

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

shall take place in Jerusalem; but why would it never do for a Prophet to perish outside Jerusalem? The following verse refers to Jerusalem as the City which has always slain its Prophets and stoned the messengers sent to her. It is an established custom which must not be violated; precedent points to Jerusalem as the place of prophetic martyrdoms. This is severe irony, for never before has Jesus shown Himself so careful of custom or precedent. The fact that He refused to be bound by tradition was precisely the ground of the Pharisees' hostility. Jesus is now 'twitting' the Pharisees with their love of observation of precedent, and ironically assuring them that, in regard to His death, all tradition shall be duly observed. Let us reconstruct the scene. The Pharisees come to warn Him of the intentions of Herod. We can easily believe that Herod Antipas might have evil designs, but what astonishes us is the manifestation of concern for Jesus on the part of the Pharisees. Was it genuine?

We know of the later alliance between the Pharisees and the Herodians. They were probably already acting in concert. Herod doubtless wished to be rid of Jesus for several reasons. He was certainly a man who, though he lacked the will to change his manner of life, felt uncomfortably accused in conscience by the preaching of John, and therefore we may presume by the teaching of Jesus. But Herod was also afraid. There were times when he supposed that Jesus was John the Baptist, whom he had beheaded, returned from the dead. The

memory of John haunted him, so Herod was afraid to lay hands on Jesus although he would gladly see Him removed beyond his jurisdiction.

This desire to shift the responsibility for action against Jesus is manifested again at a later stage. When Pilate sent Him to Herod, Herod sent Him back to Pilate.

This timely warning was therefore most probably prearranged. If Herod would not move to arrest Jesus, the Pharisees were confident that they could get the Sanhedrim to do so. It therefore suits both Herod and the Pharisees that Jesus should be driven into Judea, and no doubt Herod gave them permission to announce to Jesus the danger in which He stood in order to hasten His departure into Judea.

The Lord's reply is most suitable to this reading of the situation. The phrase 'Go and tell that fox' has in view the cunning behind the intrigue, and the reply that follows may be paraphrased thus: 'I am not going. I bide My time. I have work to do here for a few days yet. No Herod shall prevent Me from completing My task.' The next sentences seem to be addressed specifically to the Pharisees. Let us paraphrase again. To them He says, 'Don't be disappointed, however. When the time comes I go to Jerusalem. Then you can do your worst. Your warning about Herod is too transparent. It is at your hands that I shall suffer death. It would never do for a Prophet to perish outside Jerusalem.'

F. A. FARLEY.

Leytonstone.

Entre Nous.

WE have pleasure in announcing, as requested, that a Summer School of Theology for men and women is to be held at Oxford from August 6th to 17th. It will embrace about forty Lectures, under the general heading of 'Aspects of Contemporary Theology,' which will be treated in connexion with the Philosophy and Psychology of Religion, Biblical Study, Comparative Religion, and current movements in Sociology, Science, and Literature. The School will be opened on the evening of August 6th with an Address by the Rev. Dr. Selbie, Principal of Mansfield. The list of expected Lecturers includes the Right Rev. the Bishop of Gloucester, Professors K. Budde

(Marburg), E. De Faye (Paris), A. S. Eddington, Robert H. Kennett, Jas. Moffatt, W. P. Paterson, A. S. Peake, K. H. Roessingh (Leiden), J. A. Smith, Graham Wallas, Drs. William Brown, J. E. Carpenter, H. Gow, Stanley A. Mellor, P. H. Wicksteed, Revs. F. E. Hutchinson, H. D. A. Major, Charles E. Raven, A. E. J. Rawlinson, D. C. Simpson, Father Leslie J. Walker, S.J., Mr. Alban B. Widgery, the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din.

TWO TEXTS.

Lk. x. 41, 42.

'What did Jesus mean when He said, "One thing is needful"?' Did He mean to say that one thing

was needful for Mary and Martha alike? Was He thinking at all of what *they* needed? That is the general interpretation, but I am persuaded that it is wrong. If you will look at the Revised Version you will find in the margin an alternative reading for this phrase; one which comes from some of the oldest manuscripts, but which the revisers, perhaps out of considerations of sentiment, did not put into the actual text. That reading runs thus: "But few things are needful, or one."

Let us accept that version, and then see how it alters the whole sense of the passage. Jesus comes into this home at Bethany. . . . You can see the picture—the sounds of Martha hurrying to make ready, and Mary does not stir to help her! And Martha's irritation grows until in a moment when she forgets herself, she blames Jesus for her sister's idleness. "Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?" . . . Now what does Jesus reply? He deals very tenderly with Martha, for He understands so well that all this fret and hurry is her clumsy offering to His comfort. He speaks to her without a trace of rebuke, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about preparing many things for Me, but really there are only a few things that are needed," and then (striking a deeper note) He adds: "or one."

'Do you grasp what He means? He is not speaking of what the sisters need, but of what He needs. . . . He says to Martha, "You are anxious about preparing for Me many things, but I need very little, indeed, I need one thing, and Mary has chosen to give Me that. The simplest fare is all I need for outward hospitality, there is no cause for fret or worry about getting that ready, but what I want most of all is communion of mind with mind, and Mary is giving Me that."'¹

Jn. xx. 7.

"And Peter beholdeth the linen cloths lying, and the napkin, that was upon his head, not lying with the linen cloths, but rolled up in a place by itself." Then Christ, too, loved order, and even in that supreme moment, when joy in His completed work of redemption must have transmuted all earthly values—even then the habits of His life persisted, and He could be at the pains of folding away the head-bandage "in a place by itself." He had achieved an act so stupendous as the salvation of a world, and yet He could concern Himself with

¹ S. M. Berry, *Revealing Light*, 172.

the orderly disposal of a linen cloth. If, as we believe, it cost more to redeem the world than to create it, may we not in all humility find something akin to the redemptive wherever with the high purpose we set ourselves to bring order out of confusion—whether it be in a broken life, or a bewildered country, or a torn and stricken world?'²

SOME TOPICS.

Personal Revivalism.

The title of Mr. Harold Begbie's new book is *Life Changers* (Mills & Boon; 5s. net).

It is an account of the work of an Evangelist who speaks not to crowds, but to the individual. 'His genius,' Mr. Begbie says, 'lies in thinking with an intense preoccupation of individual persons. To him the man is much more than the multitude, the part infinitely greater than the whole, which is probably true in the spiritual sphere.'

The proof of conversion, the Revivalist holds, is a power of seeing men not in the mass but individually. 'He sees a significant parable in the scriptural incident of the blind man healed by the touch of Jesus. At the first touch of those gentle fingers the blind saw men walking as trees; at the second he saw "every man clearly." F. B. tells those who come to him that so long as they see men in the mass, see them as a forest, their spiritual eyes are only half opened; to see them individually, man by man, and each man a piece of divinity, an heir of eternal life, requires the second touch of the spiritual hand—the miracle of conversion.'

We are not told the name of the Revivalist. He is spoken of as F. B. because he wishes to remain anonymous. We gather that he is a mystic and that he holds a number of 'theological dogmas' which Mr. Begbie himself does not hold. But what Mr. Begbie is specially interested in is his work among undergraduates and the secret of his success. This is how his work among the undergraduates began. He was asked by two Anglican bishops in the East, who had been struck by the effect of his personal revivalism amongst missionaries, to pay a visit to their sons in Cambridge, so that they might know his ideas of religion on the threshold of their manhood. When visiting Cambridge, F. B. found 'a very distressing state of things in the colleges of

² Jessie F. Andrews in *The Congregational Quarterly*, vol. i. p. 161.

the University. He called a few of his followers to his side, and began a private work, to all intents and purposes a conversational work, among the undergraduates of Cambridge, and now we are told that 'a new knowledge of religion is spreading among men who may exercise a strong influence on English-speaking civilization during the next fifty years.'

What is the secret, then, of F. B.'s success? Mr. Begbie says that the distinguishing characteristic of his work is 'the exclusive and pathological emphasis he lays on the power of sin to rob a man's soul of its natural health—sin being understood, not merely as great vices, but as any motion in the will contrary to such excellence as that soul might reach by a genuine desire for spiritual evolution.'

It is not intellectual difficulties, he holds, that keep men from God; it is sin. And when a student comes to him with his mental difficulties and with the admission that he is out of touch with God, he brushes aside all the mental excuses of the distressed man and confronts him with the fact that it is sin, a sin which he does not really wish to give up and will not give up without a great struggle, that is destroying his happiness and depriving him of power.

Wherever there is a desire for God, however small it may be, the enslaved will may be freed. And it is the work of religion to create and strengthen this desire for God so that the man finally escapes from the slavery of sin, his will works in unison with God's will, and he reaches his 'highest usefulness to the purposes of evolution in a direct and living consciousness of God.'

Life Changers should have its place on the shelf beside 'Broken Earthenware.' They are both accounts of life changers. One by the method of emotionalism, and the other by that of simple, direct, and unimpassioned conversation.

Ernst Troeltsch.

'There he shone a bright star in a bright firmament. Heidelberg at the time was the summer rendezvous of all the "cosmopolitans,"—and with good reason. Thode was in the heyday of his influence, drawing large crowds to his lectures on Art; Windelband was filling the *Auditorium* to hear his lectures on "Philosophy since Kant"; in the theological faculty H. von Schubert (Church History), Johannes Weiss, son of Bernhard Weiss (New Testament), and Troeltsch were a trio unmatched in any German university. The fame of Troeltsch can be judged from the fact that students of other faculties made a point of hearing him at least once during their course. How much they understood is another matter!

His influence on the theological students was an indication of the unusual quality of the man. A

story went the rounds that in one and the same year he received and refused two invitations to Berlin, one to the Chair of Theology, the other to that of Philosophy—posts regarded as the "plums" in the German scholastic world. Be the story true or not, all who know student life will easily read its significance. He was a great man, frank, unassuming, and very human. Men talked of him in superlatives, and to get admitted to his seminar was accounted a real honour even by the German "theologians" themselves.

His method of lecturing had something to do with it. He came into the room like a gust of wind, banging the door behind him, began talking immediately with a strong flow of eloquence, and, almost before the poor *Ausländer* could adjust himself to the fact that the lecture had started, the class was vociferous in its laughter. Passages of importance he slowly dictated, and then followed further eloquence, lighted up with the inevitable wit. As a lecturer he was a success, quite apart from the fact that he had a point of view which men felt to be valuable and worth much effort to secure. He was far removed from the type of professor pictured in the popular imagination—dry as dust, solemn to boredom, and poles distant from life. Long after his students were out in their respective spheres he kept in touch with them, finding time for a voluminous correspondence, while many came to ask his advice on practical issues. His interest in social matters was of great help to many of the younger ministers of the German Church, and, along with others, he did much to inaugurate a new tradition for the ministry—a tradition approaching our own in its ideals of freedom and humanitarianism. The formalism of the German Church was quite alien to his mind.¹

The Influence of Personality.

'A woman sought out Drummond late one Saturday evening and asked him to come to the house. She said: "My husband is deen', sir: he's no able to speak to you, and he's no able to hear you, but I would like him to hae a breath o' you about him afore he dies."'²

¹ Arthur Dakin, in *The Congregational Quarterly*, vol. i. p. 144.

² A. H. Walker, *Radiant Christianity: Life-Story of Henry Drummond*, 19.