of God. It is undeniable that this view is in consonance with modern psychology: let us once conceive of "the will" as simply the whole man in the attitude of willing, and it is immediately evident, that, however abstractly free the "will" is, it is conditioned and enslaved in all its action by the character of the willing agent: a bad man does not cease to be bad in the act of willing, and a good man remains good even in his acts of choice.

In its nature, grace is assistance, help from God; and all divine aid may be included under the term, — as well what may be called natural, as what may be called spiritual, aid. Spiritual grace includes, no doubt, all external help that God gives man for working out his salvation, such as the law, the preaching of the gospel, the example of Christ, by which we may learn the right way; it includes also forgiveness of sins, by which we are freed from the guilt already incurred; but above all it includes that help which God gives by His Holy Spirit, working within, not without, by which man is enabled to choose and to do what he sees, by the teachings of the law, or by the gospel, or by the natural conscience, to be right. Within this aid are included all those spiritual exercises which we call regeneration, justification, perseverance to the end, — in a word, all the divine assistance by which, in being made Christians, we are made to differ from other men. Augustine is fond of representing this grace as in essence the writing of God's law (or of God's will) on our hearts, so that it appears hereafter as our own desire and wish; and even more prevalently as the shedding abroad of love in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, given to us in Christ Jesus; therefore, as

a change of disposition, by which we come to love and freely choose, in co-operation with God's aid, just the things which hitherto we have been unable to choose because in bondage to sin. Grace, thus, does not make void free will: it acts through free will, and acts upon it only by liberating it from its bondage to sin, i.e., by liberating the agent that uses the free will, so that he is no longer enslaved by his fleshly lusts, and is enabled to make use of his free will in choosing the good; and thus it is only by grace that free will is enabled to act in good part. But just because grace changes the disposition, and so enables man, hitherto enslaved to sin, for the first time to desire and use his free will for good, it lies in the very nature of the case that it is prevenient. Also, as the very name imports, it is necessarily gratuitous; since man is enslaved to sin until it is given, all the merits that he can have prior to it are bad merits, and deserve punishment, not gifts of favour. When, then, it is asked, on the ground of what, grace is given, it can only be answered, "on the ground of God's infinite mercy and undeserved favour." There is nothing in man to merit it, and it first gives merit of good to man. All men alike deserve death, and all that comes to them in the way of blessing is necessarily of God's free and unmerited favour. This is equally true of all grace. It is pre-eminently clear of that grace which gives faith, the root of all other graces, which is given of God, not to merits of good-will or incipient turning to Him, but of His sovereign good pleasure. But equally with faith, it is true of all other divine gifts: we may, indeed, speak of "merits of good" as succeeding faith; but as all these merits find their root in faith, they are but "grace on grace," and men need God's mercy always, throughout this life, and even on the judgment day itself, when, if they are judged without mercy, they must be condemned. If we ask, then, why God gives grace, we can only answer that it is of His unspeakable mercy; and if we ask why He gives it to one rather than to another, what can we answer but that it is of His will? The sovereignty of grace results from its very gratuitousness: where none deserve it, it can be given only of the sovereign good pleasure of the great Giver, — and this is necessarily inscrutable, but cannot be unjust. We can faintly perceive, indeed, some reasons why God may be supposed not to have chosen to give His saving grace to all, or even to the most; but we cannot understand why He has chosen to give it to just the individuals to whom He has given it, and to withhold it from just those from whom He has withheld it. Here we are driven to the apostle's cry, "Oh the depth of the riches both of the mercy and the justice of God!"

The effects of grace are according to its nature. Taken as a whole, it is the recreative principle sent forth from God for the recovery of man from his slavery to sin, and for his reformation in the divine image. Considered as to the time of its giving, it is either operating or co-operating grace, i.e., either the grace that first enables the will to choose the good, or the grace that co-operates with the already enabled will to do the good; and it is, therefore, also called either prevenient or subsequent grace. It is not to be conceived of as a series of disconnected divine gifts, but as a constant efflux from God; but we may look upon it in the various steps of its operation in men, as bringing forgiveness of sins, faith, which is the beginning of all good, love to God, progressive power of good working, and perseverance to the end. In any case, and in all its operations alike, just because it is power from on high and the living spring of a new and re-created life, it is irresistible and indefectible. Those on whom the Lord bestows the gift of faith working from within, not from without, of course, have faith, and cannot help believing. Those to whom perseverance to the end is given must persevere to the end. It is not to be objected to this, that many seem to begin well who do not persevere: this also is of God, who has in such cases given great blessings indeed, but not this blessing, of perseverance to the end. Whatever of good men have, that God

has given; and what they have not, why, of course, God has not given it. Nor can it be objected, that this leaves all uncertain: it is only unknown to us, but this is not uncertainty; we cannot know that we are to have any gift which God sovereignly gives, of course, until it is given, and we therefore cannot know that we have perseverance unto the end until we actually persevere to the end; but who would call what God does, and knows He is to do, uncertain, and what man is to do certain? Nor will it do to say that thus nothing is left for us to do: no doubt, all things are in God's hands, and we should praise God that this is so, but we must co-operate with Him; and it is just because it is He that is working in us the willing and the doing, that it is worth our while to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. God has not determined the end without determining the appointed means.

Now, Augustine argues, since grace certainly is gratuitous, and given to no preceding merits, — prevenient and antecedent to all good, — and, therefore, sovereign, and bestowed only on those whom God selects for its reception; we must, of course, believe that the eternal God has foreknown all this from the beginning. He would be something less than God, had He not foreknown that He intended to bestow this prevenient, gratuitous, and sovereign grace on some men, and had He not foreknown equally the precise individuals on whom He intended to bestow it. To foreknow is to prepare beforehand. And this is predestination. He argues that there can be no objection to predestination, in itself considered, in the mind of any man who believes in a God: what men object to is the gratuitous and sovereign grace to which no additional difficulty is added by the necessary assumption that it was foreknown and prepared or from eternity. That predestination does not proceed on the foreknowledge of good or of faith, follows from its being nothing more than the foresight and preparation of grace, which, in its very idea, is gratuitous and not according to any merits, sovereign and according only to God's purpose, prevenient and in order to faith and good works. It is the sovereignty of grace, not its foresight or the preparation for it, which places men in God's hands, and suspends salvation absolutely on his unmerited mercy. But just because God is God, of course, no one receives grace who has not been foreknown and afore-selected for the gift; and, as much of course, no one who has been foreknown and afore-selected for it, fails to receive it. Therefore the number of the predestinated is fixed, and fixed by God. Is this fate? Men may call God's grace fate if they choose; but it is not fate, but undeserved love and tender mercy, without which none would be saved. Does it paralyze effort? Only to those who will not strive to obey God because obedience is His gift. Is it unjust? Far from it: shall not God do what He will with His own undeserved favour? It is nothing but gratuitous mercy, sovereignly distributed, and foreseen and provided for from all eternity by Him who has selected us in His Son.

When Augustine comes to speak of the means of grace, i.e., of the channels and circumstances of its conference to men, he approaches the meeting point of two very dissimilar streams of his theology — his doctrine of grace and his doctrine of the Church — and he is sadly deflected from the natural course of his theology by the alien influence. He does not, indeed, bind the conference of grace to the means in such a sense that the grace must be given at the exact time of the application of the means. He does not deny that "God is able, even when no man rebukes, to correct whom He will, and to lead him on to the wholesome mortification of repentance by the most hidden and most mighty power of His medicine." Though the Gospel must be known in order that man may be saved (for how shall they believe without a preacher?), yet the preacher is nothing,

and the preachment is nothing, but God only that gives the increase. He even has something like a distant glimpse of what has since been called the distinction between the visible and invisible Church — speaking of men not yet born as among those who are "called according to God's purpose," and, therefore, of the saved who constitute the Church — asserting that those who are so called, even before they believe, are "already children of God enrolled in the memorial of their Father with unchangeable surety," and, at the same time; allowing that there are many already in the visible Church who are not of it, and who can therefore depart from it. But he teaches that those who are thus lost out of the visible Church are lost because of some fatal flaw in their baptism, or on account of post-baptismal sins; and that those who are of the "called according to the purpose" are predestinated not only to salvation, but to salvation by baptism. Grace is not tied to the means in the sense that it is not conferred save in the means; but it is tied to the means in the sense that it is not conferred without the means. Baptism, for instance, is absolutely necessary for salvation: no exception is allowed except such as save the principle — baptism of blood (martyrdom), and, somewhat grudgingly, baptism of intention. And baptism, when worthily received, is absolutely efficacious: "if a man were to die immediately after baptism, he would have nothing at all left to hold him liable to punishment." In a word, while there are many baptized who will not be saved, there are none saved who have not been baptized; it is the grace of God that saves, but baptism is a channel of grace without which none receive it.

The saddest corollary that flowed from this doctrine was that by which Augustine was forced to assert that all those who died unbaptized, including infants, are finally lost and depart into eternal punishment. He did not shrink from the inference, although he assigned the place of lightest punishment in hell to those who were guilty of no sin but original sin, but who had departed this life without having washed this away in the "laver of regeneration." This is the dark side of his soteriology; but it should be remembered that it was not his theology of grace, but the universal and traditional belief in the necessity of baptism for remission of sins, which he inherited in common with all of his time, that forced it upon him. The theology of grace was destined in the hands of his successors, who have rejoiced to confess that they were taught by him, to remove this stumbling-block also from Christian teaching; and if not to Augustine, it is to Augustine's theology that the Christian world owes its liberation from so terrible and incredible a tenet. Along with the doctrine of infant damnation, another stumbling-block also, not so much of Augustineian, but of Church theology, has gone. It was not because of his theology of grace, or of his doctrine of predestination, that Augustinetaught that comparatively few of the human race are saved. It was, again, because he believed that baptism and incorporation into the visible Church were necessary for salvation. And it is only because of Augustine's theology of grace, which places man in the hands of an all-merciful Saviour and not in the grasp of a human institution, that men can see that in the salvation of all who die in infancy, the invisible Church of God embraces the vast majority of the human race — saved not by the washing of water administered by the Church, but by the blood of Christ administered by God's own hand outside of the ordinary channels of his grace. We are indeed born in sin, and those that die in infancy are, in Adam, children of wrath even as others; but God's hand is not shortened by the limits of His Church on earth, that it cannot save. In Christ Jesus, all souls are the Lord's, and only the soul that itself sinneth shall die (Ezekiel 18:1-4); and the only judgment wherewith men shall be judged proceeds on the principle that as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law, and as many as have sinned under law shall be judged by the law (Revelation 2:12).

Thus, although Augustine's theology had a very strong churchly element within it, it was, on the side that is presented in the controversy against Pelagianism, distinctly anti-ecclesiastical. Its central thought was the absolute dependence of the individual on the grace of God in Jesus Christ. It made everything that concerned salvation to be of God, and traced the source of all good to Him. "Without me ye can do nothing," is the inscription on one side of it; on the other stands written, "All things are yours." Augustine held that he who builds on a human foundation builds on sand, and founded all his hope on the Rock itself. And there also he founded his teaching; as he distrusted man in the matter of salvation, so he distrusted him in the form of theology. No other of the fathers so conscientiously wrought out his theology from the revealed Word; no other of them so sternly excluded human additions. The subjects of which theology treats, he declares, are such as "we could by no means find out unless we believed them on the testimony of Holy Scripture." "Where Scripture gives no certain testimony," he says, "human presumption must beware how it decides in favor of either side." "We must first bend our necks to the authority of Scripture," he insists, "in order that we may arrive at knowledge and understanding through faith." And this was not merely his theory, but his practice. No theology was ever, it may be more broadly asserted, more conscientiously wrought out from the Scriptures. Is it without error? No; but its errors are on the surface, not of the essence. It leads to God, and it came from God; and in the midst of the controversies of so many ages it has shown itself an edifice whose solid core is built out of material "which cannot be shaken."

Augustine & The Pelagian Controversy, by B. B. Warfield

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The Theology of John Calvin

The Theology of John Calvin by Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921)

This essay appeared in a booklet published by the Presbyterian Board of Education in 1909. The electronic edition of this article was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. It is in the public domain and may be freely copied and distributed. The subject of this address is the theology of John Calvin and I shall ask leave to take this subject rather broadly, that is to say, to attempt not so much to describe the personal peculiarities of John Calvin as a theologian, as to indicate in broad outlines the determining characteristics of the theology which he taught. I wish to speak, in other words, about Calvinism, that great system of religious thought which bears John Calvin's name, and which also--although of course he was not its author, but only one of its chief exponents--bears indelibly impressed upon it the marks of his formative hand and of his systematizing genius. Of all the teachers who have wrought into it their minds and hearts since its revival in that tremendous religious upheaval we call the Reformation, this system of thought owes most perhaps to John Calvin and has therefore justly borne since then his name. And of all the services which Calvin has rendered to humanity--and they are neither few nor small--the greatest was undoubtedly his gift to it afresh of this system of religious thought, quickened into new life by the forces of his genius, and it is therefore just that he should be most widely remembered by it. When we are seeking to probe to the heart of Calvinism, we are exploring also most thoroughly the heart of John Calvin. Calvinism is his greatest and most significant monument, and he who adequately understands it will best understand him.

It was about a hundred years ago that Max Gobel first set the scholars at work upon the attempt clearly to formulate the formative principle of Calvinism. A long line of distinguished thinkers have exhausted themselves in the task without attaining, we must confess, altogether consistent results. The great difficulty has been that the formative and distinctive principles of Calvinism have been confused, and men have busied themselves rather in indicating the points of difference by which Calvinism is distinguished from other theological tendencies than in seeking out the germinal principle of which it itself is the unfolding.

The particular theological tendency with which Calvinism has been contrasted in such discussions is, as was natural, the sister system of Lutheranism, with which it divided the heritage of the Reformation. Now undoubtedly somewhat different spirits do inform Calvinism and Lutheranism. And equally undoubtedly, the disunquishing spirit of Calvinism is due to its formative principle and is not to be accounted for by extraneous circumstances of origin or antecedents, such as for example, the democratic instincts of the Swiss, or the superior humanistic culture of its first teachers, or their tendency to intellectualism or to radicalism. But it is gravely misleading to identify the formative principle of either type of Protestantism with its prominent points of difference from the others. They have vastly more in common than in distinction. And nothing could be more misleading than to trace all their differences, as to their roots, to the fundamental place given in the two systems respectively to the principles of predestination and justification by faith.

In the first place, the doctrine of predestination is not the formative principle of Calvinism, it is only its logical implication. It is not the root from which Calvinism springs, it is one of the branches which it has inevitably thrown out. And so little is it the peculiarity of Calvinism, that it underlay and gave its form and power to the whole Reformation movement--which was, as from the spiritual point of view a great revival of religion, so from the doctrinal point of view a great revival of Augustinianism. There was, accordingly, no difference among the Reformers on this point; Luther and Melancthon and the compromising Butzer were no less zealous for absolute predestination than Zwingli and Calvin. Even Zwingli could not surpass Luther in sharp and unqualified assertion of this doctrine; and it was not Calvin but Melancthon who paused, even in his first preliminary statement of the elements of the Protestant faith, to give it formal assertion and elaboration.

Just as little can the doctrine of justification by faith be represented as specifically Lutheran. It is as central to the Reformed as to the Lutheran system. Nay, it is only in the Reformed system that it retains the purity of its conception and resists the tendency to make it a doctrine of justification on account of; instead of by, faith. It is true that Lutheranism is prone to rest in faith as a kind of ultimate fact, while Calvinism penetrates to its causes, and places faith in its due relation to the other products of God's activity looking to the salvation of man. And this difference may, on due consideration, conduct us back to the formative principle of each type of thought. But it, too, is rather an outgrowth of the divergent formative principles than the embodiment of them. Lutheranism, sprung from the throes of a guilt-burdened soul seeking peace with God, finds peace in faith, and stops right there. It is so absorbed in rejoicing in the blessings which flow from faith that it refuses or neglects to inquire whence faith itself flows. It thus loses itself in a sort of divine euthumia, and knows, and will know nothing beyond the peace of the justified soul. Calvinism asks with the same eagerness as Lutheranism the great question, "What shall I do to be saved?" and answers it precisely as Lutheranism answers it. But it cannot stop there. The deeper question presses upon it, "Whence this faith by which I am justified?" And the deeper response suffuses all the chambers of the soul with praise, "From the free gift of God alone, to the praise of the glory of His grace." Thus Calvinism withdraws the eye from the soul and its destiny and fixes it on God and His glory. It has zeal, no doubt, for salvation but its highest zeal is for the honour of God, and it is this that quickens its emotions and vitalizes its efforts. It begins, it centres and it ends with the vision of God in His glory and it sets itself; before all things, to render to God His rights in every sphere of life-activity.

If thus the formative principle of Calvinism is not to be identified with the points of difference which it has developed with its sister type of Protestantism, Lutheranism, much less can it be identified with those heads of doctrine--severally or in sum--which have been singled out by its own rebellious daughter, Arminianism, as its specially vulnerable points. The "five points of Calvinism," we have no doubt learned to call them, and not without justice. They are, each and every one of them, essential elements in the Calvinistic system, the denial of which in any of their essential details is logically the rejection of the entirety of Calvinism; and in their sum they provide what is far from being a bad epitome of the Calvinistic system. The sovereignty of the election of God, the substitutive definiteness of the atonement of Christ, the inability of the sinful will to good, the creative energy of the saving grace of the Spirit, the safety of the redeemed soul in the keeping of its Redeemer,--are not these the distinctive teachings of Calvinism, as precious to every Calvinist's heart as they are necessary to the integrity of the system? Selected as the objects of the Arminian

assault, these "five-points" have been reaffirmed, therefore, with the constancy of profound conviction by the whole Calvinistic world. It is well however to bear in mind that they owe their prominence in our minds to the Arminian debate, and however well fitted they may prove in point of fact to stand as a fair epitome of Calvinistic doctrine, they are historically at least only the Calvinistic obverse of "the five points of Arminianism." And certainly they can put in no claim, either severally or in sum, to announce the formative principle of Calvinism, whose outworking in the several departments of doctrine they rather are--though of course they may surely and directly conduct us back to that formative principle, as the only root out of which just this body of doctrine could grow. Clearly at the root of the stock which bears these branches must lie a most profound sense of God and an equally profound sense of the relation in which the creature stands to God, whether conceived merely as creature or, more specifically as sinful creature. It is the vision of God and His Majesty, in a word, which lies at the foundation of the entirety of Calvinistic thinking.

The exact formulation of the formative principle of Calvinism, as I have said, has taxed the acumen of a long line of distinguished thinkers. Many modes of stating it have been proposed. Perhaps after all, however, its simplest statement is the best. It lies then, let me repeat, in a profound apprehension of God in His majesty, with the poignant realization which inevitably accompanies this apprehension, of the relation sustained to God by the creature as such, and particularly by the sinful creature. The Calvinist is the man who has seen God, and who, having seen God in His glory, is filled on the one hand, with a sense of his own unworthiness to stand in God's sight as a creature, and much more as a sinner, and on the other hand, with adoring wonder that nevertheless this God is a God who receives sinners. He who believes in God without reserve and is determined that God shall be God to him, in all his thinking, feeling, willing--in the entire compass of his life activities, intellectual, moral, spiritual--throughout all his individual, social, religious relations--is, by the force of that strictest of all logic which presides over the outworking of principles into thought and life, by the very necessity of the case, a Calvinist.

If we wish to reduce this statement to a more formal theoretical form, we may say perhaps, that Calvinism in its fundamental idea implies three things. In it, (i) objectively speaking, theism comes to its rights; (ii) subjectively speaking, the religious relation attains its purity; (iii) soteriologically speaking, evangelical religion finds at length its full expression and its secure stability. Theism comes to its rights only in a teleological view of the universe, which recognizes in the whole course of events the orderly working out of the plan of God, whose will is consequently conceived as the ultimate cause of all things. The religious relation attains its purity only when an attitude of absolute dependence on God is not merely assumed, as in the act, say, of prayer, but is sustained through all the activities of life, intellectual, emotional, executive. And evangelical religion reaches its full manifestation and its stable form only when the sinful soul rests in humble, self-emptying trust purely on the God of grace as the immediate and sole source of all the efficiency which enters into its salvation. From these things shine out upon us the formative principle of Calvinism. The Calvinist is the man who sees God behind all phenomena, and in all that occurs recognizes the hand of God, working out His will; who makes the attitude of the soul to God in prayer the permanent attitude in all its life activities; and who casts himself on the grace of God alone, excluding every trace of dependence on self from the whole work of his salvation.

I think it important to insist here that Calvinism is not a specific variety of theistic thought, religious experience, evangelical faith, but the perfect expression of these things. The difference between it

and other forms of theism, religion, evangelicalism, is a difference not of kind but of degree. There are not many kinds of theism, religion, evangelicalism, each with its own special characteristics, among which men are at liberty to choose, as may suit their individual tastes. There is but one kind of theism, religion, evangelicalism, and if there are several constructions laying claim to these names they differ from one another, not as correlative species of a more inclusive genus, but only as more or less good or bad specimens of the same thing differ from one another.

Calvinism comes forward simply as pure theism, religion, evangelicalism, as over against less pure theism, religion, evangelicalism. It does not take its position then by the side of other types of these things; it takes its place over them, as what they too ought to be. It has no difficulty thus, in recognizing the theistic character of all truly theistic thought, the religious note in all really religious manifestations, the evangelical quality of all actual evangelical faith. It refuses to be set antagonistically over against these where they really exist in any degree. It claims them in every instance of their emergence as its own, and seeks only to give them their due place in thought and life. Whoever believes in God, whoever recognizes his dependence on God, whoever hears in his heart the echo of the *Soli Deo gloria* of the evangelical profession--by whatever name he may call himself; by whatever logical puzzles his understanding may be confused--Calvinism recognizes such as its own, and as only requiring to give full validity to those fundamental principles which underlie and give its body to all true religion to become explicitly a Calvinist.

Calvinism is born, we perceive, of the sense of God. God fills the whole horizon of the Calvinist's feeling and thought. One of the consequences which flow from this is the high supernaturalism which informs at once his religious consciousness and his doctrinal construction. Calvinism indeed would not be badly defined as the tendency which is determined to do justice to the immediately supernatural, as in the first so in the second creation. The strength and purity of its apprehension of the supernatural Fact (which is God) removes all embarrassment from it in the presence of the supernatural act (which is miracle). In everything which enters into the process of the recovery of sinful man to good and to God, it is impelled by the force of its first principle to assign the initiative to God. A supernatural revelation in which God makes known to man His will and His purposes of grace; a supernatural record of the revelation in a supernaturally given Book, in which God gives His revelation permanence and extension,--such things are to the Calvinist matters of course. And above all things, he can but insist with the utmost strenuousness on the immediate supernaturalness of the actual work of redemption; this of course, in its impetration. It is no strain to his faith to believe in a supernatural Redeemer, breaking His way to earth through a Virgin's womb, bursting the bonds of death and returning to His Father's side to share the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. Nor can he doubt that this supernaturally purchased redemption is applied to the soul in an equally supernatural work of the Holy Spirit.

Thus it comes about that monergistic regeneration--"irresistible grace," "effectual calling," our older theologians called it,--becomes the hinge of the Calvinistic soteriology, and lies much more deeply imbedded in the system than many a doctrine more closely connected with it in the popular mind. Indeed, the soteriological significance of predestination itself consists to the Calvinist largely in the safeguard it affords to the immediate supernaturalness of salvation. What lies at the heart of his soteriology is absolute exclusion of creaturely efficiency in the induction of the saving process, that the pure grace of God in salvation may be magnified. Only so could he express his sense of men's complete dependence as sinners on the free mercy of a saving God; or extrude the evil leaven of

synergism, by which God is robbed of His glory and man is encouraged to attribute to some power, some act, some initiative of his own, his participation in that salvation which in reality has come to him from pure grace.

There is nothing therefore, against which Calvinism sets its face with more firmness than every form and degree of auto-soterism. Above everything else, it is determined to recognize God, in His son Jesus Christ, acting through the Holy Spirit whom He has sent, as our veritable Saviour. To Calvinism, sinful man stands in need, not of inducements or assistance to save himself; but precisely of saving; and Jesus Christ has come not to advise, or urge, or woo, or help him to save himself; but to save him; to save him through the prevalent working on him of the Holy Spirit. This is the root of the Calvinistic soteriology, and it is because this deep sense of human helplessness and this profound consciousness of indebtedness for all that enters into salvation to the free grace of God is the root of its soteriology, that election becomes to Calvinism the *cor cordis* of the Gospel. He who knows that it is God who has chosen him, and not he who has chosen God, and that he owes every step and stage of his salvation to the working out of this choice of God, would be an ingrate indeed if he gave not the whole glory of his salvation to the inexplicable election of the Divine love.

Calvinism however, is not merely a soteriology. Deep as its interest is in salvation, it cannot escape the question--"Why should God thus intervene in the lives of sinners to rescue them from the consequences of their sin?" And it cannot miss the answer--"Because it is to the praise of the glory of His grace." Thus it cannot pause until it places the scheme of salvation itself in relation with a complete world-view in which it becomes subsidiary to the glory of the Lord God Almighty. If all things are from God, so to Calvinism all things are also unto God, and to it God will be all in all. It is born of the reflection in the heart of man of the glory of a God who will not give His honour to another, and draws its life from constant gaze upon this great image. And let us not fail punctually to note, that "it is the only system in which the whole order of the world is thus brought into a rational unity with the doctrine of grace, and in which the glorification of God is carried out with absolute completeness." Therefore the future of Christianity--as its past has done--lies in its hands. For, it is certainly true, as has been said by a profound thinker of our own time, that "it is only with such a universal conception of God, established in a living way, that we can face with hope of complete conquest all the spiritual dangers and terrors of our times." "It, however," as the same thinker continues, "is deep enough and large enough and divine enough, rightly understood, to confront them and do battle with them all in vindication of the Creator, Preserver and Governor of the world, and of the Justice and Love of the divine Personality."

This is the system of doctrine to the elaboration and defence of which John Calvin gave all his powers nearly four hundred years ago. And it is chiefly because he gave all his powers to commending to us this system of doctrine, that we are here today to thank God for giving to the world the man who has given to the world this precious gift.

A Remembrance of Warfield

When I returned from Germany in 1906, I entered, as instructor in the New Testament department, into the teaching staff of Princeton Theological Seminary....Warfield was Professor of Systematic Theology (or "Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology," as the chair was then more sonorously and vigorously called). And what a wonderful man he was! His learning was

prodigious. No adequate notion of its breadth can be obtained even from his voluminous collected works. Consult him on the most out-of-the-way subjects, and you would find him with the "literature" of each subject at his tongue's end and able to give you just the guidance of which you had need. Now and then, in wonderfully generous fashion, he would go out of his way to give a word of encouragement to a younger man. The old Princeton was an environment in which a man felt encouraged to do his very best.

J. Gresham Machen |

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