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CHRISTIAN LIFE—A NORMAL
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CHRISTIAN LIFE A NORMAL EXPERIENCE

A STUDY IN THE REAL-
ITY AND GROWTH OF
CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

By

W. D. WEATHERFORD, Ph.D.

ASSOCIATION PRESS

NEW YORK: 347 MADISON AVENUE

1919

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PREFACE.

THE ready interest in and response to the little volume, "Introducing Men to Christ," far exceeded the highest hopes of any one. So far as can be ascertained, more than fifteen thousand students have followed its outline of studies; and it is believed that the faith of some has been strengthened and that many have been encouraged to undertake personal work.

There has come a rather widespread demand for some volume written along the same general lines as the former volume, but more thorough and comprehensive. This, it has been thought, could be used with more mature workers and would not in any sense take the place of "Introducing Men to Christ," which it is hoped will still find large use with underclassmen.

We have taken the liberty to follow parts of the general outline of the former volume and in one case to incorporate one chapter almost complete. This volume, however, is a completely new statement, made much more thorough and treated in greater fullness.

The attempt has been to show the normality of Christian experience; to indicate clearly how that experience grows and how it may become real in any life. There is a definite attempt also to set forth the superior claims of Christianity as over against the non-Christian religions and also those modern substitutes for Christianity which are so numerous at the present hour. The whole has been carefully tested by experience with thousands of men in religious work during recent years. It is hoped, therefore, that this may prove a laboratory book on Christian experience.

We are indebted to entirely too many friends and books to attempt to enumerate all. Whenever possible, we have tried to give credit for all quotations. We can only hope that this little volume will render as great a service as its forerunner has already seemed to do.

W. D. WEATHERFORD.

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, April, 1916.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
PREFACE	5
STUDY I. THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.....	11-25
I. The Intellectual Element in Religion.....	12
II. Emotionalism as Religion.....	14
III. Altruism as Religion.....	16
IV. Religion as Ritualism.....	18
V. Religion as Relationship.....	20
VI. Religion as Relationship (Continued).....	22
VII. Christian Life, Both Individual and Social.....	24
STUDY II. ENTRANCE AND GROWTH IN CHRISTIAN LIFE.....	27-41
I. Removing Barriers	28
II. God's Attitude of Approval.....	30
III. The Law of Expression.....	32
IV. The Meaning of Faith.....	34
V. The Meaning of Faith (Continued).....	36
VI. The Law of Association.....	38
VII. The Law of Service.....	40
STUDY III. PERSONAL RESULTS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE....	43-57
I. What Is Conversion?.....	44
II. What Is Conversion? (Continued).....	46
III. Unification of Personality.....	48
IV. A Sense of Loyalty.....	50
V. To What Shall We Be Loyal?.....	52
VI. The Revaluation of the Self.....	54
VII. Enthusiasm for Humanity.....	56
STUDY IV. THE MESSAGE OF THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS. 59-73	
I. The God of the Non-Christian Religions.....	60
II. The God of the Non-Christian Religions (Continued). 62	
III. Valuation of Man in the Non-Christian Religions.....	64
IV. Conception of Sin in the Non-Christian Religions.....	66
V. Standards of Morality in Non-Christian Religions.....	68
VI. Conception of Salvation in Non-Christian Religions... 70	
VII. Do the Non-Christian Religions Satisfy?.....	72

	PAGE.
STUDY V. MODERN SUBSTITUTES FOR CHRISTIANITY.....	75-89
I. Theosophy	76
II. Christian Science.....	78
III. Pessimism	80
IV. Positivism, the Religion of Humanity.....	82
V. Theism, a Christless Christianity.....	84
VI. Eclecticism	86
VII. The Ethical Culture Movement.....	88
STUDY VI. A PERSONAL GOD.....	91-105
I. Modern Scholarship and a Personal God.....	92
II. Modern Scholarship and a Personal God (Continued). ..	94
III. The Character of God.....	96
IV. The Meaning of God to Daily Life.....	98
V. Can God Speak to Men?.....	100
VI. Conditions of Knowing God.....	102
VII. What Is the Bible?.....	104
STUDY VII. CHRIST THE SUPREME REVELATION OF GOD.....	107-121
I. The Manhood of Christ.....	108
II. Christ's Perfect Moral Standards.....	110
III. Christ the Forgiver of Sin.....	112
IV. Christ the Revealer of God.....	114
V. Meeting the Needs of Men.....	116
VI. The Meaning of Christ's Consciousness.....	118
VII. Is the Incarnation Idea Unreasonable?.....	120
STUDY VIII. MAN AND HIS RELATIONSHIPS.....	123-137
I. The Nature of Man.....	124
II. Growth of Moral Life.....	126
III. Selfishness as Sin.....	128
IV. The Growth and Meaning of Sin.....	130
V. The Sacredness of Man.....	132
VI. The Destiny of Man.....	134
VII. Can We Accept the Idea of the Permanence of Per- sonality?	136
STUDY IX. CAN THE MODERN MAN PRAY?.....	139-153
I. The Universality of Prayer.....	140
II. Difficulties in Answer to Prayer.....	142
III. Do We Need to Pray to a Good God?.....	144
IV. Prayer Answered through Suggestion.....	146
V. Negative Conditions of Prayer.....	148

VI. Positive Conditions for Prayer.....	150
VII. Prayer a Working Force.....	152
STUDY X. THE REALITY OF RELIGION.....	155-169
I. Religion as the Projection of Our Own Desires.....	156
II. The Origin of Religion.....	158
III. The Minimum of Belief.....	160
IV. The Attitude of the Truth Seeker.....	162
V. The Will to Believe.....	164
VI. Hindrances to Reality.....	166
VII. Laws of Growing Reality.....	168
STUDY XI. SHARING THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE.....	171-185
I. The Meaning of Testimony.....	172
II. The Test of the Reality of an Experience.....	174
III. The Nature of Our Testimony.....	176
IV. Life as Religious Testimony.....	178
V. Lack of Experience and Ability to Express an Experience	180
VI. We Shrink from All Personal Conversation.....	182
VII. Testimony and the Needs of Men.....	184
STUDY XII. TESTIMONY AND THE EXTENSION OF THE KING- DOM	187-201
I. Christ's Method of Extending the Kingdom.....	188
II. Many Can Be Reached Only Through Personal Testi- mony	190
III. Men Are Waiting for Our Testimony.....	192
IV. Simple Testimony Effective.....	194
V. How to Help Those in Doubt.....	196
VI. How to Help Those in Doubt (Continued).....	198
VII. Arousing the Indifferent.....	200
BIBLIOGRAPHY	203-206



STUDY I.

THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.

STUDY I. THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“Be not wise in thine own eyes.” (Prov. iii. 7.)

“My soul, if thou wilt receive my words,
 And lay up my commandments with thee;
 So as to incline thine ear unto wisdom,
 And apply thy heart to understanding;
 Yea, if thou cry after discernment,
 And lift up thy voice for understanding;
 If thou seek her as silver,
 And search for her as for hid treasures:
 Then shalt thou understand the fear of Jehovah,
 And find the knowledge of God.
 For Jehovah giveth wisdom;
 Out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.”
 (Prov. ii. 1-6.)

“In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.” (Luke x. 21.)

 PART I. THE INTELLECTUAL ELEMENT IN RELIGION.

PERHAPS the greatest need of our time is that we shall get a clearer conception of the real meaning of Christian life. There is much confusion here, and not a few people are taking one element of Christian life to be the whole of the Christian experience. Naturally a one-sided character is developed as the result; or, what is more serious, this one-sided Christianity fails to make any appeal whatever to thoughtful people.

The first one-sided conception of religion is that of intellectualism. This is perhaps traceable to Greek philosophy. The Greek sophists set aside all tradition and all absolute standards of truth and goodness, holding that the individual must be the final authority as to what was good for him. Socrates replied to this by saying that men were not to be bound by mere traditional standards, but that they must think through the facts of human conduct and hence find the fundamental of moral obligation. To Socrates virtue and knowledge were identical, and to know the truth was

to become virtuous. To live a life guided by reason was, therefore, to Socrates the supreme happiness.

Influenced by Greek philosophy, men have often defined Christianity as a system of thought; and certainly Christianity is a system of thought. But to accept that system as true does not constitute one a Christian. The fundamental weakness in Socrates's theory of the "good" lay in the discrepancy between thought and action. Most men know well enough what is right, but many men fail to act on this intellectual knowledge. To know truth is fundamental, but not all-sufficient. Christian life *has* a creed, but it *is not* a creed. The Christian man will base his experience on the conviction of certain fundamental truths, but the intellectual assent to those truths will never by itself make one a Christian.

Some students are waiting to get all their intellectual problems settled before they consciously give themselves over to Christian living; and others, equally mistaken, suppose that because they have no particular intellectual difficulties with the Christian system of thought, conclude, therefore, that they have met the whole conditions of Christian life. But both are mistaken. "To inform the mind is one thing; to enrich the soul is quite another thing."¹

The Pharisees were most scrupulous about their intellectual conceptions and prided themselves on their thorough knowledge of the law. But Christ bluntly told them that it was not sufficient: "Ye search the scriptures imagining you possess eternal life in their pages—and they do testify to me—but you refuse to come to me for life."²

It is not a matter of indifference what one believes, as some seem to think. It is not enough just to do the best you know—that is good so far as it goes—but you must also be striving to know the best. No man ever yet built a correct life on a false conception. But we must not fall into the other mistake of supposing that thinking correctly will of itself make our conduct and character right. Reason as a final standard is not sufficient, because man is more than a rational being. Religious intellectualism is not Christian experience.

¹Brumbaugh, "The Making of a Teacher," page 5.

²John v. 39-44. From Moffatt's translation.

STUDY I. THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“Now as they went on their way, he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at the Lord’s feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving; and she came up to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister didst leave me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. But the Lord answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: for Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” (Luke x. 38-42.)

PART II. EMOTIONALISM AS RELIGION.

ANOTHER misconception of Christian life is that it consists in an ecstatic feeling of emotion. In many of the older types of revivals the most prominent manifestation of religious experience was that of a violent emotionalism expressed in tears, groanings, and shouting; and even in the quieter and more decorous congregations deep emotion was considered the necessary concomitant of religious experience. Not a few students are still expecting such an upheaval of feelings to warn them that a change of life has taken place. Professor Coe thinks that the degree of emotionalism expressed at conversion in any group of people will depend on two things: First, on the amount of expectancy for such experience for which they have been taught to look, and, secondly, on the temperament of the individual persons. In those denominations where emotional excitement is supposed to be the sign and seal of conversion all the conditions favorable to producing such upheavals are regularly used.¹

We ought not allow ourselves to be misled here. There can be no personal relationship without an emotional element. It would be foolish for one to suppose that he could love his mother without some emotion. Emotion is a normal and a necessary part of personal life and must not be discounted. To deny its rightful place is equally as foolish as

¹Coe, “The Spiritual Life,” page III.

to deny that all religion must have an intellectual background. Without thought content religion becomes superstition; without emotion it becomes a lifeless and impotent theory. The twofold danger of our day is that the more cultured will set emotion aside as something to be discounted and that the ignorant will consider it the full content of religion.

Hegel said: "The true nerve [of feeling] is the genuine thought, and only when the thought is true can the feeling be of a genuine kind." And Eucken adds that when feeling "attempts to weave a content out of itself in order to lead man beyond the mere human province to a relationship with the divine, it degenerates of necessity to the level of eccentricity and fancy."¹ "The function of feeling in the total experience," says Ames, "may be stated as that of a sign of the value of the activity in which the organism is engaged."²

There is no passage in the Bible, so far as I am aware, which prescribes the kind of feeling one must have in order to be religious. Hence those persons who say that they cannot be religious because they do not feel like it are certainly mistaken in this conception of the meaning of religion. If we have been wrong and want to be right, we may turn our faces toward God and give our lives to him regardless of whether we have any feeling about it or not. It is likely that the feeling will come later; for, according to functional psychology, all feeling is dependent upon and follows action. We first act, then we have the glow of emotion because we acted. Feeling is not religion; it is the consequence of right relationship, which is religion. Not until we have given ourselves to religious life have we a right to expect religious emotion.

¹Eucken, "The Truth of Religion," page 81.

²Ames, "Psychology of Religious Experience," page 328.

STUDY I. THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“And he came forth and saw a great multitude, and he had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, The place is desert, and the day is now far spent: send them away, that they may go into the country and villages round about, and buy themselves somewhat to eat. But he answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred penny-worth of bread, and give them to eat?” (Mark vi. 34-37.)

“And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.” (Mark x. 21.)

PART III. ALTRUISM AS RELIGION.

ONE of the most prevalent misconceptions of our day is that religion consists in doing good deeds. Men glibly quote St. James about “caring for the widows and orphans in their trouble” as the essence of pure religion. Social service has come to be such a magic phrase with us that many men have supposed that it is a dynamic for life within itself and a “cure-all” for personal and social evils.

One would not want to underestimate the value of social service. One would not dare belittle the altruistic impulses. But the doing of good deeds is hardly sufficient. It may become a fad and have very little of spiritual dynamic behind it. But deeper than this is the fact that altruism does not spring out of nothing. It has an origin and a cause. It goes back to something deeper than itself: the appreciation of the value and sacredness of human personality. Now, this appreciation of the sacredness of personality is of the very essence of Christ’s message of life, and out of that

message have sprung all the world's philanthropic movements. One who has traveled the world knows well that the fact of social service is known only in countries where the message of the Bible has been made known.

Social service is not, therefore, religion; it is the expression of religion. It is the normal and natural outgrowth of all true Christian experience. The man who thinks he is religious but has no interest in his fellow men is surely mistaken, and just as surely is that other man mistaken who thinks his interest in men has not sprung from a religious impulse. He may not have consciously given himself over to the Christian life, but his conception of the value of humanity, which is the mainspring of his service program, is purely and specifically Christian.

The danger of past religious periods has been that religion would be too subjective, spending itself on mere intellectual and emotional states; but the chief danger of our age is that religion shall become too objective, spending itself in outward deeds without giving sufficient attention to the enriching of the inner personal experience, from which all good deeds must flow.

STUDY I. THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“Hear the word of Jehovah, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? saith Jehovah: I have had enough of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to trample my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; new moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies,—I cannot away with iniquity and the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary of bearing them. And when you spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” (Isa. i. 10-17.)

“For thou delightest not in sacrifice; else would I give it:
Thou hast no pleasure in burnt offering.” (Ps. li. 16.)

“And in his teaching he said, Beware of the scribes, who desire to walk in long robes, and to have salutations in the market places, and chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts: they that devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayers; these shall receive greater condemnation.” (Mark xii. 38-40.)

PART IV. RELIGION AS RITUALISM.

ONCE more we must set aside a false conception in the form of ritualism, which is but an aspect of ecclesiasticism. Perhaps this is not so prevalent a misconception as in past times; but there are still those who think that joining the Church, attending its services, partaking of its sacraments, the reading of the Bible, the saying of prayers, constitute the whole of religion. To them religion is loyalty to an institution; it is a beautiful form, a well-appointed service, a careful performance of set practices. The danger of all religion and of all worship is that it shall become dead and formalistic. Indeed, this is the archenemy of all life; but perhaps it is a more serious problem in religion than in any other phase of life.

The evil of all evils to be dreaded is that our religion shall become institutionalized and lose its vital content. Formalism was the chief sin of Isaiah's day, which, he tells the people, induces religious stupidity and finally incapacity to see truth. The danger of our loyalty to an institution is that we forget that for which the institution stands. The great danger of any set ritual is that it shall come to take the place of real fellowship with God. It is apt to leave the life without any moral content. "When ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood."

We must not go to the opposite extreme, however, and suppose that there is no need for loyalty to the Church or order in worship. Human life seems to be dependent to a large extent on symbols. We are not, for the most part, able to grasp abstract truth. Truth must become incarnated or put into symbols. This the Church as an institution, with its ritual of worship, helps to do and thus is a means to strengthen the reality of religion. There is no possible objection to using symbols, provided we know always that they are symbols and not realities. We must always be able to break through the form and get to the reality. We must pierce the crust of organization and ritual and find the reality of God.

If organizations, times, seasons, and forms help us to find God, let us have them; but not for the sake of the institutions or seasons, but for the sake of finding life. God may be more vivid to us in the Church service, but he is just as real and as active in everyday life. We must not shut him up to consecrated places nor expect to see him only in hours of ritual performances. He is greater than any form, any sanctuary, or any sacred season or creed. We must find Him.

STUDY I. THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“Wherewith shall I come before Jehovah, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?” (Mic. vi. 6-8.)

“And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ.” (John xvii. 3.)

“No longer do I call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I heard from my Father I have made known unto you.” (John xv. 15.)

PART V. RELIGION AS RELATIONSHIP.

IF religion is not intellectualism, not emotionalism, not altruism, not ritualism, then what is it? Micah says it is right relationship to our fellow men—doing justice and loving kindness—and fellowship with God.

If we were trying to define religion in generic terms, we would say that it was man's consciousness of relationship to a higher but kindred power, with whom he desired to live on terms of friendliness. It is the expression of man's desire to have fellowship with the kindred power outside himself. The unifying element in all religions is this God-consciousness. The interpretation of this consciousness by peoples of varying temperament, culture, and environment has given rise to very divergent forms of religious belief. But the fact of universal religious consciousness makes us certain that there is central truth here. This fact of consciousness

of a higher kindred power—religion—Eucken says, is “the strongest power within the world.”

“Whatever appears in life as heroism,” says Eucken, “roots itself ultimately in religion. Nothing can inspire man in the depth of his soul, nothing can win his entire self-surrender, unless it has linked itself to his religion or has become a kind of religion in itself. Indeed, all belief of humanity and of the individual seems inseparable from a belief in the indwelling of a divine in human nature, of the loving presence of an eternal and spiritual energy in the deeds of man.”¹

To give another generic definition of religion: It is the response of man to this eternal energy within his soul and the ordering of his life in accordance with that response. This response will be largely conditioned by the conception any man has of God; but that God deals directly with every man and that every man’s soul responds to this influence from God seems to be a fact well verified by the study of anthropology and comparative religions.

Even the lowest forms of religion, therefore, seem to be a matter of relationship, a response of human souls to divine influence.

¹Eucken, “The Truth of Religion,” page 4.

STUDY I. THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit. Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing.” (John xv. 1-5.)

PART VI. RELIGION AS RELATIONSHIP.

(Continued.)

IF one attempts to define Christian religion, he has a more specific task; for here we are speaking of relationship to a personal God as revealed in a specific person, Jesus Christ.

A Christian is, therefore, one who through daily association with God, as he is revealed in the life and record of Christ, has come to know God's will and joyfully conforms his life to that will. Or, again, to be a Christian is to be rightly related to all persons: God as we know him in Christ and men as we find them interpreted by Christ. A Christian is a friendly son of God and a brotherly friend of men. It should be carefully noted that attitude toward persons determines one's religious life—and this means all persons—in so far as we know them and are conscious of them. No man can have the right attitude toward some persons and the wrong attitude toward others. Personality is essentially one. It is a living principle, and he who despises the sacredness of personality in one cannot properly respect it in another. A man cannot love God and hate his fellow men, nor can he really love his fellow men while he is deliberately neglecting his Father God. The man in the South who

hates his black neighbor, the man on the coast who despises the Japanese, the man in New England who scorns the immigrant, needs to ask himself thoughtfully whether, after all, he really has the Christian spirit. In our country, with its polyglot population, we need to be sure that we have a religious life which will stand the test of such a definition.

In this matter of relationship the whole personality is involved. It is not simply thinking correctly about persons, it is not simply feeling right concerning persons, nor is it simply acting right toward them. The whole personality—intellect, emotion, will—must respond to the other person. Hegel said that religion regarded as knowledge was an ever-increasing comprehension of God; regarded as feeling, it was an ever-increasing harmony with God; regarded as will, it was an ever-increasing and spontaneous obedience to God. And all three, he added, must be combined in one. If we use the word "person"—including both God and man—where Hegel used the word "God," we have a comprehensive description of the right response of the soul which constitutes religion. If, then, we define religion in terms of the characteristics of personality, we would say that a Christian is one whose whole personality goes out to a Christlike God and to his fellow man in glad and responsive fellowship and service.

STUDY I. THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“And one of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together, and knowing that he had answered them well, asked him, What commandment is the first of all? Jesus answered, The first is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is one: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.” (Mark xii. 28-31.)

PART VII. CHRISTIAN LIFE, BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL.

THE Christian religion, therefore, has both an individual and a social gospel. All religions have an individual gospel, but the religions of the Bible alone have a real social gospel. If the fact of God and man's relationship to him alone is stressed, we have a rank individualism. If the relation of man to man alone is stressed, we have rank socialism. But Jesus combined the two in a perfectly harmonious gospel. He taught that all men are sons of God because they partake of the very nature of God himself. He was, therefore, very eager that men should consciously accept this sonship and should live in accordance with the desire and purpose of God. He wanted every individual by conscious and deliberate choice to pass out of the realm of potential sonship into the realm of actual sonship.

At the same time Christ taught that all men were brothers. The fact that every man had within him the very Godhood, the fact that all were made in this image and likeness of God, made them kindred to each other. They were heirs of the same kingdom and possessors of the same nature. It was necessary, therefore, not only that every man should be rightly related to God, but also that he should have a

kindly feeling toward all men, thus setting up a kingdom of brotherly men in which all would have full opportunity to make the most and the best of life. An individual gospel of the value of each person is essentially to give meaning to society, and a social gospel of a race of brotherly men is essential in order that each individual and society as a whole may have opportunity to develop the Godhood within it. The two cannot be divorced. Neither can really live without the other. Individuals must be interested in humanity, and groups of human beings known as institutions and corporations must no longer be soulless; they must be true to the individual. Neither individualism nor socialism is completely true; but combined in Christianity the essence of both is preserved, and both become eminently true and inspiring.

STUDY II.

ENTRANCE AND GROWTH IN CHRISTIAN LIFE.

STUDY II. ENTRANCE AND GROWTH IN CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness :
According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my
transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity,

And cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions ;

And my sin is ever before me.

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,

And done that which is evil in thy sight ;

That thou mayest be justified when thou speakest,

And be clear when thou judgest.

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity ;

And in sin did my mother conceive me.

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts ;

And in the hidden part thou wilt make me to know wisdom.

Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean :

Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me to hear joy and gladness,

That the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

Hide thy face from my sins,

And blot out all mine iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God ;

And renew a right spirit within me.”

(Ps. li. 1-10.)

PART I. REMOVING BARRIERS.

IF life is relationship, then real life cannot be possible if there are barriers which keep us separated from other persons. The fullest life will be the one which has fewest walls of separation between it and other lives. In order that I may enter into harmonious communion or friendship with other persons, I must make sure that all barriers are removed. The barriers are such as prejudice, hatred, jealousy, or some other form of sin against other persons. If I have sinned against you, I have grieved you. I have thrown up a barrier between you and me. Suppose you have been very good to me and have helped me in every hour of need ; then suppose I just pass you by without expressing any gratitude to you for your kindness ; or suppose I actively injure your reputation or your business or your person. I have surely raised a barrier between us which

makes common understanding and sympathy impossible. You may continue to wish me well—indeed, if you are a true person, you will wish me well—but you cannot possibly approve the way I have acted. There is just one way for me to get back into your approving friendship, and that is to change my attitude toward you and make you see that I have changed my attitude:

Technically, this is called repentance. We care not what it is called; what we want to know is its meaning. The word itself means change of mind. It is this change of attitude from one of indifference or hostility to one of interest and friendliness. This change of attitude may be brought about by my seeing the heinous results of my deeds on your life, or by my seeing the continued goodness of your soul, or by seeing how you hate my attitude but still love me and wish me well. I will certainly never be turned to repentance by seeing how you hate me in response to my hatred for you. That never brings repentance.

My sense of repentance may strike deep into my emotional life, or it may be more in the realm of sober judgment; but, in any case, my whole personality sees its wrong and deliberately comes back to you and tells you of the wrong and asks you to forgive.

Sin and selfishness—perhaps we ought to say sin as selfishness—have led us away from God. They have made us ungrateful to God or even rebellious against his will. He has done all possible for us. He has made large, full, and rich life possible to us. But we turn from him and thus grieve him. How can we get back into the approving love of God? We must see that our attitude is wrong. We must change that attitude. This we will be induced to do when we see how God disapproves our actions and when we see how he loves us in spite of our attitude. This we are able to see in the life and death of Christ as nowhere else; and it is for this reason that presenting Christ to men has so often led them to change their minds, to set aside the old attitude and turn in loving fellowship to God. It means that we begin to feel about evil as Christ feels about it. It means that we have the attitude toward life which Christ has. Old attitudes have passed away, and all things have become new.

STUDY II. ENTRANCE AND GROWTH IN CHRISTIAN LIFE.

"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake; and I will not remember thy sins." (Isa. xliii. 25.)

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." (Isa. xliv. 22.)

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. i. 18.)

PART II. GOD'S ATTITUDE OF APPROVAL.

WHAT ought to be my attitude toward one who has sinned against me? Shall it be hatred, anger, scorn, desire for revenge, or simple indifference? It should be none of these. It ought to be one of hearty disapproval of the offender's deeds and of the spirit which prompted those deeds. But if I am really a true man, certainly if I am a Christian, my attitude should be one of kindness toward the man and desire that he should change his attitude toward me. The one thing I should want ought not to be revenge, but that he shall come to see his error and change his attitude.

God's attitude toward selfish and sinful men is not one of hatred. God never punishes for revenge; his punishment is always for reformation. Like a good father, he may have to punish the child in order to show the child how he disapproves his spirit and action. But God loves all men always. He never hates men. He only disapproves—heartily and strongly disapproves—the evil manner of life. Being wholly righteous, he must disapprove all evil. "Sense of value of an object, but not necessarily moral approbation of the object, is the essence of love."¹

¹Clarke, "The Christian Doctrine of God," page 86.

This does not, however, mean that we are shut out of God's kingdom. God never casts us off. "The likeness to Christ which St. John holds forth as the future heritage of saints must have its root and ground in the essential constitution of humanity. Man is the son of God, even if a lost son."¹ Sin does not destroy the sovereignty of God. It does not take the man out of the field of God's love. It does not sell man over to another. It simply raises a barrier between man and God so that man cannot understand God and God cannot approve the sinning man. The great consequence of sin consists not in the physical suffering it entails, but in the fact that it builds a barrier between us and God.

Since God is just and righteous, he cannot cease to disapprove our spirit and attitude so long as we continue to act wrong and have a wrong attitude. But when we see that we are wrong, when we decide to change our attitude, when as the result of our new understanding we acknowledge our wrong—then, of course, God as a righteous God must approve our action. He could not do otherwise. Some have supposed that Christ had to persuade God to change his attitude toward us. Not so. Christ's work is to help us change our attitude toward our own sin by showing us how God feels about that sin. Forgiveness must, therefore, follow after this change on the part of the wrongdoer. It cannot precede.

Forgiveness is, therefore, the change on the part of God from the attitude of a disapproving love to the attitude of an approving love, and it can come about only when the spirit of the one forgiven is such that God can approve it as worthy. The great result of forgiveness is that the sense of estrangement between the forgiver and the one forgiven is then removed, and a real fellowship may begin.

¹McIntosh, "The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ," page 439.

STUDY II. ENTRANCE AND GROWTH IN CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“On that day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside. And there were gathered unto him great multitudes, so that he entered into a boat, and sat; and all the multitude stood on the beach. And he spake to them many things in parables, saying, Behold, the sower went forth to sow; and as he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the birds came and devoured them: and others fell upon the rocky places, where they had not much earth: and straightway they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And others fell upon the thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked them: and others fell upon the good ground, and yielded fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

“And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? And he answered and said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath.” (Matt. xiii. 1-12.)

 PART III. THE LAW OF EXPRESSION.

WHEN one has recognized himself to be in the wrong, when he has deliberately decided to do right, when he has turned his face in the direction of right associations, there is yet need that he should give open expression to his decision. This is not so because religion arbitrarily demands it, but because his nature is such that it is necessary. There is a law of nature which says that whatsoever is covered and unexpressed will die. If you express a thought, you will strengthen it; if you suppress a thought or aspiration, you kill it. Indeed, psychology goes farther than that and tells us that no thought is ever a completed thought until it has found some kind of expression. “A disembodied human emotion is a sheer nonentity.”¹ The fuller your expression, the more vivid and permanent the thought or aspiration.

¹James, “Psychology,” page 380.

If I am ashamed to acknowledge my friendship for you or for any reason whatsoever fail to make such expression, my friendship will surely die. If I take particular pains never to be seen in your presence—which it will be readily seen is a form of expression of my friendship—then I will soon lose my friendship.

Now, one of the dangers of our present-day religious attitude is that we shall fail to recognize this fundamental law. Particularly is this true with more cultured people. There has arisen a general feeling of aversion to giving any public expression to religious convictions. They tell you that it is a matter to be settled between a man and God, that it is no business of others, and such very plausible reasons for refusing to express their convictions. But the law of expression stands firm, and no excuse will abrogate its effects.

Fortunately, there are many forms of expression of religious conviction. One very important form of expression is moral action. Another is service for those who need us. Another is standing for right principles in spite of great opposition. Still another way may be uniting one's self with the organized Church. And yet another way may be a form of public testimony in the proper place. None of these forms can be neglected with impunity. They should never be used for ostentation or for show. They should not be too boldly forced upon others. All religious work must be done with great respect for the sacredness of the privacy and personality of others; and yet we must face the fact that the fuller the expression of conviction, the deeper will be the conviction. We must never allow men to suppose they can live a Christian life on the quiet. Nicodemus tried that and failed, and his successors in our day could be named "legion."

STUDY II. ENTRANCE AND GROWTH IN CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus; that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed.” (Luke i. 1-4.)

“That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: and these things we write, that our joy may be made full.” (1 John i. 1-5.)

PART IV. THE MEANING OF FAITH.

FAITH has been supposed by many to be a leap in the dark. The little Sunday school boy defined it as “believing what you know ain’t so.” The growth of the scientific method and spirit has put much emphasis on fact as knowledge and has seemed to discredit faith. Indeed, the conception of faith which was once held as a leap in the dark is no longer tenable. Speaking of this old conception, Ames says: “Faith has thus come to be regarded as the test of religion, as knowledge is the organ and sphere of science. Religion as faith, then, involves submission to authority; and its test is sometimes represented in the willingness to accept that which is intellectually inconsistent in itself, but which is presented as the dictate of conscience or of the divine will.” There is a reason for this conception of faith; for Tertullian, one of the early fathers, declared: “I believe because it is absurd.” St. Augustine advanced one step and said he “believed that he might know,” but his faith was not based on knowledge.

Out of this conception of faith there has arisen a feeling that no scientific mind can any longer act on faith; and if

this were the true meaning of faith, it would need to be abandoned. But are we so sure that faith is divorced from all knowledge? It may go beyond proved knowledge, but it certainly must be based on knowledge. With Abelard we must say: "We believe because we understand."

There is undoubtedly a place for authority in religion as in all other fields of experience. No man has or ever will verify all truth or all experience. We act on authority in science just as much as we do in religion. I have never demonstrated that the world is round, but I accept it on authority. While every man must of necessity be an experimenter in the field of religion, he cannot compass all religious experience and must accept some things on authority. Every man cannot do all the scholarly work necessary to verify all the records of the Bible, but he must accept much of this on authority.

But this does not contravene our statement that all faith must be based on knowledge, for authority is a kind of knowledge; indeed, the kind of knowledge on which we base ninety-five per cent of our life's activities. A man who verifies by actual experiment the principles that lie behind five per cent of his life processes is no tyro either in science or in philosophy.

I remember hearing in my early boyhood a preacher illustrate what he meant by faith. There was a small stream running through my town which in the rainy season often rose very suddenly, becoming an angry torrent. I crossed this stream on a footbridge every day as I went to and from school. My preacher friend said that if I went down to that stream and the water was overflowing that footbridge, but a man standing there told me that it was still in place, it would be faith if I staked my life on his word and ventured to wade in. Well, that depended on the man who told me that the bridge was still there. If he were an ordinary tramp, my act would not be faith, but foolhardiness. If it were my father, however, it would be faith, for I would have a basis of knowledge. I would accept his word as authority, for I would know I could trust him to give me the truth. Faith divorced from knowledge is mere superstition and cannot be commended to any one.

¹Ames, "The Psychology of Religious Experience," page 413.

STUDY II. ENTRANCE AND GROWTH IN CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“And straightway he constrained the disciples to enter into the boat, and to go before him unto the other side, till he should send the multitudes away. And after he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into the mountain apart to pray: and when even was come, he was there alone. But the boat was now in the midst of the sea, distressed by the waves; for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night he came unto them, walking upon the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a ghost; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee upon the waters. And he said, Come. And Peter went down from the boat, and walked upon the waters to come to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and took hold of him, and saith unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were gone up into the boat, the wind ceased. And they that were in the boat worshiped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.” (Matt. xiv. 22-33.)

PART V. THE MEANING OF FAITH.

(Continued.)

SIMPLE knowledge is not all of faith. Many a man gives intellectual assent as to the reality of God, but he has no real faith. A second element in faith is personal commitment. It lies in the realm of the will and perhaps involves both the will and the emotions. Knowledge merges into faith when we act on that knowledge. “A belief that God is worthy to be trusted becomes faith when God is trusted.”¹

To go back to my former illustration, my bare belief in the truth of my father’s statement about the footbridge would have become faith when I committed myself to him and allowed him to lead me into the water and out onto that bridge. Our knowledge may not always be verified, but it must have rationality. Faith may be defined as willingness to act on a rational conviction. The two elements of

¹Clarke, “The Christian Doctrine of God,” page 469.

faith, therefore, are: First, the intellectual, or belief, which is the mental attitude of assent to the reality of a fact or person; and the second is volitional, which takes the form of active and glad surrender of one's self to that fact or person.

It must not be forgotten, however, that faith goes farther than knowledge. While it must always base itself on knowledge, it must and does transcend verified knowledge. The scientist finds certain facts of light and sound waves to be verifiable; and, building on these facts, he postulates ether, which is a pure act of faith. It transcends verifiable facts; it goes beyond what has actually been proved. It is a venture, not in the dark, but without complete light. Reason has interpretive insight, according to Hegel, which enables it to go beyond what it has verified. Without this there could be no advance in knowledge.

The Christian, therefore, is not unscientific in going farther than verified knowledge. He is in line with the best scientific method. "Now, faith means we are confident of what we hope for, convinced of what we do not see." (Heb. xi. 1.) We cannot demonstrate God, but it is reasonable to believe that he is. Our faith does not cut across reason; it simply goes beyond what we have proved as a fact. Therefore to commit ourselves to God, to accept his will as our will, is not blind superstition. It is just what the scientist must do in his particular field.

"The doctrine of God contains truth to which the method of demonstration does not correspond. The intellect must believe in him on the evidence that we possess—and it is great—and the whole man must rise to him in the direction which the evidence warrants by an act of faith; for it is the nature of faith to go out beyond sight and to take hold upon that which is not seen or proved. Faith is a rising of the soul to truth."¹

We have but faith: we cannot know,
 For knowledge is of things we see;
 And yet we trust it comes from thee,
 A beam in darkness: let it grow.

—Introduction to "In Memoriam."

¹Clarke, "The Christian Doctrine of God," page 467.

STUDY II. ENTRANCE AND GROWTH IN CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my words: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s who sent me.

“These things have I spoken unto you, while yet abiding with you. But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful.” (John xiv. 23-27.)

“And I am no more in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are.” (John xvii. 11.)

PART VI. THE LAW OF ASSOCIATION.

FRANCIS BACON, in his essay on friendship, writes: “A man would better relate himself to a statue or picture than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother.” And another passage in the same essay says that friendship “maketh daylight in the understanding out of darkness and confusion of thoughts.” If one wishes to grow in mind and soul, he must associate with characters that have mind and soul richness. Even dwelling with a picture which depicts character would be better than dwelling solitary. All growth is dependent on association. Emerson says that the purpose of a friend is to make us do what we can. Association with a noble personality draws out from us the higher and nobler qualities.

“It sometimes seems as if the single, all-inclusive counsel that one need ever care to give to another might be summed up in the one sentence: Stay persistently in the presence of the best in the sphere in which you seek attainment. Hear persistently the best music. See persistently the best art. Read persistently the best literature. Stay persistently in the presence of the best in character. Results must follow such association with the best.”¹

¹King, “The Laws of Friendship,” page 155.

Life is relationship. It is the contact of soul with soul. It is the responsiveness of soul to soul. Life comes by no other process than by association. If it were possible to take a human child and completely isolate it from all personal contact, it would grow up to be hardly a human. All of those finer elements which characterize manhood would be lacking. There would be no fully developed sympathy or love or unselfishness or pity; in fact, the most distinctive characteristics of a developed soul—those powers which can be grown only in association with kindred souls—would be entirely lacking. If, then, life is association, it will be deeply colored by the type of association it finds. He who would build the fullest character must of necessity associate with the best. If one wants the highest, therefore it is not a matter of choice whether he will be a Christian or not. God as revealed in Christ is acknowledged by the whole world to be the highest type of manhood, and to associate with him means the fullest life. The best cannot be found elsewhere.

If I am to associate with my friend, it will not be through physical proximity, but through mental and spiritual sympathy. I will try to find out what my friend thinks of life, what his attitude is toward the various facts of personal environment. As I find out his attitude I will put myself in a kindly and sympathetic attitude toward him, and little by little we will grow alike. I do not have to strive to grow like him. All I need to do is to hold myself persistently and sympathetically in the presence of his attitude of life, and I will inevitably grow like him. Constant and sympathetic association is an absolute law of growth. He who would grow in God's likeness must constantly and persistently put himself into the presence of God through Bible study, prayer, meditation, and service; and he will naturally, normally, and inevitably grow into a Godlike character.

STUDY II. ENTRANCE AND GROWTH IN CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“But he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.” (Luke xxii. 26.)

“And whosoever would be first among you shall be servant of all. For the Son of man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” (Mark x. 44, 45.)

“If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s shall save it.” (Mark viii. 34, 35.)

PART VII. THE LAW OF SERVICE.

THE psychologists tell us that all thought is impulsive—that is, all thought tends to pass into action and will do so unless restrained by another thought or a direct act of the will. They further tell us that those thoughts which are not allowed to express themselves are killed or made ineffective. They say that a thought never becomes fully alive which is not allowed to find expression. Conversely, when a thought is expressed, it becomes alive, active, and is made intense.

One way in which thought may best express itself is in overt deeds. Service, therefore, is a law of growth. If we expect our nobler thoughts and impulses to grow, we must give them expression in positive service. If my friend gets sick and I do not visit him, do not do anything to help him, and suppress every impulse of my soul to comfort him, my friendship will surely die. Often we get too busy or too preoccupied to give expression to our friendly impulses, and hence our friendship dies. It costs something to be a real friend and to develop one’s own spirit of friendliness. Thoughtfulness, love, and unselfish service are the price we must pay; and many are not willing to pay this price. But he who will not pay this price loses his own soul. He who will not give himself must starve.

“Who gives himself with his alms feeds three:
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and me.”

To be a friend of Christ, therefore, one must serve him. Not that Christ needs our service so much as we need to cultivate the spirit which this service will engender. To grow in Christian life one must give himself freely to those who need him and share his love of Christ with those who know him not. “Lord, when did we see you hungry and fed you? or thirsty and gave you drink? . . . The King will answer then, I tell you truly, in so far as ye did it to one of these brothers of mine, even to the least of them, you did it unto me.” (Matt. xxv. 37-40.)

Whatsoever does not serve dies. This is a law of life. If I tie my hand to my side and allow it to stay there for six months and then remove the bandage, it will hang limp and lifeless by my side. It has not served; it has been inactive and has atrophied. Full many a man starts out with a deep religious impression and aspirations, but for some cause or other he fails to give these aspirations expression in action. Later he is amazed to find that his truest aspirations seem to be dead. His deep yearning for fellowship with Christ has vanished. He finds his soul cold and without religious enthusiasm. He has not served his cause, and his religious soul has died. At our peril do we get too busy to have a share in the Christian campaign; and if later we wake to the fact of an atrophied soul, it will be the sure sign that we have been breaking an inexorable law.

I think this is the authentic sign and seal
Of Godship, that it ever waxes glad
And more glad, until gladness blossoms, bursts
Into a rage to suffer for mankind,
And recommence at sorrow: drops like seed
After the blossom, ultimate of all.
Say does the seed scorn earth and seek the sun?
Surely it has no other end and aim
Than to drop, once more to die, into the ground,
Taste cold and darkness and oblivion there,
And then rise, treelike grow through pain to joy,
More joy and most joy—do man good again.

—*Browning's "Balaustion's Adventure."*

STUDY III.

PERSONAL RESULTS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

STUDY III. PERSONAL RESULTS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” (John iii. 6.)

“For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace. . . . But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” (Rom. viii. 6-11.)

“And [the jailer] brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house. And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. And he brought them up into his house, and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God.” (Acts xvi. 30-34.)

PART I. WHAT IS CONVERSION?

IN the preceding chapter we have gone over the steps which one takes in entering a Christian life and growing into a Christian experience. At the very threshold of this growing experience one passes through what is commonly called conversion. We have discussed these various steps first in order that this difficult topic might become more plain. Of recent years there has been much discussion as to whether one needs to be converted or not. Should not a child, if properly trained and living in the right environment, just grow into a normal religious experience? Does there need to be any great change in such a life as this? Here is a boy who has been reared in a Christian home with the influence of Christian parents. He has gone to Sunday school and church. He has never known anything save to love and obey Christ in so far as his childish mind understands Christ. Does such a child need conversion? Certainly such a child does not need a great cataclysmic break with the past. He does not need to weep and mourn over great sins. So far as he knows, he has been fashioning his life after the life of Christ. What, then, does conversion

mean to him? Perhaps it may be best described as a conscious acceptance of the Christ program as his life program, a deliberate giving himself over to Christ, whom he has followed rather by imitation in the past. Up to this time he has been a kind of Christian by authority. He has lived as best he could like Christ because his father and mother taught him to do so. But sometime he must come to accountability. He must deliberately and consciously make this life his own. He must do from inner impulse what he has done by a kind of outward compulsion. When that time arrives there will be a defining of Christian experience, a growth in Christian consciousness. There will be a conscious loyalty which he never had before. There will be a deliberate choosing of the Christian life as his own which will usher him into a deeper experience, and this is certainly a type of conversion.

Indeed, something of this same type of experience may come to a man who has been trying to follow the Christian life for years. Speaking of the validity of sudden conversion, Stevens says: "On the other hand, we shall remember this also, that in all education, religious and intellectual, there are times of rapid growth and times of slow; there are moments of surprise when truths burst suddenly on the mind; there are periods of stagnation or even decay, and then times when interest is renewed and the spirit leaps up and presses forward and hastens to maturity."¹

This dawning of consciousness of the deeper meaning of life, this ripening fellowship with God which seems to come like the ebb of the ocean, this high tide of the Spirit, as some one has called it, is really and truly of the essence of conversion. We must not discredit it because it is not cataclysmic, or of the nature of an upheaval. God works in many ways, and this is one of his genuine methods of changing life.

¹Stevens, "The Psychology of the Christian Soul," pages 27, 28.

STUDY III. PERSONAL RESULTS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

“But Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and asked of him letters to Damascus unto the synagogues, that if he found any that were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus: and suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven: and he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: but rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing; and they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.” (Acts ix. 1-8.)

PART II. WHAT IS CONVERSION?

(Continued.)

BUT this quiet, conscious acceptance of Christ as our Friend does not cover the whole ground. There are those who have gone far into sin, those whose trend of life has gotten hard set toward evil; and when these become Christians, there is likely to be much upheaval. There must be a break with the past. Sometime or other such a person must come to the realization that he is wrong, that his movement is away from God, that his attitude is out of harmony with God. He must deliberately make up his mind to face about, to change his attitude, to give himself to God. Such a conversion was St. Paul's. Such a conversion was Sam Hadley's, of the famous Water Street Mission. Such a conversion is the experience of thousands who have lived in rebellion against God. This is the type of conversion described in such definitions as the following: “The restoration of friendship between a man and God is conversion.” “It is the definite conscious turning of a man from sin to God.” “It is change of character and ruling disposition.”

When man has done his part—that is, turned to God—it is then possible for God to do his part—impart life to the man. Man by turning to God has removed the barriers that

separated him from God and made it possible for God to have access to his soul. The impress of the soul of God on the soul of man has been technically called regeneration. It is, as it were, a rebirth, a birth into a God-fellowship. Man is changed from a possible or potential son into a real son. God awakens in the man new affections, new aspirations, new motives. The processes of a new character are set in motion, and man enters into a fellowship with God, which is the essence of being a Christian.

While this is a process shrouded in mystery, it is no more so than the birth of a human friendship. What one of us has not at some time grieved a companion? But finally we have come to the realization that we have done wrong; we have changed our attitude; we have come back to our companion and asked for forgiveness, and immediately there has sprung up in each soul a new enthusiasm. The touch of one soul upon another is the most mysterious fact of life, but it is likewise the most real and common experience. When a man deliberately turns to God, something really happens in his life. There is a new dynamic, a new enthusiasm, a God in us which we never had before.

All sense of estrangement is removed. A man is at one with God. "The newly awakened soul opens its eyes to the assuring smile of God. All inner cleavage, all isolation, all sense of contradiction in the universe is removed. The soul is at home in God's world."¹

¹Hermann, "Eucken and Bergson," page 62.

STUDY III. PERSONAL RESULTS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

"But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would. But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law. . . . And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof. If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk." (Gal. v. 16-18, 24, 25.)

"Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (Rom. v. 1, 2.)

PART III. UNIFICATION OF PERSONALITY.

WILLIAM JAMES defines conversion as unification of personality. "To be converted, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain an assurance, are so many phrases which denote the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto *divided* and consciously wrong, inferior and unhappy, becomes *unified* and consciously right, superior and happy, in consequence of its firmer hold on religious realities."¹

Eucken speaks of a "for and against" into which our circle of life is divided.² The "for" is the call of the divine within the human soul; the "against" is that nearest-at-hand world, the lowest impulses which would keep us from our best. "The soul in humanity," says Clarke, "was not born into peace, but into conflict."³ The fact of life itself contains this strange contradiction. We are born with capacities for good and for evil, and it is only by struggle that we are able to make the good dominate the life. But this struggle is necessary to give moral quality to the life. If we were good by necessity, as it were, we would not really be good; for nothing is good which is not the result of choice.

Hence the most intense reality of human life is struggle, conflict, aspiration for the good in conflict with the tug of

¹James, "Varieties of Religious Experience," page 189.

²Eucken, "Truth of Religion," page 3.

³Clarke, "The Christian Doctrine of God," page 456.

the evil. So much is this the case that our very nervous nature itself seems to have taken on a dual life. "The mechanism for the cognitive intellectual group of activities is the central nervous system, and that of feeling is the sympathetic nervous system. This accounts for the fact that the individual is liable to be torn between two contending worlds, between science and religion, between mysticism and worldly wisdom—that is, between the lower and external world and the inward spiritual life."¹

As these two types of ideas rise from the subconscious realm into the conscious, they struggle for mastery, and the man is drawn in two directions. Groups of ideas concerned with good and with evil, being so diametrically opposed to each other, make in man the most intense battle. Hence it is that when a man begins the Christian life his inner conflict may be of the most desperate sort. The great question is, Which set of ideas shall hold the center of consciousness? It will be impossible to destroy entirely either set, but to give one central place in one's conscious life is to make it the master of the life. "It makes a great difference to man," says Professor James, "whether one set of his ideas or another be the center of his energy; and it makes a great difference as regards any set of ideas which he may possess, whether they become central or peripheral with him. To say that a man is 'converted' means, in these terms, that religious ideas originally peripheral (on the outer edge of consciousness, or dim) in his consciousness now take the central place and that religious aims form the habitual center of his life energy."²

When a man becomes a Christian, he deliberately puts his will power on the side of the Godward ideas—on the side of this "for," as Eucken calls it. He exalts these ideas into the central field of consciousness. The battle will not all be over, for the evilward ideas will still remain on the outer rim of consciousness to harass him in his weaker hours. But so long as these Godward impulses are held in the central position, just so long will he be secure from failure. The impress of the soul of God on the soul of man makes it possible to bring these Godward ideas into the central position.

¹Ames, "The Psychology of Religious Experience," page 322.

²James, "Varieties of Religious Experience," page 196.

STUDY III. PERSONAL RESULTS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. viii. 38, 39.)

“That in all things he might have the preëminence.” (Col. i. 18.)

“Whatsoever ye do, work heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that from the Lord ye shall receive the recompense of the inheritance: ye serve the Lord Christ.” (Col. iii. 23, 24.)

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.” (Gal. ii. 20.)

PART IV. A SENSE OF LOYALTY.

IN this attempt to make Godward ideas the central and dominating ideas of the energy, the spirit of loyalty must find place. “Loyalty shall mean,” says Professor Royce, “the willing and practical and thoroughgoing devotion of a person to a cause. A man is loyal, first, when he has some cause to which he is loyal; when, secondly, he willingly and thoroughly devotes himself to this cause; and when, thirdly, he expresses his loyalty in some sustained and practical way by acting steadily in the service of his cause.”¹

The great need of many lives is just this sense of loyalty which will centralize their energies and give them driving power. Full many a person is wasting life on the mere twaddle of nothingness because they have never found any cause big enough nor any person attractive enough to grip up their lives into a unity and give purpose to their activities. Their thoughts are scattered, their energies are dissipated, their purposes vacillating—all for the need of a great centralizing cause. Professor Royce declares that “a self is a life (only) in so far as it is unified by a single purpose.”²

¹Royce, “The Philosophy of Loyalty,” pages 16, 17. ²*Ibid.*, page 171.

"It is devoting the self to a cause that, after all, first makes it a rational and unified self instead of what the life of many a man remains—namely, a cauldron of seething and bubbling efforts to be somebody, a cauldron which boils dry when life ends."¹ "If you want to find a way of living which surmounts doubts and centralizes your powers, it must be some such a way as all the loyal in common have trodden since first loyalty was known amongst men."²

Most of us are so divided between the impulses for good and those which are either indifferent or positively evil that we tread round in a circle and never make any progress. "Speaking generally," says Professor James, "our moral and practical attitude, at any time given, is always a resultant of two sets of forces within us, impulses pushing in one way and obstructions and inhibitions holding us back. 'Yes, yes,' say the impulses. 'No, no,' say the inhibitions."³ The only thing which will break down the inhibitions and enable one to live at his best is a great emotion of some kind, a great enthusiasm. This can best be engendered by giving one some object or cause to which one may be loyal. "Given a certain amount of love, indignation, generosity, magnanimity, admiration, loyalty, or enthusiasm of self-surrender, the result is always the same. That whole raft of cowardly obstructions which in tame persons and dull moods are sovereign impediments to action sink away at once."⁴

The great need, therefore, of those who find themselves weak and vacillating, those in whom the Godward ideas have small chance of remaining central, is to find some great cause for loyalty which will so centralize the being and so unify their energies as to give them a driving purpose in life. Many a man has failed to live a life of moral content simply because the temptations have been too persuasive. The inhibitions or obstructions can be swept away only by a great supreme loyalty.

¹Royce, "The Philosophy of Loyalty," page 46. ²*Ibid.*, page 172.

³James, "Varieties of Religious Experience," page 261. ⁴*Ibid.*, page 266.

STUDY III. PERSONAL RESULTS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

“And passing along by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they left their nets, and followed him.” (Mark i. 16-18.)

“And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” (1 Cor. ii. 1, 2.)

“Thomas therefore, who is called Didymus, said unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.” (John xi. 16.)

PART V. TO WHAT SHALL WE BE LOYAL?

IF loyalty be necessary for the centralizing of one's powers, then the question immediately arises, To what shall one be loyal? This is a supreme question, since that to which we are loyal will be the molding factor of our lives. We dare not make a mistake here, for life is at stake. To choose less than the best as our object of loyalty would be to condemn our lives to mediocrity when excellence might have been ours. To what, then, shall we be loyal? Some have felt that it was enough to be loyal to a great piece of work, and undoubtedly this is an inspiring object. It has strengthened many a man in hours of great strain to have a great task to do. But, in the very nature of the case, no work can be permanent. Changing times and conditions will demand new applications of energy and new forms of work. Others have felt that devotion to principles was a sufficient motive. But principles are cold and lifeless, and to make them the center of one's loyalty robs the life of warmth and enthusiasm. Still others have felt that self-culture should be our goal and center of loyal aspiration. But the difficulty here is that self-culture is its own worst enemy. Self is never a sufficient goal, because to concentrate on one's own inner life takes us away from contact with other souls, which is our only means of growth.

All of these ideas are more or less individualistic. If

life is relationship, then one dare not chose any object of loyalty which does not bind his life up with other personal life. To give one's self to things builds barriers around the life which make it impossible for one to get in contact with persons, and to be separated from persons is death. Hence our object of loyalty must be a person; and if it is to be the greatest source of power, it must be the greatest person. Here none but the best will do, and the best is God. In the person of God as we know him in Christ we must find our center of loyalty.

Eucken has said: "A negative movement from a self-centered, self-enslaved individuality to a God-centered personality, a movement from the sense world to the self and through the self inwardly to God, is at once the assertion and true salvation of our true selfhood."

When one deliberately gives himself over to loyalty to Christ, one ceases to be a self-centered man. His life at once begins to take on larger proportions. He is brought at once into a wider field of interest. "The psychologist says that by a sudden emotion or otherwise the life has become organized around a new nervous center; that the old channels of thought have been walled up; and that the self has become identified with a new world, where broader and newer channels of thought must be found."¹

Religiously speaking, the thing that has happened is the touch of the soul of God on the soul of a man, giving him new impulses and new enthusiasm. From thinking alone of self the converted one immediately begins to feel himself impelled to help others. Something has really happened in the life that makes all life bigger and more unselfish. It was such a loyalty as this which transformed Saul the Pharisee into Paul the Christian and world citizen. It was his intense loyalty which enabled him to say: "For me to live is Christ." It made him a new man.

¹The author's "Introducing Men to Christ," page 37.

STUDY III. PERSONAL RESULTS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are children of God.” (Rom. viii. 14-16.)

“Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.” (2 Cor. 5-17.)

PART VI. THE REVALUATION OF THE SELF.

SIDE by side with this change from a self-centered to a God-centered personality there arises in the Christian man a new valuation of himself. The new relationship to God opens up vast possibilities of growth and achievement and at once calls the life to more strenuous endeavor. Eucken says that through religion “our existence raises itself to incomparable greatness and intrinsic value, and into our being the essence of the cosmos enters and longs for our decision.”¹

A man's life is dignified by its relationships. A young college friend of mine was invited to be the guest of the President of the United States. His life immediately seemed more important to all his friends. He who comes to associate with the infinite God finds his life larger and more worthy than he had before dreamed it might be.

“It seems that the heightened worth of self and the altruistic impulses in conversion are closely bound up together; and the differences between them lie simply in the different content of consciousness, determined by the direction in which it is turned. The central fact underlying both is the formation of a new ego, a fresh point of reference for mental states.”² Speaking of the great power of great religious truths to release energy within a man, Stevens says: “These and such as these pull a man together and, it may be, send him out on a new path of life with a swing. (They) open

¹Eucken, “The Truth of Religion,” page 3.

²Starbuck, “The Psychology of Religion,” page 129.

up the future to him with promise and hope and show him the possibility of achieving something that is worthy."¹

This new valuation of the self is not simply an emotional estimate; it has its roots in reality. New powers have been released within the soul which had heretofore been dormant and undiscovered. It is a well-known fact that each of us has great physical resources which are used only in emergencies. The house in which I was boarding once suddenly caught fire and burned to the ground. It was located far out in the suburbs of Atlanta, so no immediate help was available. After summoning the fire company, I set to work getting out the most valuable things. Soon three negro men arrived to help me. We went into the parlor and picked up a big upright piano, a man at each corner, and marched out of the room, down eight or nine steps off the porch, then down a still longer flight of steps off the high terrace on which the house was located, and placed the piano safely on the other side of the street. Again we entered and picked up a large bookcase filled with books, weighing perhaps a half more than the piano, and carried it to safety. Under ordinary circumstances I could not have so much as lifted one corner of that case; but I had the strength somewhere stored away, and the great emergency brought it out.

In similar fashion we all have more of spiritual capacity than we are using. When we have a religious experience, these dormant powers are awakened into activity, and this is the real basis for revaluation. Speaking of the result of a religious experience in the life, Professor Starbuck says: "It is as if brain areas which had lain dormant had now suddenly come into activity, as if stored-up energy had been liberated and now began to function."²

What is needed in the life of a man to release this energy is the touch of God's life. All about us are men and women who are living far less than their best. They are using only a small per cent of their spiritual resources. If they are ever to come to their best, it will be because of the contagion of the God life which will liberate their dormant powers. Each man of us must ask himself whether he is living at his best. If we are not, we should ask God to give us life.

¹Stevens, "The Psychology of the Christian Soul," page 97.

²Starbuck, "The Psychology of Religion," page 132.

STUDY III. PERSONAL RESULTS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law." (Gal. v. 22, 23.)

"Behold, this is the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be a burden to you: for I seek not yours, but you. . . . And I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls." (2 Cor. xii. 14, 15.)

"And he answered and said unto them, Go and tell John the things which you have seen and heard; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good tidings preached to them." (Luke vii. 22.)

PART VII. ENTHUSIASM FOR HUMANITY.

CHRIST once said to his disciples: "By this will every one recognize that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another." (John xiii. 35.) The nonbelievers said of the early Christians: "Behold how these Christians love one another!" The test of a Christian life always has been and always will be its attitude toward other men. If Christian life is being rightly related to all persons—God and men—then he who hates or scorns his fellow men cannot be a real Christian. Christian life has always shown itself in friendliness. Ames records the experience of a highly trained woman to whom religious experience meant new interest in people. "New love of people took possession of me," she writes. "I don't think I had ever before cared deeply for any one. Now even the meanest person seems wonderfully significant simply as a human being."¹

Any one who has done any evangelistic work in which men have been brought to a deep consciousness of God knows how frequent this phenomenon of new kindness to men appears. Many times after an appeal for loyalty to God I have had college men come to me to know how they could get right with their fellow men. No religious expe-

¹Ames, "The Psychology of Religious Experience," page 242.

rience is genuine which does not affect our relation to men. Within twenty hours of writing this paragraph I was speaking to a group of business men about what Christ could do for life. In this particular address I was not emphasizing the social aspect of Christ's message, and yet at the close a business man deeply concerned about his relation to his father came for an interview. For some reason unaccountable to him the father had conceived a great aversion to the son. This business man was deeply grieved and felt that his own religious life was on trial. He felt that he could not really be a Christian if he did not somehow show such genuine kindness as to win his father's confidence and love.

In Montgomery's poem, "The Watchman," the captain of the guard at Christ's tomb was completely transformed in his attitude toward humanity by seeing the risen Christ:

I care no more for glory; all desire
 For honor and for strife is gone from me,
 All eagerness for war. I only care
 To help and save bruised beings and to give
 Some comfort to the weak and suffering;
 I cannot even hate those Jews: my lips
 Speak harshly of them, but within my heart
 I only feel compassion; and I love
 All creatures, to the vilest of the slaves,
 Who seem to me as brothers. Claudia,
 Scorn me not for this weakness; it will pass—
 Surely 'twill pass in time—and I shall be
 Maximus, strong and valiant once again,
 Forgetting that slain god. And yet, and yet—
 He looked like one who could not be forgot!

This is no fanciful picture. This is just what has been happening for centuries. It is the new interest in humanity kindled by Jesus Christ which has built hospitals in China, asylums in India, and schools everywhere. The service of humanity was not multiplied, but was really initiated by Jesus Christ. Speaking of the pagan peoples before Christ, Seeley says: "Humanity was known to them as an occasional impulse, but not as a standing rule of life; but with the coming of Christ this lethargy passed away, and humanity becomes a passion with the early Christians."¹ When one becomes a Christian, something really happens in his life.

¹Seeley, "Ecce Homo," pages 154, 155.

STUDY IV.

THE MESSAGE OF THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

STUDY IV. THE MESSAGE OF THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

“They that fashion a graven image are all of them vanity; and the things that they delight in shall not profit; and their own witnesses see not, nor know: that they may be put to shame. Who hath fashioned a god, or molten an image that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be put to shame; and the workmen, they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; they shall fear, they shall be put to shame together.” (Isa. xliv. 9-11.)

“He hath cast off thy calf, O Samaria; mine anger is kindled against them: how long will it be ere they attain to innocency? For from Israel is even this; the workman made it, and it is no God; yea, the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces.” (Hos. viii. 5, 6.)

“For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse: because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened.” (Rom. i. 20, 21.)



PART I. THE GOD OF THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

IN order to understand clearly the uniqueness of the Christian message it is necessary to set forth very briefly the message of the non-Christian faiths. It will be necessary to do full credit to these religions if we are to have a fair understanding of the supremacy of Christianity. Surely every religion has much of good in it; for it represents, in part at least, the striving of the Spirit of God with these people as he attempted to lead all men to himself. “The scientist,” says Professor Knox, “may ignore the wisdom of Asia, but the Christian cannot ignore its faiths. He must consider their claim and compare them with his own.” Perhaps we shall find that this comparison will be the greatest proof of the supremacy of Christ’s gospel.

As a religion is determined by its conception of God, let us first see what these non-Christian faiths have to say concerning this ultimate reality.

Islam holds firmly to a personal Being who is the divine and final person in the universe. “There is no God but God,” is the battle cry of the Mohammedan. In the fact of

a personal God, Islam is like unto Christianity; but in the characteristics of that God they stand far apart. Christianity believes in a God who is self-existent, has free will, but always acts in accordance with his own highest self. Islam, on the other hand, sets forth a God who is self-existent, has a free will, acts in entirely arbitrary fashion, without any regard for self-consistency. The Mohammedan God is, therefore, one without consistency or, one may almost say, without real morality; for no person who is arbitrary can be completely moral. Of the ninety-nine names given to the God of Islam, there is none that denotes the idea of fatherhood or tender care. He is absolutely separate and distinct from the world and touches it only according to caprice, not according to any law of self-consistency. Such a God, supremely worthy in its conception of unity, which opposes all polytheism and destroys all idol worship, can hardly satisfy the longings of the human soul for fellowship with the divine.

Islam arose out of a recoil from the Mariolatry and practical polytheism of an effete Christianity. It is Christianity's greatest and most powerful rebuke. One cannot visit Palestine without being deeply moved by the tragedy of the situation. The idolatrous form of Christianity which gave rise to Mohammedanism has in turn corrupted that religion until it has become essentially idolatrous in its practice among the common people. While its founder, like that of Christianity, taught that there was one God, its degenerate form, like that of Christianity, is much given to sacred shrines, holy places, and holy persons—all of which are virtually worshiped by the common people.

STUDY IV. THE MESSAGE OF THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

"Wherefore should the nations say,
 Where is now their God?
 But our God is in the heavens:
 He hath done whatsoever he pleased.
 Their idols are silver and gold,
 The work of men's hands.
 They have mouths, but they speak not;
 Eyes have they, but they see not;
 They have ears, but they hear not;
 Noses have they, but they smell not;
 They have hands, but they handle not;
 Feet have they, but they walk not;
 Neither speak they through their throat.
 They that make them shall be like unto them;
 Yea, every one that trusteth in them."

(Ps. cxv. 2-8.)

"And he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." (Acts xvii. 26-28.)

PART II. THE GOD OF THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

(Continued.)

TURNING from Mohammedanism to Hinduism, we immediately come into an entirely different realm of thought. Mohammed held to a God of distinct personality and complete unity. While the Hindu religion from time to time declares its God to be personal, it is a personality far different from anything we know. He is the sole essence and reality of the universe, the unity pervading all things. Besides him there is no other reality. "There is no second

outside of him, no other distinct from him," is the set formula of the Hindu faith. This does not mean that there is no other god beside him; it means that there is no other reality beside him.

There is in this conception the fundamental truth of the unity of life, the interrelatedness of all being; but there is the fundamental error of leaving out of account all human personality. If there is no other besides God, then I am a mere dream, a shadow, a delusion. This being so, it is made impossible for me to know that it is so; for my friend, which tells me it is so, is not real, has no existence. It should be noted that the denial of the reality of sense impressions plunges us into utter darkness as to finding truth, for all our experience arises out of sense impressions and as such is the basis of knowledge.

The Buddhist conception goes still farther and denies not only the reality of man, but the reality of God. There is no reality; all is change and decay and illusion. "It is an essential doctrine," says Rhys Davids, perhaps the greatest authority on Buddhism: "It is an essential doctrine, constantly insisted upon in the original Buddhist texts and still held, so far as I have been able to ascertain, by all Buddhists, that there is nothing, either divine or human, either animal or vegetable or material, which is permanent. There is no being; there is only becoming."¹

Personal Thought.—Reflect for a moment to-day on what the value of religion would be to you if you were convinced of the truth of the doctrine of these religions—that is, that there is no such thing as a human person; that you are simply deluded when you think you exist.

¹Davids, "American Lectures," page 121.

STUDY IV. THE MESSAGE OF THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

“God maketh comparison between a slave, the property of his Lord, who hath no power over anything, and a free man whom we have ourselves supplied unto good supplies, and who giveth alms therefrom both in secret and openly. Shall they be held equal? No; praise be to God! But most men know it not.” (The Koran, Sura 16.)

“And as for thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, whom thou shalt have; of the nations that are round about you, of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids.” (Lev. xxv. 44.)

PART III. VALUATION OF MAN IN THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

ACCORDING to Islam, man is not akin to God; he does not partake of his nature and essence; neither, indeed, is such a thing desirable. Man is the creature of God. He is absolutely dependent upon his Creator in everything. While theoretically he is a moral agent, practically he cannot be; for God has fixed his fate long before man comes into being. One Mohammedan writer has put it thus:

When fate has come, man cannot it avert;
 Fate fails not, should he mind and sight exert.
 Beyond the Lord's decree, writ by his pen,
 Nor less nor more comes to his servants, men.

This conception at once takes from man all his dignity and worth. He is simply a puppet in the hands of an arbitrary God. The Hindu and Buddhist conception is far less satisfactory. According to the former, man has no distinct existence, but is simply an emanation from the divine, to which he will sooner or later return. He is not responsible, for whatever he does is the deed of the all-pervading God. This at once cuts the nerve of all high endeavor. Buddhism

goes farther and denies man any existence whatever. Man is simply a shadow; or, to be more exact, he is just the result of the stored-up energy of past deeds and desires. Desire, lust, longing—these are the efficient cause of existence. If I do not put away all desire, when my being disintegrates, another being must come into existence to live out the result of the stored-up energy of my desire and deeds (karma). The horror of life, therefore, is rebirth in another form, to have new desires, only to give birth to a new existence. Man, therefore, is a creature bound to the eternal round of decay and rebirth in endless and monotonous succession. Salvation, as we shall see later, is the getting free from this wheel of destiny, the stopping of this monotonous succession of rebirths.

These conceptions do not dignify manhood. Hence in these countries the common man is nothing; he is simply a slave. Only the man who has fortune or some temporal blessing can be worthy of notice. Man is valuable, not because of what he essentially is, but because of something he possesses. As a result of such conceptions there is no social uplift movement known in these countries. Man is not worth lifting. No one needs spend energy on a delusion. Crossing over the Yang-tse River at Hankow, China, one morning I was amazed and horrified to learn that a little girl who had fallen overboard from a house boat had been allowed to drown. The fisherman near had said: "We do not want her. She would be a care to us." Life in these countries has no value, no worth, no sacredness. There are no native asylums, no hospitals, no orphanages. The waste life is thrown on the scrap heap without remorse.

Religions which have no more exalted ideas of man are not apt to make provision for a very worthy salvation.

STUDY IV. THE MESSAGE OF THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

“Verily this is no other than a warning to all creatures,
To him among you who willeth to walk in a straight path,
But will it ye shall not, unless as God willeth it,
The Lord of the world.” (The Koran, Sura 81.)

“Happy are the believers who restrain their appetites, save with their wives, or the slaves whom their right hands possess, for in that case they shall be free from blame.” (The Koran, Sura 23.)

“Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin,
For I know my transgressions;
And my sin is ever before me.
Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,
And done that which is evil in thy sight;
That thou mayest be justified when thou speakest,
And be clear when thou judgest.” (Ps. li. 2-4.)

PART IV. CONCEPTION OF SIN IN THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

No non-Christian religion has such a note of personal sin as that in the reference just quoted, Psalm li. 2-4.

Every religion, so far as I am aware, takes account of a man's consciousness of sin—that is, recognizes that man is out of harmony with his truer self and his environment. The form which this conception of sin takes varies greatly.

The Mohammedan conception of sin is nearest to that of Christianity. Here sin is a transgression of the will of God and hence personal. The fundamental weakness of the conception lies in the fact that this will of God is purely arbitrary and not necessarily in conformity to any fundamental law of right or wrong. In other words, while Mohammedan sin is personal, it is the transgression of the whimsical commands of an arbitrary God. Thus, as a Mohammedan expressed it to a missionary: “If I use tobacco, God may damn me; but if I murder or commit adultery, God may be merciful.” This at once throws sin into the realm of arbitrary codes and does away with its most heinous aspect, the nonconformity to a holy and loving will of a self-consistent God.

According to Hinduism, since there is no personal God, there can be no such thing as nonconformity to his will; so sin in the Christian sense is unknown. Also, in view of the fact that God is all and in all and nothing exists besides him, all deeds are simply the deeds of the God and hence cannot be sinful. There can be no such thing as personal transgression. In spite, however, of this philosophic unreality of sin, the Hindu religion has much to say about it. Somehow the sense of sin cannot be set aside. The chief sin is the affirmation of personal, separate existence. Thought of personality is a delusion and an error out of which arises all suffering. It is this which gives rise to karma (the influence which lives on in a new birth), which condemns one to perpetual rebirths.

"In India the great line of cleavage in the universe has always run between the real and the unreal, rather than between the right and the wrong."¹

Buddhist sin is closely akin to that of Hinduism. Since there is no such thing as permanent existence, either human or divine, since all is change, the chief sin is to harbor the delusion of personal existence. The first fetter which holds man from entering the eightfold path of peace is sakkaya-ditthi (the delusion of self).

From this very brief statement one immediately sees that sin has no such terror for the non-Christian peoples as it has for those of the Christian faith. Sin with them is error, delusion, failure. With Christianity it is personal, willful transgression. One would expect, therefore—and one is not disappointed—that moral life would be at low ebb in all these countries. In Christian countries one finds sin in spite of our religion. In non-Christian countries much of the sin exists because of the religious beliefs.

¹Pratt, "Psychology of Religious Belief," page 90.

STUDY IV. THE MESSAGE OF THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

“Ye may divorce your wives twice: Keep them honorably or put them away with kindness. . . . Fight for the cause of God,—And kill them wherever ye shall find them—such the reward of infidels.” (The Koran, Sura 2.)

“And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful: who, knowing the ordinance of God, that they that practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them that practice them.” (Rom. i. 28-32.)

PART V. STANDARDS OF MORALITY IN NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

It cannot be doubted that the non-Christian religions have many splendid moral precepts. We have paid little attention to Confucianism in these studies, but here one ought to say that the Confucian standard of morals is high. The Golden Rule, though expressed negatively, the high reverence for parents, the inculcation of virtue, courage, benevolence, loyalty—all these are splendid. But in Confucianism God is ignored, woman is degraded, polygamy is sanctioned, and no power is given whereby the other virtues may be attained. China, leprous with sin and degradation, is a full and sufficient answer to Confucian ethics as a final system.

Mohammedanism inculcates the highest reverence for God, mercy to captives, charity to the needy, patience in hardships, sobriety, and kindness. These are all well worth while. But side by side with these precepts it inculcates the most bitter cruelty to and persecution of nonbelievers; slavery is directly and positively sanctioned; lying to women is justified; woman is degraded and made a tool of man's lust; and even heaven itself is a land where man may have unnumbered houris to minister to his debased passion. No one who reads the Koran, much less any one who views the

practical outcome of the Mohammedan code of morals, can find any final standard there.

Hindu moral codes differ with the numerous sects; but, on the whole, it may be said that all alike teach self-control, truthfulness, and the sanctity of the marriage relation. The most cultured sect, following the Bhagavad-Gita as their sacred book, may be said to have a fair code of morals. But no religion can pose as having a final standard for morals which sets up in its temples carvings which are such a travesty of morality and decency that no Christian woman can visit the temple. Nor can it hope to have much moral power when its gods in incarnate form are notorious as thieves and licentious beyond measure and a part of its sacred books must be condemned by the English government as obscene literature.

In Buddhism there is the most utter confusion of essentials and nonessentials. Thus sleeping on a trundle-bed is put side by side with hatred, pride, and self-righteousness. Morality is a code and not a principle. Not only so, but all basis for morality is cut from beneath a Buddhist's feet; for he believes in neither self nor God, and there can be no moral duty for either.

None of these religions can satisfy our sense of moral life. They are the morals of a stationary code and cannot meet the needs of growing life. They were valuable in their day; but these peoples, with their belated sense of God, have far outgrown their codes. A new dynamic is needed, and Christianity can furnish that dynamic.

STUDY IV. THE MESSAGE OF THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

“On couches ranged in rows shall they recline; and to the damsels of large, dark eyes will we wed them.” (The Koran, Sura 52, spoken of future life.)

What grief
Springs of itself and springs not of desire?
Senses and things perceived mingle and light
Passion's quick spark of fire.

This is peace:
To conquer love of self and lust of life,
To tear deep-rooted passion from the breast,
To still this inward strife.

—Arnold's *“The Light of Asia.”*

PART VI. CONCEPTION OF SALVATION IN NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

By the word “salvation” we do not here refer specially to future life. This is simply a resultant of salvation. Salvation is what a religion proposes to do for us here and now.

In accordance with the Mohammedan idea of sin, as the transgression of the arbitrary mandate of God—often without regard to the fundamental conception of right and wrong—the result of sin is disfavor, but not guilt. Sin does not have the quality of guilt which it has for Christians. Hence Mohammedan salvation is not forgiveness, but indulgence; not freedom from guilt, but freedom from punishment. A man who still has a murderous heart may gain entrance into Paradise if only God pleases to be indulgent. Personal holiness is not inculcated as the goal for Mohammedan character.

According to Hinduism, the supreme evil of life is this embodied existence which continually returns in a new

embodied form. To get rid of this round of rebirth, to get away from embodied existence, to be reabsorbed into the divine is the one conception of salvation. This can be attained only by the complete denial of self, with all its desires and passions. Hence salvation is the going out of the fires of life.

Buddhism is much akin to this. It also seeks freedom from embodied existence. It is necessary thereto that a man extinguish all desire, all passion, all thought; then he will pass out of this deluded state into Nirvana, the state where he is at rest and without desire, without anxiety. Finally, when this present embodied existence is dissolved, he will simply be snuffed out; he will have attained extinction (*parra-nibana*). This is final and complete salvation; it is simply nihilism.

In these religions salvation is purely negative. It is freedom from some load, some punishment, some undesirable state. There is nothing positive in it. It has no real content. It must be acknowledged that Christian salvation has had too much of the idea of freedom from the pains of hell. But this is perverted Christianity. Christ's salvation was positive fellowship. Set this beside Buddha's extinction or Hinduism's reabsorption into the divine, and we readily see how barren the non-Christian conception is.

STUDY IV. THE MESSAGE OF THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

“For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse: because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened.” (Rom. i. 20, 21.)

How many births are past, I cannot tell;
 How many births to come, no man can say.
 But this alone I know, and know full well,
 That pain and grief embitter all the way.

—*South India Folk Song.*

PART VII. DO THE NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS SATISFY?

WE have very briefly set forth the non-Christian conceptions of God, man, sin, morality, and salvation; and we must now ask in conclusion, Do these religions satisfy the souls of men? “The religious problem,” says Professor Knox, “is: Given man, dependent and ignorant, with feelings, fears, hopes, hatreds, loves, in the midst of he knows not what dangers and difficulties, how shall he be triumphant over fear and sin and death? How shall he live in peace and make existence not only endurable, but worthy? Thus, though some may regret it, the direct and fundamental proofs of our religion can be found only in its satisfaction of the cravings of the soul and by its adaptation to the highest wants of society through its ethical activities.”¹¹

Measured by these standards, do the non-Christian religions prove adequate? The supreme craving in every human soul is for fellowship with a higher kindred power. Browning has well voiced this hunger of the soul in his splendid words in “Pauline”:

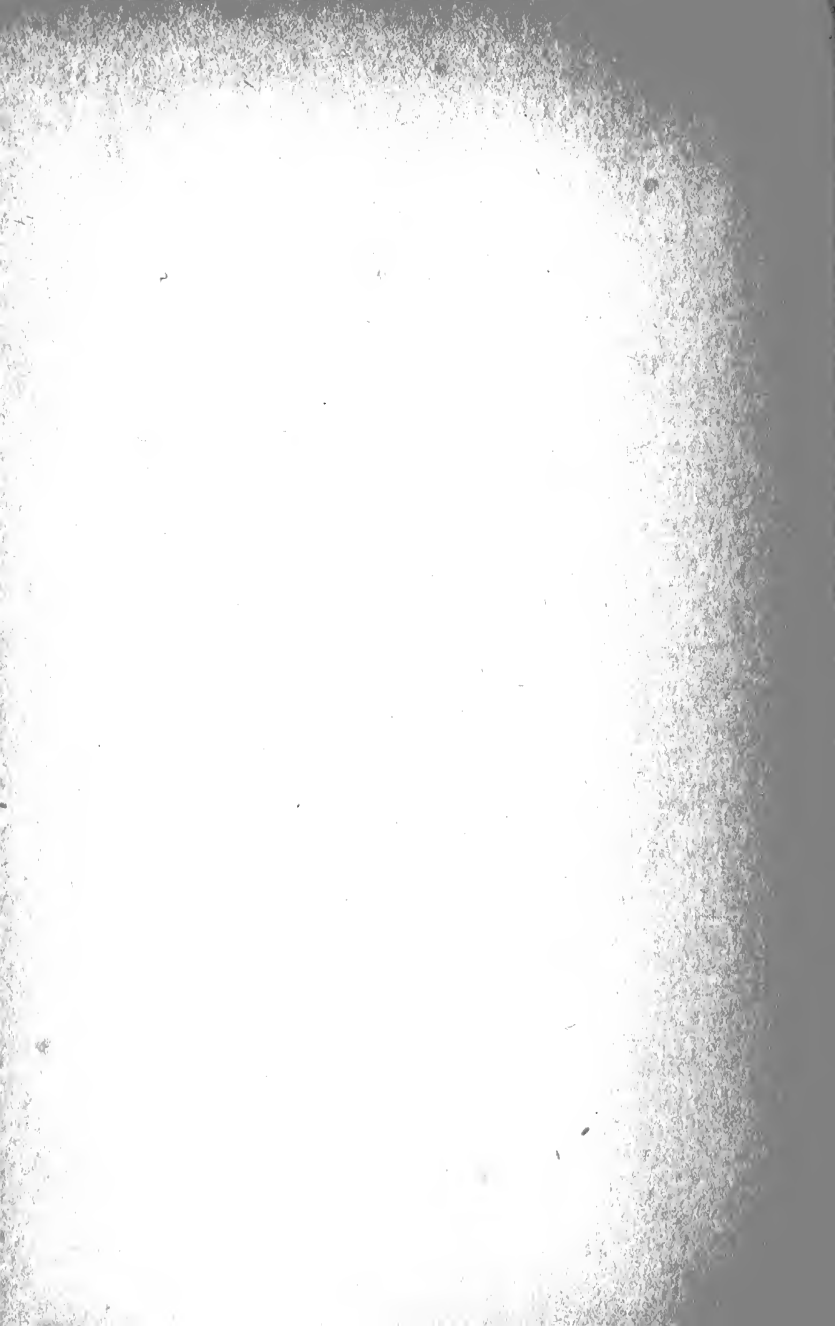
The last point I can trace is—rest beneath
 Some better essence than itself, in weakness;
 This is “myself,” not what I think I should be:

¹¹“Direct and Fundamental Proofs of the Christian Religion,” pages 156 and 173.

And what is that I hunger for but God?
 My God, my God, let me for once look on thee
 As though naught else existed, we alone.
 And as creation crumbles, my soul's spark
 Expand till I can say: "Even from myself
 I need thee, and I feel thee, and I love thee."
 I do not plead my rapture in thy works,
 For love of thee, nor that I feel as one
 Who cannot die; but there is that in me
 Which turns to thee, which loves or which should love.

Which one of the religions which we have discussed can meet this test? Islam cannot; for its God is a capricious, austere, absentee Ruler who cares naught for human life. Buddhism cannot, for it denies the existence of any God at all. Hinduism, though its contemplative method comes nearer than any other, cuts off any final satisfaction; for there cannot be any real communion, since there are no persons to enter into that relationship. There is only one. That is God; and even he is not a person, but a vague, pantheistic essence that pervades the universe.

Those who have studied the peoples in the mission fields know from observation that the souls of these men are hungry. There is a great unrest, a great longing, which finds no final satisfaction through the non-Christian faiths. That these religions have value cannot be doubted, but that they are not able to meet the needs of men is equally clear to any student. This dissatisfaction is written large in the faces of all whom one sees in these lands. There is an over-anxious expression which none can miss. The non-Christian peoples have much of joy. They love their friends; they have the love of their children; they are completely human; but the deepest yearning of the soul is only partially met. They know God but dimly and hence are unsatisfied.



STUDY V.

MODERN SUBSTITUTES FOR CHRISTIANITY.

STUDY V. MODERN SUBSTITUTES FOR CHRISTIANITY.

“For thus saith Jehovah unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live; but seek not Bethel, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beer-sheba: for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall come to nought. Seek Jehovah, and ye shall live; lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and it devour, and there be none to quench it in Bethel. Ye who turn justice to wormwood, and cast down righteousness to the earth, seek him that maketh the Pleiades and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night; that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth (Jehovah is his name); that bringeth sudden destruction upon the strong, so that destruction cometh upon the fortress.” (Amos v. 4-9.)

PART I. THEOSOPHY.

THAT we are living in a period of religious unrest, no one can doubt who has given any thought to the ten or a dozen forms of new faith which have found adherents in our midst. As would be expected, most of these cults have some truth which is worth retaining; and one should, so far as possible, see what this truth is.

Closely related to the non-Christian religions or ethnic faiths is the system of thought known as Theosophy. The Theosophical Society was organized in New York in 1875, and perhaps Madam Blavatsky and Mrs. Besant have been among its most noted advocates. It claims to be the final religion, the final science—in fact, the final wisdom. As a cult it is esoteric—that is, only the initiated can understand it fully. Its authority rests on a secret tradition which is the special property and revelation of an advanced brotherhood, who through successive incarnations have come to that high stage where the secrets of the universe may be revealed to them. Madam Blavatsky claims to have been associated with this brotherhood in receiving her revelations.

Theosophy is closely related to Brahmanism, is purely pantheistic, denies the personality of God, and says all objective reality is a temporary illusion. From the one over-soul man proceeds and hither he returns. “The most that can be said is that the absolute periodically differentiates

itself and periodically withdraws the differentiation into itself." After this human existence has been dissolved, man enters into a kind of heaven where he remains a longer or shorter time, in accordance with his merits, and then is ready for a reincarnation or rebirth. If he is ever able by perfection of life to get freedom from the wheel of death and rebirth, he then enters Nirvana or is reabsorbed into the absolute.

While it cannot be denied that some of the Theosophists have lived beautiful lives, nevertheless their system, like all other forms of pantheism, cuts the true nerve of moral action. If I am a part of God, then I cannot sin; for God, being the all-pervasive, all-inclusive, all-perfect essence, whatever I do he does, and hence I have no more responsibility. It denies all reality to man, just as does Hinduism, and hence takes all motive out of life. The mystical, contemplative element in it has made an appeal to many restless souls; but this mystical element arises out of the fact that man is a delusion, and his final salvation consists in getting out of himself, as it were, finding out that he is a delusion, and hence passing out of this shadowy existence. In no such system can any permanent satisfaction be found. Extinction is not a goal worth working toward, and such a religion is a poor incentive to life. It is pessimistic to the core and gives no incentive to high endeavor.

STUDY V. MODERN SUBSTITUTES FOR CHRISTIANITY.

“When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. The more the prophets called them, the more they went from them: they sacrificed unto the Baalim, and burned incense to graven images. Yet I taught Ephraim to walk; I took them on my arms; but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was to them as they that lift up the yoke on their jaws; and I laid food before them.” (Hos. xi. 1-4.)

“How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I cast thee off, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? my heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee; and I will not come in wrath.” (Hos. xi. 8, 9.)

PART II. CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

PERHAPS Mrs. Eddy would resent her system's being put close to Theosophy, but here it logically belongs. Christian Science, too, owes part of its large influence to its Hinduistic elements. Mrs. Eddy distinctly denies the personality of God and says: “God is not a person; God is principle.” In other words, her system borders on, or may be called, a type of pantheism. She is in harmony with both Theosophy and Hindu thought when she denies all reality to the sense world. “Christian Science reveals incontrovertibly that mind is all in all, that the only realities are the divine mind and idea. God is the only intelligence of the universe, including man.” “There is no finite soul or spirit.” “Matter will finally be proven to be nothing but a mortal belief.” “Matter and its belief—sin, sickness, death—are states of mortal mind which act, react, and then come to stop. They are not ideas, but illusions.” “Man is incapable of sin, sickness, and death, inasmuch as he derives his essence from God and possesses not a single original or underived power.” “Thus the long tragedy which sin is supposed to have enacted in the world turns out to have been only a deceptive dream.”

It will at once be seen how close this comes to philosophic Hinduism. God is all in all. He is the one essence. Man's

earthly state is pure delusion. In fact, man has no real and separate existence. There is, therefore, no solid foundation for morality, no good or final development, not even any sure basis for knowledge, since all sense impressions are mere delusions. The system is full of contradictions. It resents being called pantheistic, and yet denies all personality to God and makes man a kind of emanation of the divine. It holds that God is love; but one wonders how love can be an attribute of a completely impersonal element.

Into her system Mrs. Eddy has incorporated the power of suggestion in curing physical ills; and that she and her followers have wrought many marvelous cures, no one need deny. The system has rightly called attention to the close relation of the mind to the body and also to the fact that any real religion should have reference to well-being in this life as well as in the life to come. It undoubtedly has helped some people and has struck at that otherworldliness which has at times been the bane of Christianity.

But these virtues do not explain away the inconsistencies or make it a tenable system for a thoughtful mind. Professor Leuba's lame defense of this doctrine of the unreality of matter as identical with idealism seems to me wide of the mark. Concrete idealism does not deny matter, but claims that it is not opposed to, but, as it were, a manifestation of, spirit. Christian Science has value neither as Christianity nor as science and must sooner or later run its course.

STUDY V. MODERN SUBSTITUTES FOR CHRISTIANITY.

"The high mountains are for the wild goats;
 The rocks are a refuge for the conies.
 He appointed the moon for seasons:
 The sun knoweth his going down,
 Thou makest darkness, and it is night,
 Wherein all the beasts of the forest creep forth.
 The young lions roar after their prey,
 And seek their food from God.
 The sun riseth, they get them away,
 And lay them down in their dens.
 Man goeth forth unto his work
 And to his labor until the evening.
 O Jehovah, how manifold are thy works!
 In wisdom hast thou made them all:
 The earth is full of thy riches." (Ps. civ. 18-24)

PART III. PESSIMISM.

ANOTHER cult which is closely related to the Oriental religions is that of Pessimism. Both Schopenhauer and Von Hartman were in deep sympathy with certain elements of Buddhism. According to Schopenhauer, the world is the expression of will, and bad will or blind will at that. The will as unsatisfied striving creates the world. This world, he claims, is the worst possible world. Thought is not permanent, since it is a mere function of the brain. There is, therefore, no possible immortality, since when the thought vanishes with the brain there is no personality to be immortal. Life is taken up with the pursuit of happiness, which may never be attained; hence life is a failure. There is much more of evil in the world than there is of good. Man is worthless and deserves no better than he gets.

Plunged into so deep a sea of pessimism as this, the one recourse was to find an exit from existence. This both Schopenhauer and Von Hartman found in the Buddhistic doctrine of extinction. Pessimism accepts one substance or being, which is impersonal, of which all souls are simply emanations. Here it is hardly at one with Buddhism, but in the fact of widespread misery and suffering the two systems come together again. Like Buddhism, Pessimism finds relief through extinction.

As a philosophy and as a religion, Pessimism is a failure. No man can be expected to strive much in a world when all is against him. If all is predetermined beforehand and is bad, what use to strive for that which is good? If, furthermore, final extinction is the ultimate hope, there is no hope at all. The mind refuses to rest in such a system.

Again, Schopenhauer's system breaks down because he makes unsatisfied striving the essence of evil. But is it? Would complete satiety be blessedness? An ox that has fed and drunk and lies down to rest is a perfect ox; but not so of man. His very manhood reveals itself in its striving. To be completely satisfied would be stagnation, and that means death. It is of the nature of spiritual life that it ever aspires. So that Schopenhauer's thesis of perpetual striving, instead of being a basis for Pessimism, is the proof of the divine within man.

Poor vaunt of life indeed
 Were man but formed to feed
 On joy, to solely seek and find and feast;
 Such feasting ended, then
 As sure an end to men;
 Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets doubt the maw-crammed
 beast?

Rejoice we are allied
 To That which doth provide
 And not partake, effect and not receive!
 A spark disturbs our clod;
 Nearer we hold of God
 Who gives than of His tribes that take. I must believe.

What I aspired to be
 And was not comforts me.
 A brute I might have been; but would not sink in the scale.
 —*Browning's "Rabbi Ben Ezra."*

Optimism arises not out of overlooking the evil and suffering of life, but springs from the belief that God is bringing all life to higher perfection. This life is a training ground, and our desires and struggles are but teachers of larger life. It bases itself on the belief that through the universe "one increasing purpose runs." On the whole, humanity has found it impossible to accept any other than an optimistic theory of life. Pessimism gets us nowhere, and we will not follow a blind alley.

STUDY V. MODERN SUBSTITUTES FOR CHRISTIANITY.

“That they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.” (Acts xvii. 27-29.)

PART IV. POSITIVISM, THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY.

ACCORDING to this theory of life, a mother holding a child in her arms is the symbol of real religion. August Comte set aside a personal God and put in his place a kind of deified humanity, a great being. He claimed that religion must have two roots: First, the belief in a universal being, and, secondly, the belief in immortality. Since he could not accept a personal God, he found his supreme being in a deified humanity. Since he could not believe in the continuity of the individual after death, he found his immortality in that of the race. The aim of Comte was to bring about through his new religion a social ideal. He claimed that humanity was suffering from an overemphasis on individualism; and that to turn man's thought away from himself would not only benefit society, but also the individual.

Fauerbach claimed that humanity is actually the object of all religious worship, since our God is only the anthropomorphic formation of our own desires and needs. He claimed that there was no objective reality corresponding to our conception of God, save as it could be found in humanity itself. Hence to him the setting up of humanity as our object of worship was bringing religion in touch with reality.

George Eliot is perhaps the best literary exponent of this system. To her it became an enthusiasm; and while not in complete agreement with Comte, she has done much to popularize his theory. The central idea of her religion was not faith in God, but faith in man. Savonarola reprimands Romola for trying to run away from suffering. “If your own people are wearing a yoke,” he says to her, “will you slip from under it instead of struggling with them to lighten it?” George Eliot called men to renounce self for the sake of a larger humanity. This is good if sufficiently motived by a humanity which has the Godhood within it.

Immortality was the share each person could have in building a larger race. This also is good, provided all progress gained can be permanently kept.

May I reach
 That purest heaven, be to other souls
 The cup of strength in some great agony,
 Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love!

So shall I join the choir invisible
 Whose music is the gladness of the world.

—Eliot's "O May I Join the Choir Invisible!"

The value of this theory is to bring us back to earth and socialize our lives.

This thing is all very beautiful; but the trouble is, on the positivistic basis, taking all Godhood out of man, it is not true. First of all, there is no such thing as an idealized humanity. This is a pure fiction. Humanity is far from idealized, and that it can lift itself by its own boot straps is the wildest dream. In setting aside man's relation to a divine power, the Positivists remove all hope of humanity's ever reaching an ideal state. Neither is humanity permanent so far as this world is concerned. Science holds that many centuries hence this world will be a burned-out cinder, and life upon it must be snuffed out. Hence humanity in the state we know it now, as a collection of individual beings, will ultimately be no more. An idealized humanity would, therefore, be a god of time and not of eternity and our religion a temporary makeshift by which we could delude ourselves into a temporary enjoyment of life. Immortality of the race is a figment, since when the last human being leaves this form of existence all the struggles of the human soul for character are thrown away. There will be no world in which gladness shall be music, and all the practice of the choir will have been useless. "The religion of humanity," said Frederick Harrison, "is simply morality fused with social devotion and enlightened by sound philosophy." But this is just where this religion breaks down. It neither has a sound philosophy nor does it offer to men a sufficiently permanent and valuable humanity to command our fullest devotion. I will not devote myself completely to a mere passing puppet, however well dressed and well trained that puppet may appear. Any humanity which is a bare humanity, bereft of a divine element, is finally a puppet show.

STUDY V. MODERN SUBSTITUTES FOR CHRISTIANITY.

“Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I say unto you I speak not from myself: but the Father abiding in me doeth his works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake.” (John xiv. 8-11.)

“All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him.” (Matt. xi. 27.)

PART V. THEISM, A CHRISTLESS CHRISTIANITY.

It has become more or less popular to say that we believe in God, but we do not need Christ to interpret God. That the Jews had a noble religion and that they knew God, no one denies. That there are adherents of Mohammedanism who know God, one cannot doubt. But do they know God in his fullness? and are we satisfied with their less perfect knowledge? On the other hand, there are many, both Jews and Christians, who are reading into God all the qualities which Christ came to reveal and then are saying that they do not need Christ, for their God has the same value to them as our Christlike God. It is fair, however, to ask where they got their conception of God.

At the University of Nebraska a Jewish student stood along with a number of others who were thus indicating their quiet decision to give themselves to the Christian life. After the service the Jewish student came and asked if I thought he was right. He said he did not believe in Christ as the Messiah, but he believed in him as the greatest prophet. I then began to ask him about his conception of God. I found that he believed in the same kind of a loving Father that I trust and worship. His God was not the conception of Jehovah in the Old Testament, but the Heavenly Father of the New Testament. He was reading into his

Jehovah all the attributes which Christ came to make known. For this I am thankful. Only I tried to make clear to my inquirer that it was hardly fair to incorporate into one's life all the message of the Christ life and yet deny the historical fact whence that message draws authority and power. Christ is not another God. Those who worship him are not dualists. This unitarian emphasis has had the benefit of bringing us to realize that we do not go to Christ instead of God, but we go to God through Christ. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

This does not mean that the Hindu does not have access to God simply because he has not heard of Christ. It means that his conception of God is less full and rich. It is in this sense that no man can come unto God save through Christ. If a man can only count ten, he is shut off from the further reaches of mathematics. And if a man has only had dim revelations of God, he has not come to God in his fullness. The doctrine of Christ is not the denial of any light that any man may have. It is simply the promise and fulfillment of a truer light to all who will through him come unto the Father. To cast aside Christ as unnecessary and unreasonable simply because all men have not heard of him is just as foolish as to cast aside all mathematical formulas simply because an African savage can only count ten. Not only so, but to say that one owes no debt to Christ in coming to God is on a par with saying that the savage counting ten can arrive at full mathematical knowledge without the intervening formulas.

Christ is a historical fact, and we read God in the light of that fact. One can no more read the full character of God without the historical fact than we can have light without the candle which emits it.

By all means let every man put into his conception of God all the richness which he can find from any source, but let him not deny the source from which that richness springs.

STUDY V. MODERN SUBSTITUTES FOR CHRISTIANITY.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. . . . And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not." (John i. 1-5.)

"There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only-begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth." (John i. 9-14.)

PART VI. ECLECTICISM.

IN the midst of the confusion of faiths the Japanese have thought they could compound a new religion out of all the best elements of the various religions. Accordingly, many a Japanese will tell you that he is neither a Buddhist, a Shintoist, nor a Christian; but he is all in one. A similar movement arose in New England in the last half of the last century. A prominent educator of the East has recently espoused a new religion bordering on some such theory of religious values. The Religion of Reason during the French Revolution was a movement in the same direction. But this French religion was not able to make much progress. One of its representatives, feeling that they had incorporated into it every good element of all religions, was at a loss to know why it did not win more adherents. Accordingly, he asked Talleyrand what was necessary to make this religion a success. It is said that the old diplomat replied: "I should advise you to get yourself crucified and rise from the dead on the third day."

This strikes at the very heart of the difficulty. Religion is not a theory, it is a fellowship; and to be a fellowship there must be loving persons on both sides.

"As the nutritive elements of the soil cannot be made to minister to life and movement by being brought together and can fulfill that function only when taken up by a living organism already present, so religious truths cannot be combined into a living whole by a mere process of juxtaposition. A living religion sufficiently comprehensive in its fundamental principles can be hospitable toward truths found anywhere in the limits of the accessible universe; but the simple compiling of the truths will not make a religion endowed with victorious energy."¹

Principles in themselves have no transforming power. It is life that transforms; and a religion that is simply a compilation of principles is useless. What the human race wants and needs is great purposes and principles incarnated into a person. This no eclectic religion can furnish. If the eclectics are to make a successful religion, they will not have the simple task of compiling elemental religious truths; but they must create outright a God who incarnates them all.

¹Sheldon, "Unbelief in the Nineteenth Century," pages 216, 217.

STUDY V. MODERN SUBSTITUTES FOR CHRISTIANITY.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." (Rom. viii. 1-5.)

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. . . . And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not." (John i. 1-5.)

PART VII. THE ETHICAL CULTURE MOVEMENT.

THIS is not essentially a religion, but a declaration that supernatural religion is unnecessary to life. It is closely akin to Positivism in that it makes an idealized humanity the object of its endeavor, and it is related to Eclecticism in that its moral code is an attempted compilation of all the best elements of moral truth to be found. Felix Adler, the founder of this movement, in his book on "The Religion of Duty," says that we cannot get our religion from authority—by which he means the Bible—we cannot get it from philosophy; we cannot get it from science. "All really religious persons will agree that religion is primarily a matter of experience."¹

The central element in that experience is spirit. By this he does not mean what he calls ghosts or what he calls a universal world ghost—a god. By spirit he means a "non-material something" which dwells in us. This spirit is a kind of all-pervasive essence in which the human race is united. "The very idea of spirit is that of unity expressing itself in plurality and of endless differences fused together in an all-embracing unity."² The indwelling spirit is not

¹Adler, "The Religion of Duty," page 8. ²*Ibid.*, page 15.

something personal, but, on the contrary, decidedly impersonal. It is the common feeling we have for others, the bond of unity between man and man. It is, therefore, the world ground of all true morality. Hence morality is of the very nature and constitution of man. It is the essence of the universe, and in response to morality one finds himself in harmony with the universe. This universal, all-pervasive spirit is a kind of cosmic urge, or universal impulse, pushing all humanity forward to a higher and truer destiny. Inasmuch as this spirit pervades all men to a greater or less degree, it gives dignity to all human beings.

This movement has two definite contributions to make. First, it lends sacredness and dignity to all life and brings all men into a common brotherhood. Secondly, it puts emphasis on moral action as the very essence and meaning of life. It thus checks up all religions on their moral content and justly calls them to make their practice as good as their creed.

But the weakness of the ethical culture movement lies in its failure to explain this cosmic urge. How does it come that the heart of the universe is moral? How does it happen that in adjusting ourselves to this all-pervasive, impersonal spirit we find ourselves acting morally? There cannot be any explanation save that this all-pervasive, impersonal spirit is moral. But here we have a contradiction of terms. Whatever is moral is personal, if language means anything. Things, essences, impersonal entities do not have morality ascribed to them. Hence the ethical culturist must either cease to call his "spirit" moral or must impute to it some kind of personality. Now, if it be personal spirit, then we have no new theory, for Christianity has for centuries taught that the Spirit of God within the soul urges men on to moral endeavor. This same Spirit has united men into a common brotherhood and has given a high and dynamic motive for brotherly action or morality.

It would appear, therefore, that if ethical culture is really new, its philosophy is not true; and if there is truth in its philosophy, it really is nothing new.



STUDY VI.
A PERSONAL GOD.

STUDY VI. A PERSONAL GOD.

"Then Jehovah answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,
 Who is this that darkeneth counsel
 By words without knowledge?
 Gird up now thy loins like a man;
 For I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.
 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?
 Declare, if thou hast understanding.
 Who determined the measures thereof, if thou knowest?
 Or who stretched the line upon it?
 Whereupon were the foundations thereof fastened?
 Or who laid the corner stone thereof,
 When the morning stars sang together,
 And all the sons of God shouted for joy?

(Job xxxviii. 1-7.)

PART I. MODERN SCHOLARSHIP AND A PERSONAL GOD.

IN our modern time some have feared lest the advance of science would drive God out of the universe. The supposed conflict between science and religion is not so acute now as formerly, but there are still those who feel that there is conflict. Let us see. Science proceeds on the assumption of the uniformity and the universality of law. It assumes that a rock dropped here or in China or anywhere else on the earth will fall to the ground—that is, the law of attraction of bodies is uniform and universal. But what is the deeper meaning of this fact of uniformity? Does it not mean essential unity? If I should go into the customhouse of a city and see the clock set itself just at twelve, then on another day go into the courthouse and see the clock there set itself just at twelve in the same fashion, I would, if I were a thoughtful man, begin to wonder what the meaning of this uniformity could be. I think I would come to the conclusion that these clocks were unified either by common device and design, or else they were connected up somewhere to a central clock—that is, I would conclude that uniformity of action meant some kind of unity. I would probably find that they were all connected up with the Western Union and hence were really unified.

Now, the thoughtful man sees that there is a law of uniformity throughout the universe. This does not just hap-

pen. A self-running universe is a fiction of muddy thinking. There is somewhere a unifying element, a something that grips up all forces into itself and makes them one. Science calls this force. Hartley said that it was a very mysterious force, and so it seems to me; but at least it is unity. There are not a thousand or a hundred or even two supreme elements in the universe. The whole is unified, else there would be cross purposes and utter confusion. Then there could be no science. Science, therefore, gives us unity. This is not God, but it certainly does not deny God. The Christians claim that God unifies all life, that he is the supreme force in the universe. Science does not deny this. Indeed, it looks in this direction, but cannot go so far.

Again, science proceeds on the assumption that life is a process; that nothing is, but all things are becoming; that all things are moving toward a goal, be that goal good or bad. The law of evolution says that there is uniformity of procedure. Even the so-called jumps of nature are uniform in action and come about in accordance with fixed law. But when science says there is uniformity, progress, movement toward a goal, it says there is intelligence; for nothing save intelligence can have purpose. Blind force and purpose belong to two unrelated fields. They cannot be put together.

Hence science, as pure science, says there is a unifying element which knits all life into one unity, and this unity is shot through with intelligence. This is not God, but it does not contradict him.

STUDY VI. A PERSONAL GOD.

"The heavens declare the glory of God;
 And the firmament showeth his handiwork.
 Day unto day uttereth speech,
 And night unto night showeth knowledge.
 There is no speech nor language;
 Their voice is not heard.
 Their line is gone out through all the earth,
 And their words to the end of the world.
 In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,
 Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
 And rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course.
 His going forth is from the end of the heavens,
 And his circuit unto the ends of it;
 And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."
 (Ps. xix. 1-6.)

PART II. MODERN SCHOLARSHIP AND A PERSONAL GOD.

(Continued.)

THE very definite and decided tendency in philosophy is toward personalism. The old form of crass materialism has lost its hold. No one now believes that the higher states of consciousness can be evolved out of sheer matter. Pure idealism has likewise passed. We cannot deny the existence of matter. To define it as a delusion of our senses is sheer nonsense, for it cuts the nerve of all true thought and makes knowledge impossible. Therefore we must say that matter and spirit are somehow akin. They are not absolutely opposed to each other. The personalistic philosophy claims that material is the manifestation or embodiment of idea. Now, thought incarnated is person; and so philosophy to-day is looking toward personalism as the ultimate meaning of the universe. "Unless, then," says Dr. Bowne, "appearances are unusually deceitful in this case, it is plain that man is no impotent annex to a self-sufficient mechanical system, but is rather a very significant factor in cosmic ongoings, at least in terrestrial ongoings." And proceeding further he says: "A world of persons with a Supreme Person at the head is the conception to which we come as the result of our critical reflection."¹

¹Bowne, "Personalism," page 279.

“But,” objects a student who came to me recently, “how can God be infinite and yet personal? Does not personality limit him?” That depends on your conception of personality. “These, then,” says Illingworth, “are the constituent elements of personality as such—self-consciousness, the power of self-determination, and the desire which insistently impels us into communion with other persons—or, in other words, reason, will, and love.”¹

A person is a spirit which is conscious of itself in all its differentiations. If we think of human personality, it certainly would limit God. But we must remember that no human being is completely personal. We are just growing toward personality and are far from complete. We have a little intelligence. We know that we can find some truth, even though we often conceive falsely. We have some love power; for we know that we love our mothers and our friends, even though we often go astray in our emotional life. We have a little will; for we do choose right part of the time, even though we choose falsely often. Growth in personality is growth in fullness and accuracy of these faculties. All education is to help us know right, respond rightly to that knowledge, and act right when we know and feel. It is not impossible to conceive of a personality in which the knowing faculty is complete, in which there is right response to all life, and in which all choices are right and true. Here would be a perfect person, an unlimited person—that is, unlimited in the realm of personal life. The fact that one person has all the powers, emotions, and qualities of all his friends and his own besides does not limit him. He does not become less personal because he is not set over against his friends. If God contains all the attributes of humanity and nature, as well as all that our imperfect natures point toward, he is not thereby limited, nor is he less personal.

Dr. W. N. Clarke defines a perfect person as “the being in whom these essential powers which constitute personality (intelligence, affection, and will) exist in perfect quality and degree and are perfectly bound together and welded in use in the unity of self-directing consciousness.” Such a conception is not impossible, and such a conception approaches the idea of a personal God. It is poor and barren compared with what God must be, but it does not limit God.

¹Illingworth, “Personality, Human and Divine,” page 38.

STUDY VI. A PERSONAL GOD.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him.” (John iii. 16, 17.)

PART III. THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

IF we are to have a God whom we can worship, his character must be self-consistent and good; otherwise he would be a monster whom we might fear, but whom we could never worship. No sooner do we come to consider this phase of God's nature than the problem of evil rises up to confuse us. If God is good, how does it happen that evil is prevalent and at times seems to be triumphant? If evil is separate from God and not amenable to God, then we have a dual universe, which science will not permit us to believe. If, on the other hand, God is supreme, how can we reconcile the continued existence of evil in the world with our conception of his benevolence? This is the age-long problem, which can never be completely solved, but which we can in a measure come to justify.

The purpose of life is training, as we shall show in a later chapter. But training in moral character can come only through overcoming obstacles and through moral choice. In a world where every obstacle was removed and in which one could not help doing the right there would be no real morality. Character could never be developed in such a place. “Tell me, now,” says Browning, “what were the bond 'twixt man and man, dost judge, pain once abolished?” In his poem entitled “Rephan” Browning sets forth clearly that life without battles would be a dead calm where no character could be born. Life in such a place would be unbearable, and one would be glad to get to a world where struggle was and victory was possible.

“You divine the test.

When the trouble grew in my pregnant breast
A voice said: “So wouldst thou strive, not rest?”

Burn and not smoulder, win by worth,
Not rest content with a wealth that's dearth?
Thou art past Rephan; thy place be earth!”

Instead, therefore, of its being impossible to reconcile a good God with a world of conflict, it would be impossible to conceive of God as good in a struggleless world; for a God who would shut me up to dead indifference would rob me of the chance of character and hence be immoral. We have no praise for the parent who so smooths the path of the child as to rob the child of all endeavor, for thereby he robs the child of character. Precisely this is the danger of all luxury and ease: it makes people soft and spineless. No good God will treat me thus. We cannot make God less benevolent than our standard for parenthood. It is easier to justify the existence of evil in the presence of a good God than it would be to believe in a good God in the absence of any chance for character.

Kant, in his critique of practical reason, said that there was an oughtness in the human soul, a sense of duty which gave meaning to all morality. "But," said Kant, "if this oughtness is not in harmony with the spirit of the universe, I am opposed to the universe and must be ground to powder." He felt it absolutely essential, therefore, to posit the goodness of the universal order. We must believe that God is good or else plunge into absolute pessimism, which denies all morality.

On the hypothesis of a God without goodness, man's goodness would be the highest and the best in existence. But we all know that man's goodness is very partial. If, therefore, God is not good, there is no final goodness, and the world is incomplete. There is failure written at the very heart of things. All my striving for right is a failure, because there is no final standard. All morality is a chaos, my own moral nature a misfit and a lie. Again, we are plunged into complete pessimism, which ends in a blind alley. This human nature cannot and will not accept.

While we may not escape the difficulty of this problem, we at least can rest sure of this, that a universe such as we have is far more reasonable on the hypothesis of a God who is good than on any other basis; and if we are to be really scientific, we will act on the most reasonable hypothesis. We can no more prove God than we can prove the existence of a substance called ether; but we must accept both in order to reconcile the facts of experience.

STUDY VI. A PERSONAL GOD.

“For as many as have sinned without the law shall also perish without the law: and as many as have sinned under the law shall be judged by the law; for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified; (for when Gentiles that have not the law do by nature the things of the law, these, not having the law, are a law unto themselves; in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them).” (Rom. ii. 12-15.)

PART IV. THE MEANING OF GOD TO DAILY LIFE.

Most men do not deny God. They simply fail to see that he has any meaning for their daily lives. To them God is a being far removed from the earth, who dwells apart from men. Christ, on the other hand, conceived of God as a Father deeply interested in his children and having daily contact with them.

If God is a Person, as we have seen there is reason to believe he is, then it is possible to have personal fellowship with him. In an earlier study we tried to show that Christian life is just this companionship with God and that this companionship is normal.

This at once dignifies all life. I measure myself and am measured by others on the basis of my companionships. Noble companionships dignify life. A student friend of mine was invited to ride with President Roosevelt in his private car across my friend's native State. The friends of this college man never ceased to talk about this honor done him. His life was at once dignified by his friendship with a strong personality. This is a weak illustration of what God does for us. By giving us access to his life he at once dignifies our persons; he makes us bigger and better men.

Again, this Christian conception of God as a Person gives basis for universal religion. If religion were initiation into an occult system of knowledge, as the systems of India declare, some men would be incapable of being religious. If religion were living according to set formula or creed, then no man could be religious until he knew that formula. Even

if religion were a specific type of emotional response, then some races and some individuals of every race might find themselves incapable of such emotional response and might be cut off from religious life. But since religion is fellowship with God and God is a Person, then all men of every grade of intelligence and of every temperament can enter this fellowship. The fact that we are personal means that we can enter into fellowship with persons. Hence religion is a universal possibility—indeed, broadly speaking, it is a universal fact. Jesus called men away from an external and formalistic religion to an inward and personal religion, a religion of personal fellowship.

This Christian conception of God as a Person further means that all men may receive from God help in their every hour of need. The greatest power in the world is not electricity or steam or any other form of physical force. No amount of physical force can change a man's disposition or his spirit or his attitude. Only personal influence can do this. The stronger the personality, the surer will be his influence upon us. Henry Drummond once said: "I become a part of every man I meet, and every man I meet becomes a part of me." There is no more certain fact of scientific research than this fact of the influence of one person upon another. If, therefore, God is a person and we will use these laws of personal association, we can have our lives transformed by his presence. To help us in our every need God does not have to dip into the universe, as it were, and change all the laws of nature.

If I can so strengthen the character of my friend that he can care for his own physical welfare, I have served him more really than if I had furnished food and clothes all his life. If God through direct contact with our souls can equip us to live, he has met the fundamental need of our lives. This God does and is doing day by day.

STUDY VI. A PERSONAL GOD.

“Surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, except he reveal his secret unto his servants the prophets. The lion hath roared; who will not fear? The Lord Jehovah hath spoken; who can but prophesy?” (Amos iii. 7, 8.)

“For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.” (Matt. x. 20.)

PART V. CAN GOD SPEAK TO MEN?

BUT some object that we cannot come to know God. According to Herbert Spencer, God, as the Absolute, is unknown and unknowable. To think is to condition or limit objects; it is to set them over against what they are not. But to think the absolute or unconditioned would be to think the unthinkable. This was Mr. Spencer's contention, and there is considerable disposition on the part of some modern writers to take his attitude. Felix Adler seriously asks: “Can we form any conception of the kind of being capable of governing these tremendous forces, of overlooking this interminable wilderness of worlds? Can the analogy of human intelligence give the least clue to the nature of such a being?”¹ And yet in this very same chapter Adler gives a lot of clues to his nature when he says that “it tends to back up moral efforts” or that it is “a power outside ourselves which coöperates in the attainment of moral ends.” “I believe that there is a higher Being, an ultimate divine Reality in things.” He at least is saying that this Being has morality and effective will. That is something.

Mr. Spencer and his followers, down to and including the modern ethical culturist, say that we cannot know God and then proceed to describe him. We must not forget that all knowledge is relative. That is Mr. Spencer's contention. Thought about a thing delimits it by setting over against it what it is not; but we cannot think of the delimited object without at the same time thinking of that which limits it. We cannot think of the North Pole without at the same time setting it over against the South Pole, by which process we are of necessity forced to think of the South Pole. No man

¹Adler, “The Religion of Duty,” page 37.

can conceive of a stick with only one end. When he thinks of one end, he sets it over against another end. So when I think of a finite being like myself, by the very necessity of thought I set finitude over against infinitude.

The fact that I have to think of the infinite in terms of the finite does not mean that the conception of the infinite is completely false. All knowledge must be expressed in terms of my own experience; and while that experience may be relatively incomplete, it is, nevertheless, true so far as it goes. Take this away from me, and I can have no knowledge whatever. I could not even know that I do not know. It is not only religion, but all knowledge, which is of necessity anthropomorphic.

Herbert Spencer recognized the inconsistency of his thesis, for he acknowledges: "Though the absolute cannot in any manner or degree be known in the strict sense of knowing, yet we find that its positive existence is a necessary datum of consciousness and that so long as consciousness continues we cannot for an instant rid it of this datum."¹

The real thing which men mean when they say that we cannot know God is that we cannot handle him or see him or demonstrate his existence as we deal with scientific facts. Neither can I see or feel or demonstrate your personality nor my own. No man can prove his own existence, for the first step in the proof would be to assume his personality as the tool with which he would set to work to make the proof. But, although I cannot see your personality, I can know it. Every man does know his friends, and to try to argue him out of his belief in this knowledge is the sheerest folly. He knows them, not by scientific experiment, but by personal association. I know a person, not by finding out where he was born or how old he is, not by facts about him, but by living in the presence of his spirit. This is the one way of knowing a person; and this way is just as trustworthy, just as real, just as certain as is science in its own field.

God being a Person, we must know him through personal association. This method is as vital, as real, as trustworthy as any scientific method. God can be known. He can communicate himself to me, just as my friend can make his impress on me.

¹Spencer, "First Principles," page 29.

STUDY VI. A PERSONAL GOD.

“Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” (Matt. v. 6-8.)

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I also will forget thy children.” (Hos. iv. 6.)

“If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself.” (John vii. 17.)

 PART VI. CONDITIONS OF KNOWING GOD.

IF it is reasonable to believe that God can make himself known, then we cannot escape the conviction that he will make himself known to his children. No good and loving father would refuse to speak to his children. “Self-expression is of the essence of personality.” It is impossible to think of personality separated from a desire to make itself known. At least one of the great activities of God’s life is that of self-expression. This is not an abstract term. A person cannot express itself *in vacuo*. Real expression means revelation; it means communication of self to some one else. We must conclude, therefore, that God is continually trying to reveal himself to all men. If men have not heard his voice, it is because their ears are dull. That all men have heard something of God’s message is proved by the fact of universal religion. All religions, however perverted, are the standing proof that men have caught some faint message from God; for religion, as Dr. Tiele puts it, springs from the consciousness of God within the human soul.

What, then, are the conditions of God’s message being heard? What is inspiration? Inspiration is man’s side of the process of intercommunication, of which revelation is God’s side. The first condition of a moral revelation must be moral character. There must be likeness of character in order that there may be intercommunication. A man who

is reeking with crime can scarcely understand the speech of a pure man who talks of unselfish love, much less can he fully understand God. All men have some moral impulse in them; and it is by the cultivation of this, through response to God's will, that a man grows in capacity to understand God. Revelation is a growth; it is progressive. The more I give myself to God, the more is he able to make himself known to me; and the more he makes himself known to me, the more am I willing to give myself to him. It is reciprocal action.

Inspiration may, therefore, be described as the process of character growth, by which a man becomes capable of receiving messages from God. Revelation is the message which comes to man in consequence of this process of preparation.

If we are not hearing God's voice progressively, it is because we are not progressively preparing to hear it and listening to it. The law of all thought growth is that we shall act on what we know. We must live to our best daily in order that to-morrow there may be a better knowledge possible. God can speak only to those who are willing to hear and who by habitual hearing have prepared themselves to hear more clearly.

A so-called special revelation would, therefore, not be miraculous. It would follow the normal law of preparation. It would mean that one person or one group of persons had lived in such harmony with God that they were able to catch more of God's message than others. Why should we think this strange or impossible? We accept this in every other realm of knowledge. The artist grows by attention and interest. He gives himself to beauty, as it were. He, therefore, sees more beauty than others. When the artist Turner was showing a lady one of his landscapes, she remarked: "Mr. Turner, I have never seen such high coloring in nature." "No," said the artist; "but don't you wish you could?"

Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God," and this is the law of revelation. Growing likeness of character is the basis of a growing clearness of revelation.

STUDY VI. A PERSONAL GOD.

“Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.” (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.)

“And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation. For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Pet. i. 19-21.)

“Ye search the scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me.” (John v. 39.)

 PART VII. WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

THE Bible does not claim to be a textbook of science, history, or literature. Neither is it a fetish to drive off evil and bring good. It is not a book of holy riddles. It does not even claim to be the only revelation of God's will. John says distinctly that his record of Jesus is only a partial record and that if all were written down the world could scarcely hold the written records. (John xxi. 25.) The Bible is and claims to be a record of man's progressive growth toward God. It is a record of man's age-long search for and his experience with God. It is, therefore, a record of what God has been able to make known to men in past ages and through a specific race. It is, as it were, the laboratory book of that part of humanity which was most alert to the sense of God. The Jews went into the great laboratory of personal forces; and, finding God, they wrote down their experience for us, just as a scientific student writes in his laboratory book the experience he has with certain physical forces.

It is evident, therefore, that the Bible will be a progressive revelation. Many students have asked me how I could explain for them the seemingly incomplete morals of the Old Testament. It must be explained on the basis of progressive revelation. What Moses heard God say was of necessity colored by the content of his own mind. He did not have the fully developed, pure soul of Paul or Jesus, and he must of necessity fail to catch the full meaning of God's message.

Revelation is not a miraculous something that has no reference to man's intelligence. It must come through the medium of man's person and hence must take on to some extent the color of the medium. It is for that reason that all revelation is incomplete, save that which comes in the perfect person, Christ. He is final, but it must not be forgotten that we have not fathomed all that finality yet. Every century finds new meaning in Christ, because no previous century has had people capable of understanding that side of Christ's life. We are just now beginning to catch the meaning of Christ's social message. The message has always been there, but we are just now becoming able to interpret it.

The Bible, therefore, is a progressive revelation fitted to man's capacity. God is wiser than a kindergarten teacher, and no such teacher would begin her six-year-old children in the abstractions of mathematics or astronomy. Or, to put it differently, I have a friend. After I have known him a month, I think his character is one thing. After I have known him a year, I see new depths in his life. After I have known him intimately ten years, I am sure that I did not know him at all at the end of the first year. This is progressive revelation. Now, the Bible is just the report that some of the world's greatest souls have given us of their growing friendship with God. Since we can know God only through personal association with him, this is the only way that the world's stock of knowledge about God can grow. Our knowledge must be the sum total of available experiences which men have had with God. These great hungry souls went in search of God, and they found him in ever-increasing measure. Or, if we turn it around, the eager, loving soul of God yearned to make himself known to his children, and he has progressively been able to make them understand. If man is a person and God a loving Person, we cannot doubt that somehow they may come to know each other. The Bible, therefore, is the record of these supreme meetings of the soul of man with the soul of God. It is the record of the supreme experiences of the race and will ever remain a sacred book. That section of the Bible which records Christ's consciousness of God must be our highest and our final standard of truth, for Christ met God as no other man may ever hope to meet him.



STUDY VII.

CHRIST THE SUPREME REVELATION OF GOD.

STUDY VII. CHRIST THE SUPREME REVELATION OF GOD.

"They say unto him, Teacher, this woman hath been taken in adultery, in the very act. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such: what then sayest thou of her? And this they said, trying him, that they might have whereof to accuse him." (John viii. 4-6.)

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered. And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. iv. 1-4.)

PART I. THE MANHOOD OF CHRIST.

OUR last study brought us face to face with God's method of making himself known to men. There we saw that Christ was God's highest expression of himself. Here we must justify that statement. It must be noted, in the first place, that Christ evidently conceived himself to be without sin. He challenges the haughty leaders of Israel to convict him of sin. (John viii. 46.) In all the records of the New Testament we find not the least intimation that he knows sin in his own person. In the five passages which refer to his character and which Schmiedel¹ recognizes as alone absolutely authentic Jesus acknowledges his dependence on God. He recognizes his relative inability, save as related to the Father; but in no case is there the least intimation that he has sin in his life. He never asks forgiveness; he shows no signs of penitence. "He comes back to each new duty untrammelled by any rebuking memories. . . . He is conscious that he has never deflected at any point from the line prescribed. . . . And so he confronts the present with an undimmed confidence."²

This confidence was not due to a hardened condition of soul. Men sometimes sin until they become so deadened that they are unaware of their sin. Indeed, the sense of sin is usually a mark of growing moral character. But this was not the explanation of Christ's sense of sinlessness. No

¹Mark iii. 21-35; x. 18; xii. 32; xiii. 32; xv. 34.

²Forrest, "The Christ of History and Experience," pages 30, 31.

other person ever condemned sin so unsparingly and yet loved men so whole-heartedly.

Not only do the Gospels portray Christ as a perfect moral character, but also the letters of the New Testament. St. Paul was a man of scholarship and a man with sterling business qualities. He was not a man who could easily be hoodwinked. Not only so, but he knew personally most of the closest followers of Christ. And yet St. Paul asserts again and again that Christ was a sinless man.

It is further to be noted that the whole world joins in this estimate. Even the most severe critics have not dared attack the moral character of Jesus.

Renan was the arch-skeptic of France. I remember my surprise when I read his life of Christ. I had expected ridicule; instead I found the highest praise. Listen to this word of his: "From amidst uniform depravity pillars rise toward the sky and testify to a nobler destiny. Jesus is the highest of these pillars that show to men whence he comes and whither he ought to tend." And again he says: "The palm is his who has been both powerful in words and deeds, who has discerned the good and at the price of his blood has made it triumph. Jesus from this double point of view is without equal, his glory remains entire, and will ever be renewed."

It is the deliberate conclusion of those who have studied the facts with care that Jesus presents to the world the one moral character which is above reproach. Sidney Lanier, the great Southern poet and scholar, after calling the roll of the world's great names and coupling with each name "some sweet forgiveness" for their "errors rich," breaks out in this wonderful word about Christ, which is a summary of the estimate of the ages:

But thee, but thee, O sovereign seer of time,
 But thee, O poet's poet, wisdom's tongue,
 But thee, O man's best man, O love's best love
 O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
 O all men's comrade, servant, king or priest—
 What if or yet, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
 What least defect or shadow of defect,
 What rumor tattled by an enemy,
 Of inference loose, what lack of grace
 Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's or death's—
 O, what amiss may I forgive in thee,
 Jesus, good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ!

—Lanier's "The Crystal."

STUDY VII. CHRIST THE SUPREME REVELATION OF GOD.

"All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets." (Matt. vii. 12.)

PART II. CHRIST'S PERFECT MORAL STANDARDS.

Not only did Jesus live an exemplary moral life, but he set up a complete and final standard of morals. I have had many students say that we have outgrown the standards of Buddhism, those of Mohammedanism, and those of Confucianism. Why may we not outgrow those of Christianity? First, I have suggested that there is a fundamental difference between the standard of Christ and that of the other religions. This is not a difference of degree, but a difference of kind. Confucius, Buddha, and Mohammed attempted to set forth a minute code of all the moral duties of life. A careful reading of the texts of these religions will reveal splendid moral precepts, although there are many nonessential and nonmoral principles exalted to the plane of morality. But the great difficulty lies in the fact that a code which fits the needs of men to-day will be outgrown by the next generation. Under the system of a code the people advance, but their moral standards stay fixed.

Speaking of this situation in China, Legge says: "There has been a tendency to advance, and Confucius has all along been trying to carry the nation back. The consequence is that China has increased beyond the ancient dimensions, while there has been no corresponding development of thought."¹ A code of morals means a stationary morality; and human life is progressive and not stationary. Hence no code can ever be drawn up which will be permanent.

It is just here that Christ shows himself superior to all other moral teachers. Even the Old Testament lays down its Ten Commandments, which are perhaps the best moral rules that the world has. But they were inadequate even in Christ's day. In the fifth chapter of Matthew Christ goes beyond a number of the old commands, implying that they are too low a standard for his kingdom. "I have not come to abrogate these, then (the law), but to give them their completion." He does not put in their place some set form

of command. He does not attempt to work out a list of duties or prohibitions. Christianity has no moral code. It has a moral principle and a moral dynamic, but not a code.

Christ's teachings outstrip all other teachings. He took morality out of the realm of overt action and pushed it back into the realm of motives. He said that a murderer was not simply a man who took his brother's physical life, but also the man who hated his brother and would like to take his life. (Matt. v. 21, 22.) He said that the adulterer was not simply the man who in his body sinned against a woman, but a man who cherished lustful thoughts about a woman. (Matt. v. 27, 28.) In other words, according to Christ's standard, sin was not simply a deed that could be catalogued or punished; sin was a motive of the inner life.

He went further and described the quality of a moral motive and the quality of an immoral motive. He set forth the fundamental principle in accordance with which every motive must be judged. He said that love was the test of life. If we want to know whether a motive is right or not, test it by unselfish love. If your motive is unselfish and held in the spirit of love to others, then your life is morally good. This love must extend, not to your neighbor alone, but to all men, even your enemies.

Lovelessness is the final sin. A man can go to ruin in his character as rapidly by the road of lovelessness and selfish motive as along the road of criminal deeds. Love is life; but selfishness is death. Now, this sets a final standard of morals which humanity can never outgrow. Little by little humanity is growing in the spirit of brotherliness. Little by little we are seeing that unselfishness is the law of life. The more we see this, the more will Christ's standard of perfect brotherhood tower above us. It is a flying goal. The more we approach it, the further it leads ahead. The more we see of the meaning of unselfish love, the more do we recognize the unfathomed depths of Christ's moral principle.

In taking morals out of the realm of codes and putting them in the realm of motives and in setting unselfish love as the highest motive of life, Christ has given us a standard of morals which is final and unsurpassable.

¹Legge, "The Chinese Classics," Volume I., page 107.

STUDY VII. CHRIST THE SUPREME REVELATION OF GOD.

“But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry, and ye did not give me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me. And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.” (Matt. xxv. 31-46.)

PART III. CHRIST THE FORGIVER OF SIN.

BUT Christ did not stop with having a moral life and setting up a final standard of moral action. He went further and said that a man's life was to be judged by his attitude toward him as revealed in his attitude toward his fellow men. (Matt. xxv. 31-46.) In other words, Christ as the Judge of sin was also able to forgive sin. But the power to forgive lies in the capacity to bring people to the attitude where they may be forgiven. Even God cannot forgive a man who does not want forgiveness. If forgiveness is, as we defined it earlier, the change on the part of God from a disapproving love to an approving love, then that change can take place only when man's attitude is worthy of ap-

proval. The attitude of turning from sin, the attitude of reverence for the best, the attitude of love toward persons is the prerequisite of forgiveness. If Christ was to be a forgiver of sin, he must have capacity to bring men back to their better selves, back to God. This Jesus believed he had capacity to do. "But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." (John xii. 32.) He felt that there was that moral attractiveness about his life that would make men hate sin and turn from it. He felt that he was able to give such a complete picture of the loving heart of God that men would gladly turn away from sin and turn to God.

Precisely this is what has been happening in all the centuries since Christ. Men have been coming into his presence to see what the real standard of life is. There they have come to have a sense of sin. If any student wants to find out whether he is living right or not, let him study the Gospels. Let him stand in the presence of the manhood of Christ, and he will soon find out what kind of a character he has.

Now, the whole unselfish life and the unselfish and shameful death of Christ were necessary to help make clear to men how God hated sin. On the life of Christ the burden of sin rested. He agonized over it in every person he saw. He suffered with every sinful man; and his deep sympathy, which ultimately broke his heart on the cross, was manifest not only in his life, but in his death. By some mysterious alchemy of the human soul, love and sympathy arouse the same feeling in the soul loved, so that Christ's love has broken the hearts of men of hardened life. His death on the cross was the summation of all his sympathy for men in their struggle with sin. He too had known the bitter agony caused by the sin of man. Not his own sin cost him his life, but his sympathy for the sin of others. It costs something to know the sin and failure and need of others. It will break your heart to really sympathize with those in need, but in breaking your heart it will help to save the world. It is just this fact of heartbreaking sympathy for men, of self-identification with them, that has made the cross of Christ the means of bringing men into a new attitude toward God. The facts of life show that Christ's expectation was justified. His suffering love has led men back to God, and thereby he has really become the forgiver of sin.

STUDY VII. CHRIST THE SUPREME REVELATION OF GOD.

“Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work.” (John iv. 34.)

“I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do. And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them to me; and they have kept thy word. Now they know that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are from thee: for the words which thou gavest me I have given unto them; and they received them, and knew of a truth that I came forth from thee, and they believed that thou didst send me.” (John xvii. 4-8.)

“Jesus answered, If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing: it is my Father that glorifieth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God; and ye have not known him: but I know him; and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be like unto you, a liar: but I know him, and keep his word.” (John viii. 54, 55.)

 PART IV. CHRIST THE REVEALER OF GOD.

At the age of twelve Jesus went with his parents to Jerusalem to attend the great feast. At the close of this festival occasion, as they started northward, for some unaccountable reason Jesus was left behind. When the parents found out about it, they went back to hunt for him and found him in the temple discussing the facts of God's life. It is evident from what we have reported at that time that there was already dawning in his consciousness that deep sense of fellowship with God which makes him the most remarkable person the world has ever had.

All the way through his life Jesus seemed to have an unwavering sense of close communion with God. Other men have had this sense to a remarkable degree, but not as Jesus had it. To him it was the one great reality. Everything was dominated by this; and if it were not true, then he was the most deluded man that history records.

Not only did Christ feel that he knew God, but he felt that it was his supreme mission to make God known to men. “Jesus,” says Harnack, “is conscious that he knows God in

a way which no one ever knew him before, and he knows that it is his vocation to communicate this knowledge to others by word and deed."¹

He talked so often and so familiarly about God that one day one of his disciples said: "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus' simple answer was: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. How sayest thou, Show us the Father?" (John xiv. 8, 9.) Jesus was so conscious of God that he felt he was living the very life of God himself, so that a man who saw him saw also the very life of God. Christ never urges men to take his teachings apart from himself, but he embodies his teachings in himself.

Herein lies a fundamental distinction between Christianity and the other religions. Other religions are the religions of a book. Christianity is the religion of a person. I mean that Gautama, the Buddha, specifically told his disciples to forget him, but to keep the law: "Whoever shall adhere unweariedly to this Law and Discipline, he shall cross the ocean of life and make an end of Sorrow."² We have the law of Buddha, and it makes no difference who gave it. It is not dependent upon his life. But with Christianity it is entirely different. Christ identifies his life with his message. We are, therefore, not told to follow his law, but to follow him. He is a living Person, a revelation of God to men, continually dwelling in the hearts of men. His teachings are only instruments to lead men to him, the Life Giver.

Does the precept run, "Believe in good
In justice, truth, now understood
For the first time"? or, "Believe in me,
Who lived and died, yet essentially
Am Lord of life"?

—*Browning's "Christmas Eve."*

¹Harnack, "What Is Christianity?" page 128.

²Rhys Davids' "Buddhism," page 79.

STUDY VII. CHRIST THE SUPREME REVELATION OF GOD.

“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matt. xi. 28-30.)

“The thief cometh not, but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy: I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.” (John x. 10.)

“I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me.” (Phil. iv. 13.)



PART V. MEETING THE NEEDS OF MEN.

BUT even more remarkable than anything else in the life of Christ was his consciousness that he could meet the needs of men. No religious worker fails to see the deep hunger and unsatisfied longings of men. This longing cannot be satisfied with things. Some of the most dissatisfied people we know have a superabundance of things. It is only fellowship with kindred souls that will satisfy a person. It is for this reason that men when they really love a person will sacrifice all else rather than lose the person. Persons alone meet our need. Jesus believed that he in a supreme sense could meet the needs of men. “He seems to be confident that no one else can give what he promises. What he promises is a life of profound usefulness or satisfaction; and he promises it to any troubled spirit, no matter what its burdens or unresting aspirations may be. Imagine with what confident desire he looked out upon the crowds of travelers, business men, and soldiers thronging the great world highways that crossed-and recrossed Palestine. They were going here and there in the world on various errands. He stood looking at them from the Galilean hilltops with the

consciousness of being one who could afford them peace and light through his companionship.”¹

The remarkable thing is that men through all the ages have felt that Christ was doing what he thought he could do. Poor, distraught human beings have come to Christ and have gone their way with a new sense of peace and calm. Men needing freedom from sin have found peace through him. Men needing strength for battle have found courage in him. It is no make-believe. Millions of the earth's truest and strongest and best have come to Christ and found life. We can no more doubt their testimony than we can doubt the whole company of scientists who agree on certain scientific discoveries. “The scientific student goes into his laboratory and, taking his formula, tests it to see if it gives the proper results. If he follows the conditions laid down, he gets the results. Another man, who tries the same formula but does not follow the conditions in full, fails to get the results. He allows an error to slip in—some precipitate or acid or what not. But if every man who meets the conditions of the formula finds the same results, we say that the formula is correct.”² In similar fashion the men who have met Christ's conditions have found him meeting their deepest needs. Some who have not met these conditions may deride the idea of Christ meeting men's needs, but they can have no right to an opinion when they have not met the conditions. Meeting the conditions and trying the experiment is the one way to find the truth, and those who have made the venture testify that he meets their deepest needs.

¹Bosworth's "Teachings of Jesus and His Apostles," page 39.

²The author's "Introducing Men to Christ," page 169.

STUDY VII. CHRIST THE SUPREME REVELATION OF GOD.

“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.” (John iv. 24-26.)

“And many more believed because of his word; and they said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.” (John iv. 41, 42.)

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John xiv. 6.)



PART VI. THE MEANING OF CHRIST'S CONSCIOUSNESS.

WHAT, then, is the meaning of such a consciousness as Christ had? He believed himself to be a sinless man. He believed that he had a unique fellowship with God. He believed that he could bring men to turn to God. He believed that he could meet all the needs of men. What a wonderful opinion to have of one's self! He must have been one of three things, either the world's greatest egoist or the world's craziest man or what he really claimed to be.

It seems to me that we can set aside the first at once as being a psychological impossibility. If Christ in his colossal egotism was simply deceiving men, how could we account for his perfect moral life? There is a unity of moral life, and no man can be completely false and untrue in one realm of his nature and still be true and holy in another realm.

We may almost as quickly dismiss the second. If Christ had been deluded as to his essential nature, surely he could not have been the sanest, most normal, best-poised man in

the world. But even the skeptics acknowledge that he was the world's wonder of sanity, poise, and self-possession. Neither could we suppose that the world's finest system of morals and its highest expression of life could be the resultant of a demented brain. No one can believe this.

If, then, he was neither a deceiver nor a deceived man, he was surely the kind of person he believed himself to be, the very Son of God.

If Christ, as thou affirmest, be of men
 Mere man, the first and best but nothing more,—
 Account Him, for reward of what He was,
 Now and forever, wretchedest of all.
 For see: Himself conceived of life as love,
 Conceived of love as what must enter in,
 Fill up, make one with His each soul he loved:
 Thus much for man's joy, all men's joy for Him.
 Well, He is gone, thou sayest to fit reward.
 But by this time are many souls set free,
 And very many still retained alive:
 Nay, should His coming be delayed awhile,
 Say ten years longer (twelve years, some compute),
 See if, for every finger of thy hands,
 There be not found, that day the world shall end,
 Hundreds of souls, each holding by Christ's word,
 That He will grow incorporate with all,
 With me as Pamphylax, with him as John,
 Groom for each bride! Can a mere man do this?
 Yet Christ sayeth, this He lived and died to do.
 Call Christ, then, the illimitable God,
 Or lost! —*Browning's "A Death in the Desert."*

STUDY VII. CHRIST THE SUPREME REVELATION OF GOD.

“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only-begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth.” (John i. 14.)

“The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament showeth his handiwork.”
(Ps. xix. 1.)

“God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds.” (Heb. i. 1, 2.)

PART VII. IS THE INCARNATION IDEA UNREASONABLE?

AFTER presenting all the foregoing facts to a certain student, he said: “Yes, they all seem to be true; but the incarnation idea seems to me absurd and impossible. There cannot be such a thing.” Well, let us see. Is this opposed to all reason, as my student thought? A Christian should be the last one to ask a student to believe that which was essentially unreasonable. We may not be able to demonstrate all truth—in fact, only a very limited number of truths can be demonstrated. All we need to do is to show that a fact is not unreasonable, that it does not cut across the normal processes of the mind.

First of all, let us remember that this idea of an incarnation is deeply imbedded in the human mind. Men of all nations have looked for the incarnation of the God idea. Even in Mohammedan countries, where the founder of the system strenuously denied the possibilities of an incarnation, the human heart has found many ways to circumvent this philosophy. If this is so deeply imbedded in human nature, we should not be surprised if the fact should prove tenable and reasonable.

So long as our philosophy was purely materialistic and all existence was simply the result of blind forces acting in accordance with blind laws—in other words, so long as we thought of the world as purely a mechanical world—there could be no place for an incarnation. But we do not now so view the world. We think of the universe as the ex-

pression of will. It is matter shot through with personality. Spirit and matter are not opposites. Spirit is not abstraction, but is self-embodiment. Just as I am conscious of my processes and as I manifest myself in this human embodiment, so God is conscious of himself in all his embodiments in nature. In other words, God is the process of the universe. Every phase of the universe is but an expression of God. The forces of nature are but the workings of his will. This is our present-day philosophical attitude. Perhaps the strict philosopher would use the word "absolute" where I use the word "God."

"In a perfectly real sense creation is incarnation, nature the body of the infinite Spirit, the organism which divine thought has articulated and filled with this breath of life."

What man who has stood on the mountain top and seen the beauty of the landscape or the richness of a mountain sunset has not felt himself in the very presence of God? Beauty and majesty have no utilitarian value. They seem to be alone set to show us the life of God. We are in the habit of saying that we see God in nature.

"The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament showeth his handiwork."

So we speak, and this is the incarnation idea. This incarnation idea is just the fact of the Unseen looking out upon us through the seen.

Now, if God can look out upon us through nature, what is to hinder him looking out upon us through the highest form of that nature, which is human nature? And if in one human nature he should completely and fully look out upon us, there would be nothing unreasonable or untenable in the thought. The facts seem to show that this is precisely what he has done.

"Many were the forms and fashions in which God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets, but in these days at the end he has spoken to us by a Son." (Heb. i. 1, 2)

I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ,
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
All questions in the earth and out of it,
And has so far advanced thee to be wise.

—*Browning's "A Death in the Desert."*

¹Fairbairn, "The Philosophy of the Christian Religion," page 479.

STUDY VIII.

MAN AND HIS RELATIONSHIPS.

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“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” (Gen. i. 26, 27.)

“For thou hast made him but little lower than God,
 And crownest him with glory and honor.
 Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;
 Thou hast put all things under his feet:
 All sheep and oxen,
 Yea, and the beasts of the field,
 The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,
 Whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.”
 (Ps. viii. 5-8.)

“And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath.” (Mark ii. 27.)

PART I. THE NATURE OF MAN.

WE have defined religion as the right relationship between persons. It is essential to the full understanding of this definition that we come to understand the nature of the persons entering into this relationship. On one side stands God as revealed in Jesus Christ; on the other stands man.

We have seen that personality consists in a combination of three aspects of consciousness: intelligence, emotion or sensibility, and will power. All of these elements man possesses in some degree, though no one of them may be found in perfect degree in any one person. Man, therefore, is not a perfect person; or one might say that he is not completely personal. He is growing toward personality. Man's personality is not different in kind from God's, but is limited in degree—that is, we know truth, in so far as we know it at all, just as God knows truth. We love, in so far as we really do love, just as God loves; for love is love, even though a perfect love would be so far advanced over our own that it would appear to be an entirely new species. We are made in the likeness of God. There is a real likeness, though not a complete likeness.

We assert this likeness when we declare that man is a moral being. We mean that there is harmony between the

inmost being of man and the essence of the universe, or God. The foundation of all morality is the sense of oughtness within the man, which is just another way of saying the sense of man's unity with the universe, which is the expression of God's life. When a man says that he ought, he has gone to the bottom. Why ought he? Just because his nature tells him that he ought. And that nature tells him that he ought because oughtness is of the very essence of personal being, which, traced to its ultimate meaning, is that he is akin to a self-consistent and moral God. All conscience, all sense of duty, all moral right and wrong, ultimately grounds itself in our sense of oneness in nature with God.

The reason morality has such transcendent power, the reason it cannot be really and permanently crushed, is that it is an expression of the permanent and eternal likeness of man to God. "For if the Supreme Power of the universe is allied with the cause of goodness [we would prefer to say, is goodness], the man who performs a good act has the universe behind him. Even though the act appear to be one of absolute self-sacrifice, yet the individual cannot really lose, since God is on his side."¹ Man's morality consists, therefore, in his deliberate choosing of that which is right, that which is in harmony with his own highest nature and in harmony with the nature of God. In this choice man's will is the final determining element. Even though man at any stage of his life may not know the final good, he is duty-bound to live to the best he knows at any time. His sense of right will be a growing attitude.

The Christian doctrine of man differs from that of the non-Christian religions in most fundamental ways. Mohammedanism denies that there is any kinship between God and man. Confucianism ignores such kinship, even though it may not deny it. Not only so, but Mohammedanism and Hinduism both deny the freedom of man's will. The first is a system of determinism; the second is a system of fatalism. While Christianity recognizes this sovereignty of God, it at the same time maintains the freedom of man and his moral responsibility. Christianity, therefore, puts much more emphasis on moral life than any of the non-Christian religions.

¹Wright, "Self-Realization," page 277

STUDY VIII. MAN AND HIS RELATIONSHIPS.

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been approved, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man: but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is full-grown, bringeth forth death.” (Jas. i. 12-15.)

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it.” (1 Cor. x. 12, 13.)

PART II. GROWTH OF MORAL LIFE.

A CHILD is born into the world with capacities both for good and for evil. It is not a moral being, but it has capacity to become a moral being. Two great forces will mold the life into its mature form. The first of these forces is heredity. The individual man is a part of the race. He enters life in the midst of the stream of human consciousness. He must, therefore, bring with him certain of the established tendencies of the race. This relation of the individual to the race has led some to suppose that the direction of the life is so set before responsibility dawns, that the nature of the child is so bent at birth, as to remove from him all responsibility. We may not be able to answer all the questions raised by heredity in relation to freedom; but this much we do know: that all human society, all law, all discipline is based on the conviction that man ultimately and finally is free. Heredity may modify the degree of responsibility, but it cannot destroy it and leave man still a man. I have nothing to say about the kind of disposition I inherit, but I am responsible for the way I use and train that disposition.

After the child comes into the world, he finds himself surrounded by certain forces and influences. These have a tendency to mold his character in accordance with their own nature. Some have, therefore, supposed that a man is made by his environment. While no man can prevent his environ-

ment influencing his life, even if it be only in the nature of a recoil, yet man is not bound by his environment. A man can make his own environment, as it were. We grow like that on which we center our attention, and a man's power of attention lies in the realm of the will. I may attend to the best about me, or I may attend to the worst. Two boys come from the same home with approximately the same heredity and practically the same environment. They enter college. One becomes a social dandy, and the other becomes a serious student. The difference is largely in the things to which they give attention. Man ultimately is free and, therefore, responsible. Or, to put it from the reverse angle, we hold man responsible for his actions; therefore we must believe that he is ultimately free. How, then, does the child use his freedom to build character? "It is of the very essence of life to express itself; and this expression takes the form of personal assertion, personal initiative, the assumption of self-command. It is out of this inner struggle of self-command and self-assertion that character is born. All character, whether good or bad, is the accelerated victory over opposite tendencies. This, then, means the development of will, the building of the power of choice."¹ Since it is of the nature of life to express itself, this choice, this self-assertion, is not in itself evil or selfish. But out of this growth into self-assertion the selfish tendency arises. We are apt to come to the place where we do a thing simply because we want to and without due regard to the rights of others. The minute our self-assertiveness becomes selfishness it has passed over into the realm of evil and sin.

¹The author's "Personal Elements in Religion," chapter on "Sin."

STUDY VIII. MAN AND HIS RELATIONSHIPS.

“And he said unto all, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose or forfeit his own self?” (Luke ix. 23-25.)

“But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” (Matt. xx. 25-28.)

 PART III. SELFISHNESS AS SIN.

THE fact that it is of the very essence and nature of life to express itself has given rise to a kind of *laissez faire* theory of morals. It has become a kind of defense of license. A college man came to me once, saying that indulgence of his physical nature was no more nor less than the expression of his being; and that was natural. He had forgotten, however, and refused to remember that his nature must be expressed with reference both to his own best self and to the well-being of others. To act in accord with the demand of my lower life without due regard to the rights of my higher self and the rights of others is sin.

“Love, looking upward toward God and outward toward man, is the true law of life; and such love, filial and fraternal, will render it impossible for a man to be a selfish, self-regarding, self-seeking person. It is true that there is a self-regard which in its place is not sinful, but normal and worthy; and yet to a man in the right attitude, not self, but God and men, will appear the chief end to be regarded, and the

general claim of duty will appear more urgent than all self-interest."¹

Sin, therefore, is the placing of my will, self-will, selfishness, over against the will and the need of all other persons—God and men. Sin is selfishness. It will appear, therefore, that sin is not an abstract something, but is a concrete form of relationship. It is lack of harmony, deliberate opposition to other persons or my best person. When, therefore, man gets so set on having his own way and on following his own desire that he forgets and disregards either his own highest self or other selves, he becomes a sinful man. Selfishness is the root of all sin. A man is a libertine because he forgets his own higher nature and the person against whom he sins in the one consuming desire to satisfy his lower nature—that is, he is selfish. A man is dishonest when he forgets the property rights of others in the morbid desire to possess. He is selfish. Persons are jealous when they exalt the importance of their own natures and fail to give consideration to the virtues and rights of other natures. They consider themselves alone worthy of love, which is a form of selfishness. One is selfish when, because of ease, one indulges one's lower nature and neglects one's higher nature, which becomes sin. All intellectual laziness, all inordinate yielding to ease at the expense of development, is selfishness, is sin.

Therefore one may go to perdition on the road of selfishness as rapidly as one goes on the road of so-called grosser sins. The essential failure of selfishness lies in the fact that it makes one insensible to the needs and rights of others. It thus cuts one off from sympathy with others and destroys one's means of growth. In this respect selfishness becomes sin.

¹Clarke, "Outline of Christian Theology," page 235.

STUDY VIII. MAN AND HIS RELATIONSHIPS.

“Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.” (Ezek. xviii. 4.)

“Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye presented your members as servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now present your members as servants to righteousness unto sanctification. For when ye were servants of sin, ye were free in regard of righteousness. What fruit then had ye at that time in the things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life. For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. vi. 16-23.)

“Every one that doeth sin doeth also lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. And ye know that he was manifested to take away sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither knoweth him.” (1 John iii. 4-6.)

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John i. 8, 9.)

PART IV. THE GROWTH AND MEANING OF SIN.

STEVENS, in his “Psychology of the Human Soul,” outlines the growth of the power of sin, or selfish desire. First, we perceive an object or an end. Secondly, we think of this object or end as a possible good. Thirdly, we dwell on the thought of the good to be received. In common parlance, we play with temptation. Fourthly, a strong desire seizes us to take this possible good for ourselves regardless of how it may affect others. Fifthly, we act, and the sin is done. Every man who has yielded to temptation knows how true is this description. Sin comes from staying so long in the

presence of a selfish desire that we forget other things in this supreme desire.

Sin has at least four evil results in the individual life. First of all, it brings suffering. The laws of righteousness, as we have seen, are inwrought into the very fiber of the universe, and he who does wrong goes counter to the universe. He may not suffer at once, but suffer sometime he surely must if the laws of the universe hold true.

In the second place, sin dulls our perception of right and wrong. The tempter told the woman that her disobedience would open her eyes to knowledge; instead it blinded her to truth and opened her eyes to all sorts of evil. Like propagates like, and he who sins begins to see life as sinful. To become so blinded by sin that one is incapable of seeing God's truth is probably the unpardonable sin spoken of by Jesus.

Thirdly, sin paralyzes the will. "From him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he seemeth to have." Not only does sin blind a man to new truth, but it makes him incapable of acting on the truth he already possesses. He becomes obsessed, as it were, with evil. His mind is auto-intoxicated with its own selfish desires. Even the hatred of our sin causes us to dwell on it until it fairly possesses us, and we seem helpless to shake ourselves free.

Lastly, as suggested before, sin separates us from persons. Soul responsiveness is the law of life, and lack of soul contact is certain moral and spiritual death.

This is an entirely different conception of sin from that of the non-Christian religions. According to India's religion, sin is an error, delusion, mistaken conceptions. According to Mohammedanism, sin is the doing of things forbidden by the decrees of an arbitrary God. Sin carries with it no sense of guilt, but rather a fear of punishment.

Sin, according to Christianity, entails guilt and hence remorse. Liability to punishment is as nothing compared with the sense of guilt. This sense of wrongdoing is present with all men, but the non-Christian religions have failed to rightly relate it to a true theory of repentance. Rather they have connected it up with ritualistic observances which lead to no moral end.

STUDY VIII. MAN AND HIS RELATIONSHIPS.

“And if thy hand or thy foot causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire. And if thine eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the hell of fire. See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven. How think ye? if any man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go unto the mountains, and seek that which goeth astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth over it more than over the ninety and nine which have not gone astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.” (Matt. xviii. 8-14.)

 PART V. THE SACREDNESS OF MAN.

WE have seen that man is made in the image of God and that he is, therefore, capable of associating with God. We have also seen that sin is the breaking of this relationship with God and men. It is setting our selfish desire over against the need and rights of other persons.

If the man is to keep himself free from sin and grow into the fullness of life, he must ever keep himself conscious of the sacredness and value of other persons. In the sense of sacredness which inheres in every person, Christianity stands supreme among all religious teachings. Felix Adler, in his “Religion of Duty,” says that this is one of the great outstanding teachings of Christ which we have not outlived, and he seems to think that we will never outlive it.

Many new books have come from the press in the last two decades on the social meaning of life. Practically all, if not all, indeed, of these books have drawn their inspiration from the words of Jesus. He taught that a man was not to be

valued because of what he had, but because of what he was. What a man is may be entirely in embryo in possibilities, as it were, but he is essentially related to God and has a heritage of a noble destiny. This is essentially the social message. Our motive for social service is that man is worthy of being served and, furthermore, that by being served he can be lifted toward God. If that were not so, there would be no motive for service. Christianity of all religions gives sufficient motive for a real service program. No other religion save that of the Bible has ever developed a genuine social program.

If man is sacred, we must never treat any individual man as if he were a thing. We cannot despise any man. To do so is to despise the very Godhood within him. This at once makes all men our brothers and sets aside all race hatred, race antagonism, and race conflict. He who hates the black man or the red man or the yellow man hates one made in the image of God and really hates God himself. There is no middle ground here. We may be Mohammedans and hate other men, but we cannot be Christians and hold such an attitude. Hinduism may produce a caste system; but in Christianity there can be no castes, there can be no such thing as worthless or hopeless humanity. Christianity is the world's dynamic for social reform. Christ is the world's greatest social teacher. He is this because he valued men most and gave himself most freely to meet the needs of men. He who would keep himself free from sin and keep the avenues of his soul open Godward must incorporate Christ's teachings of the sacredness of persons into his philosophy and practice of life.

STUDY VIII. MAN AND HIS RELATIONSHIPS.

“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are. For this cause the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is. And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” (1 John iii. 1-3.)

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things? . . . Nay, in all of these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. viii. 31, 32, 37-39.)

“Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.” (2 Cor. v. 17.)

 PART VI. THE DESTINY OF MAN.

IN no other regard do the non-Christian religions fall so short as in the conception of the future destiny of man. Mohammedanism holds to a future life, but it is a very gross picture. Faithful Mohammedans will be physically resurrected with their own human bodies, and nonbelievers will be raised with bodies of apes, swine, and other animals. Paradise will not be perpetual fellowship with God, but a life of sensual pleasure.

But for the God-fearing is a blissful abode, inclosed gardens and vineyards,

“And damsels with swelling breasts, their peers in age,
And a full cup.”¹

¹Rodwell's translation of the Koran. Sura 78.

Hinduism denies the continuity of human personality, and Buddhism denies all personality. Whatever there is, therefore, corresponding to immortality in these two religions is a kind of death and rebirth up to the eight million four hundred thousand times. It is a dreary, monotonous round of death and birth, without any conscious connection between the various incarnations.

Set by the side of these crude conceptions, Christianity stands supreme. According to Christ's conception, a man is here and now, according to his character, entering the vestibule of eternal life, and life is never-ending. The joys of future life will be continued personal fellowship with God, with Christ, and with purified human personalities. Men are to be freed from the lowly elements of their nature, and their real personalities are to blossom forth into a perpetual progress. The Christian conception of immortality, therefore, is purely spiritual, or, one would better say, purely one of progressive personal relationship. The very fact of our personality means that we are immortal, for self-consciousness binds within its power the past and the present. It transcends time and change. "As persons we are identical in the midst of change, and on account of our identity we are potentially infinite."¹

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:

Thou madest man, he knows not why,

He thinks he was not made to die;

And thou hast made him: thou art just.

—Tennyson's "In Memoriam."

¹Illingworth, "Personality, Human and Divine," page 91.

STUDY VIII. MAN AND HIS RELATIONSHIPS.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again into a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Pet. i. 3-5.)

"Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you." (1 Pet. i. 10.)

"And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." (John xvii. 3.)

"But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." (Rom. vi. 8.)

 PART VII. CAN WE ACCEPT THE IDEA OF THE PERMANENCE OF PERSONALITY?¹

SERIOUS arguments have been advanced against the belief in immortality. The first is that of the evolutionist, who holds that all life is a flux. Nothing is permanent or abiding, but all things are becoming. Man is simply a temporary stage in a long process. There is no reason to believe that man, one of the most insignificant beings in this cosmic process, should be singled out for preservation. This argument tries to bully us by the preponderance of physical force.

It is a purely quantitative argument. Men will no longer be browbeaten by such fallacious logic. Even though man is small as to quantity, he is supreme as to quality. Furthermore, if evolution is going anywhere, it must have a goal. There must be a residuum. It would be pure chaos, a senseless process, that eternally threw away all it produced. Man is acknowledged as the highest product of this process of the centuries; and if he is to be thrown away after a few centuries or eons, what is the reason or sense of the whole

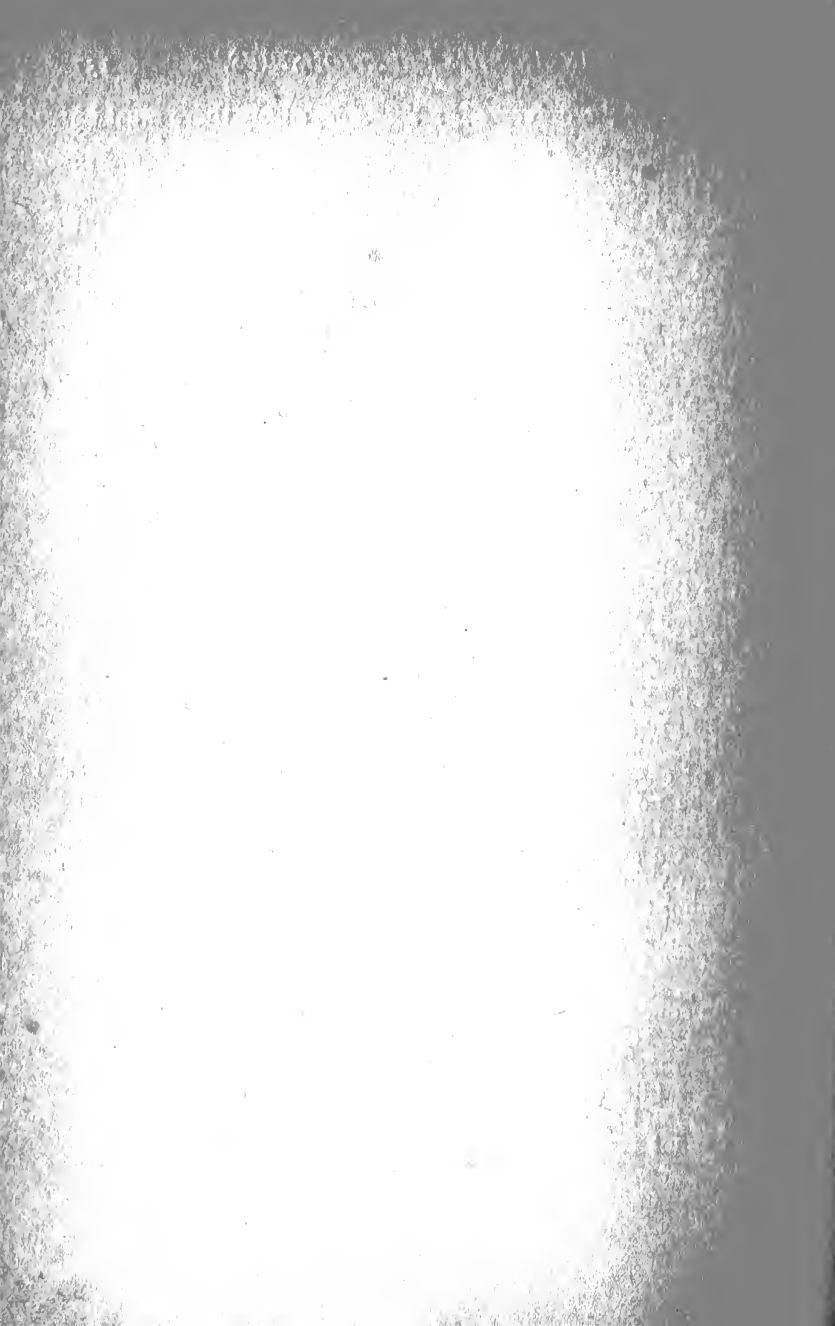
¹Cf. the author's "Personal Elements in Religious Life," Chapter VIII.

process? If the universe is reasonable, surely there must be some permanent element which gives value to the process. Even the evolutionist needs the conception of immortality to save his theory from utter chaos.

Again, it has been argued by the psychologist that thought is a mere function of the brain and that when the brain decays the thought is snuffed out. Thought being a central element in personality, the decay of the brain would mean personal extinction. But this is a gratuitous assumption. No psychologist has ever proved that thought is a function of the brain. It is far easier to prove that thought uses the brain as its instrument and that, when the agent is worn out, the agency may find other means of expression. There is no proof on either side, hence the psychologist who thinks that thought is a function of the brain is no more to be trusted than the psychologist who holds that the brain is the mere instrument of thought. If psychology cannot prove immortality, it just as surely cannot disprove it.

The third argument, which we have noticed before in our discussion of Positivism, claims that it is evil and selfish to be thinking all the time about our own personal existence in the future. They hold that it is a mere offering of a prize, as in a high school. But we cannot see it thus. Immortality is not a prize for a good life, but it is really a chance to make the life good. We make a small start toward the development of character, and then death cuts our career short. If there be no chance to continue the growing process, what good has the struggle been? We are foreordained to failure before we start, and we had just as well not start at all. No man would start to be a philosopher if he knew that all reasoning power would be taken from him at the end of the first day. In order to make our struggle for character rational, we must conclude that there is a chance to continue the task.

The conception of immortality rests ultimately on the fact of God. Having a good God, who created us, we cannot believe that he will cast us aside just as we are beginning to grow into character capable of having fellowship with him. Man being what he is and God being a loving Father, we cannot escape the belief in a continued personal existence.



STUDY IX.

CAN THE MODERN MAN PRAY?

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“But Jehovah sent out a great wind upon the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god; and they cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it unto them. But Jonah was gone down into the innermost parts of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep. So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.” (Jonah i. 4-6.)

“And the tidings reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he made proclamation and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; let them not feed, nor drink water; but let them be covered with sackcloth, both man and beast, and let them cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in his hands. Who knoweth whether God will not turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?” (Jonah iii. 6-9.)

“Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. . . . Then the satraps, the deputies, and the governors, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Then the herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up.” (Dan. iii. 1, 3-5.)

 PART I. THE UNIVERSALITY OF PRAYER.

MANY thoughtful people are much troubled about prayer. Some have dropped the habit of prayer and return to it only in hours of stress and strain. Others continue the habit, but have grave doubts as to its efficacy. A Christian worker recently came and asked the bold question: “Do you think the modern man of thought can consistently continue to pray?” We must try to answer this.

First, I reminded my Christian friend that all men do

pray. Men frequently go for long periods without uttering prayers, even though their general attitude may be a prayer. But in hours of great stress even the man who denies the efficacy of prayer will break out in spoken prayer. There seems to be a deep feeling in the human heart that the universe is adjusted to and responsive to the soul of man. At least all men do at times call out for help, whether they believe in a personal God or not. Dr. Nassau, describing the prayers of the people in Central Africa, says: "They have a ring of urgency. They are appeals for mercy, pathetic, agonizing protestations, pitiful deprecations of evil."¹ Carlyle is reported as saying: "Prayer is and remains the native and deepest impulse of the soul of man." Even in the countries where the religions deny prayer, men continue to pray. The Buddhist prays in spite of the fact that his religious creed denies the existence of both God and man. Queer enough, the followers of Gautama, the Buddha, have deified him and pray before his image most ardently and regularly. The savage is never too crude nor the man of culture too civilized to pray. Prayer seems to be a universal habit.

But prayer is not simply asking things. It is the deep trend of the life, the purpose, the motive, the supreme desire. It is the yearning of the soul to find God. "This religious desire and effort of the soul to relate itself and all its interests to God and his will is prayer in the deepest sense. This is essential prayer. It is the soul's desire after God going forth in manifestation."² Prayer is much broader than petition. It is praise, worship, and fellowship. It is the whole attempt of the personality to bring itself into harmony with and properly relate itself to that higher kindred power outside itself. All work as the expression of our desires is prayer. All character-building is prayer. Petition is just a part of the whole process, which is as broad as life.

¹Nassau, "Fetichism in West Africa," pages 97, 98.

²Bowne, "The Essence of Religion," page 132.

STUDY IX. CAN THE MODERN MAN PRAY?

"Bless Jehovah, O my soul.
 O Jehovah my God, thou art very great;
 Thou art clothed with honor and majesty:
 Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment;
 Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain;
 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters;
 Who maketh the clouds his chariot;
 Who walketh upon the wings of the wind;
 Who maketh winds his messengers;
 Flames of fire his ministers;
 Who laid the foundations of the earth,
 That it should not be moved forever.
 Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a vesture;
 The waters stood above the mountains.
 At thy rebuke they fled;
 At the voice of thy thunder they hasted away
 (The mountains rose, the valleys sank down)
 Unto the place which thou hadst founded for them."
 (Ps. civ. 1-8.)

PART II. DIFFICULTIES IN ANSWER TO PRAYER.

My religious worker went on to say that he believed in prayer because it had a reflex influence. It brought the person praying in harmony with the idea and purpose of his prayer—that is, in that sense helped one to answer his own prayer. As a universal habit he thought it had value. "But," he continued, "how can God answer prayer in a universe run according to fixed laws? In a world of natural order does prayer do anything?"

First, it was necessary to make sure that we knew what he meant by the laws of nature. They are not entities or things. They are neither matter, mind, nor force. They do not rule or govern. Laws are simply our formulation of the uniform method by which the universe is run. The method is the result of a high intelligence, else there could be neither uniformity nor method. The universe is not run by some mechanical necessity. There is a power behind the uniformity of nature. The process in the universe is but the perpetual expression of the will of God. The order of nature is the order of God. Now, if God is the essence of the universe and its order the expression of his will, then

he is free to express his will in advanced ways. Granted a divine will and a sufficient cause, things may happen which would not have happened had there not been prayer.

"Yes," said my friend, "they may happen, but do they? Will God dip into the world even if he can?" Here, again, we were back to an old difficulty, the conception of an unchanging world. God does not have to dip in; he is already in. He is not outside of his universe. The universe would not run itself one minute if the activity of his will ceased. "Then," said my inquirer, "if he is the all-pervading will, can he change things without destroying all uniformity and hence destroying all basis for scientific knowledge?" Most certainly he can. My will is a part of the natural order, just as God's will is the all-inclusive element. Now, I change things without destroying uniformity. A man pitches me a ball. The law of gravity says that the ball must fall to the ground; but my will intervenes, and I catch the ball. I have not destroyed the law of gravity. I have only superinduced a higher law, the law of will. I have not destroyed order, but I have changed things.

Indeed, all the work done by modern inventions of machinery, of wireless telegraphy, and all the rest is not a destruction of natural order, but the superinducing of higher laws—of which we were formerly ignorant—into the place of the natural order. As science discovers more and more the laws of nature, we will increasingly be able to bring about new results without changing one particle the natural order. If man with his puny will can change things, surely we cannot deny to God equal power. God with his infinite knowledge of all the laws of the universe may be able to answer any legitimate prayer I make by use of law and not in spite of it.

STUDY IX. CAN THE MODERN MAN PRAY?

“And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine is come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him; and he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee? I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will arise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. And of which of you that is a father shall his son ask a loaf, and he give him a stone? or a fish, and he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” (Luke v. 13.)

PART III. DO WE NEED TO PRAY TO A GOOD GOD?

“GRANTED that God could answer prayer without destroying the order of the universe, I have a deeper difficulty,” said my inquirer. “If he is an all-wise and good God, he knows my needs and will give them to me without asking. If he does not know my needs, he is not all-wise; and if he knows but withholds, he is not good.” At first sight this seems like an unanswerable argument. It is certainly more serious than the former difficulty. In order to clear the question, we must ask what the purpose of life really is. What is God trying to do with us here on earth? If we are correct in supposing that he is trying to develop a race of men who are fitted in character to associate with him and to dwell together in harmony and peace, we at least have a clue to our answer. The religious education of the race

means bringing to fruition in the individual the spirit of love, sympathy, kindness, unselfishness, and brotherhood. How may such qualities be developed? Experience has taught us that such qualities of character can be cultivated only by being practiced. We learn sympathy by sympathizing. We learn to love by loving. We grow unselfish by sharing. We must, therefore, have the chance to serve others if we would grow in character. It is for this reason, doubtless, that God plans to give each of us the largest possible share in the ongoing of his kingdom. He must often wait until we want certain things enough to ask for them, and he must wait to do certain things until some of his children get sufficiently interested in others of his children to cooperate with God in meeting their needs.

The Young Men's Christian Association is a great organization. It is doing a wonderful work for the young men of to-day. I suppose it was greatly needed fifty years before it was founded. I am sure that God knew the needs of young men then just as he sees their needs now; and yet he waited in order that George Williams and many others like him might see the vision, work for its realization, and so a whole generation of men might be trained in unselfish service. We know that God does actually wait for men to cooperate with him. Why should we doubt that he has good reasons for waiting until we will cooperate by prayer?

Viewed in this way, prayer is not man's attempt to make God do something which he wants done. It is man's attempt to put himself in such an attitude that God can work through him in accomplishing his will for men. It is not dictation to God or begging God to be good to his own children; it is putting ourselves into his hands for his service. In this way, and in this way alone, can God train us in all the fullness of character.

STUDY IX. CAN THE MODERN MAN PRAY?

“Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and the Lord said unto him in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one named Saul, a man of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth; and he hath seen a man named Ananias coming in, and laying his hands on him, that he might receive his sight. But Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many of this man, how much evil he did to thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call upon thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name’s sake. And Ananias departed, and entered into the house; and laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” (Acts ix. 10-17.)

PART IV. PRAYER ANSWERED THROUGH SUGGESTION.

DR. EDWARD I. BOSWORTH has made a suggestion concerning answer to prayer which is worthy of careful thought. He says that most prayers which a mature Christian prays can be answered if God is able to put a thought into the mind of a man. Most of the legitimate prayers will naturally be with reference to other persons. Not that we may not pray for other things; but, on the whole, most of our prayers could be answered by persons. Now, if God can put into the minds of other persons the proper thoughts, most such prayers may be thereby granted.

Merrell Vories, a young college man, went to Japan as a government school-teacher. He was very active out of school hours in personal work among his students. Soon he had won a number to the Christian life. The Buddhist

priests then became angry and secured his discharge from the school. Vories found himself in a foreign land without much knowledge of the language, without a position, without a mission board behind him. Besides, he was the target of bitter criticism and was liable to physical persecution. What should he do? If he left, his little band of followers would soon be scattered. If he stayed, he faced hardship, persecution, and physical evil. He and his students prayed long and earnestly. Finally it was decided that he should stay, cost what it would. He set about finding a livelihood. Two days later a draft for twenty-five dollars came to him in the mail. This draft was renewed a month later, and so for two years it arrived every month without Vories knowing whence it had come. An American business man traveling in Japan heard the story of Vories's work and said he was deeply impressed that he should send some money there. He followed the deep impression, thus enabling Vories to stay at his post and push his work. I believe God suggested that thought to the American business man and thus answered Merrell Vories's prayer.

Why should I doubt that God can put a thought into a man's mind? I can do it by blundering word, by written sign, by expression of face, by many means. Surely God is not more limited than I. Thought is the reaction from stimulus, and we all know that the strongest possible stimulus to thought is personality. Why should we doubt God's ability to suggest a thought to a human person and thus answer prayer?

STUDY IX. CAN THE MODERN MAN PRAY?

"Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit. But Peter said unto him, Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right before God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee. For I see that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. And Simon answered and said, Pray ye for me to the Lord, that none of the things which ye have spoken come upon me." (Acts viii. 18-24.)

PART V. NEGATIVE CONDITIONS OF PRAYER.

THERE is much false talk about the answer to prayer. Every prayer may be answered, and yet few answered just as we felt they ought to be answered. This leads us to lay down the first negative law of prayer.

Prayer is not making demands on God. It is an attempt to put ourselves in harmony with his will. To demand means that we suppose we know better what we need than God knows. If so, we are the God, and the one to whom we pray is a puppet. "Thy will be done" is no overpious phrase. It is simply the recognition of God's infinity and our finitude.

Again, we cannot legitimately ask God to do for us what we can do for ourselves. We may commune with God about any matter that affects our lives, but we may not ask him to relieve us of the responsibility of living. If a teacher of mathematics solves all the problems for the pupils, there will result a dull class. We must learn by mastering. If God's purpose is to build character in me, he must let me struggle with some of the problems of life. He cannot do all things for me.

Again, I may not demand that God free me from the pain which is consequent upon my sinfulness. If I am careless about the sanitation of my premises and get typhoid, I need not expect God to save me from all suffering. I may pray for wisdom to avoid such suffering again, and I may pray for wisdom in overcoming the present disease, if his wisdom sees fit to help me. Prayer is not a kind of fire escape to keep us out of difficulties.

Lastly, we may not ask that which is selfish. God can never lend himself to a selfish scheme. No good parent will give to one child what will injure another one of the children in the home. Such action would indicate a partial or prejudiced parent. God cannot help me in my business if my business injures others. I cannot ask God to give me wisdom that I may outwit and defraud my neighbor. We said any prayer could be answered, granted there was a divine free will and a sufficiently important cause. But selfishness is never sufficiently important. A selfish desire weighs as zero in the sight of a just and loving God. He who would really pray must not demand; he must not shirk; he must be willing to bear his own evil; he must not desire to succeed at the expense of others. No such prayer can be legitimately answered in the affirmative.

STUDY IX. CAN THE MODERN MAN PRAY?

“But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee. And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matt. vi. 6-15.)

PART VI. POSITIVE CONDITIONS FOR PRAYER.

IF prayer is to be availing, surely it must have laws or standards.

First of all, it would seem that we must ever keep foremost the meaning of prayer as the attempt of a man to find harmony with God. We will be aided in this by the study of God's world, by studying the lives of other Christians, and by meditation. Prayer is not so many words said, so many beads counted, so many wheels turned, so many kneelings and uprisings. Prayer is the soul's attempt to know and do the will of God. It must, therefore, be characterized by deep humility and openness to the truth.

The second condition of real prayer is earnestness. No good father gratifies every whim of his child. That would be to spoil the child and weaken the character. If we are to be developed in life, God must give us a chance to live for some things, to struggle, to agonize. This is perhaps the meaning of the parable of the importunate neighbor. The

man in his bed did not give his neighbor bread simply because of his much knocking, but because it revealed his dead-earnestness. I cannot pray for missions if I am not dead in earnest enough to do all in my power for missions—my money, my influence, my life must be at the disposal of God. No halfway, lazy prayer indifferently requested could be answered if God remain true to his purpose of training.

Thirdly, I must be interested in the things in which God is interested, if I am to pray. This is the positive way of saying that I must not be selfish. Occasionally as I work in the colleges I find a boy to whose parents I write in trying to help him. Such a letter is an open sesame to the hearts of those parents. I am interested in their supreme interest—their boy—and, of course, I get a hearty response. No man can really pray who is not interested in his brother men. He has no basis for prayer. God is interested in men; and if I am to find harmony with God, I cannot hate men. We dare not despise any—white, black, or yellow—for if we do, we cannot effectually pray. We can only ask God to help us get in the attitude to pray.

Lastly, if we are to be really praying men, we must undertake tasks too big for our human powers. When we have a superhuman task, we are drawn back to God. No man will pray so long as he thinks he does not need help in meeting the demands of life. But try a great task for God. Try to change the life of a wayward companion. Try to clear up the moral conditions in a college or the civic conditions in a rotten city, and you will find need for God. Let us undertake such great things for him that we can do them only through him, and we will have to pray.

STUDY IX. CAN THE MODERN MAN PRAY?

"But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath ever entered into my mouth. But a voice answered the second time out of heaven, What God hath cleansed, make not thou common. And this was done thrice: and all were drawn up again into heaven. And behold, forthwith three men stood before the house in which we were, having been sent from Cæsarea unto me. And the Spirit bade me go with them, making no distinction. And these six brethren also accompanied me; and we entered into the man's house." (Acts xi. 8-12.)

PART VII. PRAYER A WORKING FORCE.

WHEN prayer meets the conditions of the last two studies, it becomes a dominating force in the life, and it begins to achieve its objects. "This is true, in the first place, because a central craving organizes all the faculties of our lives about itself and sets mind and hands to do its bidding. Of the three ways in which men coöperate with God—working, thinking, and praying—a cursory view might suggest that praying is a somewhat superfluous addition. Dominant desire gathers up the scattered faculties, centers the mind, nerves the will, drives hard toward the issue."¹ Mr. Fosdick further goes on to say that this dominant desire as prayer organizes other forces around it which help to make the answer possible. It becomes a working force. It certainly releases the energies of God into a man's life and makes him capable of doing what he could not have otherwise done.

Prayer has undoubtedly been the dynamic of all great Christian advances. "For many years it has been my practice in traveling among the nations to make a study of the sources of the spiritual movements which are doing most to vitalize and transform individuals and communities. At times it has been difficult to discover the hidden springs; but invariably, where I have had the time and patience to do so, I have found it in an intercessory prayer life of great reality."²

It cannot be doubted that God has great reserves of power

¹Fosdick, "The Meaning of Prayer," page 145.

²Mott, "Intercessors: The Primary Need," page 24.

at his disposal and that the one means of access to this power is prayer. It is for this reason that most great workers have been great prayers. Prayer couples the power of God with the instrumentality of man and makes great power available in the world. "Every grave crisis in the expansion of Christianity which has been successfully met has been met by the faithfulness of Christ's disciples in the secret place. That there is a necessary connection between the progress of Christians on the one hand and, on the other, the revealing of Christ's plan, the raising up of workers, and the releasing of the great spiritual forces of the kingdom is a fact as clearly established as any fact can be established."¹

I have noticed that in those colleges where there were few men, if any, who believed in prayer, no great transformation of life has been possible. But in those colleges where there have been a few earnest students praying, great moral changes have come about. It seems as if the spiritual forces of the universe align themselves with the intense, eager, earnest prayer of a Christian man. No one can study missionary movements without realizing that prayer has been wielded by the missionaries as a mighty working force. If we expect to do work beyond the mediocre in grade and in transforming power, we must be men of prayer.

God has the abundant resources to transform the world, and the man who puts himself in the attitude to use these forces by his prayer life becomes a mighty worker for righteousness.

¹Mott, "Intercessors: The Primary Need," page 24.

STUDY X.
THE REALITY OF RELIGION.

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“(For when Gentiles that have not the law do by nature the things of the law, these, not having the law, are the law unto themselves; in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them).” (Rom. ii. 14, 15.)

“That they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.” (Acts xvii. 27.)

 PART I. RELIGION AS THE PROJECTION OF OUR OWN DESIRES.

NOT a few thoughtful people are asking whether there is any reality corresponding to our conceptions of religion. An old college friend of mine, now a prominent professor in a great State university, came to me sometime since with just this difficulty. He had once been an ardent Christian; but, with some more or less superficial study of religion, he had come to the conclusion that it was purely a fiction of the imagination. There is also a group of psychological thinkers who feel that religion is just functional in origin—that is, it arises out of the activities of our own persons. It is the resultant of a certain mental stimulus arising out of social contacts. According to the functional theory, religion is just man's adjustment to a certain part of his environment. This definition of religion we would readily accept if the psychologist would allow us to define that environment in terms of a personal God.

This conception of religion arises out of a one-sided philosophy or a one-sided psychology. In our time of specialization there is danger that men shall lose perspective. Pratt, in his “Psychology of Religious Belief,” justly calls attention to the fact that intellect and logic alone cannot give us truth. “The one thesis which I wish to defend, the one contention for which I really care, is that the whole man must be trusted as against any small portion of his nature, such as reason or perception.”¹ Whenever men have trust-

¹Pratt's “Psychology of Religious Belief,” page 27.

ed one side of their nature alone, it has landed them in error. Of course the religionist has been accused of just this one-sidedness. It has been said that he follows not his reason, but his impulses.

The human heart's best; you prefer
 Making that prove the minister
 To truth; you probe its wants and needs,
 And hopes and fears, then try what creeds
 Meet those most aptly—resolute
 That faith plucks such substantial fruit
 Wherever these two correspond.¹

The critic claims that out of our one-sided desire for a religious life we create our whole system.

Did not we ourselves make Him?
 Our mind receives but what it holds, no more.
 First of the love, then; we acknowledge Christ—
 A proof we comprehend His love, a proof
 We had such love already in ourselves,
 Knew first, what else we should not recognize,
 'Tis mere projection from man's inmost mind.²

There is certainly truth in this last quotation. If we did not have the Godhood in us, we could never comprehend God. We cannot know anything which is completely and absolutely foreign to our nature. The fact that we do comprehend God indicates that we are enough like him to come to know him. But, on the other hand, this does not prove that all our knowledge of him comes from our own imaginings. If religion is the result of pure imagination, how does it come that all peoples have it? No other form of pure imagination has universal sway. There must be some deeper explanation.

¹Browning's "Easter-Day."

²Browning's "A Death in the Desert."

STUDY X. THE REALITY OF RELIGION.

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
 So panteth my soul after thee, O God.
 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God:
 When shall I come and appear before God?
 My tears have been my food day and night,
 While they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?
 These things I remember, and pour out my soul within me,
 How I went with the throng, and led them to the house of God,
 With the voice of joy and praise, a multitude keeping holyday.
 Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
 And why art thou disquieted within me?
 Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him
 For the help of his countenance." (Ps. xlii. 1-5.)

PART II. THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION.

THERE is planted deep in man a desire for full and complete development. The meaning and method of this development vary greatly with different groups, but the aspiring impulse is universal. It is likewise universally recognized that man needs help in this struggle for development. He feels that there is something without him which can help to make or mar his destiny. He feels that his inner life can be made complete only by the proper adjustment to this outer influence, and religion is just man's attempt to make this proper adjustment. This need for proper adjustment is just the deepest fact of human consciousness. The savage has need for such an adjustment and attempts to make it. Fetishism, animism, and totemism are the results. "At one pole of being," says Talling, "the savage instinctively recognizes his [God's] existence. At the other philosophy needs God as the fundamental premise."¹ Kant, in his "Critique of Practical Reason," says: "I find an ought within which compels me to complete development. But I cannot attain complete development if the universe is bad at heart and hence against me. Hence I must believe that the universe is for me, that there is a God at the heart of things, and that my self-development is proper adjustment of myself to this God." This is religion.

¹Talling, "The Science of Spiritual Life," page 49.

This sense of oughtness and its relationship to a higher power is universal, and all religious experiences have grown out of it. "The origin of religion consists in the fact that man has the infinite within him, even before he is himself conscious of it and whether he recognizes it or not."¹ Eucken's "solid nucleus" of religion is the upspringing of God within the human soul. Jevons says that the "Continuum of Religion" is the direct and convincing revelation of God to the human soul, and every historian of religion must accept the facts of this religious consciousness.

It is generally agreed that the facts of religious consciousness are universal. What does that imply as to their reality? It means that there must be truth behind these facts, or else universal human nature is a lie. It does not mean that the forms of religion may not be filled with error, but it does mean that the religious impulse out of which these forms spring must have reality in it. If I cannot trust universal nature to tell the truth here, even though mixed with error, then I cannot trust human nature at all. There is no way of finding truth, and I am landed in nescience. But the mind will not rest in negation. We know that we can find truth, and we know that we find it by trusting our whole personality. Eucken might well have said of all knowledge and experience what he said of religion: "In the conviction of the author, religion is able to attain a secure position and an effective influence only when it is founded upon the whole of life and not upon a particular so-called faculty of the soul, be it intellect, feeling, or will."²

If we trust the whole nature of man, it undoubtedly tells us that religion is a reality and that the only way to deny the truth is to discredit human nature. We cannot discredit human nature and still continue to think. We must, therefore, accept the fact of religion as real. The forms of religion may be false, but the central fact of religious consciousness as a relation to a superior being is as deep as human life itself and cannot be set aside.

¹Tiele, "Elements of the Science of Religion," Volume II., page 230.

²Eucken, "The Truth of Religion," Preface.

STUDY X. THE REALITY OF RELIGION.

"Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake." (John xiv. 11.)

"And one of the multitude answered him, Teacher, I brought unto thee my son, who hath a dumb spirit. . . . And he asked his father, How long time is it since this hath come unto hm? And he said, From a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him both into the fire and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us. And Jesus said unto him, If thou canst! All things are possible to him that believeth. Straightway the father of the child cried out, and said, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." (Mark ix. 17, 21-24.)

 PART III. THE MINIMUM OF BELIEF.

It cannot be denied that we are in an age of unsettled faith. Historical research has undermined old beliefs, and criticism of the Biblical texts has made many uncertain of the exact authority of many passages. Many a student of religion is saying that he cannot think his way through the whole maze of the difficulties. He does not wish to be insincere and claim to believe that about which he knows nothing. Neither does he desire to throw away that which has given him power and may ultimately prove to be the truth. What, then, can he accept as absolutely abiding and on that build to a larger faith? A man at the University of Texas came to me in just this frame of mind on my last visit to that institution. What can we say to such a man?

First of all, we can say to him that there are certain fundamental facts which he can accept without any knowledge of historical or textual or any other form of criticism. He can accept the statement of the last study, that the religious consciousness is a universal reality. He can test this and verify it by his own nature. He knows that there is aspira-

tion for something bigger than himself. He feels that right adjustment of his inner life to this something bigger will bring life. Of this much he may be sure, for it is a part of universal consciousness.

Secondly, he believes in the law of righteousness. No man in his senses can doubt this. He may not know how we arrive at our judgments of what is righteous, but he feels within him a sense of right and wrong. He approves his own life when he lives righteously and condemns his life when he does unrighteousness.

“But,” said my Texas student, “what is right, and what is wrong?” I tried to show him that the final example of right life was given us in Jesus Christ. Regardless of whether Jesus was more than a man or not, regardless even of whether he was a Person or not, the picture we have of him in the Gospels is the best picture we have ever had of true righteousness. This the whole world has had to acknowledge. Furthermore, Jesus set for us the final standard. (See Study VIII., Part II.)

That there is a universal religious consciousness, that righteousness is the highest law of life, that Jesus is the best embodiment of righteousness we know, and that Jesus gave us a permanent standard of morals, my skeptical Texas student granted. “There,” I said, “you have a big foundation on which to build.” Give yourself without reserve to these things which you can accept and which perhaps all men can accept. Every man must take the best he knows and must live it to the limit of his ability. I must be true to my best conception until I find one that is better. And here is the beginning of personal religion. No man has a right to wait until he has solved all questions before starting to live what he already knows. To be religiously true to the best we know now is the surest way of knowing better to-morrow.

STUDY X. THE REALITY OF RELIGION.

“But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This man doth not cast our demons, but by Beelzebub the prince of the demons. . . . Therefore I say unto you, Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in that which is to come.” (Matt. xii. 24, 31, 32.)

PART IV. THE ATTITUDE OF THE TRUTH SEEKER.

ONE day Jesus healed a blind, dumb lunatic; and the carping and critical Pharisees said that he did it by the power of the devil. Forced by human desire for understanding to attribute the deed to some great power, but unwilling to see any good either in Jesus or in his works, they attribute the whole thing to the influence of evil. Christ's rebuke is sharp and clear. He says that the sin of misunderstanding him is pardonable; but when one so long shuts his eyes to truth that he cannot see the difference between truth and falsehood, he has committed what Mark calls the eternal sin. It is an eternal sin just because it closes the gates of truth and locks them so that no truth can get access. It is a terrible warning against trifling with one's conscience, against failure to live up to the best we know. Lack of fidelity here will undo the whole life, for it changes the whole stream of impressions which come to us. It shuts out the best; it opens us only to the worst. Playing fast and loose with one's sense of truth not only blurs moral perceptions, but blots out all distinctions between right and wrong.

To the truth seeker, therefore, nothing is more essential than an open and aggressive attitude toward truth. It is not enough to live to the best we know to-day. We must seek after truth. It is not a sin to be ignorant to-day, but it

is a sin to be satisfied with that ignorance. It is not indicative of lack of force or character for a man to fall down in a puddle of mud; but if he stays there, we would count him an imbecile. There is no sin in having one's mind vexed with doubt, but it is a sin to sit quietly and nurse one's doubts without trying to solve them. One of the greatest dangers of our time is that we shall be satisfied with negation. In no other realm are we so likely to make this mistake as in religion.

The man who wants to be fair to religion must search for truth. He must not be passive. This is too important a field for him to assume a negative attitude. Secondly, he must act on all the truth he has day by day. He who will not do these two things is neither honest nor scientific.

STUDY X. THE REALITY OF RELIGION.

"If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself." (John vii. 17.)

PART V. THE WILL TO BELIEVE.

SPEAKING of academic audiences, Professor James says: "Paralysis of their native capacity for faith and timorous abulia in the religious field are their special forms of mental weakness."¹ In his essay on "The Will to Believe," James points out that the great fear of our age is that we shall believe some error. We are even willing to forego finding truth if we can be sure to keep ourselves free from all erroneous opinion. "Better go without belief forever than believe in a lie." Assume the part of absolute impartiality to all truth. Make sure that you allow no bias to get into your thinking. Have no enthusiasm for any truth, lest it might prove to have a modicum of error. This is the spirit of our age.

"But," says Professor James, "this is precisely the poorest way of finding truth. If you want an absolute duffer in an investigation, you must, after all, take the man who has no interest whatever in the results. He is the warranted incapable, the positive fool."²

He further points out that in all moral and religious questions there can be no external proofs. One can never write "Q. E. D." after any religious statement. The very fact of lack of proof gives moral truth its efficacy. Make it an iron-clad and undoubtable fact that a certain action will bring good or evil, and the moral quality has been taken out of it. It is only a dolt who would fail to choose it if it meant absolute and certain good, or leave it alone if its consequences

¹James, "The Will to Believe," Preface. ²*Ibid.*, page 21.

were utterly and surely evil. All moral questions present a living option, as James would call it—that is, there is always a possibility of different standards of worth in that action. “Now,” says James, “we may, if we will, throw ourselves on the side of good. We may take the chance of getting some evil with our good and of losing some other good. But we can choose. We can accept the theory of the right as our working hypothesis. Religion is a forced opinion so far as that good goes. We cannot escape the issue by remaining skeptical and waiting for more light, because (although we do avoid error in that way, if the religion be untrue) we lose the good, if it be true, just as certainly as if we positively choose to disbelieve.”¹ “Skepticism, then, is not avoidance of option. It is option of a certain particular kind of risk. Better risk loss of truth than chance of error.”²

The will to believe, therefore, is finding what has the best appearance of truth and throwing ourselves into it to verify it by experience. It is not blindly gulping down something on authority; it is taking a worthy hypothesis and testing it out in experience. This the scientist does in every advance he makes. This the seeker after religion must do. We must make the great adventure and correct our conceptions as new truth is made clear to our souls.

¹James, “The Will to Believe,” page 26. ²*Ibid.*

STUDY X. THE REALITY OF RELIGION.

“Who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah?
 And who shall stand in his holy place?
 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;
 Who hath not lifted up his soul unto falsehood,
 And hath not sworn deceitfully.
 He shall receive a blessing from Jehovah,
 And righteousness from the God of his salvation.”
 (Ps. xxiv. 3-5.)

“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.” (John xiv. 21.)

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High
 Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.”
 (Ps. xci. 1.)

“But they that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint.” (Isa. xl. 31.)

PART VI. HINDRANCES TO REALITY.

A STUDENT at the University of North Carolina was troubled because religion did not “take hold of him,” as he expressed it. He was sure that there was a God and that religion was man’s relationship to that God, but somehow he could not let the impression find him. “It is to be carefully noted,” says Dr. King, “a thing may be unreal to us because it seems to have no living connection with the rest of our life or because it seems to have no special contribution to make to life. It must not be so different that it cannot be believed to belong to the same world and to the same human nature and to the same God as the rest of life, and yet it must be seen to be different enough to have a genuine and indispensable contribution of its own to make.”¹

One group of persons fail to find reality in religion because they fail to realize that God is a living Person and can be approached as other persons. Religion is not like friendship; it is friendship. It has definite laws of growth, just as has any other friendship. God is not far away. He is

¹King, “The Seeming Unreality of Spiritual Life,” page 15.

not off in the corner of the universe. He is a Person and can be met as a person.

On the other hand, some have not felt the reality of religion because, as a kind of mystical experience, it has not seemed to add anything to life. It has seemed to them that it might add a degree of peace in hours of loneliness, but that it could make a man a better worker in a workaday world has never dawned on them. But if God is personal, then his contact with me can give me the same kind of inspiration as fellowship with other kindred souls. It is a commonplace fact that we can work better if we have sympathetic understanding and fellowship in our work. If God is a real Person, he can give us just this fellowship. He therefore can and does do something for us.

Again, others have found no reality in religion because they have expected to know God easily, quickly, and exactly; and failing in this, they find religion unreal. Such persons should remember that no personal relationship is complete. Think how little we really know about our best friends, our mothers, our sisters and brothers. It is hard to break away the veil that hangs between two personalities. Strive as we may, we can never quite comprehend another soul. How much less will we be able to fully comprehend the infinite Soul!

Yet once more we fail to find reality in religion because we expect to experience God before we have met the conditions. Functional psychology says that we act first and then feel afterwards. We demand the overwhelming sense of God before we have met the conditions which would bring a convincing experience. Dr. King reminds us that "the highest things everywhere require complete commitment. They give themselves only where all is risked. No temporizing, half-hearted experiment here will give results. The meaning of a genuinely useful love, for example, does not yield itself to any calculating experiment."¹

We cannot try God for a period and then tear away if we are not satisfied, for the very fact that we have not risked all will vitiate an experiment. This is not a special demand of religion; it is a part with all personal relations. What man ever held himself in reserve as he tried to win the heart of a woman? The very fact that he did not risk all would defeat the attempt which he made.

¹King, "The Seeming Unreality of Spiritual Life," page 40.

STUDY X. THE REALITY OF RELIGION.

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do: and the God of peace shall be with you.” (Phil. iv. 8, 9.)

“But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.” (1 Cor. iii. 18.)

 PART VII. LAWS OF GROWING REALITY.

THE fundamental question is, What are the laws of a growing sense of reality in any personal relationship?

The first law is to give careful heed to the concrete expressions of God which we possess. If we wish to keep certain loved ones fresh in memory, we have their pictures on our table, we put around us pieces of their handiwork, we read as often as possible their words. We spend time putting ourselves into the presence of their attitude of life. Now, Jesus is the historical picture of God. He is the best expression of what God can do in the realm of character. He who would have his communion with God real will, therefore, spend time with Christ. He will read the record of his life. He will catch his matchless spirit of love and sacrifice. He will give much heed to this concrete expression of God's life.

The second law is like unto this first: Stay persistently in the presence of the facts of God. See what he has done in the lives of men. Read his dealings with other men in other times. Nothing is real to us which does not get persistent attention. Neglect any element in your environment long enough, and you will cease to be conscious of it. Give attention to any fact in your environment, and you will see new manifestations of that fact on every hand. The wonder is that God is as real as he is. We so constantly and persistently shut him from our field of attention that one wonders that he has any hold at all. We have no time in the

morning for Bible study or prayer. The heat of the day is filled with something else. At night we are too tired to think of God. We must pay the inevitable price. God cannot become real to us unless we pay the price of holding ourselves, through Bible study, prayer, and meditation, in his presence more than most of us have.

The third law is the law of activity. He who would know truth must act on what he has to the utmost of his ability. The man who will not act on the simple fact that two plus two are four will not be able to make progress in mathematics. He who does not act on what he knows about God need not hope to find more truth of God flooding his soul. Action gives rise to thought, which in turn moves on to action. So the process continues. It is a kind of endless chain, but action has creative power for thought. He who would have a realizing sense of God must act Godlike so fast as ever he knows how.

Fourthly, let one who wants to find God real live much with persons to whom he is a reality. Biography in reading and persons in daily life have molding power upon our sense of reality. Live with these persons, and we will catch their spirit of reality.

Lastly, seek to have your own experience and express it in your own way. I cannot know and appreciate another person just as you do. I must know him in my own way. He makes a different impression on me from that he makes on you. Your experience with God will not be exactly my experience. Be yourself and not another. Express your experience in your own terms and not in the worn-out terms of other people. Insist on finding out God rather than those things about God. Make the great venture of throwing yourself into the God program, and reality will slowly but surely dawn in your life.

STUDY XI.

SHARING THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE.

STUDY XI. SHARING THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE.

“That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” (1 John i. 1-3.)

“But the man from whom the demons were gone out prayed him that he might be with him: but he sent him away, saying, Return to thy house, and declare how great things God hath done for thee.” (Luke viii. 38, 39.)

PART I. THE MEANING OF TESTIMONY.

MOST men come to the appreciation of a new value through the experience and testimony of others who have become familiar with that particular value. If I am thrown with Mr. Edison or Mr. Marconi, I will soon begin to be interested in electricity. If I live with Mr. Burbank for a short time, I will undoubtedly get interested in the breeding of plants. So it is in every realm of life. I do not enter a new field of interest purely on my own initiative, at least the great mass of men do not.

In order that a man's testimony shall be contagious, he needs to have had first-hand experience with the thing of which he speaks. In a law court they want from a witness the report of what he has seen or heard or experienced. They do not want heresay or inferences or generalizations. In other realms we are equally exacting. We are not much interested in what a man thinks in general about Africa; but if he has been there and has had experiences, we are interested at once. A competent witness, therefore, is one who has had experience with the facts under consideration

and who can be trusted to report truthfully what he has found. If either of these elements is lacking, his testimony will be worthless. In the field of electricity an African in the heart of the Congo would not be competent, because of lack of experience. Neither would an electrical expert be competent if there were reason to suppose it was to his advantage to distort the facts. The testimony of a New Testament scholar would be worthless in the field of electricity, and Mr. Edison's testimony would be equally worthless in the field of New Testament scholarship. It is not every man who can pass judgment on religious life.

Testimony is the report of a real experience which one has had with the facts of life. Life has many facts and forces besides those we can see or hear, taste or smell. The spiritual facts of life are just as real, though not so tangible, as some other facts.

Men have gone into the laboratory of spiritual forces; they have had certain soul impressions; they have come out and reported these experiences to men. This is religious testimony. This is the meaning of the Bible. It is the experience we have had with God. To have such an experience and to report it is the most fundamental thing a Christian can do.

STUDY XI. SHARING THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE.

"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art King of Israel." (John i. 45-49.)

 PART II. THE TEST OF THE REALITY OF AN EXPERIENCE.

REALITY is that which is found to be in accord with the established order of facts. I have a theory and try it out in the laboratory. I find that the facts agree with my theory; so I say there is reality in the theory. It may be that later facts will change my theory, but this does not discredit all science. There is not a single scientific theory which has not undergone some change, some development; but sensible men have not thrown away science. Indeed, it is the boast of scientists that they are constantly finding new facts, and this openness to development is the surest sign of the reality of science. Science, therefore, survives all its own errors.

Queer enough, many men are not willing to allow to religion the same liberty. If it remains static, they say it is fossilized; if its conceptions develop, they say it has proved false because it has had to incorporate new truth. Religion being man's interpretation of his relationship to God, it must of necessity be a growing quantity. As man grows in understanding he must reinterpret. Religion is not thereby proved unreal, but it is proved all the more real.

How, then, shall we know when our theory corresponds to facts? How shall we test our own experience? The chemist observes certain facts. He makes a theory to account for those facts and then tests his theory by repeated experiments. If the experiments reveal other facts, he changes his theory to suit the facts; if they agree with the theory, he feels that his theory is real. But he tries his ex-

periments over and over again to make sure that he has made no error. Then he calls in the experience of other competent chemists. If they agree with him, he says the theory is true, and it becomes a law of chemistry.

Religion must submit—and, indeed, has submitted—to just this process. Men have observed certain spiritual phenomena. They have made a religious theory to account for these phenomena. They have then tested the theory out in practice and in thought. Unfortunately for religion, all the forces cannot be brought together in a laboratory, and the theory cannot be tested out in a day or in a month or in a year. It takes long periods scattered over wide areas of human life to test its theories. But these theories are tested and sifted. Little by little man has worked out better conceptions of the meaning of religion.

An individual takes these laws and applies them to his own life and finds certain results. Others try then and get similar results. So we say that these laws are real. They correspond to the facts of life. The test of the reality of an experience is the consensus of opinion of the competent experimenters in any field of truth.

If our theory of religion is in accordance with the facts, if those who have met the conditions and are thus competent experimenters say that it works, if we see it transform life, it has stood the test and is verified as truth. Neither science nor religion can be condemned or discarded simply because some errors have crept in. The one supreme question is, Does it work? No sane man can doubt that Christianity does work, that it does transform life.

STUDY XI. SHARING THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE.

“He answered, The man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to Siloam, and wash: so I went away and washed, and I received sight. And they said unto him, Where is he? He saith, I know not. . . . He therefore answered, Whether he is a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. . . . The man answered and said unto them, Why, herein is the marvel, that ye know not whence he is, and yet he opened mine eyes. We know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshiper of God, and do his will, him he heareth. Since the world began it was never heard that any one opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” (John ix. 11, 12, 25, 30-33.)

 PART III. THE NATURE OF OUR TESTIMONY.

A MAN who has lived out of harmony with God comes to realize that he is wrong, unhappy and divided, dissatisfied. He turns around in his life and finds certain experiences to be the result. He finds that his sense of wrong is removed. He feels that his whole personality is thrown into the battle for better life. He finds a growing happiness and a sense of growing satisfaction. Further, he finds that moral questions have taken on a new meaning. Things which before seemed right now seem wrong. New forms of life make an appeal to him. He has a new standard of moral values. He finds himself interested in persons as he has not been interested before. He finds himself glad to serve other people more unselfishly. He does not scorn men and criticize them so severely as he once did. He reports these changes in simple fashion, and this is his testimony.

Testimony, being the report of reality, never has the air of the superficial. It is genuine and cannot be considered as hypocrisy. Neither will testimony take the nature of boast-

ing. Personal character is not a thing about which any man dare boast. There are always so many weaknesses that boasting is shut out. But, on the other hand, man has had a real experience. His gratitude for a larger life ought to bid him to share his blessing with others.

Our testimony must not exceed our experience. We may not in the beginning be able to say all the things in the above testimony, but we at least have experienced part of the facts there described. Let us report in our own terms what we have experienced. Through this simple testimony others may be led into the experience of these values.

Needs must there be one way, our chief,
Best way of worship; let me strive
To find it, and when found, contrive
My fellows also take their share.
This constitutes my earthly care;
God's is above it and distinct.
For I, a man, with men am linked,
And not a brute with brutes; no good
That I experience must remain unshared.

—*Browning's "Christmas Eve."*

STUDY XI. SHARING THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE.

"Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. And seeing the man that was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it." (Acts iv. 13, 14.)

PART IV. LIFE AS RELIGIOUS TESTIMONY.

"ETHICAL judgments are worth estimates. Their proof is, first, that they commend themselves to the minds of men; secondly, that they can be embodied in conduct. The fundamental proof of the Christian religion is, therefore, in the realm of ethics, where its theory can be understood and tested as other theories in ethics can be understood and tested. If it fail us here, we may well surrender it altogether."¹

Life and conduct are of the essence of our testimony.

A geologist may investigate the strata of the earth and find certain facts which will not in the least be vitiated by the immorality of his life. The amount of truth he finds doubtless may depend on his spirit toward truth—that is, his moral life—but, in so far as he does find truth, it is independent of the state of his character. Not so with the Christian. Christianity has to do with character; and if the Christian's character does not square with his testimony, we are apt to accept his character rather than his words as to his final experience.

Religiously speaking, therefore, a man's testimony is his life. The deepest desires of my life, the average of my conduct, the normal attitude I have toward men—this is the fundamental testimony which I can give. "What you are thunders so loudly in my ear that I cannot hear what you

¹Knox, "The Direct and Fundamental Proofs of the Christian Religion," pages 119, 120.

say." This does not mean that our testimony need not be expressed in words. It does need such expression. But the real meaning is that our moral lives must correspond to what we say, else our testimony will be void. Our daily life is our experience, in the very nature of the case; and if that experience is not increasingly moral in tone, then we have no Christian testimony to give.

STUDY XI. SHARING THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE.

“In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he touched my mouth with it, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin forgiven. And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me.” (Isa. vi. 1-8.)

PART V. LACK OF EXPERIENCE AND ABILITY TO EXPRESS AN EXPERIENCE.

THE fact that religious testimony springs out of life accounts for the fact that many people refuse to bear religious testimony. The real issue is that they have no experience to repeat. Religion is not simply a knowledge of certain facts; it is the experience of a fellowship, which experience eventuates in a changed life. While religion is not an enthusiasm, it begets enthusiasm. He who has no enthusiastic fellowship with God is not apt to bear testimony to the reality of God.

The greatest need of religious people is a sense of message. It was this sense of message that sustained Christ in the midst of all his persecutions. It was a sense of message which sent Paul to the great cities of the Levant with an enthusiasm that could not be dampened and a courage that

could not be daunted. Amos met God in the solitude of the Tekoan hills, and the meaning and righteousness of God so burned in his heart that no hatred or scorn or persecution could keep him quiet. If we are to have a group of testifying Christians, we must have those who really know God. Isaiah saw the Lord, high and lifted up, and he immediately said: "Here am I; send me." It may not be unfair to say that the amount and enthusiasm of your report are apt to be in proportion to the depth and reality of your religious experience.

In some cases—yes, in many cases—I am persuaded that Christians fail to bear testimony because they have not given sufficient thought to the meaning of their experience to be able to formulate it into words. They are afraid they will blunder in their expression. While one respects the reverence with which people approach so serious and momentous a subject, yet one cannot allow the validity of the excuse. The subject is so momentous for life that we must learn how to express ourselves. We dare not give this excuse to God. Suppose a father pleaded that he did not know how to make money and hence could not provide for his children. We would scorn his excuse and tell him that life depended on his learning how to provide. Many of my friends are missing just the greatest thing in life, and I cannot give God the excuse that I do not know how to help them. I must learn how. This issue is momentous, and I am God's representative.

STUDY XI. SHARING THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE.

“Then said I, Ah, Lord Jehovah! behold, I know not how to speak; for I am a child. But Jehovah said unto me, Say not, I am a child; for to whomsoever I shall send thee thou shalt go, and whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid because of them; for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith Jehovah. Then Jehovah put forth his hand, and touched my mouth; and Jehovah said unto me, Behold, I have put words in thy mouth.” (Jer. i. 6-8.)

 PART VI. WE SHRINK FROM ALL PERSONAL CONVERSATION.

RELIGION is very personal, and we shrink from free conversation concerning it, particularly with those whom we do not know well. This feeling of reserve holds in every realm of life. We do not want people to tell us all their private affairs, neither do we want them to pry into our own personal business. Even the closest friendship does not give us the right to throw down all reserve and demand entrance into every secret of another heart. One must always walk with reverence and awe in the presence of the deep things of another soul.

But one dare not allow this argument to be carried too far. That we do have a right and an obligation to share our experiences with others, all life proves. If we did not share our experiences, then every human soul would have to learn from the beginning, and humanity could make no progress. And it should be noted that all such sharing is of necessity personal. The teacher is not simply dealing out so many cold facts to his pupils. The best teacher is the man who fuses his own soul with his facts and makes them live out of his own experience. His teaching is his attempt to help others see life as he sees it. Likewise the preacher is not a phonograph grinding out theological facts. He is the interpreter of God to men. As such he must interpret God in

the light of his own experience, which is a truly personal matter. In like manner the artist is, through his art, trying to interpret life for us—that is, trying to help us see life as he through his experiences has seen it. If, then, I must not enter the personal life of another, I cannot teach, I cannot preach, I cannot write, I cannot paint—in fact, I must shut myself off from men, for all real contact with men is personal. Of course this is the extreme, but it is the logical outcome of the theory of the noninterference in personal life.

The very fact that religion is so vital to persons means that I must continue to share what I have found so valuable to my own growth. My testimony need not be prying or lacking in reverence, but it may be intensely in earnest. If I have a real friend who has meant much to me, I am eager to share that friend with other friends and even good acquaintances. In like manner, if I know God and he means life to me, I must of necessity desire to share this experience. By some method or other I must break through all reserve and share my treasure.

STUDY XI. SHARING THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE.

“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!” (Rom. x. 14, 15.)

“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.” (Rom. iii. 10, 11.)

PART VII. TESTIMONY AND THE NEEDS OF MEN.

JESUS believed that a man who was not associated with him was missing the full meaning of life. He was one who was lost. “He was away from those to whom he belonged and was in danger of not getting back.” With Jesus social position, wealth, or other externals counted for nothing. The rich man with his barns bursting with the harvest was as completely lost and as absolutely in need as the veriest beggar on the highway. Dives was far more to be pitied than Lazarus.

We are always in danger of using false standards of value. Because a man is respectable, because he has a good house, because he wears good clothes, because he has a degree of intellectual attainment, and such externals, we are apt to think he is not in desperate need. But his inner life may be pinched and starved and dying. Often people of the largest external possessions have the least of internal richness, because overattention to the externals has robbed them of a chance to know the meaning of personal fellowship.

We need to call ourselves back continually to the reality of things. We need to remember that life consisteth not in the abundance of the things it possesseth. We need to see

the depth of agony, the hunger, the longing of human persons. We need to know that only fellowship with God can fully satisfy. This will give new impulse and motive to our personal work. Our prayer to God should daily be that we may be sensitive to the deep needs of men. We are so continuously in the presence of need that our souls may become callous.

Only he who continually sees the deep suffering and loneliness and waste of life and as continually reminds himself of the sacredness of all life will be leading men to God, who alone can save life. To be a personal worker is to be a co-worker with God in saving needy men.

'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
O, life, not death, for which we pant;
More life, and fuller, that I want.

—Tennyson's "*The Two Voices*."

STUDY XII.

TESTIMONY AND THE EXTENSION OF THE KINGDOM.

STUDY XII. TESTIMONY AND THE EXTENSION OF THE KINGDOM.

“So thou, son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, and thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way; that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, and he turn not from his way; he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul. And thou, son of man, say unto the house of Israel: Thus ye speak, saying, Our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we pine away in them; how then can we live? Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” (Ezek. xxxiii. 7-11.)

PART I. CHRIST'S METHOD OF EXTENDING THE KINGDOM.

It is a most remarkable thing that Christ left no written records of his life, even though he was engaged in founding a world-wide empire. Neither do we have any intimation that he instructed any biographer to set down his sayings. He took twelve peasant people, kept them with him for three years, filled them with his Spirit, helped them to catch his message of God, and left them to spread his kingdom through testimony. Christ to-day expects each Christian to become a competent experimenter in the field of religious truth. He expects that each one will win another. He commanded us to go out and win others until all nations have been won.

In the use of this method Christ himself set the example. Many of his very greatest statements of truth were made to one person, or at least to a very small group. One thinks of

the wonderful conversation with Nicodemus, the woman at the well, Zacchæus, and others; and they went away with a new sense of God in their souls.

This was also the method of the early Church. St. Paul in the Roman prison saw one man after another for two long years and bore his personal testimony to them. Philip preached one of his best sermons to the man on the way down to Gaza and brought a man face to face with God.

It is said of the Waldensians that every man was a personal worker. "He who has been a disciple for seven days looks out some one whom he may teach in turn, so that there is a continual increase."

This is the great method of work in mission fields even to-day. When I was in Seoul, Korea, I met a great old Christian, Ye Song Che. He was a member of the first legation to represent Korea at our own national capital. Imprisoned after his return to Korea because of his radical reform ideas, he became a Christian while in prison. He is now the Religious Work Director of the Seoul Young Men's Christian Association. His one great task is personal work. He is absolutely untiring in his personal testimony. He is a type of the native Christian. Jesus Christ means so much to them that they at once want to share him with their friends. We Americans are so accustomed to the gospel message, we so little appreciate what it has done for us, that we are very recreant about our duty.

But this is Christ's approved method, and the Church must adopt it if Christianity is ever to be triumphant.

STUDY XII. TESTIMONY AND THE EXTENSION OF THE KINGDOM.

“But an angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza: the same is desert. And he arose and went: and behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure, who had come to Jerusalem to worship; and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah. And the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some one shall guide me? And he besought Philip to come up and sit with him. Now the passage of the scripture which he was reading was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before his shearer is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: his generation who shall declare? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other? And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus.” (Acts viii. 26-35.)

PART II. MANY CAN BE REACHED ONLY THROUGH PERSONAL TESTIMONY.

DEALING, as I do, with many large meetings for men, I am constantly struck with the small number who hear the message compared with those who do not. A very small percentage attend religious services of any kind. It would be hazardous to say how large a percentage never attend, but it is appalling when we think of the millions who never hear the public presentation of the Christian message. If these are ever to be won, it must be through the method of personal testimony.

Again, there are many who do occasionally attend religious services, even those who attend regularly, who will never

enter the Christian life through any public presentation. Some of these have difficulties which must first be cleared away, and this can never be done in public address. I remember once a college man whom I asked to come to me for an interview. He revealed a story of desperate struggle in which I was able to show him some way out. After a half hour's interview, he quietly but surely accepted the Christian life. He would never have made a decision, he would never have come for the interview voluntarily, but was glad enough to come on invitation and eager enough to talk when we were together. I am sure that it was the only method to win him.

Another young man came up to speak to me after an address. He asked if I knew his brother in China. I did know him well. I suggested that I hoped he was one of the Christian workers in the college. No, he was not. Then I asked him if he would not think this over all the afternoon in the wood shop where he was to work. He agreed that he would and that he would be back that night. After my address that night, I asked if any man wished to declare his decision to be a Christian. That student was the first one on his feet. I afterwards asked him what it was that led into the Christian decision. His answer was: "I have been to church almost every Sunday of my life. I have heard enough preaching to convert every man in the State. But you are the first man who ever said a word to me personally about being a Christian." Yet his father was a Presbyterian minister, and his brother was a missionary in China.

If the world is ever won for Christ, we must have a great uprising of Christians who are willing to take their share in the great task by reporting their own experience to others.

STUDY XII. TESTIMONY AND THE EXTENSION OF THE KINGDOM.

“And Peter went down to the men, and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come? And they said, Cornelius a centurion, a righteous man and one that feareth God, and well reported of by all the nation of the Jews, was warned of God by a holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words from thee.” (Acts x. 21, 22.)

“And Cornelius said, Four days ago, until this hour, I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer in my house; and behold, a man stood before me in bright apparel, and saith, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call unto thee Simon, who is surnamed Peter; he lodgeth in the house of Simon a tanner, by the seaside. Forthwith therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord.” (Acts x. 30-33.)

PART III. MEN ARE WAITING FOR OUR TESTIMONY.

MANY Christians fear to bear personal testimony, lest it will be resented by those with whom they speak. My observation proves that this is not the case. For fifteen years I have been a traveling secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association, and I have made it my daily business to talk with men about Christian life. Many thousands have sat down with me quietly during these years. So far as I know, only two of these students have resented my testimony. One of them said that he was sorry he came because I had told him the truth and he was not willing to follow it. The other was a skeptical student who became very angry, but a year later joined the Presbyterian Church. He thanked me later for what I said to him and said that it had been the means of bringing him to Christ.

Not only do men not resent being approached, but I am

sure that many of them are wondering why we do not open the conversation.

I shall never forget an experience I had some years ago at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. After speaking one night, I came downstairs and was just starting to leave the building. It was a rainy night; and out on the porch, which was very dimly lighted from within, there stood a young college man. I greeted him as I walked out and noticed that his greeting was rather cordial. I then ventured the question as to whether he had attended the meeting. His reply was cordial again and in the affirmative. Made a little more bold, I suggested that he was probably one of the Christian workers. No, he was not even a Christian! I asked him if he would mind going in and talking it over. Imagine my amazement when he replied: "I have been standing here waiting for you to come out, hoping you would ask me to do that." After half an hour he made a decision for Christian life. Suppose I had missed that chance!

Once at a Northfield Conference I knew a young man from Yale who said he had come down to this Conference with the delegation, thinking that surely some man would, in that place and in that atmosphere, speak to him about the Christian life. One of our international student secretaries of the Young Men's Christian Association told me that his roommate in college, a prominent athlete, had to make this secretary talk to him about religious life. What must people think of the value we put upon our Christian experience when we are so slow to share its blessings?

The field is ripe unto the harvest, but the laborers are few. Let us pray the Lord of the harvest to thrust us forth and make us bold to do this work.

STUDY XII. TESTIMONY AND THE EXTENSION OF THE KINGDOM.

“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” (Matt. v. 13-16.)

“So the woman left her waterpot, and went away into the city, and saith to the people, Come, see a man, who told me all things that ever I did: can this be the Christ? They went out of the city, and were coming to him.” (John iv. 28-30.)

“And from that city many of the Samaritans believed on him because of the word of the woman, who testified, He told me all things that ever I did.” (John iv. 39.)

PART IV. SIMPLE TESTIMONY EFFECTIVE.

PERHAPS more men are kept from bearing personal testimony by the fear of its ineffectiveness than by any other thing. They feel that they are such amateur experimenters in the field of religious truth that their testimony could not possibly be helpful. Such people should remember that a real experience is a most wonderful phenomenon. People are always interested in real experience, whether religious or otherwise. If I wish to interest another person in some phase of science, I will report some simple experience I have had in that field, and soon interest springs up in the other. One's testimony does not need to be exhaustive; it needs only to be real.

Somehow or other the forces of personal life have been so arranged that just the least word from one will help another into the Christian kingdom.

At a college in which I was giving a series of addresses recently there was an outstanding graduate student. In his undergraduate days he had captained every 'varsity team and had held almost every post of honor which the students could give. But he was not a Christian. I tried hard to get at him, but he would slip out of the hall at the close of the meetings before I could get to him. Finally a friend asked him to come to see me. He came. We had not talked ten minutes until he said: "I see it now, and I can do that." He is now an active Christian worker. All he needed was the smallest possible push, and he stepped over into the Christian kingdom. It often does not take much.

H. Clay Trumbull, who was both a great preacher and a great personal worker, said that he knew of more men won to Christ through his personal conversation than through his public ministry, even though he had preached to many thousands. Every man who has tried this method of extending the number of Christ's followers is amazed at the way in which God can use the simplest sort of testimony to bring others into his fellowship.

The main thing about this testimony is that it shows others your real concern. Two college students roomed together for three years. For some reason they roomed apart their senior year, but were fast friends. John was a Christian; Charles was not. John had often meant to ask Charles to become a Christian, but could not get it done. One day after class as they came down the walk together John determined he would say a word. Just as they parted he said: "Charlie, it almost breaks my heart that you are not a Christian." Charles went home, threw himself on his knees, and gave his life to God. Afterwards he said: "When I knew that John cared so much, I couldn't stand it. It was time for *me* to get right." Do we care enough to really win men?

STUDY XII. TESTIMONY AND THE EXTENSION OF THE KINGDOM.

“And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said, Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, *TO AN UNKNOWN GOD*. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you.” (Acts xvii. 22, 23.)

PART V. HOW TO HELP THOSE IN DOUBT.

IN attempting to help those whose faith is unsettled it is essential that we should have a clear conception as to the particular form of their difficulty. Infidelity, that form of unbelief which carries with it the implication of loose morals, is not prevalent in our day. Men are not proud and blatant in their lack of faith. It cannot be denied that some who discard Christianity are immoral in conduct, neither can it be doubted that immorality tends to superinduce doubt; but it is distinctly unfair to infer from these two statements that those who are in doubt are immoral.

Agnosticism, which claims that I not only do not know God, but that it is impossible to know God, is not such a frequent form of doubt as it formerly was. Men are beginning to see that if we cannot rely on our natures to give us truth about the supersensible world, then we are not sure of any true basis for any form of knowledge.

Atheism, the denial of God, is not prevalent in our time. Men accept some kind of a supreme power, though they would not define this power as closely as the Christian defines God. The present form of unrest is that of impersonalistic, even pantheistic, tendencies. Men say that God can hardly be personal, but that he is everywhere about in the form of impersonal influence. He is force, law, order, and what not.

Still others have no definite form of doubt. They simply do not know. They are groping for the light. For the most part, they are reverent searchers for the truth. They have the attitude expressed by Tennyson's "In Memoriam":

I falter where I firmly trod,
 And falling with my weight of cares
 Upon the great world's altar-stairs
 That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
 And gather dust and chaff, and call
 To what I feel is Lord of all,
 And faintly trust the larger hope.

What, then, shall be our attitude toward such persons? First of all, it should be one of sympathy and understanding. It was said of Christ that he would not break a bruised reed, and he would not quench the smoking flax. He was never harsh with honest doubt. He was harsh only with hypocrisy, which often took the form of pious belief without pious actions. Many are the men who have been driven away from Christianity because of the intolerant attitude of those who claimed to be Christians. It is not necessarily a sign of sin nor a sign of weakness that a person is plunged into doubt. Of course it may be a sign of either or of both, but in most cases this is not true. We must, therefore, have the attitude of confidence and trust.

You say, but with no touch of scorn,
 Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue eyes
 Are tender over drowning flies,
 You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not: one indeed I knew
 In many a subtle question versed,
 Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,
 But ever strove to make it true:

Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds,
 At last he beat his music out.
 There lives more faith in honest doubt,
 Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd strength,
 He would not make his judgment blind,
 He faced the Specters of the mind
 And laid them. —*Tennyson's "In Memoriam."*

STUDY XII. TESTIMONY AND THE EXTENSION OF THE KINGDOM.

“And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and wherefore do questionings arise in your heart? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having. And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here anything to eat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish. And he took it, and ate before them. And he said unto them, These are my words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their mind, that they might understand the scriptures.” (Luke xxiv. 38-45.)

PART VI. HOW TO HELP THOSE IN DOUBT.

(Continued.)

FURTHER, we must force those in doubt to get on positive ground. Ask them to speak out everything they do not believe, then ask them to say one thing they do believe. Do not argue, but show the growing implications in the things which they positively believe.

Recently a graduate student came to me primed for a great argument. He blurted out that he did not accept Christ as divine, that he did not believe in the Bible as authoritative, and that he did not believe in God as personal. I let him talk, and finally I asked him if there was any one thing that he did believe. This scared him. He was amazed to think that he had gone so far. I asked him if he accepted righteousness as the law of largest life. He said that he did. I asked him where we had the finest embodiment of righteousness. He was forced to say in the person of Christ, although he said he was not sure that there was such a person. I told him not to mind about whether there was such a person as Christ or not. He accepted the picture of the Gospels as the world's best representative. Then I said: “If righteousness is the law of highest life and the best presentation of righteousness we have is in the gospel picture of Christ, you must, if you are honest, espouse the cause of the gospel righteousness, you must live it to the

limit, and you must urge others to live it until you can find something better. We are obligated to live the best we know."

I further told him that if he was honest he must find some reasonable explanation of why these early fishermen had been able to draw a portrait of the highest righteousness that the world knows. Of course there is but one reasonable explanation, and that is the fact that they had a living picture before them. They were writing about a real life. The main point was that I forced him onto positive ground. I would not allow him to keep me constantly on the defensive. I would not argue, but I insisted on making him think clearly and conclusively.

Honesty demands two things: First, that one will search for truth with all diligence. Secondly, that one will follow the truth to the limit when it is found. If one will be absolutely honest with himself and with the truth, I have no fear for the outcome. God can take care of his own cause if men will give him a chance. It is my business to get men to give him a chance.

Be near me when my light is low,
 When the blood creeps, and the nerves prick
 And tingle, and the heart is sick,
 And all the wheels of Being slow.

Be near me when my faith is dry,
 And men the flies of latter spring,
 That lay their eggs, and sting and sing,
 And weave their petty cells and die.

—Tennyson's "In Memoriam."

STUDY XII. TESTIMONY AND THE EXTENSION OF THE KINGDOM.

“Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and shall come and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, and if in the third, and find them so, blessed are those servants. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief was coming, he would have watched, and not have left his house to be broken through. Be ye also ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh.” (Luke xii. 37-40.)

PART VII. AROUSING THE INDIFFERENT.

INDIFFERENCE may be traced to a number of causes. First, a man may be indifferent because he has lost faith in the old forms of worship or in the statement of creeds. In that case he must be dealt with in accordance with the last section. Others are indifferent because they undervalue religion. They do not see that it really gets them anywhere. They do not feel that they need it. Still others are indifferent because they are so preoccupied with other affairs—business, pleasure, study, athletics—that religious interest has died from disuse. Traced to its ultimate meaning, this is a phase of the preceding difficulty; they really do not think religion counts. But its origin lies in a preoccupied life. Lastly, there are those who assume a forced indifference. There are practices in their lives incompatible with religious faith, and hence they dare not face God. Every personal worker has found many belonging to each class. What can be done for them?

Perhaps not first in practice, but at least first in logical procedure, one should make clear to these persons that life is determined by the things to which they give attention. To neglect any great field of values means to shut them out of the life permanently. We do not have to deny them; we only need neglect them. The classic illustration is Darwin, who lost all love for music, poetry, and art by concentrating on science for years to the utter exclusion of these other phases of life.

When we neglect religion, we not only lose interest in it, but our capacity for religion atrophies, which is far more serious. We not only fail to see; but, like the fish in the

Mammoth Cave, we lose our organs of sight by long disuse. This should be made clear to the indifferent.

Secondly, it would be well to show the indifferent one that religion is a personal relationship and necessary for all personal and social growth. He who will not give proper place to other persons in his life is cutting himself off from all growth and is robbing society of all the values which his character should add to human advancement. He is essentially antisocial. This will often arouse the indifferent.

Lastly, but perhaps first in practice, the great means of arousing the indifferent is to bring them in touch with a genuine and attractive Christian personality. One of the best words of psychology and sociology during the last decade is this: Character is not taught; character is caught. Coleridge said that the secret of his life lay in the fact that he had a friend. "A friend," said Emerson, "is to make us do what we can."

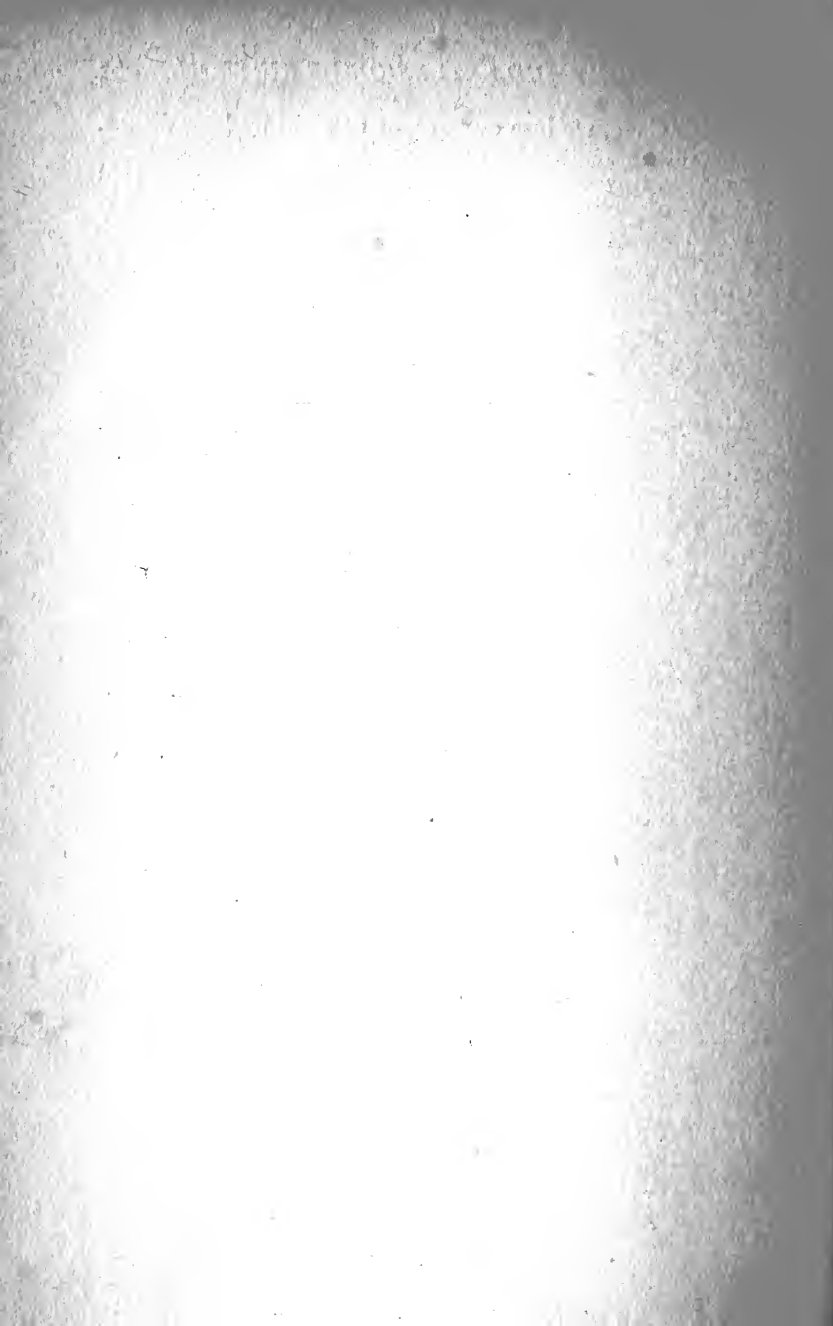
An uncle of Maltbie Babcock wanted the boy to be a minister. He invited his nephew and one of the choicest ministerial students at Princeton to spend a holiday vacation together on his farm, and Babcock went away thinking of the ministry as a life work.

One of the strongest students that ever went through Vanderbilt University went to the student conference at the end of his senior year and decided to study for the ministry. He told me afterwards that he would have made that decision years before had he been thrown with such a wholesome set of men. He saw the manliness and worth of religious students as he had never seen it before and as he could never see it in any single institution of the land. He spent ten days with the choicest Christian spirits from all the Southern colleges, and he went away with a new interest and a new life. Put your indifferent person into the presence of some wholesome, enthusiastic Christian life, and transformation must follow.

Let me live in a house by the side of the road,
Where the race of men go by—
The men that are good, and the men that are bad,
As good and as bad as I.

I would not sit in the scorner's seat,
Nor hurl the civic's ban;
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

—Foss's "*The House by the Side of the Road.*"



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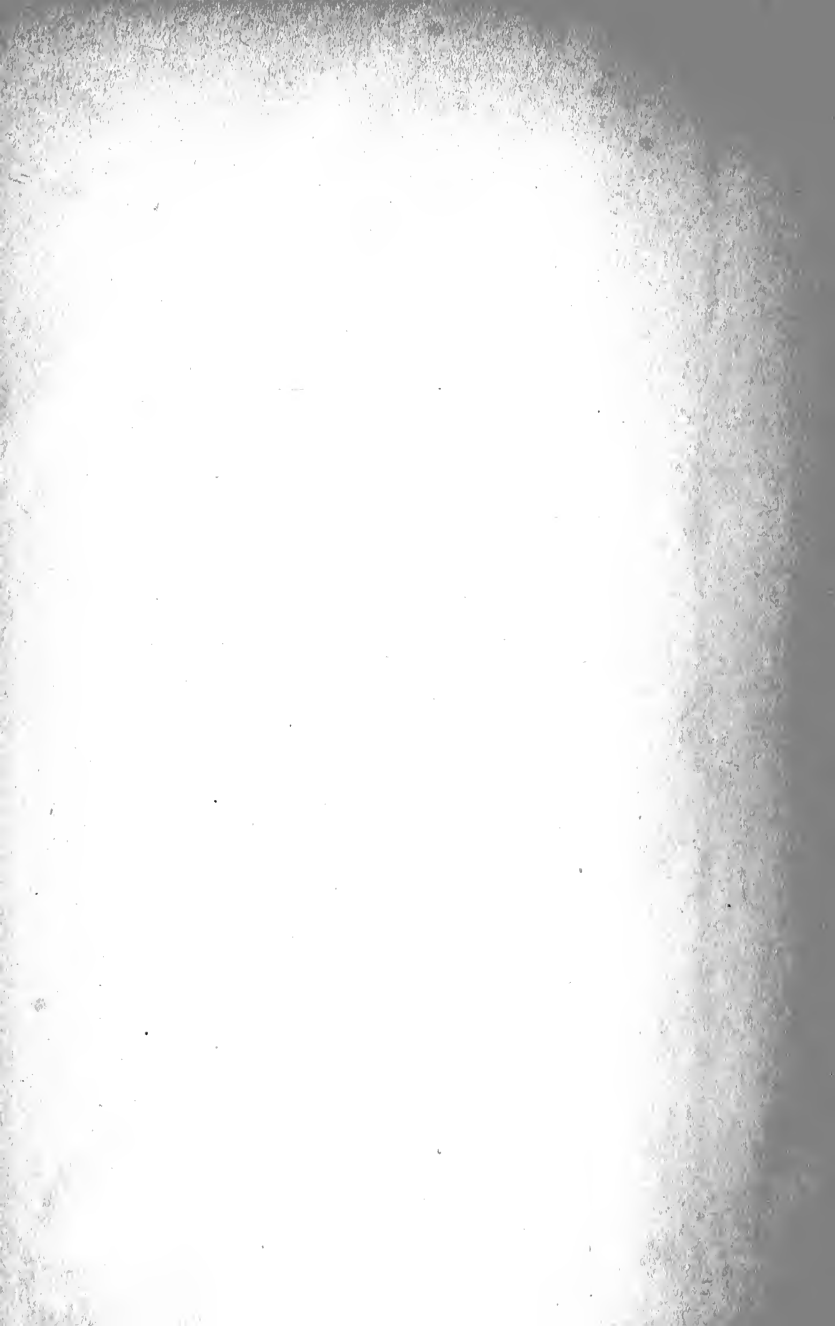
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