

Present Truth

A magazine dedicated
to the restoration
of New Testament Christianity
in this generation

Sola Gratia Solely by Grace
Solo Christo Solely by Christ
Sola Fide Solely by Faith

FEBRUARY 1977
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THEOLOGY AND BODY

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Present Truth

Present Truth is a magazine dedicated to the restoration of New Testament Christianity and committed to upholding the great Reformation principle of justification by faith.

Editor: Robert D. Brinsmead
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Publishers: A group of Christian scholars and businessmen without denominational sponsorship who have united to uphold the objective gospel amid the present deluge of religious subjectivism. Multitudes are being caught up in the popular and frantic effort to find satisfaction in some sort of religious experience. *Present Truth* is a voice in this barren wilderness of groveling internalism, a voice which boldly proclaims those great principles upon which the Reformation was founded—namely:

1. *Sola gratia.* God's saving activity outside of us in the person of Jesus Christ is the sole *ground* of our salvation.
2. *Solo Christo.* Christ's doing and dying on our behalf is the sole *basis* of our acceptance and continued fellowship with God.
3. *Sola fide.* The Holy Spirit's gift of faith through the hearing of this objective, historical gospel is the sole *means* whereby Christ's substitutionary life and death are imputed to us for justification unto life eternal. He who is thus justified by faith and filled with God's Spirit will glory only in Christ's cross and make God's saving work in Christ the central affirmation of his Christian witness. Though he will be careful to obey God and please Him in all things, he will continue to repent rather than glory in the feeble attainments of his own Spirit-filled life.
4. *Sola Scriptura.* The Bible and the Bible only is the Christian's objective and infallible rule of faith and practice, alone sufficient that he may "be established in the present truth" (2 Peter 1:12). It is the God-ordained account of and witness to the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Present Truth is not only committed to the task of upholding these founding principles of the Reformation, but it believes that we today must allow these principles to call all that we do and all that we teach into question. These principles call all traditions into question and all statements about the truth into question—even the ones set forth in this magazine. Our vision is a new Reformation that will recover what the Reformers bequeathed us and complete the restoration they so nobly began.

Present Truth is committed to the time-honored verities of the Christian faith—such as the Trinity, deity of Christ, virgin birth, blood atonement, bodily resurrection and ascension, second coming, final judgment, justification by faith alone, sanctification through the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit, and glorification at Christ's soon return.

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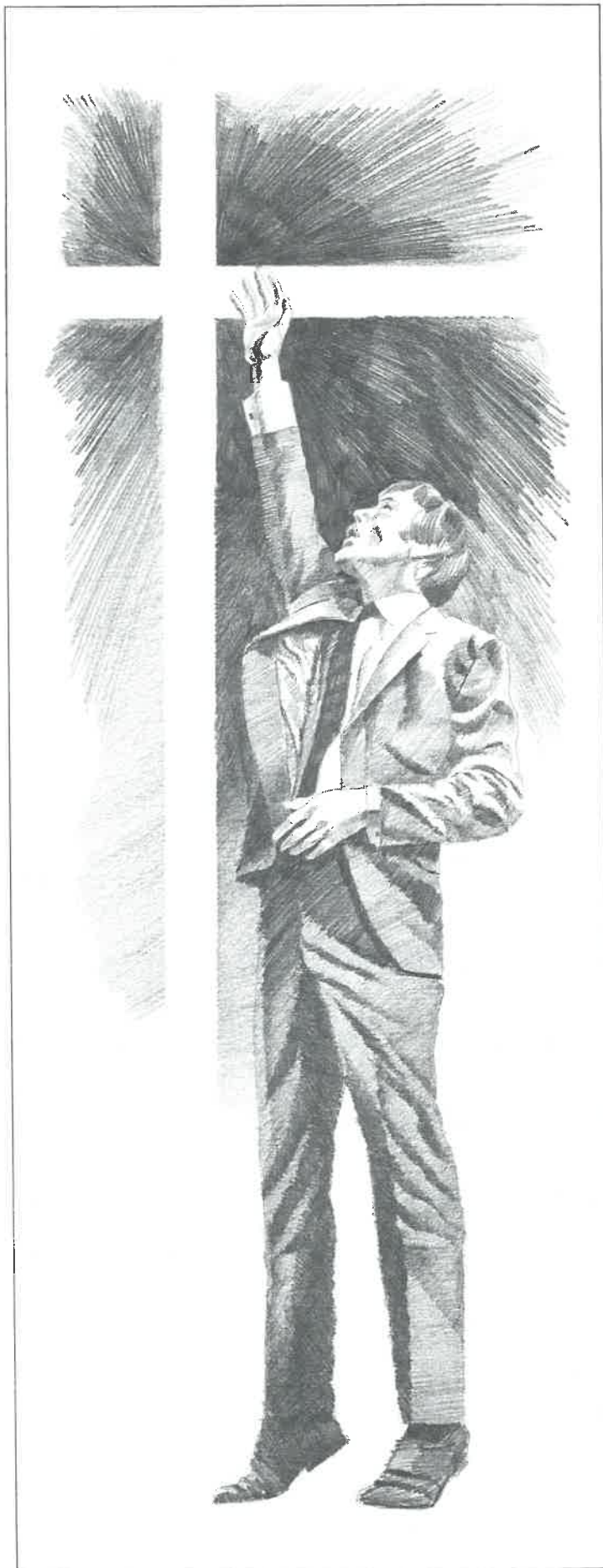
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To Contributors: Since truth is above the preferences and prejudices of any denomination, the editors welcome contributions from anyone and will judge them on their merit alone. If you wish a manuscript returned, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Moving? Please send your change of address four weeks in advance. Be sure to include both your old and new address.

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Letters

Address Letters to *Present Truth*,
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Prospective Pastor

Sir / I am writing to you for advice because I am in agreement with much that I have read in *Present Truth*. I am an evangelical seminary graduate. I hold to the Augsburg Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism. My doctrine on the way of salvation is Lutheran, and my view of the sacraments is the Reformed faith of the Heidelberg. The result is that I am not at home in most Fundamental churches because of millennialism, their view of the sacraments, and a plan of salvation that centers in man's "free will" decision. I am unacceptable to Lutherans because I do not accept "oral eating." While I accept an election to grace of individuals, not based on foreknowledge of man's use of grace, I also affirm that God truly desires the salvation of all men and that, with this intent, He sent Jesus Christ as a perfect Substitute in His life and death, reconciling the whole world to God. The gospel announces this perfect reconciliation as the full and free pardon of a condemned mankind. The preaching of the law prepares sinners for justification by showing them their need of a Saviour. In faith a sinner is assured of God's pardon in the cross of Christ. And it is this faith that is imputed for righteousness, declared righteous—legal and not inherent. Being righteous by faith, we have peace with God and a certain assurance of eternal life. For this reason I am in disagreement with Puritan Calvinism. The result of my confession is that I do not have a church association to identify with. I attend a Missouri Synod Lutheran church but never receive communion.

I would like to serve as a pastor in an evangelical church, but I do not know where I can find a church. I am not a neo-evangelical desiring to infiltrate a liberal denomination but wish to avoid fellowship with liberals. I will soon investigate the Reformed bodies, but I fear that they will want an allegiance to the Canons of Dort, which I cannot give.

So, where do I turn? In your reading and travels maybe you know of a group of believers or church association that I can identify with and possibly serve as a pastor.

Sinners are saved by faith alone and not by assent to a full doctrinal system. But a preacher must affirm a full doctrinal system loyal to the Scripture alone. I am persuaded that in the verbal plenary inspired Scripture God has clearly revealed that system of doctrine confessed in the Augsburg and the Heidelberg.

I feel that your periodical is possibly the

most important for the church of Christ today, and I appreciate its witness to the pure gospel. I will appreciate any advice you may be able to offer.

Paul V. Oinonen
178 Beech St.
Manchester, NY 03103

We are publishing Mr. Oinonen's full address in case any of our readers would like to contact him in reference to his inquiry.—Ed.

Congratulations

Sir / I really appreciated the "Letters" section in your November, 1976, issue. Congratulations for having the courage to print all those "Rocks and Bouquets": "Too Far," "Far Short," "Heresy!" etc. Why can't supposedly mature and educated Christians really grow up and "agree to disagree but be agreeable about it"!

Why must Christians be so uncivilized and quick to disagree so impolitely one with another? Isn't it often a case of the "arrogance of ignorance" and the "quickness to judge of the uninformed"?

All attempts at pigeon-holing God or boxing in His words to fit a particular mold are doomed to failure.

Cleo Halle
Evangelist
Hawaii

Another Look

Sir / I write to express my appreciation for the November, 1976, issue of *Present Truth* on the subject of biblical covenants. I always appreciate your magazine and read it thoroughly. For sure, I do not always agree with you, but neither do I know of any other publication that I am in complete agreement with. I will say that your publication is always challenging and well written, and I perceive an earnest desire on your part to be true to God's Word. Probably, more than any other publication available today, it helps one to form a "systematic theology" and also causes those who have developed or accepted a rigid "systematic theology" to take another look.

Darrell Stout
Minister
Indiana

Poor Scholarship

Sir / On page 53 of your November, 1976,

issue you make statements that I have never heard any responsible scholar make in all of my reading and study. I fear that you have taken what dispensationalists teach and misinterpreted it. And on top of that, you do not reveal and document any of your sources for this view that dispensationalists supposedly teach. This, in my mind, is poor scholarship.

Dispensationalism teaches that the believer today is not bound to keep the Jewish law. Nowhere does the dispensationalist say that the believer is not obligated to obey the precepts (laws, if you please) that are taught in the Scripture. True, the dispensationalist does say that the Holy Spirit bears a different relationship to the believer today than He did in the Old Testament period (a point which you might not agree with, although John 14:17 seems to make some distinction), but this does not mean that we feel we have the Spirit leading us and we pay no attention to the biblical law. We feel we have the Spirit's power in our lives to help us obey.

I feel that you misunderstand what dispensationalists teach. I do wish that you had revealed your source so that the statement could have been evaluated in the author's original context. You seem to say that dispensationalism can be subjective and mystical and lead away from obedience to the Bible because of a reliance upon the Spirit. This is simply inaccurate. You are misunderstanding the dispensational view of the law. I can tolerate theological disagreement, but please be fair!

Peter C. Bogert
Pastor
New Jersey

How Long?

Sir / Regarding your November, 1976, issue on "Covenant": How long does it take you to get the obvious message that much of the New Testament is an apologetic against Judaism and its law and its lack of a need for a God. You've spent all your time trying to reconcile God's-grace-by-faith and law. This issue proves it doesn't work.

Nathan Althoff
Illinois

Not One "Tick-Tock"

Sir / I ran into your magazine some months ago, and since that time I have secured most of your publications and have read them with interest. My background is

Baptist or Un denominational, so I was not familiar with the Lutheran or Reformed point of view. Of course, I cannot agree with all you say, but I do appreciate your emphasis on the "good news" of the gospel and the importance of understanding the objective basis of justification by faith.

Your November, 1976, issue, dealing with the covenants of Scripture, was of special interest since this is a subject one hears little about, at least in the Fundamental-Evangelical churches. Their emphasis is that the old covenant is done away with and we are now under grace. From that point they go into the futuristic theory of prophecy. Over the past few years I have come to the conclusion that the historical view of prophecy is correct—especially since the clock that was to start upon the return of the Jew to the land of Palestine has not uttered one little "tick-tock" after twenty-eight years.

Your selection of the most important covenants and how they form an interlocking foundation for all of Scripture is certainly true. I would add the covenant of Genesis 3:4-19, especially verse 15, where the Lord says, ". . . and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This seems to point to the day when our Lord defeated Satan and assures the bringing of His creation back into perfection—even better than Eden since now there will never be a possibility of sin's rearing its head again. All other covenants seem to build toward that glad day.

Paul N. Owen
Oregon

Alive and Kicking

Sir / It is encouraging to see that you are still alive and kicking. Once again you have executed a blow which both enhances the reconstruction of *reformed* eschatology and aids in destroying the *deformed* eschatology so prevalent today.

The November, 1976, special issue of *Present Truth*, entitled "Covenant" (Part 1), is no doubt making a great impact on its readers. There is great biblical enlightenment indeed for those readers who are in agreement with its scholarly presentation of the covenants. But for those readers who disagree with its insurmountable approach to a proper understanding of the covenants, there is too much exegetical force in its thrust to allow peace of mind. I congratulate you for another excellent work.

Carlton J. Hammond
Alabama

Excellent

Sir / I appreciate your November, 1976, *Present Truth* devoted to covenant theology. Being an Anglo-Israel believer, I will not accept some interpretations which you place on some of the covenants.

But it is refreshing to read someone who even thinks in terms of the covenants. Many of your statements are excellent, and your quotations are also fine.

Curtis Clair Ewing
Pastor
California

Federal Theology

Sir / When I received the November, 1976, issue of *Present Truth*, I was immediately pleased and very excited to see that it was on the subject of "Covenant." I immediately scanned it to see if the issue would discuss the covenant of works versus the covenant of grace. I did not see a thing, but a little later, after rescanning it, I was immediately turned against the conclusion of the issue upon seeing a paragraph disparaging Holmes Rolston, III's book, *John Calvin Versus the Westminster Confession*.

I was working with the Westminster Confession of Faith for a class project when I chanced upon Rolston's book in the college's library. I was so intrigued that I checked it out and started doing research into its subject. I checked every historical source mentioned in the first chapter, but unfortunately there was practically none of the sources in the college's library. I researched the periodicals and found two articles which opposed Federal theology on a historical basis ("The Covenant Theology—A Review Article," by J. A. Ross Mackenzie, found in *Journal of Presbyterian History*, Vol. 44, pp. 198-204; and "Covenant or Contract?" by James B. Torrance, found in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 23, pp. 59-76).

I have read both articles as well as scanned Rolston, and I feel that you have brushed aside the anti-Federal theological viewpoint without *seriously* considering it. Rolston, I admit, is somewhat flimsy in his argument, but the articles are definitely sound.

Todd G. Ireland
College Student
Pennsylvania

Diatheke

Sir / Your edition on the *diatheke* elucidated the subject immensely, although I had wished you could have devoted an entire article to the difficult passage of Hebrews 9. Ever since I learned the revolutionary truth that Jesus was given to be my *diatheke* with the Father, I've rested assured of my redemption and have studied the *diatheke* writings with a liberated sense of devotion (Isa. 42:6).

It's a shame that many confuse the *diatheke* with the Book, the Person with His Scriptures. One is the Saviour; the other reveals the Saviour. The one manifests the Life-Giver; the other is the Fountain of Living Waters Himself.

Michael Hall
Evangelist
Indiana

Unity and Tension

Sir / I want to express my gratitude for your excellent November, 1976, issue on covenant theology (Part 1). Especially refreshing to me were the comments in the section concerning the unity and tension in the covenants. I agree that often Reformed scholars have not adequately dealt with the uniqueness of the various covenants (though we certainly need to see the unity which they rightly recognize).

Wilson Green
Mississippi

"Ah's" and "Hmm's"

Sir / Your two special issues on "Covenant" encouraged me much. I said a lot of "Ah's" and "Hmm's" as covenant theology became clearer to me, washing the windows of my dispensationalist background. Your insight through anthropological data was fascinating, and your conveyance of covenantal thought into the sacraments was especially enlightening. I am glad that you didn't blunder into much detail, for the foundation laid in the framework of the covenant was explicit enough to refute the detailed errors of those who postulate some other basis for these holy institutions.

Mark Poehner
California

Signs and Seals

Sir / I have finished the study of your article, "The Signs and Seals of the Covenant," in the December, 1976, issue of *Present Truth*. I find myself in agreement with most of what you have written. It is to the glory of God's grace that He has revealed to you the truth regarding the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the sacraments instituted by Christ.

Vance Fossum
Lutheran Pastor
Colorado

Clear Voice

Sir / I have finished studying and digesting your special issues on "Covenant." My reaction is "Thank God!" He has given to our times someone who can put it all together in form and matter that cannot be mistaken.

Your clear voice crying in the wilderness of so much fuzziness is deeply appreciated. May you continue sending forth your *Present Truth* to a world that needs your wise and lucid testimony.

Roy T. Foust
Colorado

Well Done

Sir / Your issues on justification and "Covenant" were very well done. You have a strong emphasis on the work of Jesus Christ and its application to practical life. Such a balanced emphasis is in keeping with good hermeneutics. I enjoyed the issues.

Ben Hoepfner
Canada



Editorial Introduction

After weighty theological issues like "Election" and "Covenant," we thought it might be a welcome change to deal with such things as our stewardship of the body. How much does physical fitness, for instance, have to do with mental and spiritual fitness? Is vitality a factor in preaching vital sermons? If physically unfit airline pilots are removed from the cockpit, should physically unfit preachers be removed from the pulpit? Might not some who try to get help from a book on *Secrets of Victorious Living* obtain more practical help from Dr. Cooper's famous book on *Aerobics* and from the purchase of a pair of running shoes?

Has Christian theology often neglected the place of the body in redemption and practical sanctification? James N. Lapsley is one theologian who thinks it has. In the foreword of his recent book, *Salvation and Health* (Westminster Press), Lapsley says, "The want of a sound anthropology is one of the roots of the crisis in which the church finds itself today, if it is not indeed the main source of that crisis."

After discussing the Greek versus the Hebrew view of man and the Grecian influence on Christian theology, this issue of *Present Truth* goes on to explore some practical aspects of the wholistic or Hebraic view of man. John Watson's article on "The Minister's Care of Himself" is remarkable because it was written so long ago (1896). In one or two places he might have overstated his case, but most ministers will give him three cheers

for the flourish of his final paragraph. Some might get the idea of presenting it to the bishop or board of elders as part of their Magna Carta! To conclude this issue, we have invited a Christian physician to write on the relation of physical and spiritual health.

After reading this edition of *Present Truth*, some may do what a pastor friend of mine does when someone comes to see him for spiritual counsel (or a theological discussion). He takes his visitor for a brisk walk—and if the visitor wants a good talk, he gets a five-mile walk. The pastor gets his exercise, and the visitor generally finds that exercise in the open air can go a long way toward solving problems which he thought were purely spiritual. In theological dialogue this procedure has another advantage. If the pastor is fit and walks quickly (like my friend), he can always win the argument, because the other fellow can't get his breath to talk while he walks.

The idea could be useful in another area. I was wondering whether my Calvinist friends were awake until we published an issue on "Election." That did it! We got so many letters (and some very long ones with great arguments) that it is impossible to print them all and answer them all. If I could only get all these valiant defenders of the faith together some time, I would say, "Come, let us walk [quickly] together."

R.D.B.

The Greek Versus the Hebrew View of Man

George Eldon Ladd

Editorial Note: This is an article for students and theologians. It is an extract from Dr. Ladd's book, *The Pattern of New Testament Truth*, which is an outstanding introduction to the New Testament. Dr. Ladd is Professor of New Testament Exegesis and Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary.

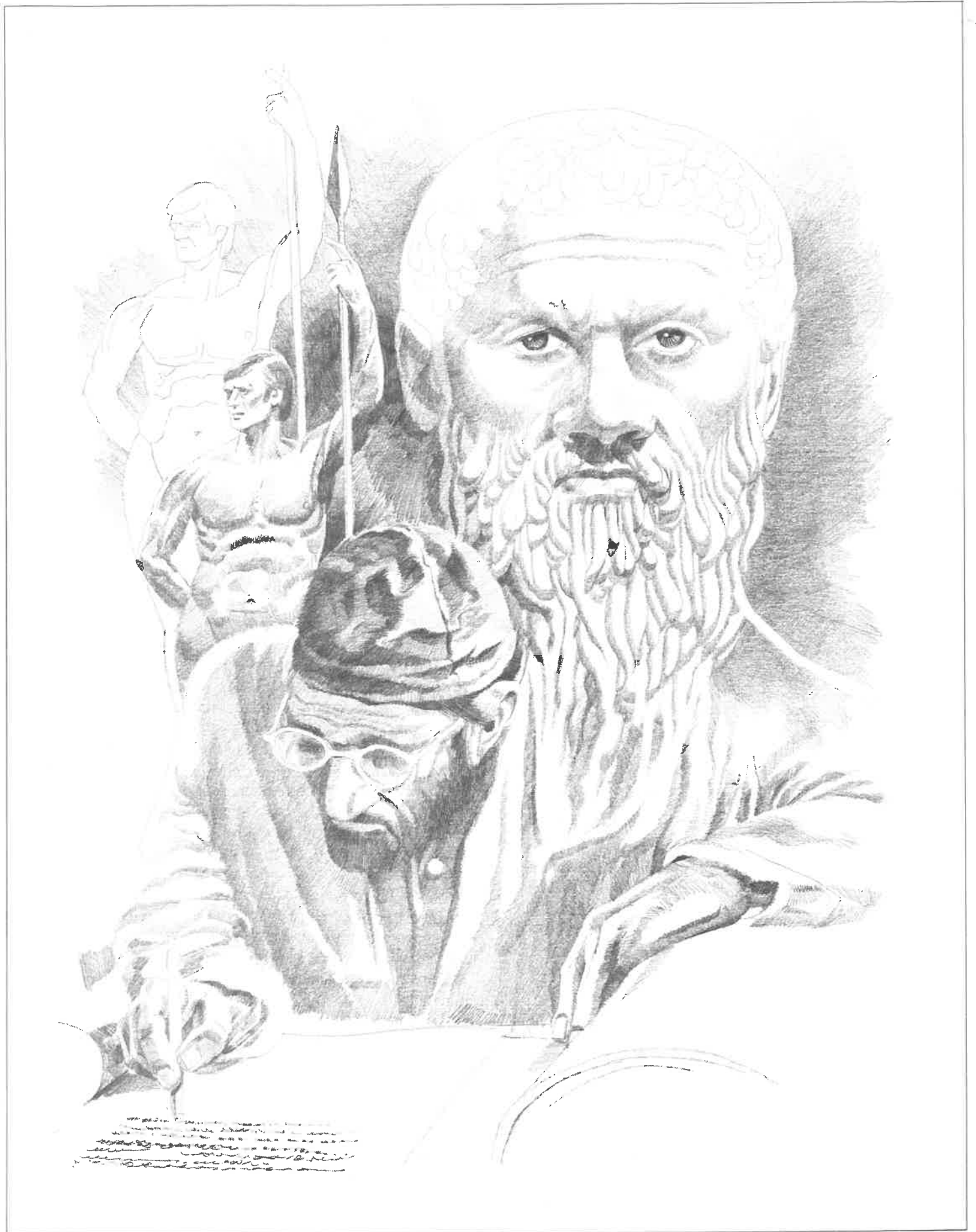
The Greek View

Until we can reconstruct with some confidence the emergence of Gnosticism, it is highly speculative to speak of the influence of Gnostic ideas on the emerging Christian faith. There is, however, a body of Greek literature that contains a view of man and the world very

close to that of developed Gnosticism, namely, those Greek philosophical and religious writings that reflect the influence of Platonic dualism. These are writings that are well known and datable; and it is profitable to compare their view of man and the world with the biblical view in both the Old and New Testaments. Such a comparison leads to two conclusions: that the Greek view¹⁴ of man

Reprinted from George Eldon Ladd, *The Pattern of New Testament Truth*, pp. 13-40. Copyright © 1968 by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. Used by permission. Footnote numbering appears as in original.

¹⁴We are deliberately using the expression, the "Greek view," in spite of Prof. Barr's protest against it (*Old and New in Interpretation* [1966], p. 39) because the Platonic dualism is roughly similar to Gnostic dualism, and the contemporary debate centers around the influence of this dualism on the New Testament. It is obvious, as Barr points out, that the Platonic view is not the only Greek view. Indeed, Guthrie says that Stoicism might be called the representative philosophy of the Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman ages (*A History of Greek Philosophy* [1962], I, 17). However, Stoic pantheistic materialism with its all-permeating divine fire is philosophically the opposite of dualism and plays no role in the current debate on syncretism. We shall show that the Platonic view was of wide currency in New Testament times; and in view of its later influence on Christian theology, we feel justified in calling it the Greek view.





and the world is different in kind from the biblical view; and that the unity and diversity of the several important strands of New Testament thought can be illustrated in terms of this contrast.

The basic problem is that of dualism. However, dualism means different things in the Greek view and in the biblical view.

The view found in Plato and in later thinkers, influenced by him, is essentially the same cosmological dualism as is found in later Gnosticism. Like Gnosticism, Platonism is a dualism of two worlds, one the visible world and the other an invisible "spiritual" world. As in Gnosticism, man stands between these two worlds, related to both. Like Gnosticism, Platonism sees the origin of man's truest self (his soul) in the invisible world, whence his soul has fallen into the visible world of matter. Like Gnosticism, it sees the physical body as a hindrance, a burden, sometimes even as the tomb of the soul. Like Gnosticism, it conceives of salvation as the freeing of the soul from its entanglement in the physical world that it may wing its way back to the heavenly world. Two further elements found in Gnosticism do not appear in the Platonic philosophers: that matter is *ipso facto* the source of evil, and that redemption is accomplished by a heavenly redeemer who descends to earth to deliver the fallen souls and lead them back to heaven.

The biblical dualism is utterly different from this

Greek view. It is religious and ethical, not cosmological. The world is God's world; man is God's creature, although rebellious, sinful and fallen. Salvation is achieved not by a flight from the world but by God's coming to man in his earthly, historical experience. Salvation never means flight from the world to God; it means, in effect, God's descent from heaven to bring man in historical experience into fellowship with himself. Therefore the consummation of salvation is eschatological. It does not mean the gathering of the souls of the righteous in heaven, but the gathering of a redeemed people on a redeemed earth in perfected fellowship with God. The theologies of the Synoptic Gospels, of John, and of Paul are to be understood in terms of this Hebrew dualism, and each of them stands in sharp contrast to the Greek dualism. The unifying element in New Testament theology is the fact of the divine visitation of men in the person and mission of Jesus Christ; diversity exists in the progressive unfolding of the meaning of this divine visitation and in the various ways the one revelatory, redeeming event is capable of being interpreted.

Since radical differences between Greek and Hebrew ways of thinking have recently been challenged,¹⁵ we must now develop our thesis and document it in detail.

The foundations of the Greek view go back to the theology of the Orphic sect, which came to light in Greece in the sixth century B.C., and spread throughout the Greek world and into southern Italy, profoundly influencing Plato and later Greek thought. This theology is embodied in the ancient myth of Zagreus (Dionysus), begotten by Zeus of Demeter. Zagreus fell under the power of the Titans, wicked enemies of Zeus. In his effort to escape them, Zagreus changed himself into a bull; but the Titans captured him, tore him to pieces, and devoured him. However, Zeus blasted the Titans by a flash of lightning, and from their ashes arose the human race. Mankind thus possesses two elements: a divine element from Zagreus and a wicked element from the Titans. This mythology expresses the Orphic theology of the dualism of body and soul. Man must free himself from the Titanic elements and, purified, return to the gods, a fragment of whom is living in him. Expressed in other words, "man's duty is to free himself from the chains of the body in which the soul lies fast bound like the prisoner in his cell."¹⁶ This freedom is not easily achieved. Usually the soul at death flutters free in the air, only to enter into a new body. It may pass through a series of deaths and reincarnations. Finally, by the sacred rites of the cult and by a life of ascetic purity, man may escape the wheel of birth and become divine.¹⁷

The main elements of this Orphic dualism appear in

¹⁵See James Barr, "Athens or Jerusalem?—The Question of Distinctiveness," in *Old and New in Interpretation* (1966), pp. 34-64.

¹⁶E. Rohde, *Psyche* (1925), p. 342.

¹⁷For Orphic doctrine, see Rohde, *op. cit.*, pp. 335-361; E. O. James in *Judaism and Christianity*, ed. W. O. E. Oesterley (1937), I, 43-46; W. K. C. Guthrie, *Orpheus and the Greek Religion* (1952).

The biblical dualism is utterly different from the Greek view. It is religious and ethical, not cosmological.

Salvation never means flight from the world to God; it means, in effect, God's descent from heaven to bring man in historical experience into fellowship with himself.

Plato's concept of man and the world. His cosmic dualism is paralleled by his anthropological dualism. The soul of man in his earthly existence is composite, consisting of the reasoning part or mind (*nous*), the spirited or courageous part (*thumos*), and the appetitive part (*epithumia*). These three parts of the soul are located respectively in the head, the chest, and the midriff.¹⁸ The highest part, mind, being divine and immortal, pre-existed before the creation of the body¹⁹ and was made out of the same material as the soul of the universe by the Creator (Demiurge) himself.²⁰ The creation of the body and the two lower parts of the soul were entrusted to the young gods,²¹ apparently to relieve the Demiurge of direct responsibility for evil. The lower parts of the soul, like the body, are mortal. Human experience is a struggle between the higher and lower parts of the soul. While Plato in this way locates moral evil in the soul, it is in that part of the soul that was created with the body and, like the body, is mortal. Most of the time, Plato speaks of the soul as simple in essence, and as the enemy of the body with its appetites and passions. "The soul is most like the divine and immortal and intellectual and indissoluble and unchanging, and the body, on the contrary, most like the human and mortal and multiform and unintellectual and dissoluble and ever-changing."²² The soul partakes of the nature of the divine, which Plato understands to consist of such qualities as beauty, wisdom, and goodness,²³ which have objective existence in the realm of the invisible and incorporeal. The soul,

then, belongs to the noumenal world and descends from this higher world into the phenomenal world of bodily existence whence it strives to regain its proper place in the higher world.

Plato likens this struggle to a charioteer driving two winged horses, one noble and the other ignoble. The noble horse wishes to mount up to the sky, to the realm of the divine eternal realities; it represents the divine immortal part of the soul whose proper realm is the region above the heaven of "the colourless, formless, and intangible truly existing essence [*ousia ontos ousa*] with which all true knowledge is concerned."²⁴ The ignoble horse—the lower part of the soul—drags downward toward the earth, and, if it is not disciplined, corrupts the soul with impurities. "There the utmost toil and struggle await the soul."²⁵

The body is thus the enemy of the soul, for it is a mass of evil,²⁶ and serves as a prison for the soul.²⁷ The body hinders the soul from the acquisition of knowledge.²⁸

Plato stops short of thoroughgoing dualism of mind/matter,²⁹ in which matter is *ipso facto* evil as in later Gnosticism. "But Plato constantly . . . conjures up a sense of that inert, negative, imperfect kind of being which is opposed to mind or soul, to purpose or good, and which as such is a source of evil, or is indeed evil itself."³⁰ There is some kind of necessity (*ananke*) in matter which makes it intractable to goodness, reason, and mind.

In a real sense of the word, salvation for Plato is by knowledge. "Wherefore we should seek to escape hence [from this world] to that other world as speedily as we may; and the way of escape is by becoming like to God so far as we can; and the becoming like is becoming just and holy by taking thought" [*meta phroneseos*].³¹ Man's highest exercise is the cultivation of the mind and the control of the body; this is the object of the wise man, the philosopher. The mind can apprehend truth; but the bodily senses can hinder the soul from the acquisition of knowledge. Therefore the mind must have as little to do as possible with the body.³² The philosopher despises all but the necessary bodily needs that he may devote himself to the soul.³³ The philosopher who succeeds in controlling the body and

²⁴*Phaedrus* 247C.

²⁵*Ibid.* 247B.

²⁶*Phaedo* 66B.

²⁷*Ibid.* 82E; 62B; *Republic* 517B; *Cratylus* 400C. Plato considers the Pythagorean concept *soma-sema* (see also *Gorgias* 493A), and while he does not accept *sema* (tomb) as an explanation for *soma* (body), he does liken the body to a prison.

²⁸*Phaedo* 66.

²⁹In precision, we ought not speak of a "spiritual" world, for Plato does not use the word *pneuma* of the noumenal world; it is the world of forms or ideas that are beheld by the mind, the highest part of the soul.

³⁰Greene, *Moira*, p. 302.

³¹*Theatetus* 176A (Greene's trans.); See *Moira*, p. 302.

³²*Phaedo* 65B.

³³*Ibid.* 64D, 82C, 114E.

¹⁸*Timaeus* 69D-70A; *Republic* 439-441.

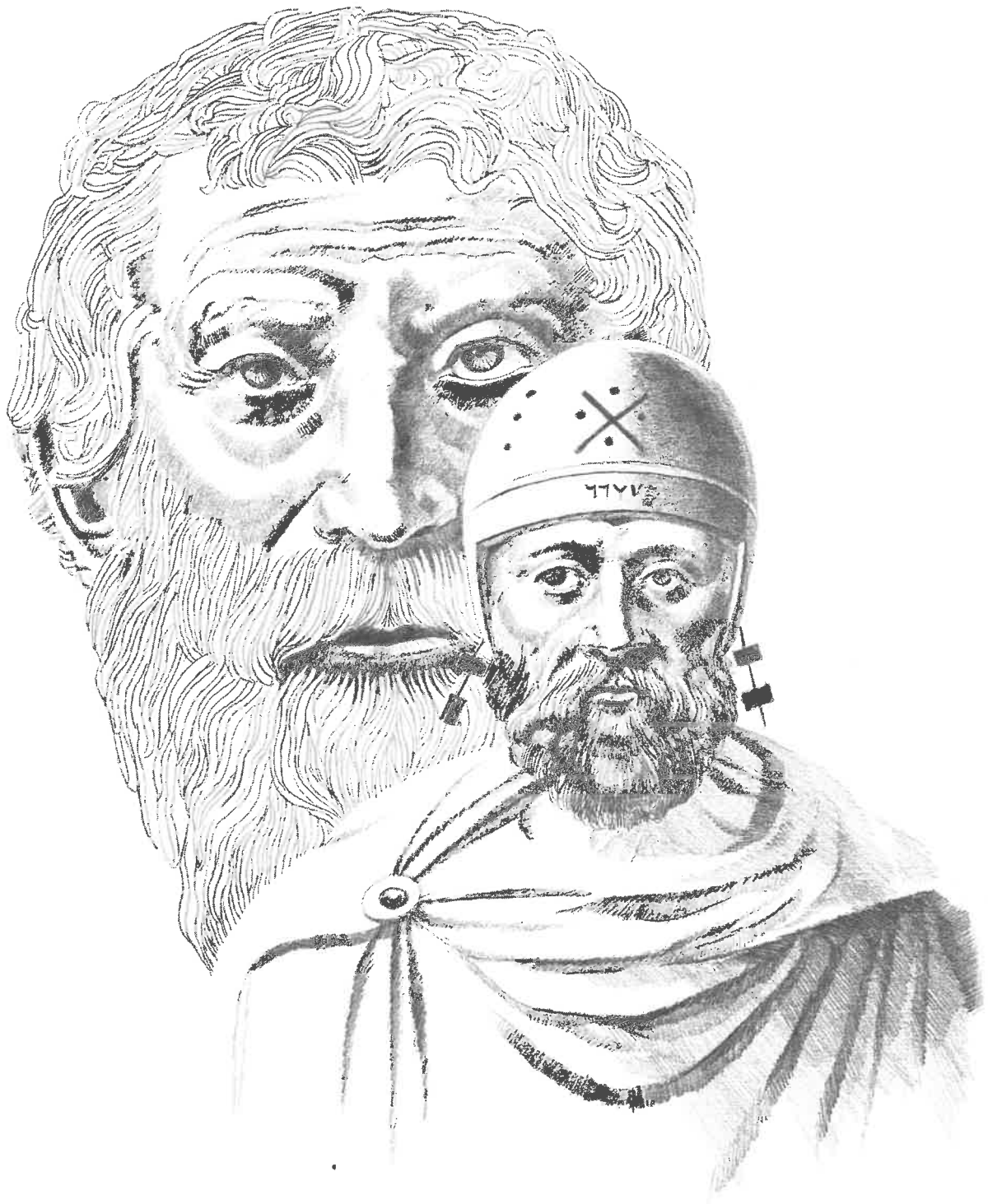
¹⁹See Plato's argument for pre-existence based on memory, *Phaedo* 72E.

²⁰For Plato's idea of God, see W. E. Greene, *Moira* (1948), pp. 286f., 291.

²¹*Timaeus* 41C.

²²*Phaedo* 80B.

²³*Phaedrus* 246E.



Plutarch and Philo

cultivating the mind will think thoughts that are immortal and divine. He lays hold on truth and partakes of immortality so far as that is possible. Those who attain this beatific³⁴ vision are loath to descend to human affairs, but their souls are ever hastening into the upper world in which they desire to dwell³⁵ because this escape from the earth is to become like God.³⁶ "When the soul inquires alone by itself, it departs into the realm of the pure, the everlasting, the immortal and the changeless, and being akin to these, it dwells always with them whenever it is by itself and is not hindered. . . . And this state of the soul is called wisdom."³⁷

Upon death, the souls of such wise men and philosophers, having been purified from the body, depart to the realm of the noble, pure, invisible, and immortal, to the realm of the good and wise god, where in happiness and freedom from all human ills they will live in truth through all time with the gods.³⁸ The souls that were not purified but which loved the body with its appetites and were thus interpenetrated with the corporeal³⁹ must undergo a series of reincarnations, each suitable to the character of the individual's earthly existence.⁴⁰ . . .

The influence and prevalence of the Platonic dualism may be realized by the fact that it is found in widely different quarters in New Testament times. We refer here only to two: the Greek Plutarch and the Jew Philo.

Plutarch provides us with a vivid picture of the state of Greek religion in educated circles in the late first century. He was thoroughly nurtured in Greek thought, culture, and religion, and his chief aim was to harmonize traditional Greek religion with Greek philosophy, represented primarily by Plato,⁴⁸ and to avoid the twin evils of atheism and superstition. We cannot give here a comprehensive treatment of Plutarch's thought,⁴⁹ but we shall only illustrate by his work the persistence of Platonic dualism in the Hellenistic world. The heart of Plutarch's philosophical thought is the same cosmological and anthropological dualism found in Plato, tied together with Hellenistic cosmology.

In his dialogue *The Face of the Moon* we find an eschatological myth about human destiny.⁵⁰ Man consists of body and soul, but the soul is itself complex, con-

sisting of soul and mind.⁵¹ Only mind is immortal, although the soul survives the death of the body. After this death, man's mind-soul must spend time in a sort of Hades, which occupies the space between the earth and the moon. Here man must die a second death, when the soul is gently and slowly purged so that man is finally reduced to his one immortal part—mind alone. This purifying process consists in purging away the pollutions that were contracted from the body. This process of purification is neither uniform nor uniformly successful. Some souls succeed in purging away all of the evil influences of the body, that is, in making the irrational element in the soul completely subordinate to reason. Other souls are so laden with evils from bodily existence that the purification is incomplete and they fall back again to earth to be reborn in different bodies. Those who achieve purification and gain a firm foothold on the moon are converted into daemons—a race of disembodied souls who serve as intermediaries between God and men.⁵²

Here we have the same elements we have found in Plato's dualism: two worlds, the phenomenal or material, and the conceptual; ⁵³ a complex soul with the mind as its highest and most divine faculty;⁵⁴ the body as a source of evil and pollution to the mind;⁵⁵ this world as an alien place from which the soul must escape to find its true destiny;⁵⁶ salvation consisting of purification from the pollution incurred in bodily life and the freeing of the mind from bodily and worldly evil.⁵⁷ The disembodied souls that have become daemons are not yet perfected; they can fall back and be reborn on earth. Final destiny is to be released from the cycle of birth⁵⁸ and to attain a permanent place in the heavenly realm.

Plutarch no more regards matter as evil *ipso facto*

⁵¹Elsewhere Plutarch reflects Plato's idea of the pre-existence of the soul and an epistemology of knowledge of life in this former existence. See *Consolation to His Wife*, 611E. "Its most generous fault [viz. of old age] is to render the soul stale in its memories of the other world and make it cling tenaciously to this one."

⁵²This same mythology is found with more elaborate detail in *Divine Vengeance* 560F-567E, and *The Sign of Socrates* 590A-594A.

⁵³*Isis and Osiris* 373F. Osiris lives "far removed from the earth, uncontaminated and unpolluted and pure from all matter that is subject to destruction and death." While the souls of men are "compassed about by bodies and emotions," they can have only a dim vision of the heavenly world. "But when these souls are set free and migrate into the realm of the invisible and the unseen, the dispassionate and the pure, then this god becomes their leader."

⁵⁴See *Isis and Osiris* 353A; 371A. Intelligence is the eye of the soul. *Divine Vengeance* 563E.

⁵⁵*E at Delphi* 432A.

⁵⁶In *Consolation to His Wife* 611E, Plutarch says that the soul is imperishable. It is like a captive bird that can become so tamed by this life and bodily existence that upon escaping the body at death, it alights again and re-enters the body, and does not leave off or cease from becoming entangled in the passions and fortunes of this world through repeated births. In *Divine Vengeance* 590, the soul is released from the body and finds great relief in being set free from the confines of bodily existence.

⁵⁷*Obsolescence of Oracles* 415B-C; *E at Delphi* 432C. Disembodied souls that succeed in rising above the bodily passions rise to heaven, "shaking off a sort of dimness and darkness as one might shake off mud" (*Divine Vengeance* 591F).

⁵⁸*Divine Vengeance* 590C.

³⁴*Timaeus* 90C.

³⁵*Republic* 517D.

³⁶*Theaetetus* 176B.

³⁷*Phaedo* 79D. See also *Phaedrus* 247.

³⁸*ibid.* 80D-81A.

³⁹*ibid.* 81B.

⁴⁰*Phaedrus* 249. For further notes on the fate of impure souls, see Rohde, *Psyche*, pp. 481ff.

⁴⁸M. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* (1961), II, 402f.

⁴⁹There is a serious lack of up-to-date works on Plutarch in English. See John Oakesmith, *The Religion of Plutarch* (1902); T. R. Glover, *The Conflict of Religions in the Roman Empire* (1909), pp. 75-112.

⁵⁰*Face of the Moon*, 940F-945D. All references to Plutarch are to the fifteen volumes of the Loeb edition, which is very serviceable because of the continuous numbering employed throughout the volumes.

than did Plato.⁵⁹ The material world is, nevertheless, the sphere of evil and is evil in its functioning.⁶⁰ The evil nature of the world is further reflected in his idea of God and God's relationship to the world. God is described in philosophical language⁶¹ and also in terms of mind and reason.⁶² He cannot come into direct contact with the evil world or be the author of anything evil.⁶³

Philo often speaks of the body as the enemy of the soul. While he does not recognize matter *ipso facto* as evil,⁷⁸ the body is a foul prison-house of the soul,⁷⁹ like a sackcloth robe,⁸⁰ a tomb (*sema*),⁸¹ a grave (*trumbos*).⁸²

Some souls "sink beneath the stream" of bodily materiality, so that the vision of the heavenly is lost. But those who pursue wisdom and philosophy, namely, God, those who discipline the body and cultivate the mind, "soar upwards" to behold the wonders of the heavenly realm. Philo describes this experience of "salvation" in the language of the Greek mysteries as though it involved ecstatic vision.

For when the mind soars aloft and is being initiated in the mysteries of the Lord, it judges the body to be wicked and hostile. . . . The philosopher, being enamored of the noble thing that lives in himself, cares for the soul, and pays no regard to that which is really a corpse, the body, concerned only that the best part of him, his soul, may not be hurt by an evil thing, a very corpse, tied to it. . . . When, then, O soul, wilt thou in fullest measure realize thyself to be a corpse-bearer? Will it not be when thou art perfected and accounted worthy of prizes and crowns? For then shalt thou be no lover of the body, but a lover of God. . . . For when the mind has carried off the rewards of victory, it condemns the corpse-body to death.⁸³ . . .

The rational part of the soul, which was pre-existent, is incorruptible and immortal,⁹² and at death "removes

⁵⁹The evil element is "formlessness and disarrangement" (*Obsolescence of Oracles* 428F); evil is "innate, in large amount, in the body and elsewhere in the soul of the universe" (*Isis and Osiris* 371A). Elsewhere, the material world is not evil but "orphaned, incomplete, and good for nothing, unless there be an animating soul to make use of it" (*E at Delphi* 390E). Plutarch does attribute to Plato the view that matter is evil (*Obsolescence of Oracles* 414F).

⁶⁰"Nature must have in herself the source and origin of evil, just as she contains the source and origin of good" (*Isis and Osiris* 369D).

⁶¹"What, then, really is Being? It is that which is eternal, without beginning and without end, to which no length of time brings change" (*E at Delphi* 392E-393C). God is free from emotion and activity (*Obsolescence of Oracles* 420E).

⁶²"God gives to men . . . of sense and intelligence [*nous kai phronesis*] . . . only a share, inasmuch as these are his especial possessions and his sphere of activity. For the Deity is blessed . . . through knowledge and intelligence" (*Isis and Osiris* 351D).

⁶³*Isis and Osiris* 369B.

⁷⁸"It almost seems that Philo regards matter as evil." R. McL. Wilson, *The Gnostic Problem* (1958), p. 45.

⁷⁹*De Migr. Abr.* 8

⁸⁰*Quis rer. div. heres* 54

⁸¹*L.A.* I, 108; *Spec. Leg.* IV, 188.

⁸²*Quod Deus sit Imm.* 148.

⁸³*L.A.* III, 71-74.

⁹²*Athanatos, Immut.* 10, 46; *aphthartos, Prob.* 7, 46; *Congr.* 97; *Spec.* I, 81.

its habitation from the mortal body and returns as if to the mother-city, from which it originally moved its habitation to this place."⁹³ This native home of the soul to which it returns after death is the heavens, where it rejoins the angels, who are pure souls who have never entered into bodies.⁹⁴ There is no trace of the idea of the resurrection of the body in Philo. The destiny of men is not a redeemed society living on a transformed earth; it is the flight of the soul from earth to heaven. In this basic thinking about man and his destiny, Philo is quite Greek and Platonic.

The Old Testament View

The Old Testament view of God, man, and the world is very different from Greek dualism. Fundamental to Hebrew thought is the belief that God is the creator, that the world is God's creation and is therefore in itself good. The Greek idea that the material world is the sphere of evil and a burden or a hindrance to the soul is alien to the Old Testament. When God created the world, he saw that it was good (Gen. 1:31). The world was created for God's glory (Ps. 19:1); the ultimate goal and destiny of creation is to glorify and praise its creator (Ps. 98:7-9). The Hebrews had no concept of nature; to them the world was the scene of God's constant activity. Thunder was the voice of God (Ps. 29:3, 5); pestilence is the heavy hand of the Lord (I Sam. 5:6); human life is the breath of God inbreathed in man's face (Gen. 2:7; Ps. 104:29).

To be sure, the world is not all it ought to be. Something has gone wrong. But the evil is not found in materiality, but in human sin. In creation, God displayed his goodness by making man the chief of all his creatures and by subjecting the created world to man's care (Gen. 1:28), entrusting to him dominion over all other creatures. When man in proud self-assertion refused to accept the role of creaturehood, when he succumbed to the temptation to "be like God" (Gen. 3:5) and fell into sin, God placed the curse of death upon man and the burden of decay and evil upon the entire world, so that man might be continually reminded of the fundamental fact that sin disrupts the enjoyment of God's gifts, even in the physical realm. Life and happiness are God's gifts; pain, toil and death are the toll of sin.

The Old Testament never views the earth as an alien place nor as an indifferent theater on which man lives out his temporal life while seeking a heavenly destiny. Man and the world together belong to the order of creation; and in a real sense of the word, the world participates in man's fate. The world is affected by man's sin. Although the world was designed to reflect the divine glory and still does so, it is a tainted glory because of sin. This intimate relationship is sometimes ex-

⁹³*Quaes. in Gen.* III, 11.

⁹⁴H. A. Wolfson, *op. cit.*, I, 359-404.



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pressed poetically. Because of human wickedness, "the land mourns, and all who dwell in it languish, and also the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and even the fish of the sea are taken away" (Hos. 4:3).

Behind this concept of man and the world is the theology that both man and the world are God's creation, and that man's true life consists in complete obedience to and dependence upon God. This can

be illustrated by the Old Testament concept of life. There is no antithesis between physical and spiritual life, between the outer and the inner dimensions in man, between the lower and higher realms. Life is viewed in its wholeness as the full enjoyment of all of God's gifts. Some Christian theologies would consider this crassly materialistic; but a profound theology underlies it. Life, which can be enjoyed only from the per-



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spective of obedience to God and love for him (Deut. 30:6), means physical prosperity, productivity (Deut. 30:9), a long life (Ps. 34:12; 91:16), bodily health and well-being (Prov. 4:22; 9:23; 22:4), physical security (Deut. 8:1); in brief, the enjoyment of all of God's gifts (Ps. 103:1-5). However, the enjoyment of these good things by themselves cannot be called life, for life means the enjoyment of God's gifts *in fellowship with God*. It is God alone who is the source of all good things, including life itself (Ps. 36:9). Those who forsake the Lord will be put to shame, for they have abandoned the fountain of life (Jer. 17:13). While health and bodily well-being are included in life, man does not live by bread alone; and the enjoyment of God's gifts apart from obedience to the word of God is not life (Deut. 8:3). Life, therefore, can be simply defined as the enjoyment of God's gifts *in fellowship with the God who gives them*. God alone has the way of life; it is only in his presence that there is fullness of joy and everlasting pleasures (Ps. 16:11).

Behind this understanding of life is a profound theology. Man shares with nature the fact of creaturehood. But man stands apart from all other creatures in that he was created in the image of God. For this reason, he enjoys a relationship to God different from that of all other creatures. However, this does not mean that men will ever transcend creaturehood. Indeed, the very root of sin is unwillingness to acknowledge the reality and implications of creaturehood. The fact that man is a physical creature in the world is neither the cause nor the measure of his sinfulness and thus a state from which he must be delivered. Sin does not result from the body's burdening down the soul or clouding the mind; it results from rebellion of the will, the self. The acceptance of man's creaturehood, the confession of complete and utter dependence upon the Creator God, is essential to man's true existence. Man truly knows himself, recognizes his true self, only when he realizes that he is God's creature. Then he accepts the humble role of one whose very life is contingent upon God's faithfulness and whose chief joy is to serve and worship his Creator. The root of sin is found not in succumbing to the physical side of his being, but in the intent to lift himself out of his creaturehood, to exalt himself above God, to refuse to give God the worship, praise, and obedience that are his due.

For this perspective salvation does not mean deliver-



Life can be simply defined as the enjoyment of God's gifts in fellowship with the God who gives them.

ance from creaturehood, for it is an essential and permanent element of man's essential being. For this reason the Old Testament never pictures ultimate redemption as a flight from the world or escape from earthly, bodily existence. Salvation does not consist of freeing the soul from its engagement in the material world. On the contrary, ultimate redemption will involve the redemption of the whole man and of the world to which man belongs. This is the theology behind the doctrine of bodily resurrection, which only begins to emerge in the Old Testament⁹⁵ but which is clearly

developed in Judaism and the New Testament.

The same basic theology is seen everywhere in the prophets in their hope of the redemption of the world. While the prophets in only a few places speak of resurrection (e.g., Isa. 25:8; Ezek. 37; Dan. 12:2), they constantly look forward to the consummation of God's redemptive purpose on a transformed earth. The nature of this transformation is diversely described. Sometimes the new world is depicted simply in terms of material abundance. The land will become so fruitful that there will be no lapse between the seasons. The grape harvest will be so prolific that the hills will be inundated in rivers of wine. War and devastation will be replaced by peace and security (Amos 9:13-15). On other occasions the transformation will be more radical. Isaiah describes it as new heavens and a new earth (65:17; 66:22), where premature death will be banished, peace and security enjoyed, and the curse of violence lifted from nature. "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like an ox. They shall not hurt

⁹⁵See R. Martin-Achard, *From Death to Life* (1960), pp. 206ff.



or destroy in all my holy mountain, says the Lord" (Isa. 65:25).⁹⁶

The world is to be redeemed from its bondage to evil not by any process of gradual evolution nor through any powers resident in the world, but by a mighty act of God—a divine visitation. Some scholars have held that two different kinds of eschatology are to be found in Judaism: an authentic prophetic Hebrew hope that looks for an earthly kingdom arising out of history, and a dualistic hope that resulted from despair of history as the scene of God's Kingdom and in its place looked for a transcendental order to be inaugurated by an irruption into history of the heavenly order. We believe this critical theory to be unsupported by our sources, and we have argued at length that the prophetic hope never looks for

the establishment of God's Kingdom to result from forces imminent within history but only by a divine visitation—an irruption from outside into history.⁹⁷ Even in the oldest conceptions, God's kingship could be absolutely established only at the cost of a great change that would make an end of the present state of things and witness the establishment of something new. "There is no eschatology without rupture."⁹⁸ In the careful words of H. H. Rowley, the Day of the Lord was conceived "as the time of the divine inbreaking into history in spectacular fashion. While God was believed to be always active of the plane of history, using nature and men to fulfill his ends, the Day of the Lord was thought of as a day of more direct and clearly manifest action."⁹⁹

⁹⁶For a detailed discussion of the problems involved in this hope, see the present author's *Jesus and the Kingdom* (1964), chap. II.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*

⁹⁸E. Jacob, *Theology of the Old Testament* (1958), p. 318.

⁹⁹H. H. Rowley, *The Growth of the Old Testament* (1950), p. 139.

While the prophets looked forward to a final visitation of God to redeem both God's people and the physical world, they were not pessimistic about the nature of historical existence before the coming of the Day of the Lord. One of the wholesome emphases of modern biblical theology is the acting of God in history. G. Ernest Wright has promoted the view that biblical theology is the recital of the redeeming and judicial acts of God in history;¹⁰⁰ and perhaps the greatest contemporary work on Old Testament theology—that of Gerhard von Rad—is a theology of the *kerygma*: the proclamation of the mighty deeds of God in history. James Barr has provided a healthy emendation of the view by insisting that in the thought of the Old Testament revelation does not occur in events alone but also in words.¹⁰¹ Von Rad recognizes that the acts and the words belong together. "History becomes word, and word becomes history."¹⁰² Several years ago, the present author expounded a similar view. God does reveal himself in events; but the events do not speak for themselves. Their inner meaning must be set forth in words. Thus revelation occurs in an event-word complex, the prophetic interpreting word being an integral part of the event.¹⁰³

Back of this concept of revelation is a profound theology of God: a living, personal God who is known to man because he chooses to reveal himself by visiting man in history. The God of the Old Testament is always "the God who comes."¹⁰⁴ "Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together—before the Lord, for he comes to rule the earth" (Ps. 98:8). "The Lord came from Sinai, and dawned from Seir upon us; he shone forth from Mount Paran, he came from the ten thousands of holy ones, with flaming fire at his right hand" (Deut. 33:2). "For behold, the Lord is coming forth out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. And the mountains will melt under him and the valleys will be cleft like wax before the fire, like waters poured down a steep place" (Mic. 1:3-4). He

¹⁰⁰Wright, *God Who Acts* (1952).

¹⁰¹James Barr, "Revelation through History in the Old Testament," *Interpretation*, XVII (1963), 193-205; "Concepts of History and Revelation," in *Old and New in Interpretation* (1966), pp. 65-102.

¹⁰²G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (1965), II, p. 358.

¹⁰³See G. E. Ladd, "The Saving Acts of God," *Basic Christian Doctrines*, ed. C. F. H. Henry (1962), pp. 7-13. See also "How is the Bible the Word of God?" in *The New Testament and Criticism* (1967), pp. 19-33.

¹⁰⁴Cf. Georges Pidoux, *Le Dieu qui vient* (1947).

Hebrew man is not like the Greek man—a union of soul and body and thus related to two worlds. He is flesh animated by God's breath, who is thus constituted a living soul.

came to Israel in Egypt to make them his people; he came to them again and again in their history; he will come again in a final eschatological visitation in the future to judge wickedness and to establish his Kingdom.¹⁰⁵

For our present purpose, the important thing to note is the difference between the Hebrew and the Greek views of reality. For the Greek, the world, nature, human history—in sum, the sphere of the visible—formed the realm of flux and change, of becoming, of the transient. Reality belonged to the realm of the invisible, the good, the unchanging, which could be apprehended only by the mind of the soul transcending the visible. Thus salvation was found in the flight of the soul from the world to the invisible world of God.

For the Hebrew, reality was found in God who makes himself known in the ebb and flow of both nature and historical events by his acts and by his words. God comes to men in their earthly experience. Thus the final redemption is not flight from this world to another world; it may be described as the descent of the other world—God's world—resulting in a transformation of this world.

The contrast between the Greek and Hebrew views of God and the world is reinforced further by the Old Testament anthropology. Hebrew man is not like the Greek man—a union of soul and body and thus related to two worlds. He is flesh animated by God's breath (*ruach*), who is thus constituted a living soul (*nephesh*) (Gen. 2:7; 7:22). *Nephesh* (soul) is not a part of man;

¹⁰⁵For a development of this theme, see *Jesus and the Kingdom*, pp. 42-48.

it is man himself viewed as a living creature. *Nephesh* is life, both of men (Ex. 21:23; Ps. 33:19) and of animals (Prov. 12:10). If *nephesh* is man as a living creature, it can be used for man himself and indicate man as a person,¹⁰⁶ and also become a synonym for “I,” “myself.”¹⁰⁷ By an easy extension, *nephesh* is man seen in terms of his appetites and desires (Eccl. 6:2, 7) or in terms of his emotions or thoughts (Hos. 4:8; Ps. 35:25; Gen. 34:8; Ps. 139:14; Prov. 19:2).

If *nephesh* is man’s life, it can be said to depart at death (Gen. 35:18; I Kings 17:21) or return if a person revives (I Kings 17:22). If the *nephesh* stands for man himself, it can be said that his *nephesh* departs to the underworld or *sheol* at death (Pss. 16:10; 30:3; 94:7). However, the Old Testament does not conceive of disembodied souls existing in the underworld after departing from the body, as do Homer and other early Greek writers.¹⁰⁸ The Old Testament does not see *souls* in *sheol*, but shades (*rephaim*), which are a sort of pale replica of man as a living creature.¹⁰⁹ These shades are not altogether different from Homer’s souls in Hades, and both represent a common conviction of natural theology, namely, that death is not the end of human existence, but that life in its fullness must be bodily life.

However, in following the course of their development, the Greek and the Hebrew thought sharply diverge. The Greeks, as we have seen, came to believe that there was something divine about the soul and that it must find release from bodily existence to take its flight to the stars. Hebrew thought developed very differently. There began to emerge, even in the Old Testament, the conviction that if men enjoy fellowship with God in life, this fellowship could not be broken by death. “For thou dost not give me [lit., my soul] up to sheol, or let thy godly one see the pit. Thou dost show me the path of life; in thy presence there is fullness of joy, in thy right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Ps. 16:10-11). “But God will ransom my soul from the power of sheol, for he will receive me” (Ps. 49:15). “Thou dost guide me with thy counsel, and afterward thou wilt receive me to glory” (Ps. 73:24). While such sayings hardly provide us with material

Almost always in Judaism, the individual hope finds its realization in bodily resurrection.

¹⁰⁶See Gen. 14:21; Ex. 16:16; Num. 5:6; Ezek. 33:6 (RSV, “any one”); Deut. 24:7 (RSV, “one”); Gen. 46:18 (sixteen “persons”). See Rev. 18:13 for this use.

¹⁰⁷Ps. 34:2; Gen. 27:35, lit., “that my soul may bless you”; Jer. 3:11, “her-self” equals “her soul.”

¹⁰⁸*Iliad* I. 3; *Odyssey* XI. 205. See E. D. Burton, *Spirit, Soul and Flesh* (1918), pp. 26ff.

¹⁰⁹See Job 26:5; Ps. 88:10; Prov. 9:18; Isa. 14:9; 26:19.

¹¹⁰R. Martin-Achard, *From Death to Life* (1960), p. 165.

¹¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 181.

for a doctrine of the intermediate state, they do express the undying conviction of the “imperishable blessedness of the man who lives in God.”¹¹⁰ They cannot conceive of this fellowship being broken, even by death. As Martin-Achard says, “Without actually being aware of it, the *Hasidim* are battering the gates of the kingdom of the dead; without reaching the positive assertion of the immortality or resurrection of the believer . . . they are preparing the way for future generations to proclaim that death is impotent against those who are living in communion with the living God.”¹¹¹ Later Judaism developed the idea of an intermediate state and sometimes identified the dead as souls, or conceived of the soul as existing after death.¹¹² However, unless there is Greek influence, as in the Wisdom of Solomon (8:19), the continuing existence of the soul in *sheol* is not due to some intrinsic quality of immortality which it shares with God but to the conviction that since God is the living God and master of both life and death, there must be a blessed destiny for individuals as well as for the nation. Almost always in Judaism, the individual hope finds its realization in bodily resurrection. In only a few places do we find the idea of a blessed immortality of the soul in heaven.¹¹³

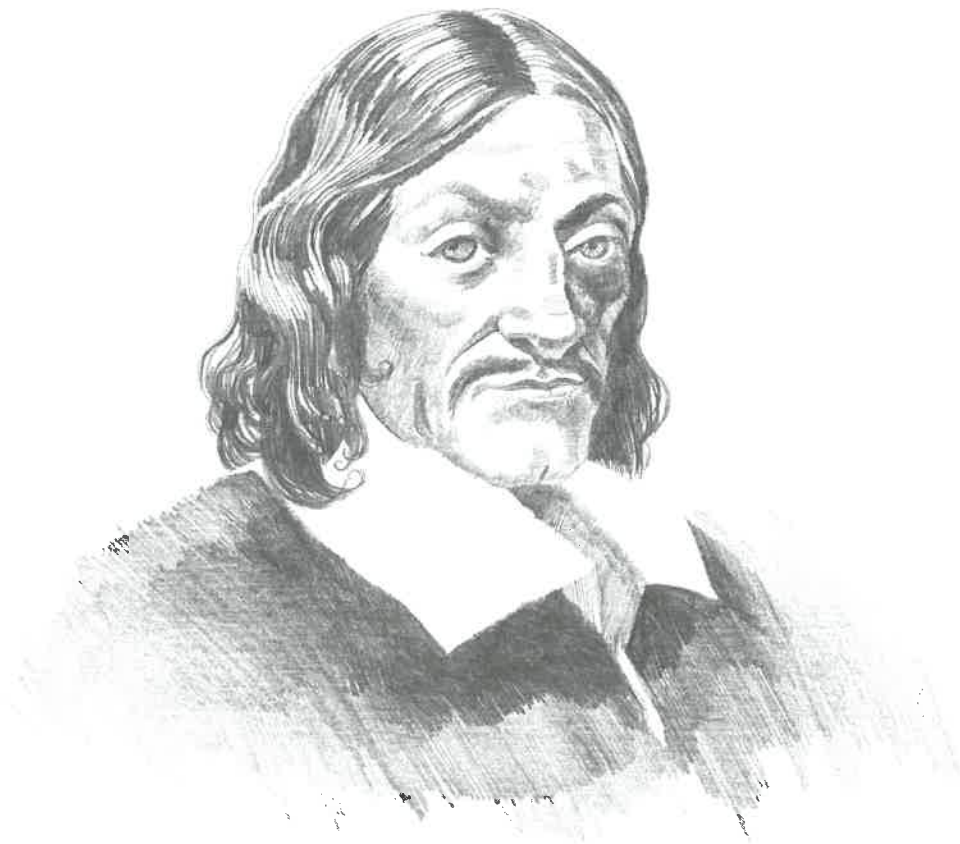
We may now summarize our findings as to the difference between the basic Greek and Hebrew dualism. Greek dualism is that of two worlds, the visible and the invisible, the phenomenal and the noumenal, becoming and being, appearance and reality. Man belongs to both worlds by virtue of the fact that he is both body and soul or mind. “God” can be known only by the control of the bodily appetites, that the mind may be free from material pollutions to contemplate the divine realities. Finally, the soul must escape from the wheel of bodily existence to return to the divine world where it really belongs.

The Hebrew view is not a dualism of two worlds, but a religious dualism of God versus man. Man is God’s creature; creation is the realm of God’s constant activity; and God makes himself known and speaks to men in the ebb and flow of history. Man is not a bipartite creature of the divine and human, of soul and body; in his total being he is God’s creature and remains a part of creation. Therefore the redemption of man and the redemption of creation belong together. Salvation consists of fellowship with God in the midst of earthly existence and will finally mean the redemption of the whole man together with his environment. At the heart of the Old Testament view is God—a living personal being—who visits man in earthly existence to establish fellowship with himself and who will finally visit man to establish his perfect rule and redemption in the world.

In sum, the Greek view is that “God” can be known only by the flight of the soul from the world and history; the Hebrew view is that God can be known because he invades history to meet men in historical experience.

¹¹²Josephus *War* ii. 156; Enoch 9:3, 10; Wis. 15:8, 14; IV Macc. 18:24.

¹¹³See Enoch 91:16; 103:4; 104:2; Jub. 23:31; IV Macc. 18:23; Wis. Sol. 3:4.



Descartes

The Justification of the Body

Geoffrey J. Paxton

We seldom think of justification as the justification—or at least as including the justification—of the *body*. For some strange reason we conceive of the sinner in a disembodied manner.

Despite this cold exclusion of the body from the merciful justification of the sinner, what else can the justification of the sinner mean except the *inclusion* of his body? What sinner is ever justified in a disembodied state? What sinner is there that may be thought of apart from his body?

Why do we ignore the body in the justification of the sinner? “The sinner is more than his body,” we may

say. This, however, is not the issue. The issue is: is the body included in the sinner? Can we meaningfully speak of the justification of the sinner without his body? Is not the body constitutive of existence in the world?

By and large, the evangelical church has tended to neglect the body. Such neglect is deep in the tradition of Western thought. From Plato to Descartes and modern idealism it has been thought that the true self or the real man lies *within* and that the body is an appendage. In the words of philosopher Gilbert Ryle, man has been thought of as the “ghost-in-the-



machine" (cf. *The Concept of Mind*).

The neglect of the body and the wider neglect of the world in much evangelical pietism is the sad testimony to the hegemony of Greek thought over the church. We have listened to Plato and Aristotle and not to Jesus Christ.

It is clear that this approach to the world and to the body in particular is a constituent element of the *two-sphere* mentality of Roman Catholics and pietistic evangelicals. Strong in our thinking and behaving has been the idea that there is the supernatural and the natural spheres, the "sacred" and the "profane," the "spiritual" and the "secular." The two spheres have

been seen as two conflicting and irreconcilable antitheses. The former (i.e., the "supernatural," "sacred" or "spiritual" sphere) is the domain of God, while the latter (the "natural," "secular" or "profane") is the domain of the devil.

This mentality has caused (and is still causing) havoc in the church. To begin with, it has given many Christian employees a deep-seated inferiority about their type of employment. They find themselves in the "secular." Has God put them there? Perhaps they have only been able to maintain God's second best! Not a few are apologetic about this, especially if there are members of the same family in "the full-time service for the Lord" in some "spiritual" work.

Next, the *mind* has been given uncontested position over the *manual*. Do we not instinctively bow to the professor and take the factory hand for granted?

The neglect of the body and the wider neglect of the world in much evangelical pietism is the sad testimony to the hegemony of Greek thought over the church.

How many of such factory hands do we find on our church boards and in our church sessions? Have we not heard people say, "He is only an *ordinary* carpenter"? What is meant, of course, is not that there are extraordinary carpenters but that all carpenters are ordinary when compared (even subconsciously) with the academic.

Not least—and the particular concern of this article—is the approach to the body that such a Grecian two-sphere mentality has produced. To many the body is a necessary evil. The body is the bridgehead to the powers of darkness. The body is passing away, while the soul will live forever. Why then afford the body too much recognition? Indeed, it needs to be kept back or kept under. It must not be dressed too nicely or accentuated in the slightest. It may ensnare some would-be-innocent *soul*. Of course, if this is the status of the body, it matters not too much *what sort* of material is fed into it or *how much*. Evangelical Christians, by and large, accept (without complaint) the most atrocious quality of food in their pantries and in their stomachs. Some of the food is not fit to be served to animals, yet it is blithely consumed by the evangelical.

The body has little or no connection with the soul or the spiritual in this widespread type of thinking among evangelicals. What difference does it make if this or that food is consumed in this or that amount?



However, the fact is that this is a question which matters much, because the ill effects of this kind of mentality have reached epidemic proportions. Good members of the army of the Lord are being killed with alarming rapidity. Of those who survive there are cripples or those who are so stuffed and clogged up that they are virtually useless anyway. In Australia cardiovascular disease is a major killer. Obesity is a major problem in the United States as well as in some other countries.

To die of old age is now a rarity. But it is even more tragic that so many evangelical Christians accept this fact with fatalistic resignation as "the way things are today." Of course, death is the doorway to "higher service" (not spatio-temporally but qualitatively!). Why bemoan it, then? Should not the (keen) Christian welcome

it? Is it not unspiritual to shake the fist at death?

Of course, satiating the body because of its evil nature is but one way of approach. The other way is to ascetically beat the body to death—or very close to death. Starvation and socio-physical flagellation will keep it in check.

Yes, the two-sphere mentality is coming back upon us with a vengeance. The ill health of all too many of us moderns is eloquent enough testimony to that. So is the ecological problem which is but the extension of our treatment of the body to the wider creation. Modern man—and this includes all too many of us Christians—is on a rampage of pollution and destruction.

What is the proper perspective? Is there anything that will provide us with a way out of this dilemma? Indeed there is. Thank God there is.



The Gospel and the Body

There are at least two ways in which we may state the bearing of the Christian gospel upon our approach to our body. Note, however, that they are two ways of stating the same reality.

1. God has taken to Himself *the* human body. Notice, we did not say that God has taken to Himself (in Jesus Christ) *a* human body. People used to say that God assumed “human nature” (a universal phenomenon) and not a single individual. But the phrase “human nature” is now under fire as an abstraction. Today (and correctly so) it is more proper to speak in a way that emphasizes the total man (*totus homo*). We must affirm that God assumed *the* human body (meaning the body of every man and not just of one man).

Notice also that we say that God has taken to Himself in Jesus Christ the *human body*. God has assumed matter in the incarnation. All who wish to deny matter in whatever form are forced to deny the incarnation also. In Jesus Christ, the God-Man, we have the reality of God and the reality of the world. We do not have one without the other.

Since the coming of the Christian gospel in Jesus Christ, it is not possible to deprecate the body (and matter generally) without at the same time deprecating God. God has taken the body into the Godhead—forever. There could not be a stronger antidote to Greek thinking than this. It is no wonder that the Greek philosopher sought to deny that Jesus was truly man and that He had a true body. The philosopher postulated that it simply appeared as though (Docetism) Christ had a body. Matter was thought to be evil, and therefore it was claimed that Christ could not really have been human. The heretic, Apollinarius, tried to improve upon this Docetic heresy but ended up being tutored by Plato

God has taken to Himself in Jesus Christ the human body.

and denying the *full* manhood of the Saviour.

Both these heresies (Docetism and Apollinarianism) represent the recoil of the Greek mentality at the assuming of human flesh by God. All who wish to deprecate the body must join either the Docetists or the Apollinarians. But this much they should realize before embarking on either course: if you do not have the body, *you cannot have God either*. Body-haters are God-haters.

2. Another way of putting the situation is to say that what God has *joined together* (Himself and matter, Himself and the human body), let no man put asunder. Whereas we previously stressed what it was that God assumed (the body), here we stress the *union* of God and the body.

The Christian gospel is the end of a two-sphere mentality. The reality of God is to be seen in the reality of the world. There is an *inseparable union* between the “supernatural” and the “natural,” the “sacred” and the “secular.”

Notwithstanding the fact that God is greater than His Self-presentation in the world (cf. *Extra-Calvinisticum*), it remains an unalterable dictum that the reality

The Christian gospel is the end of a two-sphere mentality.

To affirm God without the body is to deny the gospel, and to affirm the body without God is to deny the gospel.

of God is to be found within the reality of this world.

Some today have fallen into the trap of *reducing God to the world* on the basis of the truth of our previous paragraph. This is to try to have the world at the expense of the Almighty God. However, those who have tried to have God without the world are in no better position. Both ways are false and gospel-denying. The reality of God and the reality of the world are present in the *one* (union) reality, Jesus Christ.

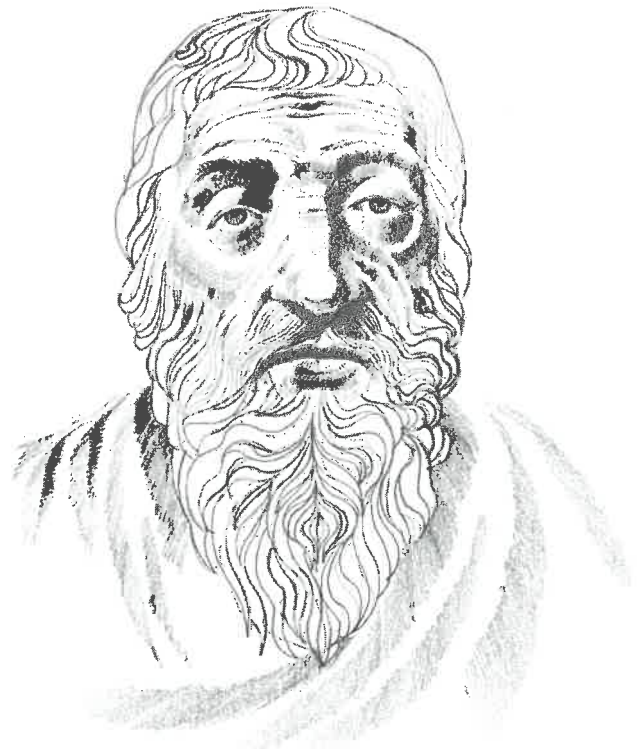
Some have tried to deny this fact. Nestorius—or if not he, his followers—sought to make Jesus Christ into “two persons and two natures.” To this the church said a firm “No!” (cf. Chalcedon, A.D. 451). Jesus Christ is the reality of God (divine) and the reality of the world (human) *in one Person*.

Matter (and the body) is more than justified by the gospel of the God-Man, Jesus Christ. To deny the body is to deny the gospel. It is as simple and as tragic as that. To affirm God without the body is to deny the gospel, and to affirm the body without God is to deny the gospel.

The church Fathers in the Council of Chalcedon gave us the proper perspective. There is a *union* without *fusion* of God and the body (God cannot be reduced to body, and body cannot be elevated to Godhood); there is a *distinction* but no *separation* of God and the body in the Person of Jesus Christ.

If God has justified the human body of believers in Jesus Christ, then where is our sanctification of the body as the (only proper) loving response to that action of God? Are we showing that we believe the gospel of the reconciliation of the world (and that means the body) to God in Jesus Christ? Are we convinced that *now* the body has been put into its right relationship to God in Christ? Or do we have a “half-Christ”? Our approach to the body is our approach to the gospel. Do we believe, then?

Our approach to the body is our approach to the gospel.



Nestorius

The Body and Christian Theology

Robert D. Brinsmead

In his letters to the Corinthian church the apostle Paul tried to correct a type of super-spirituality which depreciated the human body. He contended that the body was God's temple which would be resurrected at the last day (1 Cor. 3:16, 17; 6:18, 19; 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Cor. 15).

The early apologists for the Christian faith had to contend against the same Grecian influence by stoutly maintaining three fundamental things—that God created a material universe including the human body, that the incarnation was a bodily reality, and that there will be a resurrection of the body at the last day. This is how it came about that these three Christian affirmations figured so prominently in the Apostles' Creed.

Many of the early church Fathers were educated in Greek philosophy or came under its influence. The result was an amalgamation of Christian theology with Greek philosophy.

The theology of the early Middle Ages was dominated by the towering figure of Augustine of Hippo, who completed the fusion of the Pauline emphasis of sin and grace through faith with a Neoplatonic view of man that stressed the imprisonment of the soul in the body. This dualism led to an increasing asceticism in the life of the medieval church, which meant an attitude of indifference or even outright hostility toward the body. The official theology of the church concentrated on getting the soul of the believer into heaven, through the Sacraments, or at least on saving it from hell, as the doctrine of purgatory developed.—James N. Lapsley, *Salvation and Health*, p. 39.



St. Augustine

Luther exploded the whole pietistic framework of medieval theology by returning to a more biblical view of man. He understood that “flesh” and “spirit” were not two parts of man but the whole man seen from two different aspects.

Coming down to the medieval period, Lapsley continues:

If the health of the body was not forgotten, it was once again generally relegated to the status of a matter of relative indifference, which might as well be sacrificed to gain eternal bliss. This was the situation that obtained as Martin Luther grew toward manhood at the turn of the sixteenth century.—*Ibid.*, p. 41.

The medieval church did not understand what the New Testament meant by “flesh” and “spirit.” In real Greek fashion she understood these terms to designate two parts of man—the higher and lower natures. Since things like body, work, eating and sexuality belonged to the “flesh,” they were regarded as inferior functions, if

not tainted with evil. On the other hand, prayers, fasting, celibacy and religious tasks were regarded as “spiritual” and therefore superior, if not meritorious.

Luther exploded this whole pietistic framework by returning to a more biblical view of man. He understood that “flesh” and “spirit” were not two parts of man but the whole man seen from two different aspects. All that man did in his natural state was “flesh,” especially such “higher” things like praying, fasting, celibacy and religious devotions. And all that which man did under the control of the Spirit was “spiritual” even though it was corporeal activity such as working, eating, and performing family duties.

Subsequent Protestant theology, however, tended to make as great a dichotomy between salvation and body as the church did before the Reformation. Its overriding concern was to save the soul and get it into heaven. The Bible also talks about saving souls, but by this it means saving whole persons, not a part of the *totus homo*.

Results of Super-spirituality

An unbiblical super-spirituality which depreciates the body can be a real handicap in the church’s task of reaching those outside her fold. The man in the street often feels that the church’s concern is not for his concrete corporeal existence. He thinks that Christians are preoccupied with the flight of the soul from the material world, and he feels that Christian theology is too unre-

An unbiblical super-spirituality which depreciates the body can be a real handicap in the church’s task of reaching those outside her fold.

lated to real life. Where did cartoonists get the idea of depicting heaven as a ghost sitting on a cloud, strumming a harp? How can a real man, who is a lover of his own flesh (Eph. 5:29)—which in itself is not sinful but is man’s God-given nature—and who is a lover of the material world, find anything really winsome in a “salvation” like that? He is often “turned off” by this talk about “salvation” of the soul as if such “salvation” meant some form of incorporeal existence which he cannot possibly appreciate—in fact, an existence which he must, as man, find quite repugnant (see 2 Cor. 5:3, 4).



Luther

The word “salvation” has become so truncated through the influence of Christian philosophy on Christian theology that the word seldom means to modern ears what it meant in Bible times.

The problem is that the word *salvation* has become so truncated through the influence of Christian philosophy on Christian theology that the word seldom means to modern ears what it meant in Bible times. It has come to mean (or at least sounds like) salvation of a part of man. It is true that the resurrection of the body is still confessed, but it is tacked onto salvation almost like an eschatological afterthought.

A distorted anthropology distorts the healthy, down-to-earth realism of God’s loving concern for the whole man. It tends to the notion that God does not care, or at least



cares very little, for the body or the whole man as a totality. It is a dehumanizing view of man which fails to do justice to the biblical truth that it is the whole man whom God loves—man who in the totality of his existence eats and sleeps, works and plays, laughs and weeps; man who loves to see the light of the sun and dreads the darkness of the grave.

When the church presents anything less than a message of salvation of the whole man, when she fails in her mission to speak to the whole man, she abdicates vital territory which is then completely taken over by secular philosophies. Then she has to compete with false messiahs with one hand tied behind her back. But the church should be the bearer of the good news of the redemption and restoration of the total man.

A super-spirituality which depreciates the body also has a detrimental effect on believers within the church. If they think that salvation has little to do with man's corporeal existence but consists rather in a flight from that existence, this will distort their view of what it means to live the Christian life. Some will tend to think that the essence of holiness consists in ascetic withdrawal from all the joys of concrete bodily existence. A sharp distinction is then made between doing "secular work" and "the Lord's work." Heaven seems near only in devotional

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exercises or when the emotions are stirred in religious meetings. Spiritual euphoria is thought to be the atmosphere of heaven.

Or a concept of "soul-salvation" which is not a "whole-salvation" can lead people to think that since God is not very concerned with the body, neither should they be too concerned about how they treat the body. It is amazing how many Christians think that they display their spirituality by neglecting the body. If they hasten a coronary

by bad living habits, they think that this will be a good testimony of their dedication to the Lord's work.

While no evangelical Christian today would espouse the heresy that immoral acts are not a hindrance to holiness, still the Grecian view of the human body is difficult to shake off. Many of us still treat the body with shameful indifference. We make little effort to preserve our powers in the best possible condition. We invite great bodily debility by the indulgence of appetite and hurtful habits, and think that God is not concerned with how we regard the laws of life. By intemperance our powers of body and mind are greatly impaired, yet we think this has little or nothing to do with progress in the divine life. But so-called harmless indulgences of the flesh can enslave us and prove to be the greatest hindrance to soul sanctification. We need to distinguish between this spurious "Grecian sanctification" and the New Testament sanctification of the whole man.

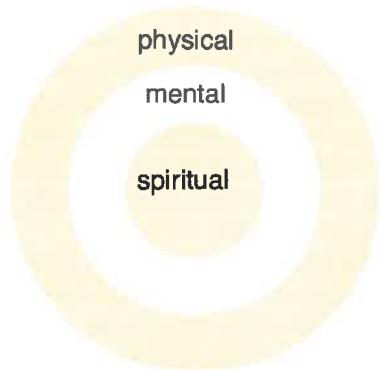
This type of emphasis which concentrates on an immaterial soul salvation has brought a reaction—a radical swing by one section of the church toward the "social gospel" and a message of salvation which concentrates on improving man's lot in this world. Either view—the salvation of the metaphysical "soul-box" to the exclusion of the body, or the salvation of the body without personal regeneration of the heart and the creation of a hope of the life hereafter—is a distortion of the biblical idea of salvation of the whole person, whom God wills to live in the totality of his existence in the enjoyment of all God's gifts in fellowship with God.

The Interrelation of the Physical, Mental and Spiritual Natures

Man has physical, mental and spiritual powers, which are closely related and integrated into one living person. Instead of man being like this:

physical + mental + spiritual

he is more like this:



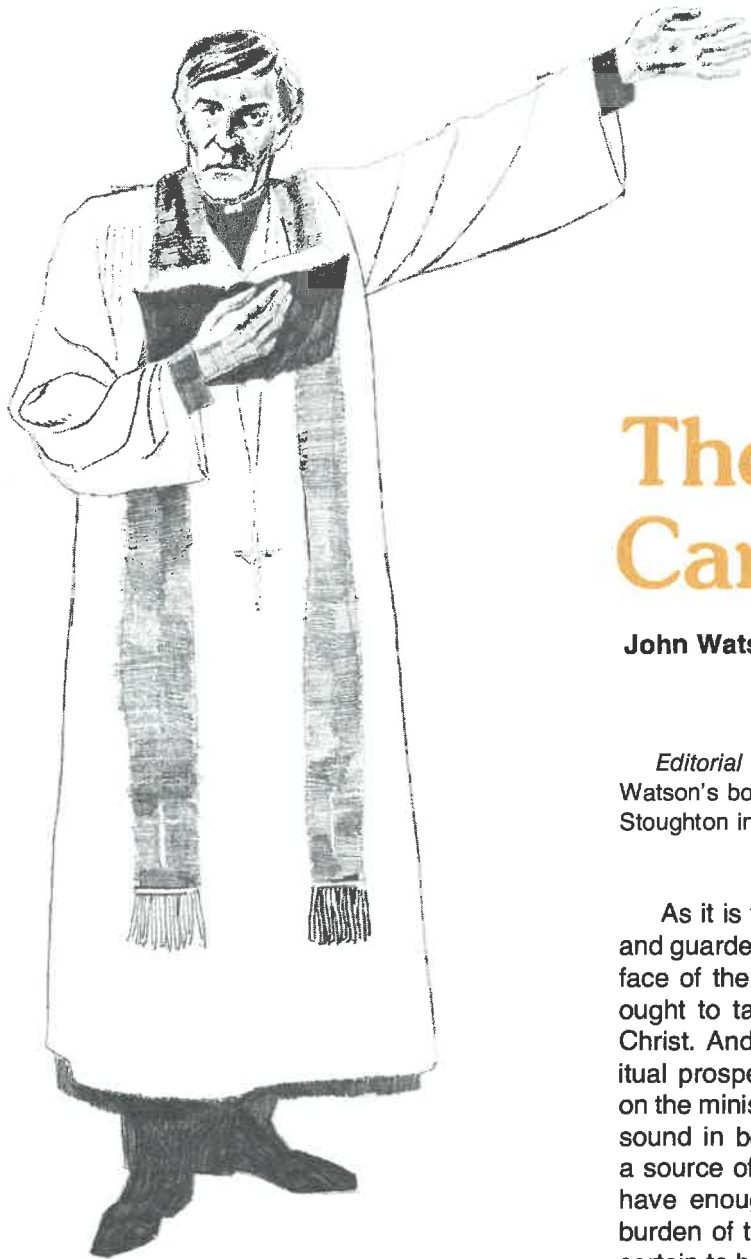
We need to distinguish between spurious "Grecian sanctification" and the New Testament sanctification of the whole man.

This means that whatever affects one part of man will affect the whole man. We cannot be truly healthy in one area of our existence unless we are healthy in every area. A sick body tends to depress the mind and the human spirit. Guilt can cause all sorts of physical disorders, while a merry heart does good like a medicine.

There are many people in this world who are looking for real health and quality of life. Surely the church has a message for them. She can tell them that they cannot find optimum well-being and quality of life while they ignore their spiritual health. Their life of estrangement from God, their hostility to Him, and their burden of guilt affect their mental and physical health. But what if they reply (as they might) that our neglect of the physical laws of life also prevents us from attaining optimum spiritual health?

Of course, this principle of the vital interrelation of our threefold nature means that while we are in this world we cannot realize perfect physical, mental or spiritual health. We cannot be perfect in one area unless we are perfect in every area. But we do have a completeness already by faith in Jesus Christ (Col. 2:10). In Him we are already restored and glorified at God's right hand (justification), and we wait for this perfect life to appear with Him (glorification) (Col. 3:2-4). In the meantime, however, it is our privilege and responsibility to glorify God by living in harmony with all the laws of our physical, mental and spiritual natures (sanctification). One thing is sure: we will inevitably begin to practice in the here and now what we hope to be in the there and then.

We will inevitably begin to practice in the here and now what we hope to be in the there and then.



The Minister's Care of Himself

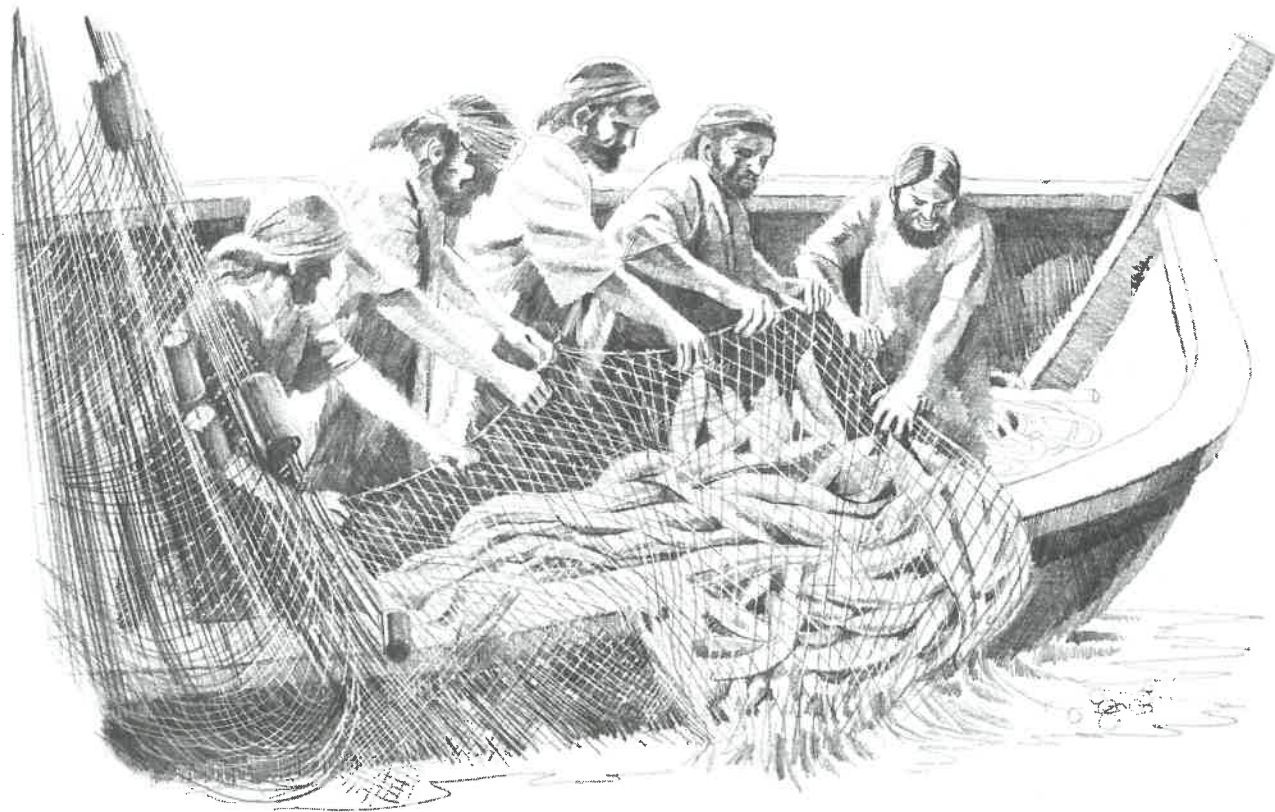
John Watson

Editorial Note: The following material is taken from John Watson's book, *The Cure of Souls*, published by Hodden and Stoughton in 1896.

As it is the will of God that the Church should be fed and guarded by a human ministry, there is no man on the face of the earth who has such responsibility, and who ought to take such care of himself, as the minister of Christ. And first he must see to his *health*, for the spiritual prosperity of a congregation depends very largely on the minister's being not only sound in doctrine but also sound in body. It is not merely that a valetudinarian is a source of endless anxiety to kind-hearted people who have enough concern in their own homes without the burden of the minister's weakness, and that the work is certain to be crippled with a leader that is afraid of breaking down, but, what is much more unfortunate and injurious, the invalidism of his body will certainly creep into his teaching, for, as a rule, one can only get robust sermons from a robust man.

One ought indeed to be thankful that Christ chose as His first apostles men not only of conspicuous spiritual genius, but also of a hardy, natural, wholesome habit of life—fishermen, and such like,—and that of the four Gospels that must remain for ever the authoritative docu-

As a rule, one can only get robust sermons from a robust man.



The spiritual prosperity of a congregation depends very largely on the minister's being not only sound in doctrine but also sound in body.

ments of our faith, three proceeded, directly or indirectly, from those weatherbeaten Galileans, and the fourth from a physician. Whatever may be said of later Christian literature, there is nothing sickly, unreal, mawkish, or gloomy in the Gospels. They are sober, sensible, downright, manly books, such as able-bodied men would write and real men like to read. The body is a factor in thinking, as well as in pulling ropes and forging iron. Suppose two men be both saints, you need not expect equally good stuff from each in the way of thought if one be sound in body and the other unsound. As a rule, any one who has inherited an inferior constitution, or whose nervous system is overwrought, or whose body is deformed, or who is a chronic dyspeptic, or who is in any way below the working average of strength, will be peevish in temper,

inclined to useless argument, fiercely intolerant of other people's views, a slave to crotchets, and pessimistic in the extreme. It is his misfortune, and allowance ought to be made for it. He may live above it, but the chances are he will not. One ought to extend to him every consideration, as to a crippled man, but it is wise to make some discount from his opinions. Unless he be singularly assisted by the grace of God, they will be less than true; he is sub-normal, and his views are apt to be sub-normal too—deficient in balance, sobriety, charity. When a minister is untouched in wind, sturdy in limb, clean in blood, you have a certain guarantee of bright, honest, manly thinking. He is not likely to be falsetto, hysterical, garrulous, simply because he is sound in body as well as in mind.

[It is, however, possible to be exasperatingly healthy, and one can understand a much tried woman being driven away from a minister whose radiant unlined face showed that he had never known pain, and who had married a rich wife, and taking refuge in a church whose minister had a liver and preached rampant Calvinism. 'Was yon a man'—so she put it—'for a widow with seven children to sit under?' Invalid ministers have a certain use and do gather sympathetic congregations—becoming a kind of infirmary chaplains. But their ecclesiastical and theological views must be taken with great caution.]

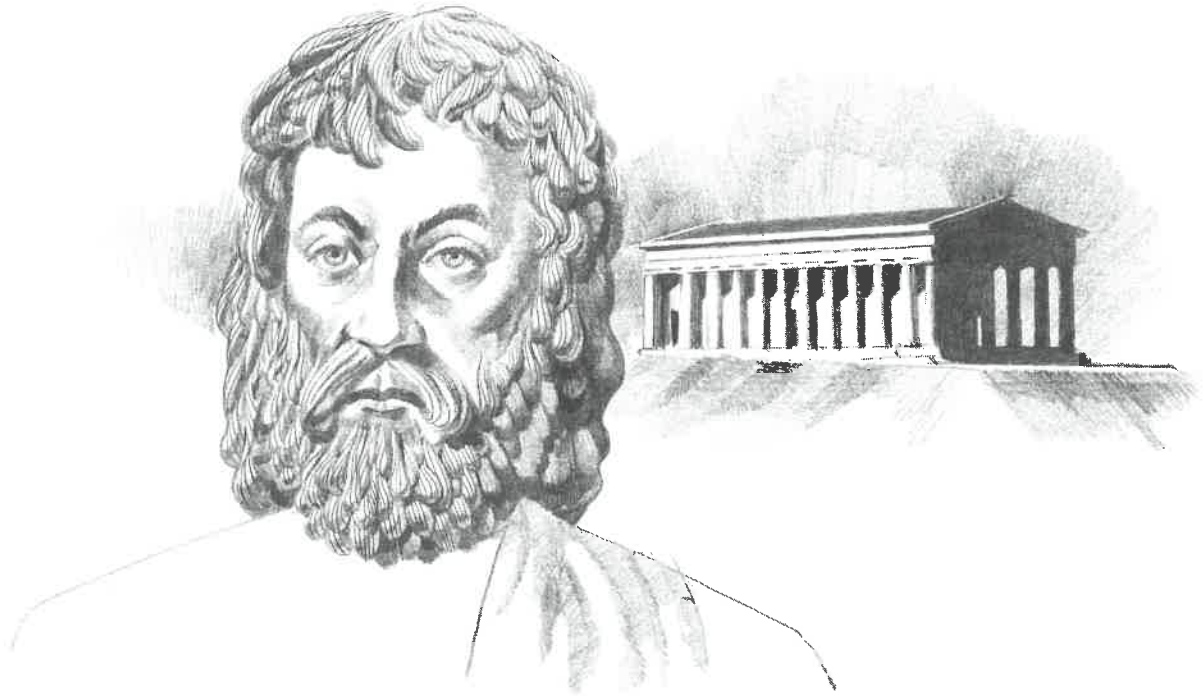
It is not extravagance to say that the physical health of theologians has affected the religious character of nations.

It is not extravagance to say that the physical health of theologians has affected the religious character of nations . . . During long centuries it was the custom of Christendom for a baron to send his able-bodied sons to the field and any deformed or sickly lad to the Church. Was it wonderful that theology and religion got out of touch with life, and became fantastic and unreasonable? Human life has now more doors for the infirm, and the Christian Church has ceased to be a home for incurables, but it is not as a rule the strong, stirring, full-blooded boys of a family who enter the ministry, but the lad who is half-alive, who plays no games, who is painfully composed. This is a public misfortune, since, if any other man be out of sorts, his wife suffers, but if a minister be below par a thousand people have a less successful life for a week. His business is to put heart in them for six days' work and trial, but for that enterprise a man's pulse must beat high and his own heart be buoyant. If his digestion be bad, then he goes into the pulpit and hits viciously at some heresy or mourns the decay of morals. The people, who had been expecting a glimpse of heaven, go home in despair . . .

Every church should have a physical examination at the entrance to the theological college, and only admit those men who would have passed as first-class lives with an insurance company. And the working minister should have his own rules of health—to have his study re-charged with oxygen every hour, to sleep with his bedroom window open, to walk four miles a day, to play an outdoor game once a week, to have six weeks' holiday a year and once in seven years three months—all that his thought and teaching may be oxygenated and the fresh air of Christianity fill the souls of his people.

The working minister should have his own rules of health so that his thought and teaching may be oxygenated and the fresh air of Christianity fill the souls of his people.





Aesculapius

How Spiritual Health Is Impaired by Neglect of Physical and Mental Health

D. Weston Allen, F.R.A.C.G.P.

Today if you are physically sick, you visit a doctor. If you are mentally disturbed, you have an appointment with a psychiatrist. And if you are spiritually distressed, you see your pastor. But this was not always the case. In ancient times the priest was the doctor, and the doctor was the priest. The surgeon was the servant of the priest. While this had some obvious disadvantages, the person was treated as a whole.

Under the influence of the Greek philosophers, especially Plato and Aristotle, a dualistic view of man was generally accepted—with an overwhelming emphasis on the soul. In the temples of Aesculapius soul-medicine was almost exclusively practiced. There was a time when the church was so influenced by Platonic dualism that the body, being matter, was regarded as evil and unworthy of any attention, study or care. Thus the spurious

Under the influence of the Greek philosophers, especially Plato and Aristotle, a dualistic view of man was generally accepted—with an overwhelming emphasis on the soul.



anatomy and physiology of Galen were unquestioningly taught as fact for over 1,000 years. The body was not only ignored but actually punished and abused in the interest of treating the soul. Virtually all disease was ascribed to demons. The use of matter for treatment of the body was considered to be the deification of earthly things. The temples of Aesculapius were replaced by monasteries where the priests performed their superstitious rites for the sick, including magic charms, hypnosis and faith healing. Thus began the rift between soul-oriented priests and body-oriented doctors—a rift which has been widening.

With the discovery of the germ and the study of physiology and biochemistry, rational body-oriented medicine was born and quickly assumed dominance over the priestly ministry, which retreated even more into the specialization of soul care.

The enormous advancement of medical, anthropological and psychological knowledge in the twentieth century has resulted in hyperspecialization and the further fragmentation of man. Thus the man who visits an otologist and happens to mention his abdominal discomfort is referred to the gastroenterologist with the unexpressed comment: "To me you are an ear, and the rest of you a tumor." Even the clergy, in an attempt to regain lost territory, are becoming hyperspecialists—marriage counselors, psychologists, sociologists and demonologists. Each tends to see disease, whether physical or spiritual, through his own specialty rather than as it relates to the whole person.

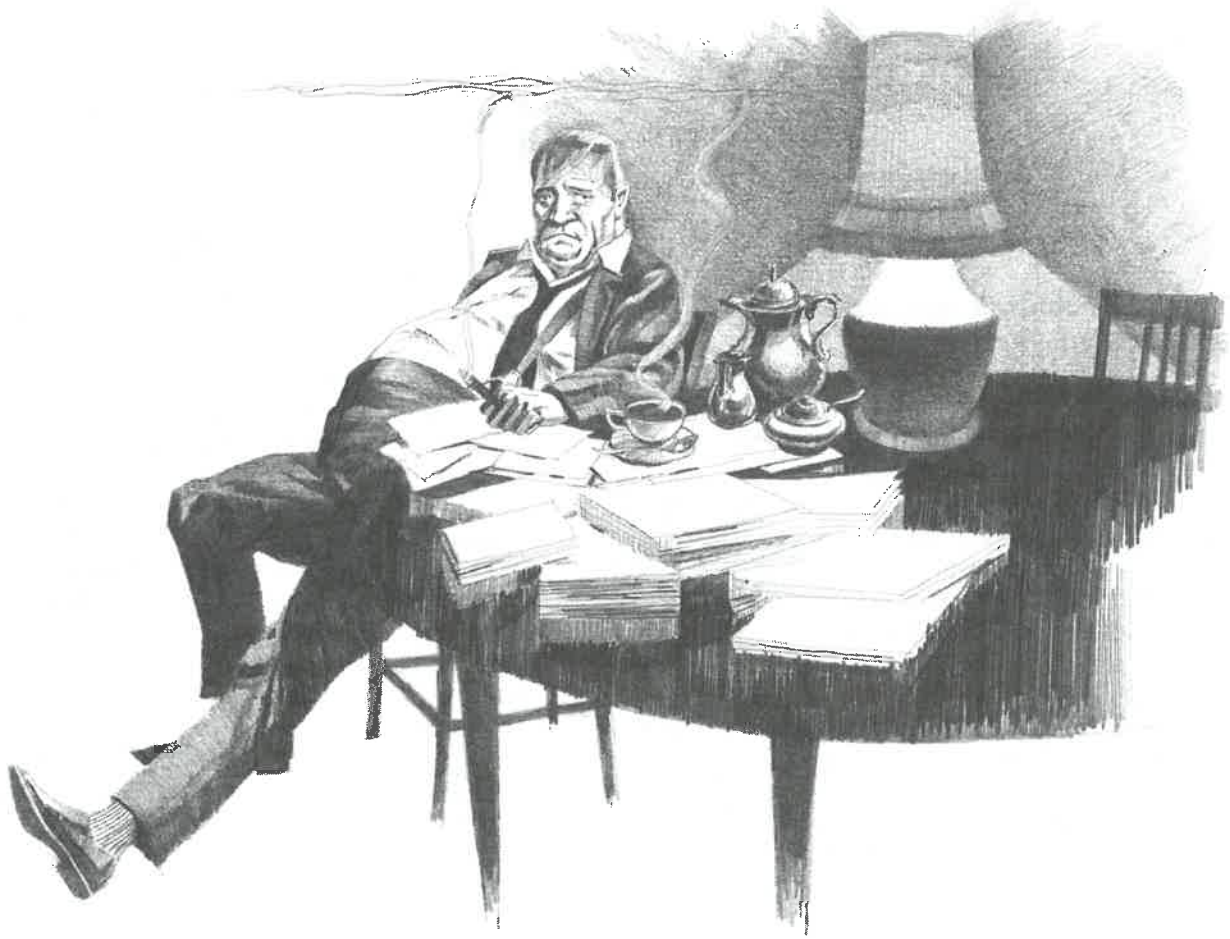
For example, a demonologist is inclined to see all abnormal behavior as a result of demon possession or oppression, while a psychologist may attempt to explain all behavior from a rational viewpoint which denies any supernatural influence. Both are likely to ignore the body and its influence.

An example of such hyperspecialization was recently told to me by a very sensible pastor who was confronted

The cause of disease, whether physical, mental or spiritual, is nearly always multifactorial—that is, it has more than one cause.

with a situation in which some self-styled demonologists were attempting to exorcise demons from a young woman who was obviously mentally disturbed. The woman was becoming progressively worse, more aggressive, destructive and uncontrollable, while all the time the demons were getting the blame. She was able to disrupt any journey by threatening to jump out of the car. Only by telling her to go right ahead if she wished to did her attitude begin to change! When the pastor confronted her with her moral and personal responsibility in life (toward herself, her body, and toward others) and with the objective gospel, the change in this young woman was quite amazing, and the "demons" left at once.

The cause of disease, whether physical, mental or spiritual, is nearly always multifactorial—that is, it has more than one cause. For example, heart disease is often caused by a combination of cigarette smoking, a high-fat diet, inactivity, obesity, hypertension, stress, diabetes and maybe heredity. The cause of tuberculosis is not merely the tubercle bacillus but a combination of incorrect breathing, malnutrition, alcoholism, fatigue and unhygienic practices. The organisms flourish in damp, dark, squalid environments and are rapidly destroyed by direct sunshine. The cause of disease is not merely the germ but the violation of one or more of the laws of life. Your peptic ulcer may be caused by a combination of what you eat and what eats you—and the later more important than the former.



The Body/Mind Relationship

There is a vital relationship between the body and the mind. Whatever affects one will affect the other. It is impossible to have health in one without the other. The concept of psychosomatic disease (psycho—the mind; soma—the body), conceived by Paracelsus in the sixteenth century, has been well accepted. In almost every disease the mind plays some part, either to a greater or lesser extent. The powerful effect of the mind on the body has become the subject of a highly specialized science and field of medicine. It has been popularized in many books, such as *None of These Diseases*, by Dr. S. I. McMillen (London: Lakeland, 1972).

So intricate is this relationship, however, that it is seldom a simple case of mind over matter. The mental state itself may be caused by the physical condition—a sort of somato-psycho-somatic state. Dr. John Ellard, psychiatrist in the Northside Clinic, Greenwich, N.S.W., Australia, rightly states, "More and more it becomes clear that there is no absolute distinction between physical and psychological illness and that in the understanding of

There is a vital relationship between the body and the mind. Whatever affects one will affect the other.

every illness, these factors (and social ones) need to be considered . . . a precept often ignored, even in the most lofty of institutions."—*Modern Medicine of Australia*, Mar. 17, 1975, p. 55. He emphasizes the need to consider all factors for each individual, to look at the whole man. "In a sense, the wheel has turned full circle; man is becoming a unity again and the old psyche-soma division is more of a hindrance than a help."—*Ibid.*

While Socrates taught, "You should not treat body without soul," Christians today need reminding to not treat soul without body. Many a good Christian has become distraught over his spiritual state—his lack of faith, failure in prayer, gloomy and pessimistic thoughts, lack of love, joy and peace of mind, irritability, anxiety, depression—when the real problem is largely physical.

While Socrates taught, "You should not treat body without soul," Christians today need reminding to not treat soul without body.

Spiritual Problems Are Sometimes Somatically Based

Obvious somatic causes of mental and spiritual problems include the organic diseases which affect the brain and nervous system. Destruction of brain cells through an injury, tumor, poison, infection or stroke may result in mental apathy, impairment of mental, moral or emotional faculties, and marked changes in the whole personality.

For optimum functioning the brain must have a good circulation of good-quality blood, supplying the twelve billion brain cells with a rich supply of oxygen, nutrition, fluid and hormones. Insufficient thyroid, adrenal and sex hormones can all greatly affect the personality and depress the mood and spirit, which in turn may further depress these endocrine glands of the body. Conversely, an overactive thyroid can cause extreme irritability and loss of emotional control, again creating a vicious cycle.

But there are much more subtle changes than these, which often greatly affect the Christian's sanctification. Mrs. T. is just one example of this. A Christian for most of her life and a regular churchgoer, Mrs. T. was beginning to experience some problems in her marriage. Her husband no longer attended church, and her own interest was waning. Bible study seemed a laborious effort. Concentration and memory were failing. And her thoughts would wander even during prayer. Mrs. T. was particularly worried about her increasing tendency to "explode" at her husband and the children for no apparent reason, and she was even more worried about her bouts of depression, which were becoming more severe and more frequent. Mrs. T., aware of her spiritual problem, went to her pastor and was given some very helpful counseling on the gospel, Bible study, prayer and interpersonal relationships, but she made no marked improvement. It seemed that God was no longer real to her, and the gospel seemed too difficult to understand. Castigating herself for her lack of faith and ineffective witness, she became even more depressed. At times she would be so overcome with guilt that she felt she must have committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit.

The cause of Mrs. T.'s condition was neither wholly spiritual nor wholly physical, but both. Her diet was greatly impoverished, consisting almost entirely of

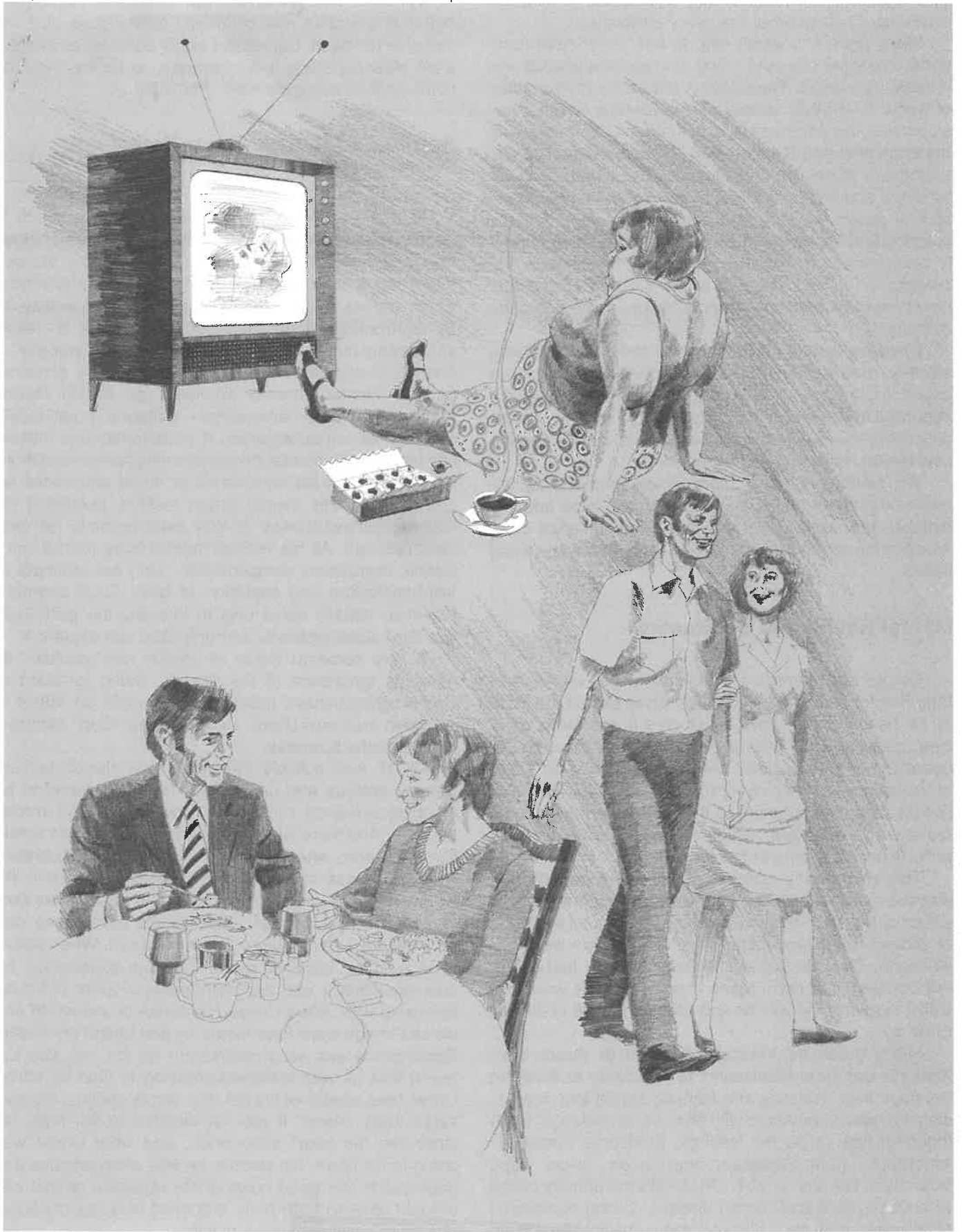
highly refined and processed food, with large quantities of sugar and fat. She had no regular exercise other than her (semiautomated) housework, was considerably overweight, ate too much at night, slept poorly, and whipped her tired nerves with six cups of coffee throughout the day. Waking with a furred tongue and bad breath, she would usually get the day off to a bad start by skipping breakfast. Mornings were usually a mad rush to get the children off to school before leaving for work herself. Evenings were little better, and her only relaxation was in front of the TV before going to bed.

This typical Western lifestyle was largely responsible for Mrs. T.'s mental and spiritual condition. Her brain was so starved for good fuel (and vitamins), so choked up with waste matter, and so drained through constant stimulation with caffeine that it was almost impossible for her to discern spiritual things, which in turn affected her physically. She was caught in a downward spiral. Only by paying careful attention to her physical and mental habits, as well as the spiritual, could Mrs. T. break the vicious cycle. This she did. By forgoing her TV viewing and going to bed earlier, she was able to arise earlier in the morning and prepare herself and her family a substantial breakfast (their main meal) without the usual rush. Refined sugar and cereals were replaced with fruit and whole grains. Fats, spices and stimulants were virtually eliminated from the diet. Instead of coffee a large glass of water (six per day) and a walk were taken during coffee breaks. A long walk with the family in the evenings after a light supper and hiking on weekends provided additional exercise. Within days of commencing her new lifestyle Mrs. T. began to feel like a new woman. Her spiritual life improved greatly, and today both she and her husband are attending church with renewed zeal and are rejoicing in the gospel. They would not go back to their old lifestyle for anything.

There are others whose spiritual life is impeded by their physical habits and poor health. A famous doctor at the turn of the century was consulted by a woman with severe depression and spiritual problems, certain that she had committed the unpardonable sin. When the doctor saw her tongue, he exclaimed, "No wonder!"

If a pastor has a good message and yet finds his congregation apathetic, it may not all be Satan's doing. Experiments have shown that oxygen deprivation from stale air impairs the judgment, dulls the intellect, and makes people impatient and irritable. If you pray for the Spirit to open the people's hearts, you may have something to do by opening the windows.

Vitamin B deficiency (due largely to eating refined, processed cereals) results in insomnia, irritability, confusion, forgetfulness, apathy, inability to concentrate, hallucinations, delusions, and manic and paranoid behavior. At the famous Mayo Clinic a group of women were placed on a vitamin B deficient diet not dissimilar to the average American diet. Within days there was a complete change in personality. They became so



nervous, irritable, neurotic and uncooperative that the experiment had to be prematurely terminated.

Many people, possibly one in ten, suffer from functional hypoglycemia, and many of these are nervous and irritable as a result. The cause is excessive consumption of sugar and other simple carbohydrates, which overstimulates the pancreas and actually results in starving the brain of sugar. A substantial protein breakfast can go a long way in helping this situation. The tendency to impatience and irritability in midmorning may not be due to lack of prayer but to lack of a good breakfast. Artificial coloring and flavorings in processed foods have recently been shown to cause hyperactivity in children. According to Dr. Ben Feingold of the Kaiser Permanente, they tend to be restless, naughty, quarrelsome and often dishonest.

Exercise is one of the best remedies for tension, anxiety, depression and hypochondria. It improves psychological stability. Adequate sleep is also very important for a right mental attitude and a healthy personality. Prolonged sleep deprivation will cause apathy, depression, irritability and aggression.

We could give many more illustrations of how improper treatment of the body affects the mind and, inevitably, the spiritual life. Obviously, no Christian interested in his spiritual health should ignore sensible living habits.

Mental Habits and Spirituality

Others are mentally and spiritually sick because of their mental and emotional habits. They expect the mind to be healthy when they never give it any stern exercise, grappling with difficult problems, new thoughts, or questions of truth. Instead, they feed the mind on a diet of newspapers, exciting fiction stories, television and gossip. The sensory input to the mind determines one's beliefs and attitudes, which in turn determine one's actions and reactions to life situations.

The will in many cases is poorly developed through disease or wrong use. Many are sick through the wrong action of the will. They make their decisions on the basis of subjective feelings rather than the objective weight of evidence. They do something because they feel like it, not because it is right. Many chronic invalids would be well if they only thought so and enlisted the aid of the will to be so.

Many make no attempt to guard or direct their thoughts but allow themselves to daydream or dwell on the past, their mistakes and failures, sordid and depressing themes, or the future with anxious forebodings. Such thoughts flow on to the feelings, producing "negative" emotions—guilt, remorse, depression, anger, lust, frustration, fear and anxiety. These are the primary cause of both physical and mental disease. Giving expression to thoughts, both good and bad, more indelibly fixes them

in the mind and influences the emotions. Repressing negative thoughts and emotions, however, is also destructive to health. Repressed anger surfaces as depression. How important it is, therefore, to fix the mind on noble and elevating themes! (Phil 4:8).

Spiritual Problems Affect Mental and Physical Health

In many cases of mental "illness" the problem is largely spiritual or moral. Professor J. E. Adams, in his book, *Competent to Counsel* (Grand Rapids: Baker), takes issue with Freudian and Rogerian philosophy which denies human responsibility to the mentally ill. By confronting people classified as mentally ill—even schizophrenics—as morally responsible people, a change in attitudes and beliefs can often be achieved and the "illness" cured or alleviated (pp. 26-33). Mental "illness" is often a camouflage—a means of self-justification or of self-acceptance. A person may find that he can live with his mental illness (blaming his nerves) more easily than with his conscience or moral and social responsibilities. His mental illness justifies (explains) his actions, his selfishness. It may even promote his self-centeredness. All his mental mechanisms (denial, projection, repression, compensation, etc.) are attempts at self-justification and expiation of guilt. Such attempts, however, usually serve only to intensify the guilt. Guilt is a God-sized problem, and only God can expiate it.

A very common cause of mental and spiritual "illness" is ignorance of the gospel. Being ignorant of God's righteousness (justification), people go about to establish their own (Rom. 10:3). Playing "God" can be a very stressful business.

Mr. H. was actively involved in the church but extremely anxious and depressed. There appeared to be no physical reason. His diet was good. He had no worries at home. And there was no apparent cause for his condition. However, when given a *Spiritual Health Appraisal Test*, the cause of his condition became apparent. He believed that God accepted him on the basis of his faith in Jesus Christ. He was "sure" of his acceptance with God because Christ was living in his heart. When asked what was the basis of stable Christian experience, he answered that it was his maintaining a warm heart relationship with Jesus Christ. His sense of self-worth and his self-image were determined by and based upon what God's grace was accomplishing in his life. He also believed that he was rendered pleasing to God by letting Christ take control of his life. His whole spiritual life was subjectively based. It was all directed to his faith, his inner life, his heart experience, and what Christ was doing in his heart. No wonder he was often anxious and depressed! The good news of the objective gospel has brought relief to both body and mind of many prisoners of a hopelessly subjective religion.

Improper treatment of the body affects the mind and, inevitably, the spiritual life.

I have known of patients who became absolutely distraught about their vain attempts at developing a "happy, radiant Christian personality." This overwhelming preoccupation with the inner experience is self-defeating. It is unhealthy—spiritually, mentally and physically. If ministers of religion do not preach the gospel of God's work for us in Christ and make that the foundation of faith, they turn people into spiritual neurotics. True faith is a way of health for the whole man because it goes out of itself to Another. To live by faith is to get your eyes off yourself and to live by focusing on a new center.

Of course, one cannot conclude that a person who suffers mental illness does not believe the gospel. There are many good Christians who fully understand the gospel and who take every possible care with their health but yet are plagued with nervous disorders. The effects of heredity and environment cannot be entirely overcome. Early childhood experiences, social factors,

and hormonal and other medical conditions quite beyond our control may be responsible.

In all cases of disease, whether physical, mental or spiritual, a law has been violated, either by ourselves, by our ancestors, or by others. The wages of such transgression are disease and death upon the entire human race, but the gift of God is eternal life—total health forever—through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 6:23). Although we cannot achieve total physical, mental and spiritual health until glorification, we may possess it now by faith because it is God's gift in Jesus Christ. Motivated by the gospel and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we then begin to practice this total health now in sanctification through compliance with the physical as well as the mental and moral laws which govern our being.

The good news of the objective gospel has brought relief to both body and mind of many prisoners of a hopelessly subjective religion.

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