

CHRISTIANITY TODAY



||| A PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL DEVOTED TO STATING, DEFENDING
AND FURTHERING THE GOSPEL IN THE MODERN WORLD |||

SAMUEL G. CRAIG, Editor

H. McALLISTER GRIFFITHS, Managing Editor

Published monthly by
THE PRESBYTERIAN AND
REFORMED PUBLISHING CO.,
501 Witherspoon Bldg., Phila., Pa.

MID-MAY, 1931

Vol. 2

No. 1

\$1.00 A YEAR EVERYWHERE

Application pending entry as second-class matter at the Phila., Pa., Post Office.

What is an Evangelical?

PHILIP SCHAFF'S great work, "The Creeds of Christendom," consists of three large volumes—of which the first deals with the *History of Creeds*, the second with the *Greek and Latin Creeds*, the third with the *Evangelical Creeds*. An examination of the second and third volumes shows that the former deals with the creeds of the Greek and Roman Catholic churches and the latter with the creeds of the Protestant churches, other than those of the Unitarian type, that appeared before the publication of the volumes in 1877. This means that the designation, "Evangelical," as employed by Dr. SCHAFF was for the most part synonymous with the designation, "Protestant."

If now we keep in mind the fact that Dr. SCHAFF employed the word in its generally accepted sense, we will not be greatly at a loss to understand how it has come about that the word as used today seems to have no definite meaning. As long as the vast majority of the members of the Protestant churches held to what was common in that system of thought and mode of life that found expression in the creeds of the Protestant churches—Lutheran, Reformed and Arminian—no great confusion resulted from identifying the Evangelicals with the members of these churches. It has come about, however, that an increasing number of the members, and particularly of the Ministers of these churches, do not hold to that system of thought and life. The word, however, still continues to be used to designate the members of these churches. Hence the varied and confused senses in which the word "evangelical" is

employed today. Hence the fact that men with all kinds of beliefs, or lack of beliefs, are designated "Evangelicals." If everybody that is called an Evangelical today is really an Evangelical, then it means nothing to call a man an Evangelical. A word applied indiscriminately to everybody ends by designating nobody. We would not imply that the word "Evangelical" has become a word without meaning but it does seem to us that if it is to be saved from that fate—and it seems to us too good a word to be allowed to die—there must be an insistence on the part of many that the word be used in its proper historical meaning.

When we call ourselves "Evangelicals" in the proper historical meaning of the word we mean, first of all, that we are not Roman Catholics. The primary protest of LUTHER and CALVIN was against the

sacerdotalism of Rome, i.e., its interposition of the church with its priesthood, as a means of grace, between the soul and God. As a result, their primary affirmation was on the immediacy of the soul's relation to God. An Evangelical is, therefore, first of all, one who holds that God saves men by acting immediately on their souls not through the medium of the church and its ordinances established by Him for that purpose. We are not to suppose, however, that a man is an Evangelical merely because he insists on the immediacy of the soul's relation to God. If that were the case Unitarians would have a perfectly good right to call themselves "Evangelicals." It is imperative to point out, therefore, that a man is not an Evangelical in the historical meaning of the word unless he also affirms that the soul is dependent on God and on God alone for salvation, that nothing that we are and nothing that we do enters into the ground of our salvation—that it is all of God, nothing of ourselves. The opposition of the Evangelicals to the sacerdotalism of Rome was not in the interest of making man his own saviour. Not at all. Rather it was in the interest of directing men's attention to JESUS CHRIST Himself as the one and only Saviour from the guilt and power of sin. The Evangelical is even more strongly opposed to any and all representations that makes man his own saviour than he is to the sacerdotalism of Rome. An Evangelical is ever one in whose soul there echoes a hearty "amen" when he reads PAUL'S words: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God;

IN THIS ISSUE:

Is the Pulpit Forgetting God?.....	5
Wm. Childs Robinson	
Notes on Biblical Exposition.....	7
J. Gresham Machen	
Birth Control in the Light of the Bible...	9
J. H. Gauss	
Books of Religious Significance.....	10
Questions and Answers.....	11
"Freedom and Restraint".....	12-13
Neal L. Anderson Cornelius Van Til	
Letters to the Editor.....	15
Ministerial Changes.....	17
News of the Church.....	19

Is the Pulpit Forgetting God?

By the Rev. Wm. Childs Robinson, A. M., Th. D.

Professor of Church History in Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia

[We consider ourselves exceedingly fortunate to be able to publish this arresting and powerful analysis of present-day tendencies. It is the substance of an address delivered by Dr. Robinson before the Faculty and Students of Westminster Seminary on April 14. The first part only is included here. The second part will be published in our next issue.]

THIS question was first focused by a representative gathering of Southern Presbyterian ministers and officers (March 20, 1931). The agenda sheet proposed that the speakers assume the Gospel in its orthodox form and devote themselves to a discussion of the real questions facing the Church today, i.e., prohibition, capitalism, race, world peace, and church union. While such a platform may be very proper for a week evening discussion, it is my observation and conviction that this statement is symptomatic of the thinking of a large section of the American pulpit. Let us assume the gospel—in some places in its orthodox, in others in its Ritschlian form—and let us be busy making over the world.

The same question was focused a week later by the Southern Interseminary Conference at Emory University (March 26-27, 1931). The chief subjects discussed at this conference were capitalism and race relations. The January *Interseminarian* underscores the practical content of conversion—personal adjustments, political operation, commercial and industrial conduct, race relations, international relations. It declares: "Nothing less than a united church will be equal to the tremendous task we face" (p. 3).

God Ignored

The major planks, then, in the platforms of these two gatherings were identical. And the only plank in either platform which brought God in was the plank on Church Unity. And here God is only brought in to be asked out as unessential. Church unity is to be brought about by crashing the creeds. The first article in the creed is God. The Church is to be so concerned with human contacts and relationships that, when our doctrines of God intervene, we are to banish those doctrines. God doesn't matter!

And so these two programs were ar-

ranged (probably unwittingly) to play into the hands of contemporary humanism. For humanists demand either the reformation of the existing church along humanist lines or the abolition of any specific institution; and either the retention of the word God as merely a symbol of man's highest social aspirations, or the abandonment of the term.

W. A. BROWN, *Pathways to Certainty*, p. 16, cf. citations there given.

A Rabbi at the Religious Education Association

Tomorrow (April 15) the Religious Education Association, meeting in the Central Congregational Church in Atlanta, is to discuss the theme, "religious issues in our economic crisis." The program says: "The essential thing needed is a frank and persistent search for and analysis of the facts regarding the workings of our present economic philosophy to see in how far these facts make or break us as human beings." The conspicuous place in the program given to Jewish rabbis certainly relegates the Deity of our Lord to the position of a doctrine non-essential to a "religious" association. In fact, religion itself does not seem to be necessary for membership in the "Religious Education Association." Representatives of universities, social and business institutions, unite with "Jewish, Catholic, Protestant Churches" in the "Twenty-Eighth Annual Convention of the Religious Education Association." The president of the Association, Dr. WILLIAM ADAMS BROWN, favors admitting humanists (men who do not believe in God) to Christian communion (Introduction to HORTON's *Theism and the Modern Mood*). We may be sure he will offer no objection to their fraternizing with Presbyterians in the meeting tomorrow. I am ready to attend a meeting of economists, regardless of their theology; but I cannot endorse a religious association which in its absorption with

economics and in its inclusiveness forgets God.

Why Not Include Communists?

If we are to include the Jews and Humanists in our "religious" associations, by what logic can we object to the Bolsheviks? On every hand it is being said that they have a fervid "religious" enthusiasm for the worker's cause. They are devoted to the betterment of humanity—at least the proletariat section of humanity. Indeed, we do find the *Interseminarian* (p. 5) recognizing that Communism, while atheistic, has "high and worthy ideals." While Religion recognizes the injustice of the economic order and yet tolerates the *status quo*, Communism is uncompromising in its efforts to establish the ideal society. Religion recognizes the family; Communism opposes the family as selfish; and Communism encourages women to develop the capacities and qualities which they have. DOUGLAS VERNON's write-up of *Communism versus Theism* in the January *Interseminarian* seems to evaluate the social view of Communism more highly than the corresponding stand of Religion, and passes by the fact that Communism is atheistic as though that were a matter of small moment.

Some years ago one of our leading United States officials declared that American religion was emphasizing the second table of the law to the neglect of the first table. Since that time, in order to make the world safe for democracy, we mustered a great army. And now we hear Humanism's cry, "Heaven as well as earth must be made safe for democracy!" When Professor W. H. HORTON tells us that most of the time men trust in these little intimate, friendly, humanistic gods, you might think he was describing popular Chinese polytheism or Japanese Shintoism, instead of the faith of the American intelligentsia (*The Christian Century*, March 18, 1931).

Dr. Fosdick's "Non-theological Religion"

But more subtle and more dangerous is the repeated declaration of Dr. HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK that he is not preaching a theological religion, he is preaching a psychological religion. And the great American radio public is sipping this psychological religion every Sunday afternoon. As you all know, there are "fifty-seven varieties" of psychology. Probably there is only one thing in which these conflicting psychologies agree—every one of them is a study of man. It may be a study of man's soul or it may be a study of his behavior. It may be the stream of his consciousness, the stream of his muscular actions, the release of his libido, or only the study of "the lyric note" in the midst of business. In any event it is a study of man. And therefore a psychological religion must be a humanistic religion, it must be anthropomorphic and anthropocentric.

Too often the exposition of Scripture drives down into a frantic effort to decode the text into the latest phrases of psychology and philosophy; and a clutching after human or social values by forced exegesis, eisegesis, and "sanctified imagination." That God's self-revelation is the chief purpose of the text seems to be alien to the thought of the expositor. The center of gravity in public prayer is on earth, in sharp differentiation from the Lord's Prayer, of which the center of gravity is clearly in heaven. The re-reading of B. M. PALMER's *Theology of Prayer* would be a tremendous help in reviving true worship.

Whose Kingdom?

Thus we see that there are two great notes in American religious thought, "the social gospel" and "a psychological religion"—the group and the individual. Synthesize the two and bring you in the Kingdom! That is approximately what a great deal of glib talk about "the Kingdom," "the Kingdom," "the Kingdom" comes to. Just one question obtrudes itself: whose Kingdom? Surely such a Kingdom is the Kingdom of man; it is not the Kingdom of God. Has the American pulpit forgotten God?

A religion that forgets God will not long bless man. Professor HOCKING discerns "that human life is of supreme

worth *per se* is the illusion of humanism. I would almost say that the supreme worth of human life is best represented by man worshipping" (OBERLIN Lecture on *The Inherent Value of Religion*). Your own Dr. MACHEN has pointed out that it takes Christianity to save men from the present mechanistic world view (*Forum*, March 1931). Caught in the vise of scientific environmentalism, men need as never before a vision of God in His Majesty. The only refuge from blind fatalism is to posit the sovereignty of man on the royal sovereignty of God. Focus your eyes with HU SHIH, the neo-Confucian modernist, on the Naturalistic Conception of Life and the Universe, and you become a causal automaton; you dismiss love as quaint biological lore, and can only describe your "beloved" in terms of angles and rhombs (HU SHIH in *Forum*, February 1931, p. 121. Cf. OTTO—*Things and Ideals*. W. LIPPMAN—*Preface to Morals*). Dr. W. P. PATERSON of Edinburgh recently remarked that the preaching of God in His objective reality produced the great religious experiences; while the mere preaching of religious experience has been impotent to reproduce worth-while Christian experience.

Pulpits That Speak Only for Man

Neither will the pulpit fulfill its call to serve greatly in the social maelstrom by forgetting God. When the pulpit commits itself to the support and upbuilding of labor organizations under the impression that "the entire Church stands committed to the principles of collective bargaining" (*Interseminarian*, p. 4, and speech of Mr. TAMBLYN at Emory University, Thursday, March 26, 1931), it makes itself *ex parte*. No more is it regarded as unprejudiced, unbiased. No longer can it bring the Divine Absolute to bear on the relativities of man.

EMIL BRUNNER, *The Theology of Crisis*, has ably summarized the situation: "It is supremely right for mankind to make its stand against tuberculosis, syphilis and alcohol, against imperialism and the spirit of acquisitiveness. These monsters must be met—and in that battle what man may hope to be a spectator? . . . But in order to see these practical questions and grasp them in a definite way, men must approach them with a standard of judgment, with an under-

standing of life already formed; that is, with a definite theology. How can men approach these questions with a definite theology if the pulpit forgets God? When you rob theology of its *theos*, you rob life of its meaning.

When even a Jewish rabbi recognizes that the first rôle of religion is to proclaim the burden of the LORD (Rabbi SILVER in *Religion in a Changing World*), it is particularly fatal for the Reformed pulpit to forget God. Some one has remarked: "Just as the Methodist places in the foreground the idea of the salvation of sinners; the Baptist, the mystery of regeneration; the Lutheran, justification by faith; the Moravian, the wounds of CHRIST; the Greek Catholic, the mysticism of the Holy Spirit; and the Romanist, the catholicity of the church; so the Calvinist is always placing in the forefront the thought of God" (M. W. PRESSLY, *Calvinism and Science*, quoted by MEETER, *The Fundamental Principles of Calvinism*, p. 27). As Calvinists our prophetic mission is to keep the God-concept at the heart of religion. We are called to preach God. It is as we fulfill our calling, as we help men to catch the vision of the King in His beauty, that we will be to them an effectual blessing, spiritually and socially.

The Calvinist's Vision of God

Just here, perhaps, some Presbyterians have a lesson to learn from the "unhyped Calvinism" of Holland, with its emphasis on Common Grace. "The Calvinist is the man who has caught a vision of God in His majesty, one who sees the controlling and guiding hand of God everywhere." "It is God in the exercise of His sovereign rights in all spheres and in all relationships as it relates to His love and grace, His control of human destinies, the control of nature and its laws; it is God in this exercise of His sovereign rights which lies at the bottom of the Calvinist's thinking." "Everywhere the Calvinist is conscious of the fact that he is treading on his Heavenly Father's soil, in the realm of science and art, in politics, in business, in social life, no less than in the realm of particular grace. Everywhere in all departments of life he is treading on holy ground and his duty carries him everywhere" (MEETER, pp. 67, 72, 81). Every life is a plan of God, and every

man is called to observe the law of CHRIST in his vocation. Are men blinded by the pessimism of business depression? Preach, "The LORD reigneth, let the earth rejoice." Is man inhuman to man? Preach, "The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble, for the LORD our God is holy." God is King of every life and of all of life.

Professor T. F. CARL MULLER also recognizes the outward call of the Reformed Theology; but he is sure that "the outstanding interest (in the Reformed Faith) is centered in religion, not in morality; on the Beyond, not on the here; on God Himself, not on the world first, with God as a subsidiary help to our per-

sonal and social existence in it." (*The Reformed Theology as a Guardian of the Pure Gospel*, January 1931 *Evangelical Quarterly*.)

In centering on the God-concept the Reformed Faith is just upholding Bible Christianity. God is the theme of the Bible. Bible preaching is preaching God. The Scriptures "Principally teach what man is to believe concerning GOD." Would God that the pulpit were following the Book! God declines to be made secondary to man. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The first and the greatest commandment is: "Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all . . ." The first

article in the creed is: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth." This primary word in early Christian preaching was also the question to be first raised and to be nobly answered by that great line of Christian thinkers stretching from JUSTIN MARTYR to AUGUSTINE of Hippo. Concerning this significant fact perhaps mother Britain has a word for America. An Oxford manifesto affirms "that the doctrine of God is the primary doctrine, and the Church was right to lay stress upon it." (Introduction to *Oxford Essays on the Trinity and the Incarnation*.)

(Concluded in our next issue)

Notes on Biblical Exposition

By J. Gresham Machen, D.D., Litt.D.

Professor of New Testament in Westminster Theological Seminary

V. THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

"I marvel that you are so quickly turning from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, unto a different gospel, which is not another—only, there are some who are disturbing you and are wishing to subvert the gospel of Christ." (Gal. 1:6, 7, in a literal translation.)

Another Gospel Which Is Not Another

IN the last number of CHRISTIANITY TODAY, we pointed out the strange absence, in the Epistle to the GALATIANS, of the usual thanksgiving for the Christian state of the readers. There was nothing to be thankful for in the news which PAUL had received from the Galatian churches, and PAUL had not the slightest intention of expressing a thankfulness which was not justified by the facts.

The news which had come from the churches was bad and only bad, and the Apostle plunges at once into his treatment of it. "I marvel," he says, "that ye are so quickly turning away, from Him who called you in the grace of CHRIST, to another gospel, which is not another—only, there are certain men who are troubling you and are wishing to subvert the gospel of CHRIST."

The Person whom PAUL means when he speaks of Him from whom the GALATIANS are turning away is of course GOD the FATHER. God had called them by that

majestic call at the beginning of their Christian life which had been made possible only by the gracious gift which CHRIST had made for them on the cross; yet now they are turning away from such a call and despising such grace. No wonder that the Apostle marvels at a perversity so great!

The thing to which they are turning away so quickly is designated as "another gospel, which is not another." But in the Greek two different words are used here for "another." The word which is used in the former place is *heteros*; the word which is used in the latter place is *allos*. The former word, *heteros*, often, though not always, has in it the notion of difference in kind between one thing and another. Thus it is said in the Gospel according to LUKE, in connection with the transfiguration, that "the fashion of His countenance became other." Here the word *heteros* is used for "other," and the plain implication is that the fashion of His countenance was *different* from what it had been before.

The other word, *allos*, on the other hand, designates merely numerical distinctness of one thing from another. If I give a man an apple, and he asks me whether I have "another," the word that he will naturally use is not *heteros* but *allos*.

In view of this distinction, the scoff-

ing observation that "orthodoxy is my doxy, and heterodoxy is the other man's doxy," is seen to illustrate rather clearly the principle that a little learning is a dangerous thing. As a matter of fact, *orthos* means "straight" and "orthodoxy" means "straight doxy;" whereas *heterodoxy* means a doxy that is *different* from straight doxy—in other words, it means "crooked doxy!"

We trust that the readers will pardon this slight digression and will now return with us to the matter in hand. PAUL says that the GALATIANS are turning unto a different gospel, but that that different gospel is not really a second gospel to be put alongside of the gospel already preached, as though it could be a companion with it in a series. "No," says PAUL, "it is not really a gospel at all; there is only one gospel, and that is the gospel already preached to you. This other teaching, though it purports to be a gospel, is not really a gospel at all. It is not really another gospel, but only a perversion of the one true gospel."

Christ's Gospel Or the Gospel About Christ?

The one true gospel is "the gospel of CHRIST." What does PAUL mean when he designates it so? In what sense is it to be called a gospel "of CHRIST?"

CHRISTIANITY TODAY



||| A PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL DEVOTED TO STATING, DEFENDING
AND FURTHERING THE GOSPEL IN THE MODERN WORLD |||

SAMUEL G. CRAIG, Editor

H. McALLISTER GRIFFITHS, Managing Editor

Published monthly by
THE PRESBYTERIAN AND
REFORMED PUBLISHING CO.,
501 Witherspoon Bldg., Phila., Pa.

MID-JUNE, 1931

Vol. 2

No. 2

\$1.00 A YEAR EVERYWHERE

Entered as second-class matter May 11, 1931, at
the Post Office at Philadelphia, Pa., under the
Act of March 3, 1879.

Christianity and the Miraculous

IN our February issue we indicated, as fully as the limits of our space permitted, the kind and measure of that supernaturalism that real Christianity recognizes and demands. In this issue we seek to indicate the place that those particular manifestations of the supernatural we call miracles occupy in Christianity.

It is important that we distinguish between the supernatural and the miraculous. The latter is related to the former as the species to the genus. The recognition of the miraculous necessarily involves the supernatural but there may be a recognition of the supernatural where there is no recognition of the miraculous. A man who believes in God, in other than a pantheistic sense, believes in the supernatural; but such a man does not necessarily believe in the miraculous. Even if we confine our attention to what is specifically Christian, the supernatural includes a great deal more than does the miraculous. Regeneration, the new birth, for instance, is a supernatural event, but, properly speaking, it is not a miraculous event. Regeneration has this in common with the miraculous, namely, it is an event due to the immediate power of God. A miracle, however, is not only an event wrought by the immediate power of God; it is an event in the external world. While then all miracles are supernatural events, all supernatural events are not miracles. A miracle, it may be well to add, is not merely an event in the external world that we are at a loss to explain. If that were the case, the number of events we call miraculous would decrease as the

extent of our knowledge increased. As a matter of fact the number of events we are warranted in calling miracles would be exactly the same even if we possessed knowledge like the Most High. A miracle, in the strict sense of the word, is an event in the external world that the forces ordinarily operating in this world are incapable by themselves of producing, no matter how divinely led—an event that demands the immediate activity of God as its only adequate explanation.

There are those who affirm their faith in those manifestations of the supernatural in the form of the miraculous recorded in the Bible but who class these miracles among the non-essentials of Christianity. These maintain, as a rule, that miracles have only an evidential value. They were "signs" to convince men that Christianity was of God and when they accomplish that end their purpose is fulfilled. The essential thing, therefore, is not that we

believe the miracles but that we believe the things that the miracles evidence as true. Once we have arrived at such faith the miracles have no further significance for us. If we can arrive at such faith without the aid of the miracles or while denying the miracles, well and good. There is some truth in this contention. The miracles do possess evidential value. They are "signs" that are fitted to convince men and that have convinced men that Christianity is of God. NICODEMUS showed sense above that of many modern would-be apologists when he said to Jesus: "We know thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these signs, that thou doest, except God be with him." It is true also that the miracles had greater evidential value, relatively speaking, for the first Christians than they do for us. We have other evidences, such as the historical effects of Christianity, which they did not possess. Moreover all the miracles must have had evidential value for those who first witnessed them. For us, however, the one miracle that has outstanding evidential value is the resurrection of Jesus. But while there is truth in this contention, it comes far short of expressing the whole truth. What it fails to recognize is that miracles enter into the very substance of Christianity. They are not merely "the bell which draws men to God's sermon;" they are an important part of the sermon itself. Apart from them the sermon itself would be radically different from what it actually is. It is true, of course, that all the miracles do not enter into the substance of Christianity in the same degree. We

IN THIS ISSUE :

Concerning the Work of Evangelism...	4
R. A. Meek	
Is the Pulpit Forgetting God?—II.....	5
Wm. Childs Robinson	
Notes on Biblical Exposition.....	8
J. G. Machen	
Current Views and Voices.....	11
The 143rd General Assembly— A Description and An Interpretation	13
Ministerial Changes.....	19
News of the Church.....	20

embody the vital truths of the wonderful redemptive scheme. The Gospel alone is the power of God unto salvation. Its basal facts constitute the only teaching that the ascended Christ has promised to re-enforce with divine power and make efficacious. There has never been in the history of the Christian Church a great soul-winner, clerical or lay, who did not reverence, use, and magnify the Holy Scriptures. They are "the sword of the Spirit." The Master venerated them and proclaimed their thorough trustworthiness. Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Edwards, Finney, Spurgeon, and Moody accepted them as authoritative and dependable, and presented them as the veritable Word of God. Liberalism and successful evangelism do not go together. As Mr. Ernest Gordon so impressively points out in his extraordinary book, "The Leaven of the Sadducees," after existence for a century in the United States, the Unitarians, whose teachings constitute the essence of the prevailing Modernism, have in their organization less than a hundred thousand members and are practically without missions. This, though they have had in their possession much wealth and some of the best equipped colleges in the country. American Methodism was formerly distinguishable for its evangelistic spirit and effectiveness, but within its recent decades the Modernists have largely gained control of its institutions and governmental machinery, with the result that for the second year in succession it has had an actual decline in membership, the decrease during 1930, according to figures lately published in *The Christian Herald*, amounting to more than 43,000.

The evangelism needed is a *deep and thorough work of regeneration*. Neither a claptrap, sensational revivalism, nor an outward moral reform, nor a worldly personal campaign to enlist unsaved people as church members, can do for the sinner, the Christian Church, or human society what needs to be done. Sin is too deep-seated in human hearts and the evils to which it has given rise are too strongly rooted and widely extended to be overcome and eradicated by any superficial process. Only the supernatural power of the Holy Ghost can deliver either individuals, the Church or the social order from the moral ills that are preying upon and wrecking them.

Mankind, ecclesiasticisms, and civilization must be saved by the "old-time religion," or they must perish. This truth is writ upon the pages of human history, both sacred and profane.

Furthermore, the present distressing situation calls for an evangelism that *seeks to conserve the fruits of successful Christian effort*. To lead the lost to Christ and then leave them as spiritual babes to have their faith corrupted and undermined by Modernist teachers and influences is to pursue a course that is foolish and futile. Those to whom God gives spiritual progeny are under weighty obligations to see that it is properly nurtured and cared for, no matter what the cost. If new schools and seminaries

are necessary for this, they should be established; or if it is only by setting up new places of worship that this end can be attained, they should be provided. Wesley and the illustrious leaders of the Protestant Reformation did not hesitate to take whatever of such steps were needful to meet the religious exigencies of their times, and if need be we of the twentieth century should not fail to follow their courageous and heroic examples. Loyalty to any denominational name should not be allowed to outweigh loyalty to Christ, His Gospel, and the true interests of the immortal souls for whom He died. To let that come to pass, would be to betray the most momentous and sacred trust ever reposed in human hands.

Is the Pulpit Forgetting God?

By the Rev. Wm. Childs Robinson, A.M., Th.D.

Professor of Church History in Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Ga.

Part II

THE Protestant Reformation was primarily a rediscovery of God. LUTHER took seriously the Holy Sovereignty of God, and in JESUS CHRIST God revealed Himself to Brother MARTIN as gracious Father. The Reformers charged the Mediaeval Church with falsifying the true theme of Christianity, substituting man's Church and man's history, human intermediaries and intercessors, for God. With the mighty power of His Word, the Friar of Wittenberg brought Saxon Europe face to face with the living God. And every revival since has issued from the preaching of the Almighty God. JONATHAN EDWARDS brought New England to grips with God, and the Great Awakening ensued. JAMES HENLEY THORNWELL saved South Carolina from Skepticism by his glowing proclamation of the holiness of JEHOVAH. America needs Ministers who will devote their time to CHARNOCK on the *Divine Attributes* rather than to KIRBY PAGE on *War*.

Fellow students, you are called to be ambassadors of God; not advocates of labor organizations. Your vocation is theology; not psychology, not economics. Your primary theme is God; not the social gospel. Two years ago Dr. WEIR,

venerable secretary of your Board of National Missions, brought us this ringing challenge from a Chicago official: "We cannot live without men who interpret God to us."

There are still souls that pant for God as the hart panteth for the water brooks. There are trusting hearts in whom are the highways to Zion; men and women whose one desire is to dwell in the house of the LORD, that they may behold the beauty of the LORD. Devotion still lifts her litany:

"Oh, how I fear Thee, living God,
With deepest, tenderest fears;
And worship Thee with trembling hope,
And penitential tears."

And Christian or worldling, it is still true, "Thou hast made us for Thyself and we are restless until we rest in Thee." Do not allow the allurements of the world to seduce you from your high vocation. Christian ministers! your goal is not to be acclaimed District Governors of Rotary; but to be remembered as "men that spake the word of God."

The American pulpit is not only forgetting God as its primary theme; it is also shifting its central purpose. Too much of our preaching has a wrong teleological orientation. Instead of the glory of God we are seeking the conservation of

human values. We are substituting LOTZE and RITSCHL for CALVIN and the Bible. We used to preach that man's chief end was to glorify God. Now we make our ideas of God according to human value-concepts. A representative example of this way of thinking is found in Professor HORTON's article on the impotence of God. With a naivete that is astounding Dr. HORTON proceeds to create a God that shall meet the demands of men, and conserve their religious values. He writes:

"It is power that men seek when they seek for God; power to stand the gaff in the gruelling struggle of life, power to conquer their baser impulses and develop their nobler potentialities, power to persevere in the effort to create a better human society, against all the fierce opposition which such an effort is bound to elicit. A deity is a power; and the deities that will survive in the struggle for existence are those which have the greatest power to inspire and invigorate their devotees, and raise them to the highest level of triumphant and abundant life.

"The supreme God whom all men are blindly seeking is the supreme power which, if one could rightly and reverently ally oneself with it, would make all life a chant of victory."

Is American religion about to revert to magic, that we thus create our own higher powers in conformity with our needs, and in order that they may serve our behests?

Is God to be put into the "survival of the fittest" grist mill, and what most glorifies man to be accepted as God? That there might be a living God Who reveals Himself and Who is concerned for His own glory never seems to occur to the writer. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision." These dream-gods of wishful thinkers shall go into discard, and the living God Who has revealed Himself in redemption history shall reign alone, resplendent in the glories which He in His Word has ascribed to Himself.

We shall never get a grip upon the present depression until we stop looking at human values and begin to think of the glory of God. Though it be an unpalatable doctrine, the only rational explanation of this depression is that the universe is not being run primarily for the glorification of the United States, the enrich-

ment of the American public, the inspiration of god-forgetting humanism. "The heavens declare the glory of God," and "the fullness of the whole earth is His glory." We will only secure a rationale for our day when we heed the Psalm call:

"Give unto the LORD, O ye sons of the mighty,
Give unto the LORD, glory and strength.
Give unto the LORD the glory due unto His name.
Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness,
And in His temple let everything say Glory." (Ps. 29.)

Especially the Reformed preacher needs to hear MÜLLER's Erlangen message:

"At the very heart of the life of faith must stand the living God, who desires to be held in honor for His own sake, and not only as the deliverer of the soul and the supreme means of salvation."

LUTHER's faith is:

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost—that is the note struck by the first commandment and by the first petition. Nothing can be dearer to our hearts than the honor of God."

This is also CALVIN's religion:

"It is neither true piety nor correct theology to direct men's attention mainly to their own salvation. It is for God and not for ourselves mainly that we are born. But in order to make the glorifying of His name more attractive to men and to stimulate their zeal for it, the LORD has so ordained it, that by seeking His glory men always best further their own salvation."

But some of our Presbyterian book reviews read as though the Reformed preachers have less consciousness of the meaning and glory of their own heritage than any people in the world. When SHAILER MATTHEWS exchanges the sovereignty of God and the objective Godward meaning of the Atonement for a mere victory of personality over environment, of organism over mechanism, the Northern Presbyterian reviewer (judging from reports) must have surpassed even the flattering review which *The Atonement and the Social Process* received from a Southern theologian. A Southern Presbyterian reviewer commends Union Seminary's (N.Y.) *Ventures in Belief* to "every thinking Christian," without a word of protest against Dr. WEIMAN's rejection of the supernatural. But when

deliverance was not forthcoming from the orthodox Southern Presbyterian, it arose to the LORD from another source. Though he professes a lower doctrine of inspiration, Dr. W. P. PATERSON, of Edinburgh, has the courage of his convictions. He told the Atlanta Presbyterian ministers that "a Church that has lost the supernatural gospel is in the same condition as the salt that has lost its savour."

At the Jerusalem Missionary Council (1928), a group of German theologians felt it necessary to offer a manifesto supporting the absolutely unique acts of God for the redemption of men against the syncretism implicit in the papers on the Missionary Message, and one of these papers was written by a Southern Presbyterian. Have we lost the courage of our convictions? Or do we love the glory of men more than the glory of God?

Dr. W. M. MCPHEETERS, my honored colleague, seriously questions whether the plan for the union of American Presbyterianism is taking sufficient account of God. If we draw up an ordination vow which the unsophisticated will understand as a subscription to the Westminster Confession, but which the initiated will know allows each individual to subscribe only to so much of that Confession as he himself regards as the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, are we honoring the God of truth to Whom in the first place we make our profession of faith?

What will our Presbyterian reviews do with the Yale lectures in which Dr. WEIMAN denies the personality of God? Will JUDAH again vie with EPHRAIM as to which can be more subservient to this brilliant creator of his own gods? Or, like PAUL, will our spirits be stirred within us when we see ATHENS given to idolatry? If we believe that God has revealed Himself and that the Scriptures principally teach that self-revelation, consistency requires us to condemn the making of ideas of God contrary to the Biblical revelation.

Or glance at our books. A Northern Presbyterian theologian issues *The Procession of the Gods*, on the cover of which the Crucified appears between a cross-legged BUDDHA and symbols of nature worship. While in *The New Science and the Old Faith*, a Southern Presbyterian university president declares that the God of the Old Testament (EL, ELOHIM, JAHVAH) is the same as BAAL, ISHTAR,

ASHTORETH, BRAHMA, etc! (p. 407, cf. p. 128.)

Was ELIJAH right at Mt. Carmel, or was he only an old foggy? Well, evidently the Son of Man bore some of the lineaments of the mighty TISHBITE. When men saw Him consumed with zeal for the LORD (John 2:17), some said He was JOHN the BAPTIST, others ELIJAH (Matthew 16:14). And as His zero hour arrived, the Servant mounted His fire step praying: "Nevertheless for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name." Oh, that we who bear His name might be anointed with His Spirit—"the spirit of the fear of the LORD" (Isaiah 11:2-3).

In the great premises of his kingdom of ends, THOMAS AQUINAS was right. The soul is higher than the body. Religion cannot be a mere means to society's amelioration. The pulpit must revise her teleology. The primary consideration—the supreme end—is not human values, but the glory of God. The glow of sacred eloquence as well as the radiance of Christian living shines that men may glorify our Father which is in heaven.

Young gentlemen, as you enter your pastorates, I beg you, take the Sermon on the Mount as the model for the true motivation in preaching; take the angels' "Gloria in excelsis, in excelsis Deo!" (Luke 2:14) as the keynote in worship; and take the Apostle's motto as the panacea for congregational factionalism, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the LORD" (I Cor. 1:30).

Finally, religious leadership is taking too lightly the word that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines from the face of JESUS CHRIST. Too many of us are slurring the Deity of CHRIST; too often we forget the ultimate meaning of our LORD. Professor PRINGLE-PATTISON feels that to give us a true picture of God, JESUS "did not require actually to be God." Dr. JOHN BAILLIE thinks it enough for modern Christianity to believe that in CHRIST God has been pleased to do something for humanity He had never done before (*The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity*, p. 121). A Briton writes of the human presence of CHRIST in which God was divinely present. Even conservative preachers and professors allow statements of belief to be made which ring the changes, with definiteness

and precision, on the perfect and complete humanity of JESUS; yet, when referring to the Godward side of His being, stop with an adjective and a terminology that is patient of a RITSCHLIAN interpretation. There is a tremendous issue here. Is JESUS ultimate reality to the universe, or is the universe ultimate reality to JESUS? Do we still believe with the church catholic that CHRIST is true and eternal God? Do we believe with PAUL and JOHN and Hebrews that all things were created by Him and unto Him? Do we believe that He, personally pre-existing, did supernaturally enter human history by a Virgin birth, and did supernaturally attest His Deity by the resurrection of His body? Then by all that we hold most precious, let us declare our faith today.

If CHRIST is only one, even the best, of mankind's helpers along the way of life, then his Church may well ally itself with the disciples of other helpers in a fellowship of faiths and a fellowship of reconciliation, and a national religious education association, and a world syncretism. The Buddhist and the Mohammendan agree with our stand against alcohol; the Tao and the Buddhist are as pacifist as SHERWOOD EDDY could wish. But, if CHRIST be not a mere product of this planet, but its LORD and God and King, then we must take a different attitude toward such entangling alliances. I believe with Dr. B. M. PALMER and the fathers of my Church, that God hath given CHRIST to be the whole creation's Head (Eph. 1:22. Cf. Phil. 2:9-11, Dan. 7:13-14, Is. 9:6-7, Matt. 28:18-19, Rev. 5:11-13). I believe that this universal headship is founded on the fact that CHRIST is the eternal God and the immediate author, controller and governor of the cosmos (Heb. 1:2; John 1:3; Col. 1:16, 17). It is neither necessary nor becoming for me to take the Body of this Almighty Head and unite it with those who revere Him not. It is not necessary, because in this Headship of JESUS there is safety to the universe, all things are created *unto Him*. "The footsteps of our King are to be seen in all the grand march of history, which begins and ends in a true theocracy." As Head, CHRIST is the sole depository of grace. From the divine-human CHRIST, as a reservoir filled from the fount of Deity, common grace and special grace shall continue to stream until "the kingdoms of this world become

the kingdoms of our LORD and of His CHRIST."

And it is peculiarly improper and unbecoming to take the Body of our Divine Head and make it a mere part of a syncretistic world cult; to be placed in the hands of every reforming enthusiast to be used according to his peculiar whims. No! that Body which is CHRIST's fullness may neither be bound to the chariot in which CAESAR rides, nor yet yoked to the subtler ideologies of evanescent reformers.

In his customary sententious manner, Dr. P. T. FORSYTH has divined and divided our problem (*Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, pp. 27, 28, 29):

"Even with CHRIST in the centre, we must go on and ask a question which divides Christianity into two streams, one of which ends in the eternal kingdom of holy God, and the other in the brief sovereignty of spiritual man. We have to ask, in the Gospel's interest, whether CHRIST is central to a glorified humanity or to a glorious God . . . what we are developing at the moment is an anthropocentric Christianity. God and CHRIST are practically treated as but the means to an end . . . the consummation and perfecting of Humanity.

These two streams may not seem far apart in their origin, but they part widely as they flow on. And one makes glad the City of God and His kingdom, and the other is lost in the desert. The latter makes CHRIST and Christianity to culminate and be exhausted in the service of man, the former makes their first work always to be the honour and worship of God. In that worship man grows to all his destiny, and warms, and even melts, in perpetual brotherly love and service. The one makes the centre of Christianity to be the ideal and spirit of CHRIST, the other the Cross of CHRIST. One makes the Cross the apotheosis of sacrifice with a main effect upon man, the other makes it the Atonement with its first effect on God. The result of the latter is a Church; of the former, a social State more or less spiritualised, and more or less fleeting. The latter postulates the Deity of CHRIST, the other but his relative divinity."

Fellow students, what I have been trying to say to you in many words, ZECHARIAH better says with a few words:

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Return unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts."