



# The Incarnation of the Eternal Word

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From *A Handbook of Revealed Theology*, 1883

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At length, "in the fulness of the times," that tremendous mystery, the incarnation, was consummated. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father " (John 1:14). Then, for the first time in the annals of the universe, the Godhead was found dwelling in a created nature, and forever and most intimately united to it. The seed of the woman had appeared, and the longings of holy men of all preceding ages were now realized.

**1. The humanity of our Lord was produced by a direct miracle.** It was born in virtue of the promise of God's grace made to man, on the ground of the existence of a covenant of redemption between the Eternal Three in One. And hence the humanity of our Lord sustained no covenant relationship to Adam, and consequently was not involved in the effects of Adam's sin. These were the terms in which the incarnation was announced to the Virgin by Gabriel "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35)

Not that Jesus was the Son of God, only because of His miraculous conception; for, in truth, the phrase, "Son of God" includes, not merely His humanity, but His Godhead. The Eternal Word was to become the child born, and the Son given. Hence, He is called "the Son" before His incarnation, because He was "foreordained before the foundation of the world" (I Pet. 1:20).

"I will declare the DECREE: the Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee" (Ps. 2:7). The title, Son of God, evidently assumes the incarnation, either as an accomplished fact, or as an eternal and unalterable purpose of Jehovah. It does not explain the mode of the relation of one person to another person in the Godhead. It has no reference to the Trinity as an abstract God, nor does it describe an essential mode of being in a particular person of the one Jehovah. The Godhead of the Messiah was no more begotten than the Godhead of the Father, or of the Holy Spirit. The jargon that has been written on the eternal generation of the divine nature of our Lord is very painful to read, and has driven many men into rank Socinianism. It is time that such absurdities were forever abandoned. For the doctrine of the eternal generation of a divine nature is more than a mystery; it is an utter absurdity. A mystery is something above reason; an absurdity is something contrary to it.

Now, eternal generation is an absurdity, because it is a contradiction in terms; for manifestly that which is eternal cannot have had a beginning, and therefore cannot have been generated. And, vice versa, that which has been generated cannot have existed from all eternity, and therefore must have begun to be at the time of its generation. Hence the two terms, "eternal generation," are mutually destructive of each other, as much so as virtuous vice, or limited infinity, or imperfect

perfection, or any other equally incongruous terms that can be put together. Who can believe in a begotten God? The very idea is monstrous, and even blasphemous! The Godhead of Christ was in no sense begotten; for the obvious reason that one of the fundamental ideas of God is that He is an uncreated Being, existing by a sublime necessity of nature. The idea of a begotten God, then, must be renounced as fraught with deadly peril to the whole orthodox faith.

Jesus Christ was indeed begotten as to His human nature, so that it is true that He who was very God was begotten, but not begotten as God. The Godhead condescended to ally itself with another nature, which was created by the miraculous power of the Holy Ghost (Luke 1:35), and therefore that Holy Being who was born of the Virgin was called the Son of God.

Hence, Jesus Christ is never called the Son of God previously to His incarnation, unless with a prospective and prophetic reference to that event. The title describes the relation of the Second Person to the Father in the covenant of redemption and in the salvation of the Church. It is an official, not an abstract name. It includes the humanity of our Lord, either as existing or as about to be.

**But it does not exclude the divine nature.** For if there was an incarnation at all, then the Being incarnated must have previously existed in some other nature. And from other sources we gather that He who was thus made flesh was the Eternal Word; a person in the adorable Godhead; the Maker of all things, the Upholder of the universe; "God over all, blessed for evermore." (Rom. 9: 5) The title, Son of God, then, as applied to our Lord, is a comprehensive description of His whole person. It proclaims Him as the God incarnate! "He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. 1:4)

**2. But to return to the miraculous conception of our Lord's humanity.** By this astonishing dispensation, the Son of man escaped all taint of sin, and was born, according to the language of Gabriel, a "holy thing" or being (Luke 1:35).

It was necessary to the acceptance of the sacrifice for our guilt, that it should be free from all blemish. This was prefigured under the law by the requirement that every priest, when ministering at God's altar, and every sacrifice offered as an atonement for sin, should be ceremonially clean.

The taint of original sin was not allowed to pass upon the man Christ Jesus. He was emphatically "without sin" (Heb. 4:15); "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26); "the Lamb of God, without blemish and without spot" (I Pet. 1:19). His conflict was with external evil, for in His nature there was none. "The Prince of this world came, and found nothing in Him" (John 14:30); i.e., nothing to suit his purpose as a tempter; for every emotion of the human soul of our Redeemer rose in instant and entire resistance to every dark suggestion that was presented by either men or devils. For "He knew no sin" (II Cor. 5:21); i.e., He never approved of sin in His thoughts or affections; and "He did no sin" (I Pet. 2:22); i.e., He never committed the act of sin. Thus the sacrifice was laid upon Jehovah's altar without a blemish! The Redeemer offered Himself without spot to God.

**3. Yet it must never be forgotten that the manhood of our Lord was a complete human nature, consisting of body, soul, and spirit.** He took the whole of our nature into union with His Godhead. The Scriptures lay special emphasis upon the assumption of flesh by our Lord. "The Word was made flesh" (John 1:14). "God was manifested in the flesh" (I Tim. 3:16). "He Himself likewise took part of flesh and blood" (Heb. 2:14), etc. But it is evident that in these passages flesh stands for human nature in its entirety. The word is used in that sense when men generally are referred to, e.g., "Thou hast given Him power over all flesh" (John 17:2); i.e., over all men. "All flesh" (i.e., all men) "had corrupted his way upon the earth" (Gen. 6:12). The reason why flesh is thus put for the whole man is obvious. The body is that part of our nature which we see, that by which we recognise a man and distinguish him from his fellows. It is the outward and visible sign of the soul which dwells within.

That our Lord did possess a human soul, which was the subject of all innocent human affections, is a doctrine of Holy Scripture. It was the human soul which spake in the never-to-be-forgotten exclamations, "Now is my soul troubled" (John 12: 27); "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38); "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matt. 27:46). This human soul thrilled, "yet without sin" (Heb. 4:5), with all the emotions of which other human souls are

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susceptible. All the pure instincts of our nature were found in the man Christ Jesus. He was susceptible of joy and sorrow, of elevation and depression, of affection and aversion, of a growth in knowledge, of support from heaven, of the pleasures of friendship, and of the sorrows of desertion.

His human nature was no phantom, as some of the earlier heretics affirmed it was. It was a true and proper man, "in all respects made like unto His brethren" with the exception of sin.

**4. In this humanity the Divine and Eternal Word dwelt, and will dwell for evermore.** The Godhead speaks through the humanity, and acts through its ministry. The omniscience of the indwelling deity beams in the glances of those eyes which are "as a flame of fire" (Rev. 1:14); and its omnipotence speaks in the tones of that voice which is "as the sound of many waters" (Rev. 1:15). Godhead and manhood are indissolubly united in the one person of the Mediator; each nature retaining its own distinct properties, the Godhead not having become human nor the humanity divine. And how gloriously both elements of our Lord's person were displayed even while He was upon earth!

At His birth we see Him a helpless babe laid in a manger, dependent upon the tender offices of His mother, and persecuted by Herod; while as an incarnate God, the stars of the firmament, the host of angels, the shepherds of Judea, and the wise men of the distant East, do Him homage. At His baptism we behold His body immersed by John in the waters of the Jordan, while His Godhead is proclaimed by His Father, speaking in an audible voice from the excellent glory. At the wedding feast of Cana He sat as a human guest at the table, and nourished His body by partaking of the viands which were placed before Him; but He proved His Godhead by exerting creative power when He turned the water into wine. On the lake of Galilee His humanity is so spent with toil that it sleeps amid the bellowing of the storm; while the Godhead rebukes the winds and the waves, and they sink into a reverential calm. In the desert the human hands broke the bread and divided the fishes, but the Godhead created the miraculous supply which fed a multitude of thousands.

At the grave of Lazarus tears of sorrow moistened His human visage, while the tones of His omnipotence shook the sheeted corpse from its sleep of corruption, and raised it to life. On the cross we behold His humanity weltering in blood, and groaning in the agonies of death; while the Godhead clothes the sun with sackcloth, rends the thick temple veil from top to bottom, shakes the solid rocks, and opens the tombs. In the rich man's sepulchre we see our Lord's humanity cold and still, the prey of death; but ere long the indwelling Godhead bursts the bonds of mortality, and raises the man Christ Jesus, a victor over the last enemy!

And this intimate union between the two natures in the person of the one Christ shall never be dissolved. For after the final judgment, and after all the elect shall have been admitted to heaven in their perfected humanity (Rev. 20 & 21), the Eternal Word will still be "the Lamb," a title which manifestly includes His humanity. Thus John describes the heavenly world in its final and unalterable state: "The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it" (Rev. 21:22). "The glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev. 21:23). Its throne is still "the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev. 22:1-3). Thus in the constitution of His person, Jesus Christ will be "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8).

**5. By assuming our nature, the Eternal Word became capable of obedience and suffering.** As abstract God, He was incapable of subjection to any higher authority, for higher authority than His own did not exist. As God He was above all law—Himself the standard of eternal righteousness and the lawgiver of the universe. He was a law unto Himself. As abstract God, too, He was impassible. His divinity could not suffer, for the very idea of misery is invincibly incongruous with the conception of God. But by being "made of a woman," our Redeemer was "made under a law" (Gal. 4:4). He became possessed of a dependent nature, which was capable of subjection to His Father's will, and was justly amenable to His authority. "He learned obedience by the things that He suffered" (Heb. 5:8). His possession of humanity, too, enabled Him to suffer and die in our stead. By this miracle of mercy He qualified Himself for the cross and the tomb. He learned to become "the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3).

**6. He stooped thus low that He might obey the law in the very nature in which it had been broken.** Man had, before the eyes of the universe, trampled upon every precept of God's law; and now by the God-man every precept of that law must be honoured and obeyed. "The seed of the woman," bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, must render the obedience

which we had refused. The particular law which man had broken was the eternal law of righteousness in its application to human duty; and manifestly this particular law could only be obeyed by one possessed of our nature, and who stood in our relations to God and to each other.

**7. By the assumption of human nature, the Saviour became competent to endure the curse of the same law.** The law consisted of two parts, the precept and the penalty. Without a penal sanction a law loses its very nature. It ceases to be a law, and becomes mere advice, which a man may observe or disregard, as he pleases, without any judicial results. A penalty in case of disobedience is essential to the very idea of a law. Hence the law of God to man has, and has ever had, its annexed penalty. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4, 20). "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Hence Jesus became a man that He might be "made a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13); and that He might be "made sin for us, though He knew no sin" (II Cor. 5:21). The curse with which man had been threatened HE became capable of enduring, by assuming man's nature.

**8. By the incarnation our Lord qualified Himself to become to us a sympathizing Saviour.** He became a man that He might be competent to sympathize with us in our griefs. He came to pass through the various stages of human life, from infancy upwards, that He might be touched with a feeling of our infirmities (Heb. 4:15). He came to taste of our every cup of sorrow, and to be "in all points tried as we are," that He might be "a merciful and faithful High Priest" (Heb. 2:17).

He was tried by poverty, for "He had not where to lay His head" (Matt. 8:10); by slander, for His enemies said He was "mad, and had a devil" (John 10:20); by flattery, for the Pharisees attempted to cajole Him (Matt. 22:16), and "the multitude sought to take Him by force and make Him a king" (John 6:15); by temptation, for on one occasion alone Jesus was forty days and forty nights tempted of the devil in a wilderness (Matt. 4:1, 2); by persecution, for He was scourged, crowned with thorns, and hung upon a cross (John 19:1, 2), and "His visage was so marred more than any man's, and His form more than the sons of men" (Isa. 53:14).

By the ingratitude of friends, for Judas Iscariot betrayed Him, and in His extremity all His disciples forsook Him and fled, while Peter "denied Him with oaths and curses" (Matt. 26); by divine desertion, for on the cross He exclaimed, "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46); by soul travail, for in His agony He groaned, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death" (Luke 22:39-46; Matt. 26:38); by the bitterness of death, for "He bowed His head and gave up the ghost" (John 19:30). Thus, whatever our trial may be, Jesus can sympathize with us; in every path of sorrow He hath been before us, and has left His own weary footprints there.

**9. By condescending to become a man, He sought to allure us to seek again the God from whom we had strayed.** His object was to bring man and God together again, to reopen intercourse between earth and heaven. Thus He veiled the insufferable splendours of His abstract deity beneath the form of a man that He might enable us to look upon the Godhead without terror. He softened down the majesty of His glory, that it might not destroy us. He sought to win our confidence to Himself, that "through Him we might have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Ephes. 2:18). He came to remove every obstacle out of the way of our communion with Jehovah, and especially to destroy that great barrier between us and our Maker—our guilt.

He appeared to shed His blood, that that "blood might cleanse us from all sin" (I John 1:7); and that, by the washing away of our sins, He might restore us to fellowship with the fountain of all good. Guilt removed, there remains no other barrier between man and God. Then God and man are at one again, and to the latter earth becomes the vestibule of heaven. And this grand reconciliation the Word became a man to effect (Col. 1:21)

**10. Jesus became a man that He might raise the Church to the highest glory possible for creatures.** Jesus stooped that He might raise us; He took our nature, that, in His own person, He might advance it to its greatest conceivable elevation, and might then assimilate that nature, as possessed by us, to the standard of His own. Conformity to the God-man Christ Jesus is presented to us in Holy Writ as the Christian's ultimate destiny. We are to "behold Him face to face" (I Cor. 13:12); are to "see Him as He is, and are to be like Him" (I John 3:2); we are to possess His image (I Cor. 15:49); are to sit with Him in His throne (Rev. 3:21); and to bear His name in our foreheads (Rev. 22:4). Our very "bodies are to be thoroughly changed, that

they may be fashioned like unto His glorified body" (Phil. 3:21). Thus in every respect, save the peculiar sense in which Christ is the God-man, will His human nature be the type and the model of ours.

The Church will be raised above angels, cherubim, seraphim, and archangels. In Christ Jesus, her "kinsman Mediator", she will attain the highest pitch of created glory and blessedness. To use the marvellous language of Holy Writ, she will be "filled with all the fulness of God" (Ephes. 3:19). She will be Jehovah's crown; "a royal diadem in the hands of her God" (Isa. 62:3).



## Christ's Advent in the Flesh

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From *The Pulpit Cyclopaedia*, 1851

*"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."* (Gal. 4:4, 5)

One of the great mysteries of our religion is the advent of the Saviour into our world. The apostle with all his learning, gifts, and inspired powers of mind, exclaimed, "Great is the mystery of godliness," &c., (1 Tim. 3:16). This illustrious event had long been predicted and promised.

The earliest intimation of divine mercy referred to it, "The seed of the woman," &c., (Gen 3:15). Jacob in his blessing on Judah's tribe had recorded, "The sceptre shall not," &c., (Gen. 49:10). Isaiah had introduced it with an exclamation of wonder, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive," &c., (Isa. 7:14), and anticipating it, he bursts forth, "Unto us a child is born," &c., (Isa. 9:6). Ages after ages rolled on, until at length, over the favored plains of Bethlehem angels hovered, and sung to the shepherds, "Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11)

Our text refers to that day, and the great event connected with it. Observe, the person sent—the period specified—the mission contemplated.

**I. THE PERSON SENT.** "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."

**1. The person was the Son of God.** Angels are sons of God, so are all saints, but Christ is the only begotten of the Father. The sonship of the Redeemer has involved a controversy which commenced very early in the Christian era, and is not yet terminated. The doctrine clearly teaches the pre-existence of Christ. He was sent by and from the Father; he came down from heaven; he had glory with the Father before, &c. It is also evident that Christ essentially partakes of the nature of Deity; that he is really divine, of one essence and glory with the Father—the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person "that he thought it not robbery," &c., (Phil. 2:6). That "he is over all, God blessed forever," &c., (Rom. 9:5). But the Son of God was sent,

**2. Enshrined in our nature.** The divine glory had dwelt in the ancient tabernacle and temple, but now it became embodied—clothed with our humanity—allied by a most inexplicable union to our nature. Hence the peculiar phraseology of the text, "made of a woman," not born in the usual way, of a woman, but "made," "the seed of the woman." "A virgin shall conceive." Let us just read the inspired account, Luke 1:35. Woman, the first in the transgression, is thus signally honored in the divine conception of the world's Redeemer. Thus, too, the conception of Christ was holy, so that he was perfectly free from all moral defilement and human depravity.

**3. He was subject to the divine law.** "Made under the law."

- a. As a man he was under the moral law; bound by those precepts of pure equity which are righteous, just, and good.
- b. As a Jew, he was under the Levitical law, and bound to observe its rites, and offerings, and sacrifices.
- c. As a surety for man he was obnoxious to the curse of the broken law, and exposed to all its inflictions of wrath. He was born under these, and lived to fulfill these, and thus became a curse for us although actually he knew no sin. As to the appearance of the Son of God, notice,

**II. THE PERIOD SPECIFIED.** "In the fulness of the time."

1. At the time selected in the exercise of God's infinite wisdom. All times and seasons were his; he knew, therefore, the best and most fitting period for the manifestation of his Son to take place.

2. **At the time predicted in the oracles of truth.** Observe the celebrated prophecy of Jacob, "The sceptre shall not depart," &c., (Gen. 49:10). Now just at the time of Christ's appearance the civil power and authority of the Jews were usurped by the Romans. They became subject to that great monarchy, and had not the power of putting criminals to death. So also, Daniel had declared that seventy weeks were determined, &c., (Dan. 9:24); so also in Haggai, "The glory of the latter house," &c., (Hag. 2:9). Now in that, Christ taught, wrought miracles, &c., and forty years afterwards it was destroyed.

3. **At the most appropriate period, for giving prominence to the Saviour's advent, to the nations of the world in general.** No other period so well adapted. Not before the flood—not in the patriarchal ages—not during the period of the barbarism which generally prevailed, except in Judea—not during the conflicts of the foul great monarchies, but in the learned Augustan age; when the world was at peace—when the evidences of Christianity could be examined by the learned of all countries—when the apostolic Jews could go forth through the known world, &c.—when the world had been prepared by the predictions, the rites, and ceremonies of the Jews, and by the general expectation which seemed universally to prevail—when all other systems had failed to make men wise, and holy, and happy. Observe in reference to the advent of Christ,

**III. THE MISSION CONTEMPLATED.**

1. **"To redeem," &c. Enlargement here is impossible.** Allow me to cite a few passages from the records of holy writ. "The Son of man came to seek," &c., (Luke 19:10); "God so loved the world," &c., (John 3:16); "This is a faithful saying," &c., (I Tim. 1:15); He came and "his own self bare our sins in his own body," &c., (I Pet. 2:24); "Suffered for sins, the just for the unjust," &c., (I Pet. 3:18).

2. **To exalt us to an adopted sonship.** By sin, we were outcasts, &c. Aliens under wrath, but being redeemed, we may return to God, and become his children, "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ," &c., (Rom. 8:17); by a believing reception of the Lord Jesus Christ, John 1:12.

**APPLICATION**

1. Are we personally interested in the blessed advent of Christ?
2. Have we realized the blessing of adoption?
3. Are we looking for his second coming?





# The Desire of All Nations

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Richard Fuller

From *The Baptist Preacher*, July 1846

"...and the desire of all nations shall come." (Haggai 2:7)

The text foretold an amazing phenomenon. It declared that the High and Lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, would be seen among sinful men; that He who from everlasting had dwelt in light unapproachable, would assume some form and make his entrance upon this globe; that the invisible and ever glorious, whom no man had seen, nor could see—the Eternal, forever concealed behind stars and suns, would veil his effulgence, and push aside those stars and suns, and come into the world. Such is the prophecy; and if this wonderful event, dimly anticipated, could agitate and transport the inmost spirit of patriarch and prophet, what should be our emotions now?

When He has come; when we have seen "the brightness of the Father's glory," (Heb. 1:3) "come forth from the Father and come into the world" (John 16:28); when He who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, has "made himself of no reputation and taken upon him the form of a servant, and been made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, has humbled himself and become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:7, 8); when we can say, "without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (I Tim 3:16); and with adoring confidence, each of us can exclaim, "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." (I Tim. 1:15)

My brethren, God, that eternal Spirit, has rent the veil and shewn himself in our midst. The Word which "in the beginning was with God, and was God, was made flesh, and dwelt among us." (John 1:14) Christ Jesus has come into the world, and "he that hath seen me," he says, "hath seen the Father." (John 14:9) And now what movements should stir our minds? In Christ, "God was manifest in the flesh." (I Tim. 3:16) He is "the image of the invisible God," (Col. 1:15) "the brightness of the Father's glory, and express image of his person." (Heb. 1:3) In his temper the character of the Deity was impersonated; in his life the attributes of the Deity were embodied; in his cross the very heart of the Deity is disclosed to our love. What a Being! Search creation through—no such object can be found for the admiring and adoring contemplations of the universe.

Having gazed upon this wonderful Being, think next of the enterprise on which he came, and the cost at which that enterprise was achieved. The enterprise! Think of that; it was the salvation of man. The devils saw him and exclaimed "what have we to do with thee?" (Luke 4:34) As if they had said thou hast not come to save us. No, they had nothing to do with him; but we have everything to do with him since he came for us men and our salvation.

The enterprise—and, then, the cost—those sufferings which destroyed his life, though they could not destroy his love,—think of these, and how are you affected? "Christ," says Peter, "hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust." (I Pet. 3:18)

Ah! Miserable sinner. From eternity had the only begotten reposed in the bosom of the Father, and now see him leaving that bosom and taking the form of a servant for you. From eternity had the fairest among ten thousand and altogether lovely been rich in the glories and hosannas of the skies, and now see him becoming poor for you;—so poor, that living he had not where to lay his head, and dying he would, but for charity, have been buried like a common malefactor, by the highway side.

Follow the adorable Jesus from scene to scene of ever deepening insult and sorrow. Trade his footsteps, marked by his own blood. Behold his sacred face swollen with tears and stripes. And, last of all, ascend mount Calvary and view there the amazing spectacle; earth and hell gloating on the gashed form of the Lord of glory; men and devils glutting their malice in the agony of the Prince of life; and all the scattered rays of vengeance which would have consumed our guilty race,

converging and beating in focal intensity upon him of whom the Eternal twice proclaimed, in a voice from heaven, "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17) After this, what are our emotions? Can we ever be cold or faithless? No, my brethren, it is impossible, unless we forget this Saviour, and lose sight of that cross on which he poured out his soul for us.

My impenitent healer, how loudly does the text speak to you; and I cannot sit down without asking, what think you of Christ? How are you treating him who came and who seeks to save you? You have heard that he is the desire of all nations; tell me is he your desire or aversion—will you receive and obey him, or are you resolved stilt to say, "Not this man, but Barabbas?" (John 18:40) Recollect, without him you can have no peace now,—your deepest, strongest wants must be unsatisfied,—the whole creation cannot make you happy. Recollect, you will soon have nothing to do but to die; then "the desire of the wicked shall perish." (Psalm 112:10) And what will become of you?

Soon the Saviour will come again, and very differently. "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." (Rev. 1:7) And then, when you call upon mountains to cover you, and abysses to shelter you, how will your present conduct appear? And what a wail will be yours when, shattering the air, and shattering your soul, that sentence shall be pronounced, "depart accursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matt. 25:41)

It is, however, to us Christians that the application of the text especially belongs at this time, and in our bosoms how many thoughts ought it to awaken. True, (oh blessed be God for this,) Jesus Christ is all our desire and all our salvation. We know him as such, and our souls do magnify the Lord. But, with the possession of this blessing, what responsibilities devolve upon us!

**My very dear brethren, is Christ the Desire of all nations?** Then why are there so many nations still ignorant of Christ? The angel declared that the tidings should be to all people. Why then have so many not heard those tidings? The Saviour's command is, "go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15) Why then have not the heralds of the gospel traversed the earth? The answer to these questions I blush to give; it is (shame on our covetousness, and the reproach of our country and of our churches) that Christians have not done and will not do their duty.

Ah! My brethren, my brethren, just now as I surveyed the cross, I pronounced it almost impossible for us to be faithless to Christ; but alas, when I turn from the cross to the conduct of Christians, I have most painfully to confess my mistake. Where is the Spirit of Christ amongst us? Upon whom has his mantle fallen, all wet with tears for the perishing? "When he saw the multitudes he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." (Matt. 9:36) How few are affected with such a sight now.

"Five hundred millions of souls" exclaimed a missionary, "are represented as being unenlightened. I cannot, if I would, give up the idea of being a missionary, while I reflect upon this vast number of my fellow-sinners who are perishing for lack of knowledge. Five hundred millions! Intrudes itself upon my mind wherever I go, and however I am employed. When I go to bed it is the last thing that occurs to my memory; if I awake in the night, it is to meditate on it alone, and in the morning it is generally the first thing that occupies my thoughts."

Nor is it only the heathen at a distance; among ourselves how many thousands of the sons of Ethiopia are stretching out their hands, and how have they been neglected. My brethren let us awake to our responsibility ere the wrath of God wake us to sleep no more, and the cry which goeth up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth attract his righteous indignation.

**Is Christ the Desire of all nations?** Then, my brethren, let us preach Christ; and let our missionaries preach Christ. We do not want philosophers, nor metaphysicians, nor even theologians, but preachers of Christ and him crucified. Nor let us fear that God will not open a great and effectual door for us, if we are willing to be co-workers with him. What am I saying? my brethren, how wide a door is already open; and if, instead of indolently crying, "there are yet four months and then cometh harvest," we would only "lift up our eyes and look on the fields," upon every side we would see them "white and ready to harvest." (John 4:35)



**Lastly, is Christ the Desire of all nations?** Then how sure is our success. True, we must expect difficulties, and it is not improbable that before the gospel conquers the earth there will be many conflicts and convulsions. But when we consider what God hath promised and done, how intent and busy is the whole Trinity in the grand scheme of salvation, what difficulty can move us?

Who can doubt that all events shall conspire to secure Emmanuel's triumph, and even the passions of the world become ministers in its conversion to God? Many of us deprecated and deplored the disruption which lately divided our churches, but the man has blind eyes who sees not already the hand of God in this; and he, amongst us, has a cold heart who has not felt a glow at the noble conduct of our brethren at the North, and is not fired with holy emulation. And thus shall it ever be, the truth shall yet bind kings in chains, and nobles in fetters of iron; the wheels of the Redeemer's chariot move not back, but shall roll on until "the Desire" shall become the delight of all nations, and shall reign over them in righteousness.

All the resources of the universe are in the hands of the ascended Jesus; to him the Father hath said, "thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;" (Psalm 45:6) and the hour hastens on, when the whole earth shall become a temple, and that temple be filled with the glory of the Lord, and echo with the praises of

"An assembly such as earth  
Saw never, such as heaven stoops down to see."

Welcome the glorious consummation! Oh months, and seasons, and years, speed your tardy flight, and usher in the blissful period, that day when from every hill and valley shall ascend clouds of incense, to return in sparkling showers of mercy; when from every human heart shall swell the angelic hymn, glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good will to men.

When the pealing chorus of a renovated world shall answer back the thundering acclamations of the skies, and every creature which is in heaven and on the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them shall say, Allelujah! the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; Worthy is the Lamb that was slain; Blessing and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen!



## The Preservation of the Infant Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

H. T. Kilpatrick  
From *The Baptist Pulpit*, 1850

It is night, and all nature sleeps. But what or who is that I see passing with hasty step, thus hid from public gaze, and the searching eye of persecution? It is a delicate female, and with a tender infant pressed to her maternal bosom, and accompanied by one lone person else, but who is she? Oh! It is Mary, the mother of Jesus! She carries in her arms the only hope of a ruined world!

Here is a strong case. Herod is out, or about to be, on the work of infant murder, and this very infant is the sole object of pursuit. In the history of man's redemption a wondrous page is here turned up to view. It would appear that this matter has now to be settled, as it were, between the Great Jehovah, and Herod, whether God's eternal purposes of salvation shall all fail, and the whole scheme of mercy be thwarted by Herod!

No! Brethren, we tell you, no! And though things appear, humanly speaking, to be thus hair-hung, as it were, yet Herod can no more murder that infant, than he can pluck the strong pillars from the throne of Jehovah. This same infant Jesus is the

incarnate God—is God as well as man—is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. (Isa. 9:6)

Now we hold it as a truth, that Herod could no more destroy God the Son, than he could destroy God the Father, contrary to the counsels of the Godhead; and that God the Son would as surely finish the great work of the atonement upon the cross, burst the bands of death and return to the Father—we say we hold these things just as certain, as that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

And we all agree that if God had seen proper, he could have destroyed ten thousand such as Herod in a moment of time. But notwithstanding all this, it was absolutely necessary that the infant Jesus should be carried to Egypt, beyond Herod's jurisdiction?

Why?

Because God commanded it to be. Because it was His will who worketh all things after the counsel of his own pleasure. Because this was one link in the great chain of God's economy of grace, and if one link be gone, the chain is broken. Because the Scriptures must be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." (Matt. 2:15)

And we might add, because God intended to teach that his purposes and sovereignty do not supersede the necessity of man's agency.



## The Grace of God and a Holy Life ---

The American Baptist Publication Society  
From *The Baptist Manual*, 1849

**T**here is in many, a strange desire of separating what God hath joined together—the grace of God and the righteousness of man. One set of persons exalt the grace of God, and speak in the loftiest terms of the gospel of Jesus Christ; but say little of the duties of man and the obedience which is required of him. As if the bare knowledge of the gospel scheme were to be substituted in the place of true holiness; or as if it were wholly unnecessary to enter into the detail of that obedience which man ought to perform. Others equally unreasonable, insist exclusively upon the importance of moral practice, and view with jealousy every attempt to give prominence to the doctrines of grace; as if a blow were thereby aimed at morality, and as if the obligation to a righteous life were thereby undermined. Both are equally in error.

The grace of God supplies a most efficacious motive to holiness; and holiness is the inseparable result of the grace of God, when it is received into the heart. The one is the means, the other the end. Can the end be answered without the means? Look at the success of those philosophising schemes of reformation which inculcated the beauty and the excellency of virtue, but applied no adequate motive to the mind. On the other hand, can the doctrines of Christianity be of any use, except as they conduce to their proper end? To allege this would be to degrade the gospel, since its superiority above every other moral system arises from its, more powerful effects in meliorating the character and conduct of those who embrace it. In perfect harmony with this view of the subject we are told in scripture, that the Son of God gave himself for us for the express purpose of redeeming us from all iniquity, and purifying unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.

In order, therefore, to acquire a just view of the Christian dispensation, we must regard a right system of faith, and a righteous and holy life as indissolubly connected. We must consider it as a vain attempt effectually to reform our conduct, unless we embrace the holy principles which Christianity inspires. And on the other hand, we must deem it unnatural, and even impious, to hold the truth in unrighteousness; to exalt the doctrines of the gospel, and to neglect the practical effects

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which these doctrines were intended to produce. Few indeed avowedly separate the doctrines of the grace of God from a righteous and holy life, but many do it practically.

Many, who will fully admit the holy influence of the gospel, yet act as if the bare reception of its truths were a kind of compensation for, at least, what they would call the lesser sins of man. Hence, with a strange inconsistency, they will say, such a person is, without doubt, a religious man, but he is passionate. Another is exceedingly pious, but he is sullen and morose. A third is very devout but he is worldly. Is it not plain that a separation is here made between religion and its practical influence? It is supposed that a man can be religious, and yet not gentle; pious, and yet not benevolent; devout, and yet not detached from the world.

In the same inconsistent manner do multitudes reason, who are religious on the Sunday, while they are wholly engrossed with the world through the week. Who can attend with the same punctuality the church and the theatre; who would not on any account neglect the preaching of the gospel, but in their families discover nothing of its benign influence; who very carefully settle the articles of their faith, and hold them strenuously; but take little pains to regulate their temper, evidently over-looking that necessary duty, as if it were no essential branch of religion. In a word, we are chargeable with the same inconsistency whenever the holy doctrines which we believe are not embraced as principles of action, influencing and regulating our whole conduct, teaching us how to feel, to act, to suffer, in our families, in our shops, in our retirements, in out converse with the world; in short, in all the various circumstances of life.

The inconsistency which I have been condemning is greatly supported by our resting in general ideas of religion without entering minutely into the details of its duties; and by our being satisfied with approving generally of its doctrines without a particular application of them to our own cases and circumstances. On the other hand, nothing shows more decidedly a truly upright spirit than the full and complete manner in which religion is applied, with distinctness and particularity, to a man's own case, carried through ad the business of life, and made to regulate every part of the conduct. It is an easy thing to express an admiration of the scriptures, to speak in high terms of an excellent treatise on religion, or to be loud in commendation of a pious discourse.

But the only solid proof which we can give in either case of cordial approbation, consists in the close and faithful application of what we have read or heard to our own consciences; in the alteration we are induced to make in those parts of our temper and conduct which have been shown to be wrong; and in the abiding nature of the effects which, through the blessing of God, have been produced in us. Herod knew that John was a just and holy man; he heard him gladly and did many things because of him. But when John plainly applied his preaching to Herod's own case, and said it is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife, then the insincerity of his heart appeared; he could not bear the application of the doctrine which he had previously professed to approve; and he put John to death.

The true remedy for this evil is the practice of close and diligent and daily self-examination, and the habit, not merely of reading the scriptures and hearing sermons, but of applying both, with fidelity, to our own circumstances. The words of a particular text are soon repeated; the propriety of the conduct it inculcates is easily acknowledged. But to examine its contents in detail, and to consider with attention, and with a view to ourselves, the temper and the practice which it enjoins, is a work of no small labour and self-denial. I trust that none will think me presumptuous, if with a view of lessening the difficulty, I should venture to propose a few questions which every individual may advantageously put to himself.

We acknowledge that man is a sinful and guilty creature, and that naturally his heart is "enmity against God." (Rom. 8:7) But are we conformably to this doctrine resisting that desire which we feel to be independent of God? And are we striving to bring every rebellious thought into subjection to the rules of his holy word? Do we feel that there is in ourselves an evil heart of unbelief which leads us to depart from God? And are we, therefore, afraid of loving other things better than God, of trusting to human support rather than to him, of honouring man more than God, and of valuing the world more than his favour?

Is it our grief that we have hitherto served and obeyed God so imperfectly; and is it our serious wish and our sincere endeavour to honour him for the future, by setting him ever before our eyes, by making his will the rule of our actions, and

his glory our end? What pains then are we taking to do this? And wherein do we show that we are in earnest about it? Unless we are daily and earnestly engaged in resisting and subduing that enmity against God, his law, government, and authority, which so much prevails in all by nature; what proof can we have of being right in our faith? Too many there are who, wholly selfish in their views and desires, seeking no farther to serve God than they think will be sufficient to prevent their incurring the dreadful effects of his displeasure.

But are these true Christians? Certainly not. The object of the gospel is to teach us to strive against sin, to love God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, and to make his glory our aim in all that we do. This will readily be acknowledged. But let me ask, is it our unvarying endeavour to exercise that habitual regard to God which will influence us in all we say, do, or think? Does everything bow in our esteem to the will and command of God? Do we adopt those principles and live that kind of life which we know God will approve; or is there nothing in either which we can alter for his sake? Do we labour to maintain in our minds a lively sense of his presence? Do we exercise a constant submission to his will, a constant dependence on his power, wisdom, and goodness?

Are we habitually thanking him for the mercies we enjoy, ascribing them only to his free and unmerited grace in Christ Jesus; and are we striving by some more substantial proofs than words to testify our gratitude to him? In our troubles, do we look to him alone for deliverance, resigning ourselves to his holy will, and even bearing affliction cheerfully for his sake? Do we value him as our chief good; as the only proper object of our happiness? And do we prove that we do so by preferring no gratification to his favour, by making every requisite sacrifice, and renouncing every evil habit, readily, for his sake? In short, do we set him before us as the witness of our actions, the judge of our conduct, the end of all that we do?

But let me now request my readers to take another view of the subject. They acknowledge, I doubt not, that this is a sinful world, and that therefore a Christian is not to be of the world even as Christ is not of the world, but is to make it his study to "mortify [his] members which are upon the earth fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for the which thing's sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." (Col 3:5, 6)

Now allow me to inquire, do we really believe this doctrine? Let us bring the matter to a point with our consciences. Are we renouncing the spirit of that world, whose friendship is represented as enmity against God? Are we crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts? Are we engaged in, a secret warfare with all our evil inclinations, and labouring to bring them into subjection, that our hearts may be as a temple sacred only to Christ? If this is the case, how do we show it? Are we daily examining ourselves? With what perverse dispositions are we maintaining this struggle? Are we as much and as earnestly engaged in subduing ourselves, as in pursuing honour, wealth, or worldly comfort? In what do we deny ourselves?

I ask not what open and public sacrifices we are making—vanity may prompt to these; nor whether we are imposing penances on ourselves—that is comparatively an easy task. But are we mortifying our vanity, curbing our pride, subduing our self-will, renouncing our love of consequence and power, giving up our own pleasure; and especially are we resisting our besetting sin? Many of the commandments of God, let it be remembered, it is both easy and creditable to fulfill. Herod himself seems to have executed these, but he would not give up the gratification of a criminal passion, from regard to those doctrines of which he acknowledged, generally, the truth.

The due reception of the gospel farther implies the attainment of a meek and quiet spirit. Do we then control our anger? Is the power of religion clearly visible in the restraint which we put upon those ebullitions of passion, and expressions of peevishness, which would otherwise break forth? Can we govern ourselves under provocation? If others are angry with us, are we calm with them? But perhaps someone may say, "My passion is soon over." Yes, this is natural to you, but why was it not restrained by religion? "But has religion," it may be asked, "anything to do with our petty quarrels and resentments, which are soon excited and soon allayed?" Yes, for religion consists in restraining these from a regard to God, and reverence to his law. True religion is an habitual restraint on every evil temper; a powerful principle which keeps under and subdues every other which stands opposed to it. It is a principle derived from God, and it should be exercised in the resemblance of him who was meek and lowly in heart, and who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered, threatened not.

Then as to covetousness: are our desires of worldly things moderate? Are we contented with our present station, or are we impatiently striving to be delivered from its difficulties? Are we apt to be cast down when we meet with disappointment, and easily elated by worldly success? Are we making the wealth or the happiness of this world our principal objects; or are these wholly subordinate to religion? In a word, are we more anxious to possess the favour of God and his peace in our souls, than to possess any earthly treasures? Religion, it is true, does not require that we should relax in the just and proper duties of our calling, or be less diligent, industrious, and frugal than others; but then, if we are living as men whose conversation is in heaven, and whose hearts are chiefly set on things above. We shall pursue our business with far less eagerness than others do: we shall be far more anxious that our children should be holy than that they should be rich. Our children themselves should be able to perceive that it would make us more happy to see them religious than accomplished or rich.

I would further ask, what it is from which we derive our pleasures? Knowing how impure and polluting many of the sources of earthly pleasure are, and how apt to draw away our hearts from God; are we so indifferent to them, as to renounce them entirely whenever the interests of our souls require it? Are our pleasures derived from other and purer sources, sources pointed out and sanctioned by the law of God, which in this, as in every other particular ought to be our guide and director? Do we consider eating and drinking as principal sources of gratification, or do we regard them in their true light? As necessary indeed to the support of our bodies, but at the same time as liable to become instruments of temptation, and hindrances to a holy and spiritual life, and therefore requiring to be regulated by the rules of strict temperance?

Thus also are we to guard against the inordinate love of an earthly object. We are to beware lest we should love even a wife, a husband, or a child, to such a degree, as to forget that God requires the chief place in our affections. In short, we must be habitually employed, would we really be Christians, in watching over and subduing every evil propensity; so that all the thoughts of our hearts may be brought into subjection to the will of God. To hear the gospel preached, to acknowledge its truth, to enjoy a measure of its comforts, is but a small thing. The essential business of religion consists much more in the secret warfare which I have described; in carrying our knowledge into practice, and regulating by it our daily conduct.

There is a class of duties which still remains to be noticed. I mean the duties of justice between man and man. The law of God with respect to these is, that we should do unto others as we would they should do unto us; nay more, that we should seek our neighbour's welfare as truly as our own, and some points even in preference to our own. Now how are we acting in this respect? We acknowledge the rule — are we following it? Can we withstand the temptation of profiting by the ignorance or carelessness of our neighbour? Shall we be able to say at the Day of Judgment, "It has been my rule in life to take no advantage of another"? There will be daily occasions of exercising the principle of true righteousness, if we are influenced by it. It will lead us to judge favourably of our neighbour's actions, and to defend him when unjustly accused; to rejoice in his prosperity, to sympathise in his distress, to supply his wants as far as we are able; and, above all, it will teach us to promote the welfare of his soul. There is nothing, perhaps, in which men are apt so much to pride themselves as in the discharge of their duty to their neighbour; and yet when tried by the word of God, there is nothing in which they are generally more deficient.

If any one of my readers should object to this paper as legal, and as manifesting an ignorance of the grace of the gospel. I would entreat him to peruse the second chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to Titus. "Speak thou," says the venerable apostle, "the things which become sound doctrine." (Titus 2:1) But what were the things becoming sound doctrine respecting which Titus was instructed to preach? They were the distinct and particular duties of aged men and aged women, of young women and young men, of servants and subjects. We see then how practical the preaching of Titus was required to be, and how particular also; not merely dwelling in generals, as too many are apt to do, and recommending holiness in a loose and vague way; but entering into the detail of the tempers which his hearers ought to possess, of the duties which they ought to practise, of the sins they ought to avoid: bringing religion home to their families and extending its influence to the ordinary business of life: regulating their whole conduct in such a manner as to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, and to command the admiration even of heathens.

And to confirm this view of the matter, the apostle states it to be the very design of the gospel to produce in all men such a conduct as he had recommended. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that,

denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. (Titus 2:11-13)



## Strange Gods and Their Worship ---

G. Winfred Hervey

From *The Story of Baptist Missions in Foreign Lands*, 1884

**T**he care of the Brahmins in preserving the lives of certain animals is not dictated by humane tenderness, but by religious convictions and the exigencies of their ceremonials. The annals of martyrdom afford the best illustrations of the atrocity of the Brahmins, while meeting the demands of their ritualism.

The cruelty and inhumanity of the Hindu worship are illustrated not only by the custom of immolating widows, but in the worship of Kali, the goddess of robbery and murder. One of the most celebrated temples in India is the temple of Kali, about three miles from Calcutta, at Kali Ghat.

Kali, according to the Hindu belief, is the wife of the third god of the triad, Shiva, the great Destroyer. She is variously represented. Sometimes she is pictured as a woman of dark blue color, in the act of trampling under her feet her prostrate and supplicating husband. She holds the bloody head of a giant in one hand, and in the other an exterminating sword.

Her lips, eyebrows and breast are stained with the blood of her victims, whom she is supposed to devour by thousands. The ornaments of her ears are composed of human carcasses; the girdle around her waist consists of the bloody hands of giants slain by her in single combat. Her necklace, which hangs down to her knees, is composed of their skulls. Sometimes she is represented on a lion. Then she is painted yellow and dressed in red clothes.

In some districts in Bengal she is depicted as holding her half-severed head in her left hand, with streams of blood gushing from the throat into the month. This is intended to show her thirst for blood; for on one occasion, as the sacred legend tells us, being unable to procure any of the giants for her prey, in order to quench her thirst, she cut her own throat, that the blood issuing from thence might spout into her mouth.

According to one of the Brahminical books, the *Kolika Purana*, the blood of different creatures has different degrees of virtue in slacking her thirst. The blood of a fish satisfies her one month; the blood of a wild boar or antelope twelve years; the blood of a buffalo or tiger, one hundred; of a lion, a reindeer or of a man, a thousand; the blood of three men slain in sacrifice, a hundred thousand years.

Formerly many human victims were offered in sacrifice to this goddess. Mr. Caleb Wright, who travelled in India some forty years since, says that during his sojourn in Calcutta a human victim was offered up at a temple of Kali in the immediate vicinity of the town.

That murderous class of robbers, the Thugs, who make a conscience of plunder and assassination, believe that their profession is of divine origin, and instituted by Kali. In some of the festivals of this goddess, as that of the Durga, the Brahmins of the highest caste, or holy teachers, take no active part, leaving its ceremonials to be performed by their servants of the Sudra caste. But they have composed its ritual and the legends that popularize it. They likewise contribute largely towards the expense of it, and countenance everything as applauding spectators.



The worship of Juggernaut ("King of the World") was once attended with the annual loss of many lives. The great temple of the god is at Puri, and in the days of Dr. Carey it was computed that a hundred and twenty thousand lives were in some years lost by the fatigues and privations to which the pilgrims were exposed in their long journeys. Twelve festivals were celebrated every year. The roads leading to Puri are in many places lined with the bones of pilgrims, while dogs and vultures are seen here and there devouring the flesh of such as have recently died. Mr. Lacey informed the traveller, Mr. Caleb Wright, that in 1825 he counted ninety dead bodies in one place, and his colleague at the same time counted one hundred and forty more in another place. The number that once cast themselves under the wheels of the towering car has never, so far as we know, been estimated.

Dr. Buchanan gives an account of one instance in which it was not a transport of wild fanaticism, but a calm determination, that must have nerved the victim to sacrifice his life. In this case, the pilgrim announced to the throng that he was ready to offer himself: "He laid himself down on his face in the track of the towering car, with his arms stretched forward. The multitude pressed round him, leaving the space clear, and he was crushed to death by the wheels of the tower. A shout of joy was raised to the god; he is said to smile when such a libation of blood is made. The people threw cowries, or small pieces of money, upon the body of the victim, in approbation of the deed."

The interior of the temple of Juggernaut at Puree, like that of Mahomet at Mecca, cannot be safely entered except by the faithful. The only foreigner who ever saw the inside of this temple was an English officer, about sixty years ago. He gained admission by painting and dressing himself like a native. When the Brahmins found out that their holy place had thus been defiled, they raised a mob and so threatened the English residents of Puri that they all fled for their lives. Suspecting, however, their pursuers to be more avaricious than revengeful, they tried the artifice that vanquished Atalanta. They strewed the way with pieces of silver, and while the natives stopped to pick them up, made good their escape.

But the sanctity of this place is ceremonial, and not moral. In two of the three temples placed in juxtaposition, the deva dasi, or dancing girls, devoted alike to Juggernaut and to vice, display their professional skill for the amusement of the idols that are enthroned in the largest of the three. It is the old story of the partnership of Cruelty and Lust told once more.

The sacrifice of infants to the Ganges was once annually made at the great festival called Gunga Saugor, the name of an island at the mouth of the Ganges. The infants were cast into the water either in obedience to some vow or in the hope of securing some future blessing. When the Serampore brethren commenced their mission in India, this festival was kept with the cruel rite of casting infants into the river, usually to be devoured by alligators. The influence of the mission was brought to bear on the English officials, but, for many years, nothing was done to put down this species of religious murder. At length, however, the religion of Jesus gained the victory. The festival is still held in January, but infanticide is no longer permitted. Upon the occasion of the annual return of the Gunga Saugor, a British officer with fifty native soldiers (Sepoys) is stationed here to prevent these human sacrifices.

While Dr. Thomas was residing at Maids, in the early years of the Baptist mission, an infant that had been exposed in a basket, suspended from the branch of a tree, fell, or rolled, out on the ground, and was immediately seized by a jackal. The Doctor happened to pass that way just in time to prevent the child from being devoured. He had the satisfaction of presenting it alive to its mother. At another time, while passing under the same tree, he found a basket suspended from its branches containing the skeleton of an infant, the flesh having been devoured by white ants. In such cases, the infant is generally visited and fed by its mother for three days. Then, if it be not devoured by ants or birds of prey, nor die through exposure to the cold or the rain, it is afterwards taken home. This cruel custom is said to grow out of the belief that when a child is sickly it must be under the influence of some evil spirit, to appease the wrath of whom the mother suspends it in a basket from the limb of the tree in which the evil spirit is supposed to reside.

Some missionaries, whose powers and spheres of observation are very limited, come home and tell us that they never saw anything of the kind, and that previous accounts must be exaggerated. But writers who would evidently show us the bright side of Hindu life frankly admit that infanticide is still committed in many parts of India. They go too far, however, when they assert that the priests never sanctioned the abominable practice. They forget the Gunga Saugor. Very sensibly do they account for many instances of infanticide. They are partly due to the enormous cost of wedding feasts, the mistaken notion

that the daughters are disgraced if they remain husbandless, and the forbidding of widows to marry again. The degradation of women by polygamy and servitude lends plausibility to apologies for murdering them in infancy.

The disgraceful truth must be told, that the East India Company set itself in practical opposition to the progress of Christianity in Hindustan. Being a great mercantile corporation, like Venice when in full blossom, it persecuted the true servants of God, while it patronized superstition and vice. At one time Birmingham numbered among its inhabitants men unprincipled enough to manufacture idols to send out to India.

We never learned that the ships of the honorable Company were forbidden to transport them. And in India itself, Government papers, as orders and other documents, were printed so as to commence with an invocation to Ganesa, the God of Wisdom, whose red images have the head of a white elephant, with a rat at his feet, on which it is said to perform its journeys.

Worship of Kali, the goddess of robbers and murderers, was formerly patronized by the Company. In Ward's journal we find the following record. "Last week a deputation of the Government went in procession to Kali Ghat and made a thank-offering to this goddess of the Hindus, in the name of the Company, for the success which the English had lately obtained in this country. Five thousand rupees were offered. Several thousand natives witnessed the English presenting their offerings to this idol."

And while the Government derived a large revenue from its tax on the pilgrims to pagan temples and idols, it made very liberal grants to some of the temples of idolatry. As late as 1834, one holy place in Poona received 3,600 rupees per annum; another, 25,000; Trimbeck, 6,000; Jejury, 40,000. For many years after the Serampore brethren commenced their work, the East India Company patronized the Hindu idolatries so liberally and in so many forms that millions of the ignorant natives had good reason to believe that their British conquerors and governors rendered sincere homage to their cruel and abominable religion.

The Serampore brethren attacked the Hindu religion in the way that is required by the Great Commission—by preaching the Gospel and by teaching the commands of Christ. Robertson of Brighton, and some of his disciples, would have us pursue a different course. They would require us first to get at the core of Hinduism and see what we discover there that is in substantial unity with the true faith. Having thus found out the valuable parts of the Hindu system, we are to apply ourselves to the work of inducing the poor idolater to make use of these parts in building up the new and better system that is found in the religion of Christ.

This is a very plausible theory. St. Paul applied it when he preached his famous sermon at Athens, but not with very remarkable success. A few were indeed converted, but of the mass of his audience some mocked, and others said, "We will hear thee again of this matter." (Acts 17:32) It is well worthy of notice that the great Apostle to the Gentiles could not found a church in Athens. The students of comparative religion, in their search after the vital core or germ of a system of idolatry or superstition, too frequently miss their way. We commend to them the profound saying of Pascal: "We think ourselves much more capable of reaching the centre of things, than of grasping the circumference. But it does not require less capacity to trace something down to nothing than up to totality. The capacity in either case must be infinite."

The most successful missionaries in all lands have found that whenever they preached the atonement of Jesus, and the love of the Father in giving His Son to die as our propitiatory sacrifice, the regenerating energies of the Holy Spirit have attended the message. Then the converts from the most venerable and most fascinating superstitions have exclaimed, "What have we to do any more with idols?"

