

THE PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

VOLUME V

OCTOBER 1907

NUMBER 4

AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE OF KNOWLEDGE AND AUTHORITY.

In a former number of this REVIEW¹ we attempted to give a general exposition of Augustine's doctrine of knowledge and authority, which naturally ran up into some account of his doctrine of authority in religion. The more detailed study of this specific subject we were forced, however, to postpone to another occasion. We wish now to take up this topic and to make as clear as possible Augustine's teaching concerning it.

The cardinal facts to bear in mind are that, to speak broadly, with Augustine the idea of Authority coalesces with that of Revelation, the idea of Revelation with that of Apostolicity, and the idea of Apostolicity with that of Scripture. With him therefore the whole question of authority in religion is summed up in the questions whether there is a revelation from God in existence, where that revelation is to be found, and how it is validated to and made the possession of men: while the master-key to these problems lies in the one word apostolicity. Whatever is apostolic is authoritative, because behind the apostles lies the authority of Christ, who chose, appointed and endowed the apostles to be the founders of His Church; and Christ's authority is the authority of God, whose Son and Revelation

¹ THE PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW, July, 1907, pp. 353-397.

the University of Halle, May 25, 1846. It is truly a remarkable list. Of all these sixty years there is not one in which articles and books, sometimes of lasting value and epoch-making importance, did not issue from his pen. The titles of them cover no less than 49 closely-printed pages. Dr. Hilgenfeld's first activity dates from the time when the old Tübingen School was at the acme of its prestige and influence. To some of its positions(*e. g.*, the priority of Matthew to Mark) he remained faithful to the end. Even when eighty years old and more he used with unabated vigor to follow and criticize from his own standpoint all recent developments in New Testament science. His productivity until the very last was unparalleled, hardly an instalment of his *Zeitschrift* appearing without an extended article from his hand. The interest attaching to the present pamphlet is increased by the recent death of the man whom it honors. He survived his eightieth birthday more than three years and was so active till the very last that the list offered him on the sixtieth anniversary of his doctorate will undoubtedly require once more to be supplemented. The pamphlet contains a good engraving of Hilgenfeld. It is valuable as a piece of bibliography to every writer in the field of New Testament science.

Princeton.

GEERHARDUS VOS.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST. By DAVID W. FORREST, D.D., Edinburgh. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. 1906. New York: Imported by Charles Scribner's Sons. Price \$2.00 net. 8vo.; pp. xvi, 437.

There is a story told of an impetuous and somewhat headstrong cavalry leader in our great Civil War which is brought back to our memory by Dr. Forrest's book. He had just ordered a daring charge, when he was interrupted by an aide-de-camp, riding furiously and bringing imperative orders from the general in command, to draw back. "Of course I obey my superior officer", he said, with no attempt to conceal his chagrin. "But", he at once added, his face clearing up, "Mr. Aide-de-camp, this is a very remarkable order, which I find it difficult to understand. And how do I know it has not suffered some 'sea-change' in its transmission through you? And, indeed, how do I know 'the old man' is quite himself this morning?" "Men", he said, turning to his forces, "charge!" The authority of Christ, says Dr. Forrest, is of course final. It has in all ages been acknowledged by the Christian Church to be final (p. 1, cf. pp. 101, 392). But it certainly is not always easy to ascertain precisely the bearing of either His commands or His example (pp. 160, 393); and in point of fact men have repeatedly and in great masses and through long periods gone astray in their appeal to His authority. Nor is it easy to be sure that some of the phrases transmitted to us "have not come to us coloured by later reflection" (p. 399): His disciples certainly misunderstood Him in some of His utterances and modified them to suit their own

convictions (pp. 312, 317, 319), and though "the question of subsequent modification or interpretation touches" different parts of His teaching with more or less force, it is legitimate on all occasions to raise it (p. 292). And in any event Jesus' own outlook was bounded by the horizon of a man of His own time, race and social and intellectual opportunities. The mysteries that press on us pressed similarly on Him. The mystery of suffering for example—"we have no reason to suppose" that the data required for its solution "lay within Christ's purview more than within ours" (p. 141). "The *detailed* course of the kingdom in the world" was "inscrutable" to Him as to us; because "the influences that determined it were infinitely complex", and above all the factor of the free human will comes in to modify all forecasts (p. 300, 312). It is not difficult for us to convict Him even of positive errors. No doubt He shared the current opinion which attributed the 110th Psalm to David, and the later chapters of Isaiah to Isaiah (p. 69). Nor did He err only in matters of Biblical criticism. "His teaching in many of its parts is coloured by temporary-Jewish influences" (p. 96): even the Parables, at least those "that portray the final judgment, 'are affected' by suggestions from Jewish traditional belief" (p. 292). Thus we are carried through the whole sorites and—despite the occasional accidental dropping of such a phrase as "Christ teaches with authority" (p. 331)—the only conclusion that can be reached is that no such "authority" can justly be assigned to the teaching of Christ as has "in all ages been acknowledged by the Christian Church" (p. 1). As we read we are inevitably reminded of Nelson at St. Vincent, vociferously protesting his subjection to his admiral's authority, but taking great care to clap his glass to his blind eye, and, crying out 'I see no signal', to go his own way.

And here we must emphasize the phrase "his own way". For we must not suppose that Dr. Forrest puts aside the authority of Jesus in favor of that of the Scriptures. As he says himself, generalizing on an individual instance: "He who believes that Christ's thought had its limitations will not think that Peter's knowledge on such a matter was infallible" (p. 330, cf. p. 413). "Is it at all likely", he demands, "that the Apostle was commissioned to reveal an eschatological truth which was concealed from the Lord Himself, or which He deliberately refrained from proclaiming?" We do not pause here to point out that according to John's representation (Jn. xvi. 12-13) precisely this might seem very likely; or to point out that according to Dr. Forrest's own principles there seems no good reason why the later writer, after mature reflection and the teaching of experience, might not have known better than Jesus. What we are concerned to point out here is that so far from falling back from Christ's authority upon that of the Holy Ghost speaking through the apostles, it is one of Dr. Forrest's aims in setting aside the authority of Christ to escape also from the authority of Scripture. It is, in fact, just because Christ's authority authenticates the Scripture that Christ's authority is onerous to him. He sweeps the field clean and leaves himself logically without any "external authority" at all. And he succeeds very fairly in living practically up

to this logical result (pp. 372, 382, 421, cf. 2, 64, 68). There is, of course, an appeal here and there to Scriptural teaching as if there were some good reason why we should not outrun the "scriptural warrant" for this or that (p. 50). But this occasional slip is explicable usually from the influence of long habit and from a sense of the force of the appeal upon those addressed. There is exhibited no great tendency to defer to the detailed teaching of John or Paul or Peter: but rather a suggestion here and there of an underlying hesitancy in appealing to it. At one point, no doubt (p. 330), there seems to be a hint let fall that we may appeal from any one apostle to "the common primitive faith" as a better basis of confidence. What is not shared by all or a plurality of the Apostles we are told, "according to every sound canon of Biblical criticism", "can only rank as a theologoumenon" of the individual; and as not "forming part of the common primitive faith" fails, by implication, of normative authority (p. 338). The New Testament, however, is treated on the whole as but a product of the Church (p. 383) which can possess no higher authority than belongs to the Church—even though it comes from "the creative period of the Christian faith" (p. 421). We say truly, then, that Dr. Forrest strips himself of all "external authority", and stands forth as, in some sense, autonomous. Has he not the Spirit as truly as any of the Apostles? And does not the promise of guidance into all the truth belong to him as really as to them? And does there not lie behind him a much longer and a much wider experience than lay behind them—through which the Church has learned many things?

We have thought it best to begin thus by stating briefly the central and determining line of thought of Dr. Forrest's volume, that we may have before us at once the principles which have controlled his thought, and the issue to which he would conduct us. We may properly revert now, however, to the manner in which these principles and conclusions find utterance. Dr. Forrest takes for his subject "The Authority of Christ": and his end is to determine the sphere in which that authority,—shall we say is available or shall we say is extant?—and its "character"—or shall we say its mode of operation?—within that sphere. In one word, Dr. Forrest's purpose is to investigate the limits of Christ's authority both extensively and intensively. In what sphere is He authoritative? he asks; and then, How authoritative is He in that sphere? He cannot be said to proceed in his discussion in a right line: nor does the book give the impression of a unity. One gets the suggestion as he reads that it may have been composed piece-meal, at perhaps disconnected periods, and not in all its parts with the same precise end prominently in view and with the same definitions and presuppositions vividly in mind. Nevertheless the whole is bound together in some sort of unity by the fact that the whole treats in one way or another of the authority of Christ: and if at one time there seems an implicit recognition underlying the discussion of the plenary authority of our Lord's declarations and only a zeal to provide against their misapplication, while at another there seems a tendency to deny at least absolute authority to His declarations themselves, the reader still is able with

a little care, to find his way amid the resulting ambiguities. If we may be allowed a conjecture as to the composition of the book, we may perhaps suppose that it originated in a strong feeling on Dr. Forrest's part that "the authority of Christ" has been and is frequently much too lightly asserted; and has accordingly been invoked for a multitude of points of view and conceptions, usages and practices for which no colorable warrant can be found in the recorded teaching and example of Jesus. Here is, for example, a portentous sacerdotal system like that of the Church of Rome. Or here is an impracticable scheme of conduct like that propounded by Tolstoy. Or here is a thoroughly indefensible withdrawal from public life and avoidance of the common duties in which our complicated modern social organization enmeshes us. Or here is an innumerable body of particular crochets more or less offensive to sane thought. And for all of them alike "the authority of Christ" is confidently appealed to. The case obviously calls for a serious examination of the basis on which "the authority of Christ" is claimed for these things, and Dr. Forrest has felt this obligation and has given us a series of excellent chapters in which the interpretation of Christ's precepts and the general bearing of His teaching is searchingly examined and illustrated. It is a dreary mass of crass and often evident misinterpretations and misapplications of Christ's words which he has to expose.

If Dr. Forrest had stopped at this point, although there would certainly remain points of detail which would invite criticism, he would have made us all his debtors. But unfortunately there are a number of instances in which the authority of Christ is invoked for matters not to Dr. Forrest's mind, with regard to which it cannot be denied that the recorded words or example of Jesus warrant the appeal. And Dr. Forrest has unhappily permitted himself to be misled on their account into an attempt to discredit the authority of Christ. He pleads that we must not raise the dilemma in men's minds "as to whether the acceptance of His authority is compatible with loyalty to truth" in any region of their investigation (p. 2): and he does not seem to perceive, or at least does not stay at this point sufficiently to consider, that if this principle is given universal validity it amounts to saving Christ's authority in name while discarding it in fact throughout the whole range of knowledge. Under its pressure, he seeks to escape the dilemma, first, by throwing doubt upon the exact transmission of our Lord's words and example; and next by invoking a theory of the Incarnation by which the authority of His teaching and example, even when fully before us, is reduced to the vanishing point. The book thus becomes a sustained attempt to throw off the authority of Christ altogether; and by this driftage of the argument its own unity is, as we have said, seriously marred. For what is the use of arguing at great length that the teaching and example of Christ have been misapplied by this or that class of reasoners or body of Christians, if we are not quite certain what the teaching and example of Christ are, and they have no authority at any rate? The assertion in the opening chapters of the book of a theory of the Incarnation which robs the

teaching and example of Christ of all authority, antiquates beforehand the argument of the later chapters that the teaching and example of Christ have often been grossly misinterpreted by those who have appealed to them. The argument of these later chapters proceeds on a major premise which has already been discredited, and can command our attention only if the assertion of the former chapters is rejected by us. The gravamen of the case the book seeks to make out certainly lies therefore in its opening chapters, in which Dr. Forrest attempts to expound the Incarnation as in its very nature voiding the authority of Christ; and that attempt must therefore claim our previous attention. We think this unfortunate, for the excellence of the volume lies in its later chapters, in which the proper use of Christ's authority is studied. But we have no choice. Both the logic of the case and Dr. Forrest's own arrangement of his matter demand of us to seek the crux of the volume in its opening chapters and its theory of the Incarnation.

This theory of the Incarnation is nothing other than that kenotic theory which, after enjoying a remarkable vogue in the middle of the last century, has in more recent years fallen very much out of credit, as continued discussion has thrown more and more into light its inherent weaknesses, or rather impossibilities—metaphysical, exegetical, theological and religious. Respectable in the hands of its first propounders as an attempt to do justice to Christological data neglected by the Lutheran construction in which they had been bred, it has lost the respect of men when it has become only a fig-leaf to hide the nakedness of those who, fallen from their first estate of trust in the God-man, yet shrink from standing forth in a bare naturalistic conception of the person of Jesus. It is thus, unfortunately, that it appears in Dr. Forrest's pages, as in those of most of its remaining advocates. Dr. Forrest declines to enter into the deep questions which such a theory necessarily brings with it. "It is quite foolish", he says, "to seek to disparage the idea of the Son's self-limitation by asking what became of His cosmical function during the incarnate period" (p. 95). And then he enumerates a number of the suggestions which have been made to meet this and similar difficulties raised by the kenotic assumption, with the general implication that any of them will do well enough, —although no one of them has yet been invented which does not fatally infringe upon either the Christian doctrine of the Trinity or our fundamental conception of God. With these things, however, Dr. Forrest does not concern himself. His concern is rather with the right of men to hold to be false, what the Son of Man recognized as true. Says he: "The frank recognition that such was the character of the Son's incarnate state is a prime necessity for Christian faith at the present time. For this age is preëminently one of historical research, bent upon discovering as far as possible the actual facts of the past. Now it has been demonstrated beyond dispute that there are sayings of our Lord which, taken literally, seem to conflict with established results of biblical investigation, and that His teaching in many of its parts is coloured by temporary Jewish influences. When Professor Pfeiderer, on grounds such as these, ridicules the notion that Christ

is a 'final definitive authority', the only right reply is: We do not claim that Christ's word is final in all spheres. . . . We can only gain for Christ His true place and essential significance by plainly recognizing, not only that the limitations are there, but that they are the inescapable accompaniments of a historical Incarnation" (pp. 96-7). Which, being interpreted in the brutal language of the streets, means just that we cannot in the face of modern research sustain the claim of Christ to "authority". Dr. Forrest would, indeed, distinguish and say, 'except in the sphere of faith and conduct' (p. 3),—or, as he puts it here: "we do claim that He has embodied in His person and in the principles He has expounded the final revelation of religious truth and practice, of 'what man is to believe concerning God, and what duties God requires of man'" (p. 97). The care with which this language is chosen should not, however, pass unobserved. Even in "the sphere of faith and conduct" Dr. Forrest is not prepared to claim absolute and indefectible authority for every utterance of Jesus. "His teaching in many of its parts is coloured by temporary Jewish influences", and we shall need to take these into account in applying it to our own times: and this "revelation" of religious truth and practice does not find its embodiment so much in spoken words enunciating final doctrine and promulgating final precepts, as in lives quickened by the Spirit He has sent and efflorescing under His influence into true thinking and high acting. There is, thus, at least a tendency in Dr. Forrest's discussion to reduce the authority of Christ to His immanent action on the conscience of the race, or of His church. "That He constantly confronts us with an obligation which presses down upon us from the Unseen" constitutes "what we call the authority of Christ" (p. 7). This seems to mean that Christ is the incarnate conscience of the race; and His authority consists in the coincidence of His demands on us with the demands of our religious and moral nature. "He quickens the impulses and resolves" of our moral and religious nature, and we respond to it in a higher outlook and upward aspiration,—

"Then a sense of law and beauty,
A face turned from the clod—
Some call it Evolution
And others call it God."

Dr. Forrest calls it Christ: and sees here Christ's authority manifested. It is thus that Dr. Forrest adjusts his profound reverence for Jesus as the "final authority" of Christians and his inability to find in his recorded teaching a final authority for his thinking and acting. It is always painful to disturb such adjustments: and the more painful as it becomes evident that the adjustment is in the individual an expedient to retain as much as is possible to him of the higher truth. But what choice have we? In this sphere too the maxim will be found to have in all its absoluteness its inevitable application: "Ye cannot serve two masters".

Dr. Forrest's impulse to the adoption of the kenotic theory of the incarnation seems then to be rooted in mental perplexity in view of the conflict between some of Jesus' utterances or points of view and

some suggestions of recent research. This perplexity is voiced in such phrases as this: "If Christ is declared by us to guarantee the accuracy of what is scientifically disproved, or at least improbable in the last degree, we are much more likely to imperil His claim than to establish the disputed point" (p. 69). And certainly we may be permitted to suspect that the dogmatism with which the elements of the kenotic theory are asserted and the fundamental postulates of the Chalcedonian Christology are discarded, is a reflection of the terror with which the dilemma Dr. Forrest finds himself in inspires him,—the terror lest all trust in Christ be destroyed in wide circles by the conflict between His utterances and recent theory. But Dr. Forrest seeks support for his theory from Scripture. Why he should be exigent in this matter is not very apparent, in view of the weak hold which the authority of Scripture has upon him, particularly in its historical element, the only element on which he can depend for the dramatization of our Lord's life on earth, from which he derives his chief support in advocating the kenotic theory of His incarnation. But, permitting that to pass, Dr. Forrest has persuaded himself that the Scriptures give us both in their didactic teaching and in the portrait they draw of Jesus in the Gospels, a kenotized Christ; and he supports himself on this their supposed testimony. We cannot say, however, we have found anything very new or particularly strong in the exegetical argument with which he has favored us.

✓ To the great passage, Phil. ii. 6 sq., he consecrates two long passages (pp. 98 sq.-338 sq.)—one of them a formal discussion in the kenotic interests: and, of course, he says many things in both of them which command our attention and exhibit his own careful study of the passage. But in neither discussion can he be said to have advanced the matter in hand. The more formal discussion (pp. 98 sq.) even acquires a somewhat unpleasant flavor from the sustained effort made in it to rid it of its two most obvious theological implications—that of the unbroken persistence of the Son of God "in the form of God" after His incarnation, and that of the consequent coëxistence in the Incarnate Son of "two natures". It is quite certain that in the phrase *ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων*, the participle embodies the conception of continuance and, therefore, declares not merely that Jesus was before His incarnation "in the form of God" but also that He retained that "form of God" after His incarnation. The sixth verse indeed, as its tense-forms unmistakably indicate, lays the basis in one broad negative statement for the entire positive statement given in verse seven, and there analyzed into two parts,—not less, then, for the "He humbled Himself" than for the "He emptied Himself". The unbroken continuance of our Lord "in the form of God" is therefore of the very essence of the assertion; and it is it which governs the choice of the language throughout the entire passage. It is this that accounts not only for the *λάβων* and the *γενόμενος* (in both instances), but also for the *ἐν ὁμολώματι* and the *σχήματι*, which have seemed to many "to point to an apparent rather than to a real Incarnation" only because the ruling idea of the passage, that Christ Jesus always continued to be—because He was by nature

and could not but be—"in the form of God", has been lost sight of. It was because He continued in His incarnation to be "in the form of God", that He is said, not to have come to be in "the form of a servant" but to have *taken* "the form of a servant": there was here no exchange of one "form" for another, but an addition of one "form" to another; as the ecclesiastical language has accurately phrased it, there was an "assumption". Accordingly He is said, not to have "become man", but to have "become in the likeness of men". The docetic inference had been excluded by the "He *took* the *form* of a servant": there is no illusion here, but a real assumption of the "form", that is, of the characterizing quality, of all that belongs to, the servant's nature. The transmutation notion is now excluded by the assertion that He did not, in assuming humanity, "become man" exactly, but only "became in the likeness of men": He remained much more than He seemed; though His humanity was a real humanity, really "assumed", and He lived in the sight of man within the limits of this humanity so as to appear only man, this was not all,—He remained "in the form of God" all the time as well, and therefore was only "in the likeness of men".

Whatever He did therefore as man,—within the limits of the humanity He had assumed—He did voluntarily, by an ever fresh act of voluntary self-abnegation. His dying, for instance,—that was not an inevitable sequence of His incarnation, but an additional act of voluntary self-devotion. He who is and remains "in the form of God" may properly at any and all times claim and exercise His right of "being on an equality with God" the deathless one, and not die: and this possibility and right is wholly unaffected by the fact that He has assumed into union with Himself, "the form of a servant", and thus has made it possible for Him to act here too "in the likeness of men". Accordingly we are told, in order that the example of our Lord in His self-abnegation may be exhibited in its full extent, that "being found in fashion as a man", "He humbled Himself"—it is a voluntary act of His own, not an inevitable consequence of His changed nature, no longer in His power to do or to prevent; and that He did this "by becoming"—it is a change to the unnecessary, not a submission to the inevitable, that is signalized by the term—"by becoming subject even unto death". Death, then at least—and all that led up to and accompanied and issued from death in His subjection to human conditions—was not the unavoidable and irresistible consequence of His incarnation, coming of itself as the necessary lot of the nature He had, not assumed, but become; but an additional act of humiliation voluntarily entered into in the prosecution of His mission by Him who, just because He remained "in the form of God", had no necessary part in death, but might well have held to His inherent right to be in this matter also, on "an equality with God". Not only is at least this much so imbedded in the passage that it cannot by any artifice of exegesis be driven out of it, but it constitutes the main and emphasized teaching of the passage, on which hangs its whole value to Paul in his exhortation to his readers

to look not to their own things but each also to the things of others, and thus to have the mind in them which was in Christ Jesus.

- ✓ The meaning of the passage to us, then, is precisely that, according to Paul, the Son of God did not lay aside His divine "existence form" in "becoming man", but, retaining in full possession all that characterizes God as God and makes Him that specific Being we call God (for that is the significance of "being in the form of God"), took to Himself also all that characterizes a servant as a servant and makes Him that specific being we call a servant; and having so done, willed to live out a servant's life in the world, subjecting Himself from moment to moment, by uncompelled and free acts of His unweakened will, to the conditions of the life which, for His own high ends, He willed to live, and manifesting Himself thus to man as "in the likeness of men", "in fashion as a man", though He was all the time Lord of all. This is, of course, the precise antipodes, the express and detailed contradiction, of the entire kenotic construction. It is the assertion of the dual nature of our Lord: for according to it the humanity of our Lord was something added to (*λαβών*) His divine nature, not something into which His divine nature was transmuted. And this includes of course the assertion that within the person of Christ there are two "minds"; though both matters are denied by Dr. Forrest with intense dogmatism. "No matter how real may be the affinity of divine and human nature, these two diverse methods or forms of operation can by no possibility coexist within the same conscious personality" (p. 89, cf. pp. 51, 91); "there was but one mind, that of the Word made flesh" (p. 58, cf. pp. 53, 90). It is also the assertion of the retention, in the Incarnate state, in possession and use, of the whole body of Divine attributes, which in their sum make up "the form of God"; although this too is not only denied but scoffed at by Dr. Forrest. He complains of those who occupy the same position here with Paul, that they "calmly transfer" "what is true of the Son in His timeless existence to Him in the period of His humiliation as if the continuity of His absolute attributes were self-evident" (p. 65, cf. pp. 51, 53, 59). It is further the assertion that the controlling factor in our Lord's whole earthly manifestation, as well as in His entire life-history, is His Divine nature, since it was He who was in the form of God who not only "emptied Himself" by taking the form of a servant, thus becoming in the likeness of men; but also, being found in fashion like a man, humbled Himself by becoming subject even unto death and that the death of the cross; although this too Dr. Forrest sharply denies (pp. 91-92).

- ✓ But above all for our present purpose—for this is the hinge on which the whole kenotic controversy turns—it is the assertion that our Lord's life of humiliation on earth was a continuous act of voluntary self-abnegation, in which He by the strong control of His absolute will to live within the bounds of a human life, moment by moment denied Himself the exercise of His divine attributes and prerogatives in all that concerned His mission, because He had come to do a work and for the doing of it it behooved Him thus to do; and not the unavoidable natural development of a purely human life incapable as such of escaping the

changes and chances which are necessarily incident to humanity. By this assertion Paul sets aside at one stroke the whole kenotic contention, to which it is essential to hold that in our Lord's life of humiliation "there was not merely" (as Bishop O'Brien puts it in words adopted and utilized by Dr. Forrest, p. 93), "a voluntary suspension of the exercise" "of all His infinite attributes and powers", "but a voluntary *renunciation of the capacity of exercising them*, for a time". And not only Paul, we may add, but the whole Gospel narrative as well, to which Dr. Forrest would make his appeal, as if it dramatized Christ's life on earth as not only a purely human one but a helplessly human one. A very simple test will exhibit this. Let any simple reader of the Gospels be asked whether their narrative leaves upon his mind the impression that Jesus' life and acts were determined for Him by the necessary limits of a well-meaning but weak humanity; or were not rather the voluntarily chosen course of a life directed to an end for the securing of which He daily denied himself the exercise of powers beyond human forces? No simple reader of the Gospel will be easily persuaded that Jesus' life was what it was because He had for the time lost the capacity to act in superhuman powers: that it was, for example, lack of power rather than lack of will which withheld Jesus either from making the stones bread at the demand of the tempter (else where was the temptation?), or from coming down from the cross when challenged thereto by the scoffing multitude. But when we have assured ourselves that the limitations within which Jesus' life were cast were voluntary from day to day and act to act,—and not the necessary sequence of a change which had once for all befallen Him at His incarnation we have cut up the kenotic theory by the roots.

The advocate of the kenotic theory who, under the condemnation of the epistles, seeks comfort from the Gospels, certainly has a claim upon our pity. No one of the evangelists, assuredly, shares his conception. To one and all alike Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, and to each and all alike a divine manifestation is both a *manifestation* and a manifestation of *what is divine*. "Even the oldest Gospel", says that Bousset whom Dr. Forrest repeatedly quotes as if he were an "authority" in such matters,—on this occasion indeed speaking truly,—"even the oldest Gospel is written from the standpoint of faith; already for Mark Jesus is not only the Messiah of the Jewish people, but the miraculous eternal Son of God whose glory shone in the world. And it has been rightly emphasized that in this regard our three first Gospels are distinguished only in degree from the fourth". And again: "In the faith of the community, which is shared already by the oldest evangelist, Jesus is the miraculous Son of God in whom men believe, whom men set wholly by the side of God" (*Was wissen wir von Jesus*, pp. 54, 57). It would be hard if writers, writing for the express purpose of depicting a Divine Being manifesting His deity in His daily course, should have so missed their mark as to have presented us rather with a portrait in which only a human life is manifested. That they have not done so is obvious to every reader of their Gospels. And when Dr. Forrest attempts to make it appear that they have done so, he not only wilfully shuts his

eyes to one whole half of their representation, but sets himself in direct contradiction to their whole portraiture of Jesus. It is he, not they, who tells us that Jesus had "a bounded outlook", was "subject to all the influences of His immediate surroundings", and even in His "perfection" was not "absolute" but "conditioned" (pp. 11, 12). In their view Jesus' outlook had no limits, He was master of all circumstances, and His perfection was just the perfection of God. So far from Jesus' "perfection" being to them "conditioned, not absolute", "derived not creative", negative not positive ("His sinlessness means that He did not at any point of His progressive experience deflect from the specific ideal of service set before Him by God", p. 12) it was just the realization in a human life of the perfection which constitutes the ethical content of the idea of God (Mt. v. 48), asserted by Jesus as His own possession as the Son of God (cf. Volkmar Fritzsche, *Das Berufsbewusstsein Jesu*, pp. 31-32). According to the evangelists thus Jesus' perfection is the manifestation of the *τελειωσις* of God in flesh: a manifestation made under the conditions of human growth it is true, but a *manifestation*, and a manifestation precisely of the *τελειωσις* of the absolute God. Others needed daily to seek from God forgiveness of their unceasing sins: He, needing no forgiveness, is the dispenser of forgiveness to others, and even commits to others the right to remit sins. As self-evident as is the evil of all others (Mt. vii. 11), so self-evident is it that "doing the work of the Father" brings them into unison with Him (Mt. xii. 50): since whatever the Father has, in that does He share (Mt. xi. 28 sq.).

It surely is hopeless to appeal to evangelists seeking to present this conception of Jesus, in order to validate a theory that in the days of the flesh He was phenomenally mere man with no capacity left Him for Divine activities. Of course they represent Him as growing in wisdom, and as therefore at every stage of His growth lacking in complete knowledge and perfected wisdom: as subject to changing emotions,—and there might have been included, only there does not chance to be included, in this, the experience of the emotion of surprise; as making inquiries and learning by experience. All this belongs to another side of His complex personality—the human side, which the evangelists, though they do not dwell upon it so fully or make its validation so much the end of their writing, yet are as far from obscuring as His divine dignity and powers. If we begin with the dogmatic announcement: "There was but one mind in Christ", naturally—*cadit quaestio*. If there was but one mind in Christ, then certainly He could not have been at one and the same time the subject of knowledge and ignorance, He could not have been at once God and man. But then, the whole Gospel narrative becomes at once a mass of contradictions: contradictions which cannot be voided by resolutely shutting our eyes to one and that the main line of representation and focussing attention on the lower and less emphasized series. Thus we are brought, to say nothing more, into flagrant contradiction with the main purpose and general trend of the evangelical narrative. It is designed to set forth Jesus to us in His Divine majesty: to it He is the

manifestation of God in the flesh. To Dr. Forrest, He reveals nothing but human limitations in His life. "Confessedly, what we desire to discover is the revelation which God has been pleased to give us in Jesus Christ. We see that in certain instances Christ is represented as characterized by limitations. Of what value is it to say that while these existed for Him in one sense, they did not exist in another? The sphere in which they did *not* exist is, *ex hypothesi*, outside the range of the revelation" (pp. 55ff., p. 79). It is worth while to insist on this and similar passages. For they are not chance utterances but belong to the essence of the situation. What we have to interpret is a double series of parallel facts. The means of interpretation adopted is neglect of one whole series and exclusive validation of the other. The result is that all that is left to be said of Jesus in the days of His flesh is that He was subject to human limitations.

Let us not blink this shocking result. All that Christ was, in the days of His flesh, was, according to this conception, that limited nature whose outlook was bounded, which was accessible to temptation and was the subject of moral growth (p. 79). This was absolutely all there was to Him. Behind this there were no depths in that personality. The Scriptures tell us that God's outlook is boundless, that He is essentially perfect, that He is not tempted of evil. In what sense was this Jesus, then, who was nothing beyond and above the nature whose outlook was bounded, which suffered temptation and was the subject of moral growth—and who therefore was not in any recesses of His being perfect as God is perfect,—in what sense was this Being God? Dr. Forrest wishes to recognize Him as God. In order to recognize this Being as God, however, he must redefine Deity and in redefining it he must define it away. The ultimate difficulty of all theories of the class that he is defending is thus brought before us. Having set their hearts on a merely human Christ, and yet feeling unwilling to yield up frankly the Divine Christ of the Gospel revelation, they end by debasing the idea of God to the human level; so that in the end we lose not only our Divine Christ but God Himself. That simply is not God which is imperfect, and in process of perfecting by means of temptation. If this is all that Christ is, then Christ is not God; and Dr. Forrest continues to call Him such only by stress of old habit and by a willing delusion. Dr. Forrest seeks to make capital (pp. 94, 95) out of the consent of the humanitarian theorists with the orthodox in their perception of the absurdity of the kenotic hypothesis. If it is any comfort to him to cry out against the upper and nether mill-stones grinding together, he ought not to be denied that small comfort. It ought, however, not to seem unnatural that every consistent thinker—whether his consistency is of belief or of unbelief—should think ill of a theory which inconsistently wishes to be both at once.

We cannot illustrate here in detail the straits into which Dr. Forrest is brought by his attempt to interpret the Christ of the Gospels as a mere limited human being in His phenomenal manifestation. It admits of no doubt, for instance, that the evangelists represent Him as sharer in the whole extent of the divine knowledge, differentiated from the

prophets (with whom Dr. Forrest confuses Him, p. 7, though He never calls Himself a mere prophet) just in this,—that to the prophets God reveals some items of knowledge, while His Son shares in all He knows (Mt. xi. 28 sq.). We have lately had occasion to point this out, however (see Hastings' *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, art. "Fore-sight"), and will not here go over the ground again. Let us take the sole example we can allow ourselves, then, from another sphere—that of the Divine power which the Evangelists ascribe to Christ; but which Dr. Forrest in the interests of his theory denies to Him, insisting that He wrought His mighty works, like other instruments of God's will, only by means of the power of God graciously exerted, now and again, in His behalf. In the course of his argument he necessarily, however, comes across this phenomenon of the Scriptural representation: that Jesus in working a miracle says, "I will: be thou clean"; "I say unto thee, arise"; while His disciples say, "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth"; "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole". In face of this contrast Dr. Forrest knows nothing better to urge than this paradox: that "the emphasis which He puts on His own personality is an assertion, not of His independence of the Father, but of the entireness of His dependence upon Him"! By this he apparently hopes he will persuade us that the distinction here drawn only means that Christ was more dependent—more perfectly dependent, he would say—on an exterior power for the working of His miracles than His apostles even!

Surely no one will contend that the Son is "independent" of the Father; much less that the Mediator of the Covenant, in His covenanted work, acts "independently" of the Father. Here is only one of those "undistributed middles" which are as characteristic of Dr. Forrest's reasoning as the misplaced "only" is characteristic of his style: for the whole plausibility of his paradox here depends on the ambiguity of the use of the words "dependent" and "independent". The plain man will be slow to believe, however, that the contrast between the "I will" of Jesus and the "Jesus Christ maketh thee" of His disciples, is not a contrast between the relatively independent action of the Lord and the relatively dependent or instrumental action of the Apostles, in the matter of working miracles. It is nothing less than obvious, indeed, that the difference in the modes of statement means that the power by which the miracles of Jesus were wrought was in some high and true sense His own power, while that by which those of the Apostles were wrought was not in this high and true sense their own power. So far from it being possible to say that Jesus "was not the worker of His own miracles", we must go on to say that, according to this representation, He was the worker not only of His own but also of those of His disciples as well. The whole series,—His and theirs alike,—were His work. Is this a false testimony of the authors of the historical books of the New Testament? Jesus Christ on earth or in heaven—but whether on earth or in heaven, the same Jesus Christ incarnate—is the real source of the power by which the miracles, whether of His own or of His disciples' working, were wrought: and what is really significant of the record is that it takes pains by its "I will" and "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole",

to say this of all alike. There is no such distinction then in the minds of these writers as that which Dr. Forrest draws between the earthly and the exalted Christ, in respect to this question. Of course this is not to say that God the Father was not concerned in the working of these miracles, and that they were wrought "independently" of Him: that the Man Jesus was not conscious of resting on the Father's power, or of doing merely the Father's will: that in all His mediatorial work He did not act as the "Sent of the Father"—as His "delegate", if you will. These are deeper questions than can be touched upon in this notice: but it is surely already superabundantly evident that they are not to be lightly set aside, as if there were no profound problems here of the interrelations of the Persons of the Godhead,—by the shallow expedients at the disposal of a kenotic theory. Enough that here too, as at every other point, the kenotic theory runs precisely athwart the most emphatic deliverances of the Gospel narratives.

In the failure of the kenotic theory on which he bases his whole argument, the entire structure of Dr. Forrest's attempt to reduce the authority of our Lord in sphere and character alike, of course falls to the ground. It will scarcely do to say that God is authoritative only in the spheres of faith and conduct. It is, of course, open to Dr. Forrest to follow his Bousset and his companions, and assail the trustworthiness of the Gospel report of Christ's teaching and life. We have already seen that he exhibits a tendency here and there to find in the evangelic report the intrusion of the later reflection of the community. We cannot believe, however, that he is prepared to carry this to such lengths as, like Bousset, to disengage from the Christ of faith as presented in the evangelists a Christ of fact who was merely man, and perhaps something less than an average man; much less to such lengths, as, with Pfeiderer, to lose the real Christ altogether behind the veil of the Christ of faith. The retention of the Christ of the evangelists in any recognizable form, however, entails the retention of the Christ of authority—authority in His declarations as well as in the religious impression He made, and in His declarations in all spheres as well as in those of faith and conduct. Of this Christ, it is illegitimate to speak, as Dr. Forrest speaks of his kenotic Christ, as if He were liable to repeat in His teaching Jewish errors (p. 69), and not quite able to forecast the future in which His authority might be wrongly applied. There remains to us, of course, the whole duty of carefully weighing His words and example and of seeking to apply them only according to His will. Whatever value Dr. Forrest's book possesses to us will be found to lie in its earnest attempt to perform this work in several departments of thought and action. He has, of course, not been able in even this serious and careful discussion to place himself on a plane which is above criticism: but he has led us through a study of the relation of Christ's teaching to individual and corporate duty which is cast in a high note and cannot fail to interest every reader.

We must not neglect to say frankly before closing, nevertheless, that in the course of his discussion Dr. Forrest occasionally hints at theological positions which we cannot share and which on another occasion we

should like to traverse—such as, for example, his very defective doctrine of Providence in connection with an exaggerated doctrine of freedom (pp. 139, 140, 142, 143, 146), or his conception of the gift of the Spirit without distinction of His miraculous endowment of the Apostles and His indwelling in the people of God, or, indeed, his fundamental conception of Christianity as summed up in “the filial spirit” (pp. 153, 202). Nor would we neglect to say equally frankly that we deprecate the apparently confused way in which certain findings of modern criticism are here and there utilized, as if they stood apart item from item and did not form a part of a closed system of anti-supernaturalistic interpretation. But on none of these things can we dwell now. We shall only stay to say in a word that Dr. Forrest’s second work does not seem to us to fulfil the promise of his first one: but exhibits him as embarking upon a line of thought from advancing in which his well-wishers will heartily pray he may be saved.

Princeton, August, 1906.

B. B. WARFIELD.

THE GOSPEL IN THE GOSPELS. By WILLIAM PORCHER DU BOSE, M.A., S.T.D., Author of *The Soteriology of the New Testament*, *The Ecumenical Councils*; Professor of Exegesis in the University of the South. New York, London and Bombay: Longmans, Green & Co. 1906. 12mo.; pp. xiv, 289.

Dr. Du Bose certainly does not write for “the general”. Some of the difficulty we have experienced in following his thought in the present volume may undoubtedly be due to our not having yet given ourselves the pleasure of reading his earlier work, on *The Soteriology of the New Testament*: it is more than likely that much which has been expounded at length and with plainness in the earlier has been presupposed in the later treatise. Some of the apparent difficulty of his thought may be due to a mere trick of style, an inordinate love of antithesis and neatly contrasted phraseology, which betrays the author into many an obscurity, and not seldom into open paradox. Some of it, again, may be due to the scheme upon which the book is ordered, which involves the occupation in turn of three different and gradually rising standpoints, and obliges an effort to attain an inclusive mode of expression in which many different points of view may find room for themselves. It cannot be doubted, however, that much of it is inherent in Dr. Du Bose’s conceptions, and belongs to the type of thought of which he is an exponent. This is a type of thought which is quite alien to the ordinary mental movement of plain men. “I would describe Christianity in its largest sense”, says he, in the opening paragraph of his closing chapter (p. 274), “to be the fulfilment of God in the world through the fulfilment of the world in God. This assumes that the world is completed in man, in whom alone God is completed in the world. And so, God, the world, and man are at once completed in Jesus Christ.” Language like this is, of course, perfectly familiar. But we frankly confess our inability to attach to it any clear meaning.

The task which Dr. Du Bose has proposed to himself is to expound the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But, in this volume, not that Gospel in its