

Christ, In the Hebrew Epistle

Rev. F. A. Dunlop

The third verse of the first chapter carries us further in our study of Christ. In this verse, Christ is presented as "the brightness of the Father's glory"; "the express image of His Person." This corresponds with Paul's word, in Colossians 2:9, "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The Holy Spirit intended that we should understand Christ to be "very God of very God." In Christ, God, who is invisible Spirit, was revealed. Paul refers to Christ as "the image of the invisible God." Col. 1:15.

The booklet I referred to in a previous article, written by Elder Bruce R. McConkie, of The Church of Jesus Christ, God, who is invisible Spirit, was revealed. Paul in form like God, and God is in form like man. Both have size and dimensions. Both have a body." Again, I quote, "And we have already seen that the resurrected Lord with His tangible body of flesh and bones was in the express image of the person of the Father who also had a tangible body of flesh and bones, one in which spirit and body are inseparably connected. So man is body and spirit; Christ is body and spirit; and God is body and spirit."

Mr. McConkie goes to the Genesis account of Adam's creation for this position. "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him." These words are taken literally, which runs us into much difficulty, and dangerous error. If we take these words literally we make God both male and female. The record reads: "In the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." Now, unless Adam and Eve were identical in form (and I am inclined to believe they were not) He could not be like both. However, if we take these words literally we are driven to this conclusion.

To take such a position is to encounter difficulty with God's omnipresence—and in fact Mr. McConkie has done this very thing. He writes, "Men sometimes speak of the omnipresence of God as though God himself filled the immensity of space and was everywhere present. This is an utterly false and pagan notion. God is a personal being who is and can be in but one place at one time." Mr. McConkie should read carefully Psalm 139. He should endeavor to make his idea harmonize with Isaiah 57:15, "For thus saith the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity." The title, "I am," can only be understood in the light of God's omnipresence. It suggests that anytime, anywhere in eternity, God stands in the immediate present. He is the "I am" of the Past, Present, and Future.

We do not doubt that God accommodates Himself to the circumstances and sometimes assumes a form. He appeared to Moses in the "burning bush"; He appeared to Israel in the "cloudy pillar"; but God is Spirit. Paul speaks of Him as the "Invisible God." John made this statement concerning the Father: "No man hath seen God at any time." John 1:18. His omnipresence is as mysterious as is His omnipotence, but in Him "we live and move and have our being." Bishop Harold Browne says, "The image and likeness consisted in that man was created intelligent, immortal, personal, with power of forethought and full choice, and at the same time pure, holy, and undefiled." When Paul would restore that image in the work of regeneration, he speaks of "righteousness and true holiness." God is Spirit, eternal, invisible, omnipresent, so teaches the Bible, so teach the great Creeds of the Church. Let no man be misled by lesser authority.

The King's Highway

THE LAYMAN LOOKS AT THE PULPIT

By Nelson Bell in "Preachers' Magazine"

It is Sunday morning and we sit in the sanctuary, quietly and restfully. The setting is of minor importance. Whether severe in simplicity or cathedral-like in beauty, no aesthetic or worshipful atmosphere can, of itself, supply the spiritual needs of mankind.

Only two kinds of people occupy the pews . . . those who have a saving relationship with Jesus Christ, and those who have not.

There are some in the pew today who feel that preaching has tended to complicate rather than to simplify the gospel message. By dealing so much with the fringe results of sin in disordered lives, it has obscured the basic need of every human heart.

The laymen needs Biblical teaching, and the average layman wants it. He needs a dynamic for daily living, not simply an ethic a little loftier than his own high aspirations. He needs as much to be told where he can get the power to do the thing he knows to be right as to be told what to do.

Looking over the Sunday morning congregation, made up of the redeemed and the unredeemed, we are moved to reflection. Are not hundreds of sermons wasted, at least in part, because they are instructing non-Christians how to act like Christians?

The pew serves no good purpose when it contributes to an excessive sense either of ministerial insecurity or of security. Some occupants of the pew criticize their pastor, no matter how well he preaches or how faithfully he serves them. Others would gush over the preacher if he got up and repeated a nursery rhyme in a pleasing tone with soft modulation.

The laymen has a right to expect certain things from the pulpit. We would suggest five: simplicity, authority, power, urgency, and opportunity for a decision.

Editor's Note:—This article is an excerpt from an editorial appearing in "Christianity Today." It was written by the executive editor of that new magazine on the evangelical front.

BEARING THE LORD'S BURDEN

"Was there ever a time when the burden of the Lord was not too heavy for the man who had to bear it? It is of the very nature of the Lord's burden that it should be so. The shoulders of Atlas are unable to carry it. The hands of Moses that dropped in weariness, the cry of Elijah, 'I, even I only am left,' the Figure that collapsed in the Garden of Gethsemane, these are the hands, that is the cry, that is the figure of every man who has ever dared to take upon himself the burden of the Lord. Be assured that if your burden affects you otherwise, if there never comes a time when it seems beyond you and absolutely crushing, then it is not the Lord's burden that you carry. But just because the burden is the Lord's, it is not you alone that carry it. The Lord carries it with you. Take the Lord's burden upon you and you shall find that the strength of the whole universe is in you to help you bear it. Yes, we do get help. If it were not for that we should all break down."

From a lecture by Dr. L. P. Jacks given to the Yale Divinity school in the Lyman Beecher lectures on preaching. Sent in by Rev. H. E. Mullen.

"Praying for missionaries by name is a means of drawing out our interest toward the foreign fields."