

THE RESTORATION HANDBOOK

By **FREDERICK D. KERSHNER**

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THE RESTORATION HANDBOOK

Studies in the History and Principles
of the Movement to Restore
New Testament
Christianity

By

FREDERICK D. KERSHNER

Author of "The Religion of Christ,"
"Christian Baptism," "How
to Promote Christian
Union," Etc.

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P R E F A C E

The purpose of this series of studies is to present in popular and yet systematic fashion a brief outline of the history and principles of the movement to restore New Testament Christianity inaugurated during the early part of the nineteenth century. The studies may be used at the prayer-meeting hour, in the Christian Endeavor or Bible-school periods, or at such other times as may be found most convenient. Wherever possible, it will be helpful to have at hand at least a few of the more important reference books mentioned in the series, for the consultation of the class. The lessons are adapted to the question-and-answer method of teaching, or may be taught by the topical, round-table or lecture methods, as the teacher may prefer.

Under ordinary circumstances, the minister is the best person to lead and direct classes studying the handbook, but any man or woman qualified to teach in the Bible school will have no difficulty in using it. It will be found to be an excellent text for use in preparing for a revival meeting or in connection with the average teacher-training course. The Restoration movement makes its appeal to the thoughtful consideration of earnest seekers after truth everywhere. It succeeds best when it can secure a careful and serious hearing for the facts which it presents. It is in order to assist in gaining such a hearing that the present manual has been prepared.

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OUTLINE OF THE COURSE IN FULL

PART I.—RESTORATION HISTORY.

(Six Lessons on the History of the Restoration.)

- Lesson I. Origin and Purpose of the Restoration Movement.
- Lesson II. Historical Beginnings of the Restoration Movement.
- Lesson III. Thomas Campbell and the "Declaration and Address.
- Lesson IV. The Life and Work of Alexander Campbell.
- Lesson V. The Life and Work of Barton W. Stone.
- Lesson VI. The Restoration Fully Launched—Walter Scott.

PART II.—THE BIBLE.

(Six Lessons on the Authority of the Scriptures.)

- Lesson I. The Final Authority in Religion.
- Lesson II. The Place of the Old Testament in Christianity.
- Lesson III. The Place of the New Testament in Christianity.
- Lesson IV. The New Testament Analyzed.
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PART III.—THE SUPREME LORDSHIP OF CHRIST.

(Twelve Lessons on the New Testament Creed.)

- Lesson I. Human Creeds.
- Lesson II. Failure of Human Creeds.
- Lesson III. The Bible Creed.
- Lesson IV. The Bible Creed Analyzed.
- Lesson V. The Gospel of Righteousness.
- Lesson VI. The Gospel of Service.
- Lesson VII. The Gospel of Freedom.
- Lesson VIII. The Supernatural Element.
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- Lesson X. The Resurrection.
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- Lesson XII. The Nature and Purpose of Prayer.

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(Twelve Lessons on the Restoration of the New Testament Church.)

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- Lesson II. Original Constitution and Polity of the Church.
- Lesson III. The Original Name.
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PART V.—CHRISTIAN UNITY.

(Twelve Lessons on the Plea for Christian Union.)

- Lesson I. The Original Unity.
- Lesson II. The Present Situation.
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PART III. THE SUPREME LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

Twelve Lessons on the New Testament Creed

- LESSON I. HUMAN CREEDS.
 LESSON II. FAILURE OF HUMAN CREEDS.
 LESSON III. THE BIBLE CREED.
 LESSON IV. THE BIBLE CREED ANALYZED.
 LESSON V. THE GOSPEL OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.
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 LESSON XII. THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF PRAYER.

LESSON I. HUMAN CREEDS

I. What is Meant by a "Creed."

The word "creed" comes from the Latin word *credo*, meaning "I believe." The Standard Dictionary defines a creed as follows: "A formal summary of fundamental points of religious belief; an authoritative statement of doctrine on points held to be vital, usually representing the views of a religious body, a confession of faith."

The distinction between human creeds and the divine creed must always be kept clearly in mind. It is incorrect to say that any religious body or organization can exist without a creed, for such a body or organization must believe in something and hold to *some* form of doctrine. Now, whatever belief it regards as essential constitutes its creed. Hence every church has, and must have, a creed.

Another distinction which is essential to clear thinking is the difference between "creed" and "ordinance." A creed contains the essentials of belief—it is a mental or intellectual affirmation; an ordinance is something to be *done* or carried out in action. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are *ordinances*, but they are not a part of the creed of the church. Great confusion sometimes arises because this distinction is not kept in mind.

II. How Human Creeds Arose.

We have to go back to early church history in order to understand the origin of human creeds. Professor Gumlich, who has written what was perhaps the best brief account of the church creeds of Christendom, acknowledges that the beginning of human creeds was coextensive with the early organization of the Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic Churches. After stating that, in apostolic days, no creed existed except a simple confession of belief in the Messiahship of Christ, he continues: "When, however, the Jewish Christian, the Paulinist and Hellenistic Alexandrian churches, which had, at first, opposing tendencies, united together, and, from their common strife against the Gnostics, Ebionites, and other parties, had developed into the Catholic Church, with its episcopal government, the simple acknowledgment of Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God no longer sufficed." It was at this time that the first human creed was formulated, and it was at this time also that the apostasy from the original and apostolic form of Christianity began. It follows naturally that we can not return to the Christianity of the New Testament without going back of human creeds to the divino creed which they supplanted.

III. The First Human Creed.

The first human creed for the church which history records is the so-called "Apostles' Creed." It is universally conceded nowadays that this creed was unknown to the apostles themselves. The earliest written form in which it appears does not go back further than the fourth century A. D., the exact present wording dating from 750 A. D. The usual form in which it is stated is the following: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen."

This creed was the starting-point of all the human creeds which have since followed.

IV. The Second and Third Creeds.

There are two other creeds which are usually linked with the Apostles' as the earliest of the purely human church confessions. These are what are known as the Nicene and the Athanasian

Creeds. The Nicene was formulated by the Council of Nicaea in A. D. 323, but was not given its present form until after the Council of Constantinople, which met in A. D. 381. The Greek Church rejected the Constantinopolitan formula, and still adheres to the older Nicene statement. The Nicene Creed is too long to quote in detail, but may be found in any edition of the Book of Common Prayer of the English Church, as well as in most other church disciplines. It contains a great deal of theology dealing especially with the vexed problem of the Trinity.

The Athanasian Creed was not written by the church Father whose name it bears, but was published first in Latin, about the end of the fifth century. Its author is supposed to have been Vigilius of Thapsus, who wrote it under the name of Athanasius. It is still more theological and technical than the Nicene, and is unintelligible to any one not well versed in scholastic terminology and thought. Nevertheless, it declares that any one who fails to, accept it *in toto* can not hope for salvation.

The Roman Catholic and most Protestant churches adhere to the Nicene Creed, and some of them to the Athanasian.

V. The Creed of the Greek Church.

The Greek Church differs from the Roman Church chiefly in the fact that it acknowledges the patriarch of Constantinople as the head of the church instead of the bishop of Rome. It has changed its creed very little since the death of John of Damascus in 754 A. D. It adheres to the old Nicene Creed as its baptismal formula. The latest, and, we understand, the most authoritative, formulation of its doctrine was made at the synod of Jerusalem in 1672, where the confession of the patriarch Dositheus was accepted. Like the Roman Church, the Greek communion is a great ecclesiastical organization definitely based upon a human creed which has grown up as a result of accumulated tradition.

VI. The Creed of Roman Catholicism.

The Roman Catholic Church has the most difficult creed of all to understand and explain. It comprehends all of the old creeds, including the Apostles', the Nicene and the Athanasian, and, in addition, the decrees of the various church councils, and, since the doctrine of Papal infallibility has been asserted, the contents of all the Papal bulls. What is usually known as the Tridentine Confession, formulated at the Council of Trent (1545-1563 A. D.), is the most substantial statement of the bulk of the Catholic doctrine. Many other items have been added since then, however, so that there is no other church which possesses so lengthy, or, in the strictest sense of the term, so completely human, a creed. In Roman

Catholicism, the original creed of Christ and the early apostles has reached its utmost limit of expansion. The various Protestant churches have human creeds, but none of them is quite so far removed from the simple New Testament foundation as is the creed of Rome.

VII. Protestant Creeds.

When the Reformation broke out, the first thing its founders did was to formulate a variety of creeds. The Lutherans accepted the Augsburg Confession; the Presbyterian, the Westminster; the Church of England, the Thirty-nine Articles, and so on down the list. The Methodist Episcopal Church accepts a modified form of the Protestant Episcopal creed, and the Congregational and Baptist Churches, while accepting the doctrine of the local independency of each congregation, allow the separate churches to determine their "covenants" or creeds. The Congregational Council formulated a typical creed for the use of the churches which it represents, a few years ago, which possesses the merit of being very brief and also of being quite liberal in its theology. The Baptist churches usually adopt what is styled the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, a much older and more Calvinistic document. Practically all the orthodox Protestant denominations accept the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds, most of them using one or both of them somewhere or other in their regular forms of worship. While this is true, it is also true that perhaps the majority of church-members who repeat these creeds fail to understand or to accept them; at least, in the meaning which they had when they were written. Theological creeds are becoming "dead letters" in most churches which use them.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES.

The apostasy from apostolic precedent embodied in the substitution of human creeds for the one divine creed known in New Testament times, is vividly foreshadowed in the following Scriptures: 2 Tim. 1: 13; 2: 14-19; 2 John 9; 2 Pet. 2: 1, 2.

BLACKBOARD OUTLINE.

HUMAN CREEDS	}	T. General	{	1. Apostles 2. Nicene 3. Athanasian
	}	I". Special	{	1. Roman Catholic 2. Greek Church ^ Protestant

Apostolic Church Knew No Human Creed.

OTHER REFERENCES.

The best book of outside reference, dealing with the subject discussed in this lesson, is the "Campbell-Rice Debate" (pp. 759-912), especially the opening speech of Mr. Campbell. The best brief history of the creeds is Gumlich's "Christian Creeds and Confessions."

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. Nature and Origin of Human Creeds.
2. The Apostles' Creed.
3. The Nicene Creed.
4. The Athanasian Creed.
5. The Creed of the Greek Church.
6. The Roman Catholic Creed.
7. Protestant Creeds.
8. The Present Status of Human Creeds.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. What is the derivation of the word "creed"?
2. What is the Standard Dictionary definition of the word?
3. What two distinctions in regard to the subject should always be kept in mind?
4. Can any church exist without a creed? Why?
5. What is the difference between "creed" and "ordinance"?
6. How did human creeds arise?
7. What was the first human creed styled?
8. Give the approximate date of this creed. Had the apostles anything to do with it?
9. Give the substance of the Apostles' Creed.
10. What was the second human creed, and from what time does it date?
11. What was the third human creed? How does it differ from the first and second?
12. What churches accept the first three creeds?
13. What is the creed of the Greek Church?
14. What is the Roman Catholic creed?
15. What is the Lutheran creed called? The Presbyterian? The creed of the Church of England?
16. What do you know of the Methodist, Congregational and Baptist creeds?
17. Which of all these creeds is the most "human"?
18. What is the prevailing tendency in regard to human creeds?
19. Is it right to accept, theoretically, something which we do not really believe?

20. How do most Protestants understand or accept the theological statements contained in their church creeds?
21. What is the only creed which never needs any "revision"?

LESSON II. FAILURE OF HUMAN CREEDS

I. The Purpose of Human Creeds.

Human creeds were formulated, in the first place, in order to secure unity of faith and to preserve the orthodox church doctrines and customs unimpaired. For over two centuries, as we have seen, only the divine creed required by Christ and the apostles was used by the church. During these two centuries, Christianity made the greatest progress in its history. It was only after Greek philosophy and Oriental mysticism crept into the church that it was deemed necessary to set up a doctrinal standard of fellowship, dealing with mooted theological speculations. The leaders of the church at this time appear to have felt that the doctrinal test which Christ himself laid down was insufficient for the age. Hence they sought to improve the divine creed by substituting a more elaborate human creed for it.

At first this creed was short and comparatively inoffensive. There is not much in the so-called Apostles' Creed which any modern Christian will dispute. Every creed which succeeded the Apostles' grew more elaborate, until, in the Athanasian and others, the language became so scholastic and intricate that even the most learned authorities were in doubt about its meaning. All the while, these creeds, instead of unifying Christendom, caused greater divisions and partyism than existed before. Hilary, bishop of Poitiers in Aquitania, who lived in the fourth century, said of the results of creed-making: "It is a thing equally deplorable and dangerous that there are as many creeds as there are opinions among men, as many doctrines as inclinations, and as many sources of blasphemy as there are faults among us: *because we make creeds arbitrarily and explain them as arbitrarily.* And, as there is but one faith, so there is but one only God, one Lord and one baptism. We renounce this one faith when we make so many different creeds, and that diversity is the reason why we have no true faith among us. We can not be ignorant that, since the Council of Nice, we have done nothing but make creeds. And while we fight against words, litigate about new questions, dispute about equivocal terms, complain of authors, that every one may make his own party triumph; while we can not agree; while we anathematize one another, there is hardly one that adheres to Jesus Christ."

These words, dating from the early period of the rule of human creeds, show how conclusively they failed in accomplishing the purpose for which they were intended.

II. Actual Results of Human Creeds.

Some of these have been indicated already, but it may be well to give a brief summary of the evils produced by these man-made tests of church fellowship. First, they produced disunion and schism instead of fostering union among the followers of Christ. Second, by substituting human standards for the divine, they more and more discredited the latter in the minds of men. Third, they were largely responsible for the fierce persecutions which stain the history of Christianity. Fourth, they discouraged independent thinking and the search for truth. Fifth, they made theological speculation central in the activities and work of the church, instead of giving that place to spiritual development or to the Christian life. Sixth, they have tended to develop religious insincerity, because so many people have accepted them only nominally and without actually believing in them.

There are many other evils which have flowed from human creed-making, but the above list comprehends the most important ones. No good has resulted from such creeds which is not characteristic likewise of the divine creed which they supplanted. The whole experiment of human creeds has proved a disastrous failure.

III. Human Creeds and Church Divisions.

That human creeds produce rather than cure church schisms is a commonplace of religious history. The more lengthy and minute the creed, the larger the number of people who will be excluded by it, for every additional clause excludes some one in addition to those already excluded. In this way the multiplication of creeds means the creation of sects and parties, more and more destructive of the unity and peace of the church. There is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," and one faith means one creed. That creed is certainly not any human document, but, rather, the divine confession of faith given and required by the Head of the church himself. This creed is the indispensable prerequisite of unity, but the moment it is discarded and a human creed is put in its place, the foundations of schism and disunion are already laid. Men are apt to say, and quite reasonably: "What right has another man to make a creed for me?" It naturally follows that what one man can do, another can do also; and in this way the schism-creating process of creed-making, to which Bishop Hilary referred fifteen hundred years ago, proceeds. Human creeds have been the most fruitful source of church separations and division.

IV. Human Creeds and Persecution.

Human creeds, being regarded as authoritative and final, have naturally led to the bitterest persecution. After the Nicene Creed was formulated, Arius, whose teaching was condemned specifically in this creed, was bitterly persecuted and was practically forced to accept statements which he did not believe, in order to live. Gibbon's "History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" gives a graphic account of the Arian persecutions. From the days of Arius down to the present age, creed-makers have frequently tried to compel others to accept their dogmas. Of course, in the more enlightened modern age, persecution in the old sense no longer exists, and yet even to-day the "heretic" who does not accept the creed formulated for him by others is frequently made as uncomfortable as the laws and social usage will permit. Creeds naturally beget intolerance, and intolerance is the father of persecution. Once the divine order is forsaken, every kind of evil is apt to follow.

V. Human Creeds and Intellectual Freedom.

Human creeds are in the nature of intellectual straightjackets. They say to the mind: "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." They are responsible, more than anything else, for the opposition of science to religion, and they are prolific of infidelity. The chief assaults of the most learned skeptics in all ages upon the Christian religion have been leveled against theological dogmas contained in the creeds. Mr. H. G. Wells is a modern illustration of this fact. Wells' attacks upon the church have been directed almost entirely against the old theological, and, to him, absurd, dogmas contained in the Nicene and other creeds. Mr. Campbell, in his debate with Rice, inveighed vigorously against the crushing of the human intellect involved in the acceptance of human creeds. He said, among other things: "We can neither, in reason nor in conscience, ask a person to subscribe to twenty-five, thirty-three or thirty-nine articles. He is but a new-born child. We expect him to grow. We will not put him upon the iron bedstead of Procrustes and stretch him up to thirty-nine articles. We will place him in the cradle of maternal kindness, and feed him the sincere milk of the Word, that he may grow thereby. Nor will we at any time say to him: 'Brother, you must never grow beyond the *thirty-ninth* article. If you go to the *fortieth*, we will cut you down or send you adrift. If you live threescore years and ten, remember, you must never think of the *fortieth* article. You must subscribe to them all now at your birth, and subscribe to no more at your death.' "

It is this absolute negation of the search for further truth which constitutes one of the most serious indictments of all human creeds.

VI. Necessity for Constant Revision.

Since the human mind *will* think in spite of the creeds, and since human thought is constantly searching for and appropriating more truth, there arises the constant necessity for revising the old creeds, in order to keep their adherents from throwing them bodily overboard. Every church which possesses a human creed has to set to work with the passing of the years in order to keep its creed measurably abreast of the times. Old dogmas are revamped and re-interpreted, and occasionally they become so antiquated that they have to be dropped altogether. This is what has happened in most Protestant churches, with the once almost universally accepted article of infant damnation. The "five points of Calvinism" are now so liberally interpreted by most of their adherents that they cease to retain the essence of their original meaning. The process of creed revision is always slow, and is attended with much bickering and contention. These things do not make for the peace and harmony of the church. It is only the divine creed which never needs any revision, and which thus, at all times, guarantees the peaceful and satisfied acceptance of Christians.

VII. Why Human Creeds Have Failed.

Human creeds have failed, primarily, because they lack the divine authority which the creed of the church should always possess. They are man-made substitutes for the divine constitution of the church, and hence must go the way of all purely human expedients. Man sets himself up in the field of divine authority, and man necessarily fails in his pretensions. The church of Christ is not of human origin, and no man has a right to formulate the conditions upon which people shall be received into its fellowship. Whenever such an attempt is made it is doomed to failure. Since the church is Christ's, the creed of the church must be the creed which Christ has himself prescribed for it. Christ said, "Upon this rock," meaning the confession of Peter, which was the only creed known to the New Testament age, "I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it," and, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid," in this confession. Because human creeds *do* lay "other foundations," the gates of Hades prevail against them, and always shall prevail.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES.

Matt. 16:13-20; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; Jude 3 and 4; Eph. 4:1-16. The first reference gives the true creed of the church; the second emphasizes the necessity for adhering to this creed alone; the third points out the danger of apostasy from this creed and of following

human substitutes, and the fourth furnishes a beautiful picture of the unity and harmony of the church which adheres to the "one Lord" and the "one faith."

BLACKBOARD OUTLINE.

HUMAN CREEDS PRODUCE	}	1. Schism 2. Persecution 3. Intolerance 4. Hypocrisy 5. Stunted Development	THEY ABE	}	BECAUSE 1. Man-Made 8. Ephemeral S. Unscriptural 4. Presumptuous
"Other Foundation Can No Man Lay than That Which is Laid."					

OTHER REFERENCES.

1. "Campbell-Rice Debate"—Section on "Human Creeds" (pp. 759-912).
2. Kershner—"The Religion of Christ," chapter on "Creed."

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. The Purpose of Human Creeds.
2. Why This Purpose Failed.
3. Human Creeds and Church Schism.
4. Human Creeds and Intolerance.
5. Human Creeds and Persecution.
6. Human Creeds as Productive of Skepticism.
7. Human Creeds and Intellectual Freedom.
8. Human Creeds and the Scriptures.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. Why were human creeds first formulated?
2. Were they needed or used during the first two centuries of church history?
3. Show how the process of creed-making constantly became more technical and elaborate.
4. What was the testimony of Bishop Hilary in regard to creed-making?
5. Mention six results of creed-making in actual experience.
6. Why do human creeds tend toward church divisions?
7. How are they opposed to the divine creed in this particular?
8. How have human creeds led to persecution?
9. How are human creeds related to intolerance?
10. How do they affect the question of intellectual freedom?
11. How have they helped to produce skepticism?
12. What prominent present-day writer is an illustration of this tendency?

13. Give the substance of Mr. Campbell's remarks upon the relation of creeds to intellectual freedom.
14. Why do human creeds have to be revised?
15. What difficulties and dangers always attend such revision?
16. Mention some of the dogmas in Protestant creeds which have been "revised" out of existence.
17. What is the chief reason for the failure of human creeds?
18. Mention some other reasons.
19. If the church is Christ's church, what about the creed?
20. What Scriptures point to the inevitable failure of human creeds?

LESSON III. THE BIBLE CREED

I. What the Divine Creed Is.

We have seen that the church, of necessity, must have a creed; that is, some definite statement of what one must believe in order to enter its fellowship. We have seen, also, that this creed must be of divine origin in order to be of real and permanent value. This being true, it is obvious that there must be a divine creed clearly proclaimed in the New Testament. In other words, there must be a clear statement, in the Bible record, of just what Jesus and the apostles required a man or woman to believe in order to become a Christian. There is such a statement, and it is repeated more than once. Sometimes it is said that the converts "believed on" Christ. Paul told the Philippian jailor to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." At other times, it is simply said "they believed." The confession made by the Ethiopian eunuch, although probably an interpolation in the text of the Book of Acts, is, nevertheless, very old, and doubtless reflects the actual situation with regard to the earliest confession used in the church. Most significant of all, Christ told Peter, when the latter made his confession of faith, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," that upon this rock—that is, upon the rock of the truth contained in this confession— " I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.'" Obviously, then, this confession, since it is the rock upon which the church is founded, must constitute the divine creed—the essential article of faith necessary to make one a Christian. Everything in the New Testament, and in early church history, confirms the fact that the confession of Peter, as recorded in Matt. 16: 16, is the divine creed and the one and only creed common to apostolic times. It is this creed which is advocated by the Restoration movement.

II. When This Creed was Given.

The divine creed, as already indicated, was announced near the close of the greater Galilean ministry of Jesus, when he "came into the parts of Caesarea Philippi" and asked the disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of man is?" It was then that Simon Peter, answering for the group of disciples, replied: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." At this time the church of Christ had not yet come into existence, as Jesus plainly says in his answer to Peter when he makes the statement, "Upon this rock [that is, Peter's confession, or, rather, the truth contained in that confession] I *will* build my church." The church, not yet in existence, was to be built upon the great fact of the Messiahship and Lordship of Christ. A statement of sincere belief in this one cardinal truth—a deliberate and willing acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Christ—was to constitute the creed, and the only creed, of his church.

There are other places in the New Testament where Jesus was acknowledged as the Christ (see especially the confession of Nicodemus in John 1: 49, and of Martha in John 11: 27, as well as Jesus' own confession in John 4: 26 and Matt. 26: 64 before his crucifixion and resurrection); but he always discouraged such acknowledgment, because he knew that the time was not yet ripe for the founding of his church. When the church was definitely established on the first Pentecost after the resurrection, this confession was the corner-stone upon which it was builded, and all those who wished to become followers of Christ were asked to accept it as the one confession and creed of the church.

III. The Creed in the Apostolic Age.

The three thousand who constituted the first converts to the church of Christ were obviously required to accept no other creed than the divine confession made by Peter at Caesarea Philippi. The final conclusion of the apostle's sermon on this memorable occasion, as given to us in Acts 2: 36, is a challenge to accept this confession. "Let all the house of Israel," says the speaker, "therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified." The whole sermon leads up to this conclusion. Throughout his discourse, Peter is occupied with the idea of proving just one thing, and that thing is the Messiahship and Lordship of Jesus Christ. Beyond any question, it was this one thing which his hearers believed and accepted when they cried out, "Brethren, what shall we do?" Peter did not ask them to believe in the so-called Apostles' Creed, or the Nicene, or the Athanasian, or the Westminster Confession, or the Thirty-nine Articles, but he did make it clear that they must believe and accept the cardinal fact that Jesus

is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Believing this, and repenting of their past sins, they became fit subjects for the ordinance of baptism, and thereby for formal enrollment as members of the church of Christ.

This history of the first conversions made by the church is especially significant, because it is obvious that it was intended to serve as a model for all future conversions. The creed which the first converts were asked to accept must certainly have been the creed which all later converts were to profess. It is inconceivable that the church should have been founded and should have begun its work with an incomplete or inadequate confession. Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church," and Peter scrupulously adhered to the "rock" to which Christ referred when he opened the doors of the church on the day of Pentecost.

The accounts of later conversions in the Book of Acts all indicate that the same creed which was announced by Peter as the creed of the church on the day of Pentecost prevailed throughout the early Christian communities. It is said of the five thousand, mentioned in the fourth chapter of Acts as converts to the new faith, that "they heard the word" and "believed." Of the Samaritan converts, who accepted the message as proclaimed by Philip, it is said: "But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8: 12). When Philip later converted the Ethiopian eunuch, it is said (Acts 8: 35) that he "preached unto him Jesus." Still later, when Peter proclaimed the gospel in the house of Cornelius, the message which he brought (Acts 10: 34-43) was a simple statement of the Messiahship and Lordship of Christ. Paul told the Philippian jailor (Acts 16: 31) to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." All the other records of conversions in the Book of Acts bear witness to the use of the same statement of faith in Jesus as the Christ as the only creedal requirement for becoming a member of the church of Christ.

TV. Early Historical Testimony Concerning the Creed of the Church.

It is universally conceded that the original apostolic creed, the confession of Peter, was the only creed required in the churches of Christ for the first two centuries of the Christian era, and perhaps longer. Mr. Rice, in his debate with Mr. Campbell upon the question of creeds, makes this admission, but tries to break its force by saying that the church was disorganized and split up during this period because it had no better creed! And yet Mr. Bice must have known that the church made greater and more

satisfying progress during these first two centuries than it has ever done since. All the apostasies and errors of the later history of Christianity date from the period when the divine creed was abandoned in favor of man-made doctrinal statements. Obviously, the only way to get back to the pristine vigor and power of the apostolic church is by abandoning the human substitutes which took the place of the original creed, and by accepting the latter as the only doctrinal test of fellowship for all Christians.

V. The Restoration and the Problem of Creed.

The movement for the restoration of New Testament Christianity naturally and inevitably included an effort, first of all, to restore the New Testament creed to its rightful place as the one and only doctrinal test of fellowship for all Christians. Perhaps the clearest statement regarding the matter was made in Walter Scott's first great sermon on the Ohio Western Reserve, which inaugurated the new movement in its practical evangelistic capacity. It is unfortunate that the entire text of this great sermon, in many respects the greatest in Restoration history, has not been preserved. It was preached at New Lisbon, Columbiana Co., O., in 1827, from the confession of Peter as recorded in Matt. 16: 16. Baxter, in his "Life of Scott" (pp. 104, 105), gives the only account of this sermon now in existence. Among other things, he says: "He [Scott] then proceeded to show that the foundation truth of Christianity was the divine nature of the Lord Jesus—the central truth around which all others revolved, and from which they derived their efficacy and importance—and that the belief of it was calculated to produce such love in the heart of him who believed it as would lead him to true obedience to the object of his faith and love. To show how that faith and love were to be manifested, he quoted the language of the great commission, and called attention to the fact that Jesus had taught his apostles that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem! He then led his hearers to Jerusalem on the memorable Pentecost, and bade them listen to an authoritative announcement of the law of Christ, now to be made known for the first time, by the same Peter to whom Christ had promised to give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which he represented as meaning the conditions upon which the guilty might find pardon at the hands of the risen, ascended and glorified Son of God, and enter into his kingdom."

The keynote of Scott's evangelistic campaign, which began with this sermon, and which marked, as we have said elsewhere, the real starting-point of the actual history of the Restoration, was sounded

in this sermon, with its clear and powerful appeal to discard a" human creeds, and to go back to the divine creed as recorded in Matt. 16: 16. From that day down to the present time, Restoration evangelism has sounded the same note, and much of its success has been due to this fact. Even the denominational churches of the present day have come to a point where the old, man-made creedal standards are largely dead letters, and where they are placing more and more emphasis upon the divine creed alone. The constitution of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, a loosely jointed aggregation which takes in most American Protestant churches, is on record as making its only test of fellowship an acceptance of "Jesus Christ as the divine Lord and Saviour"—thus acknowledging that the divine doctrinal standard which should be required of Christians. The Federal Council acknowledges that a church is Christian if it accepts this creed and thus proclaims to the world that such a creed is sufficient and adequate as a doctrinal test of Christian fellowship. The time must come when this divine creed will again be openly proclaimed as the one universal Christian confession, in accordance with New Testament authority and with the uniform practice of the original and apostolic church of Christ.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES.

Matt. 16:13-20; Luke 24:45-47; Acts 2:14-42.

This is the order of the texts used by Walter Scott in his great sermon upon the Christian confession. If possible, Baxter's analysis of the sermon as a whole should be read in connection with these Scriptural passages. Note especially how Matt. 16: 16 is linked up with Acts 2: 37, 38. Here we have the relation of the Christian creed to the Christian ordinances clearly and fully indicated.

BLACKBOARD OUTLINE.

THE DIVINE CREED	{	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where Found—Matt. 16:16 2. Where Given—Caesarea Philippi 3. First Confessor—Peter 4. Authorized - By Christ 5. First Used—Pentecost 6. Ahandoned—At the Beginning of the Apostasy
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To Restore the Apostolic Church We Must Restore the Apostolic Creed.

OTHER REFERENCES.

1. Baxter—"Life of Walter Scott," Chapter VI.
2. Kershner—"Religion of Christ," chapter on Creed.

3. Creel—"The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church," Chapter V.

4. Oliver—"New Testament Christianity," Chapter V.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. Necessity for the Divine Creed.
2. How the Creed Came to be Given.
3. The Creed in New Testament Times.
4. How the Creed Came to be Abandoned.
5. The Attempt to Restore the Creed.
6. Modern Denominational Progress Toward the Divine Creed.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. Why must the church have a creed?
2. Why must this creed be divine?
3. What is the divine creed?
4. Where is it found?
5. Who was its first confessor?
6. What did Jesus say with regard to this creed?
7. Where was this creed given?
8. Under what circumstances?
9. Mention other places in the Gospels where Jesus was confessed as the Christ.
10. Why did Jesus discourage such confession during his public ministry?
11. When was the church of Christ founded?
12. What was made its corner-stone?
13. What creed did the three thousand accept?
14. Outline the use and history of the creed in the cases of conversions mentioned in the Book of Acts.
15. What is the testimony of history regarding the creed during the first two centuries of the Christian era?
16. What is the attitude of the Restoration upon the subject of creed?
17. Sketch briefly Walter Scott's argument upon the creed.
18. What is the present tendency of denominational churches in the matter of creed?
19. Give an illustration from the history of the Federal Council of Churches.
20. What must be the ultimate creed of Christendom?
21. What is the chief reason for the failure of human creeds?
22. Mention some other reasons.
23. If the church is Christ's church, what about the creed?
24. What Scriptures point to the inevitable failure of human creeds?

LESSON IV. THE BIBLE CREED ANALYZED

I. How to Determine the Meaning of Creed.

There are various ways by which we ordinarily determine the meaning of words and expressions. Perhaps the most frequently employed method is simply to consult the dictionary. If a word is used a number of times in a book, its meaning can usually be gathered from the context. As a rule, the latter method is better than the former when strictly Biblical terms are involved, for our modern lexicons usually endeavor to give the present-day significance of words as they are used by the majority of people now living, and sometimes mistaken usage changes the original meaning of the terms involved. There is practically no controversy, however, as to the meaning of the word "Christ" or "Messiah." The former term is Greek and the latter Hebrew, but both mean the same thing. Literally, the "Christ" or the "Messiah" is "the anointed one of God," or, as Peter expressed it, "the Son of the living God." The Messiah, to a Jew, was the visible Incarnation of God, who was to rule on earth and set up the divine kingdom among men. Perhaps the average Jew thought of him as a great temporal king or ruler who was to bring back the scepter to Jerusalem and to deliver his people from foreign tyranny and bondage. The idea of a spiritual kingdom was hard for the Jews to grasp, although the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, and especially of Isaiah, clearly pointed to such an interpretation of the Messiah's rule. To accept Jesus as the Messiah or the Christ meant therefore to accept him as the visible Incarnation of God upon the earth, and, by virtue of this fact, as the supreme Lord and Ruler of life. This is what Caiaphas had in mind when he asked Jesus point-blank whether he were "the Christ, the Son of God" (Matt. 26: 63). This is also what Peter meant when he confessed Christ to be the Son of the living God (Matt. 16: 16). So far the meaning of the divine creed is clear. It is simply the acceptance of Jesus as the Son of God; that is, as the Incarnation of God on earth, and, therefore, as the supreme Lord and Ruler of one's life.

II. Things Excluded in the Meaning of the Creed.

It is obvious that the creed as thus denned does not include any purely theological or metaphysical speculation. The finely spun theories about the nature of the Deity included in the Nicene or Athanasian Creeds, for example, have no place in the definition. The average Jew who accepted Jesus as the Messiah knew nothing of any such speculations, and, in the nature of the case, could know nothing about them. No more could the Philippian jailor, to whom

Paul preached, know anything about them. Whether true or false, such theories are entirely outside the province of the creed of early Christianity. Few, if any, of those who came into the early church were expert theologians. A creed made up of subtle metaphysical speculations was therefore an impossible test for those who were asked to become followers of Christ during the apostolic period. The early Christian creed was necessarily free from such conceptions. It is well, for many reasons, that this was the case. Aside from the fact that such speculations are too abstract for the vast majority of the common people ever to understand, the further fact that all human speculation is ephemeral and needs constant changing and revision, as men learn more about science and reality, makes any purely metaphysical creed a document of uncertain value. The divine creed, being intended for all times and all ages, could not contain anything which in its value is ephemeral and subject to change. All metaphysical and theological speculation is therefore ruled out as an element in the constitution of the permanent creed of the church.

III. What Is Involved in the Creed.

The real creed of the church of Christ is an affirmation of loyalty and allegiance to a certain ideal furnished us specifically in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. To get at the meaning of the creed, therefore, we must study the life and teaching of Jesus. In a single word, Christ himself, rather than theories or speculations about Christ, is the creed. Jesus, and not any human philosophy concerning Jesus, constitutes our real creed.

The personality of Jesus very plainly embodies certain definite ideals of life. These ideals are given to us in the Gospel accounts of Christ's career. Moreover, in the Epistles, we have corroborative evidence both as to what these ideals are and as to how they are to be embodied in actual Christian experience. If Christ is the Christian's real creed, and if to be like Christ as nearly as he can is what his acceptance of the creed means, then it is obviously necessary to know something of what Christ's way of life was in order that we may attempt to live it.

It is not necessary to make a careful and scholarly analysis of the New Testament writings in order to get at the gist of Christ's conception of life. The most ignorant peasant can grasp the idea without special effort or training. There is a very complete summary given in what is known as the "Sermon on the Mount," and there are other brief summaries in the twelfth chapter of Romans and the thirteenth of First Corinthians. Any man or woman who will make an honest effort to live true to the ideals expressed in

any one of these sections of Scripture will be living up to the principles of his creed.

There are obviously two sides to Christ's interpretation of life, as given to us in these passages in Scripture. The first deals with the present life—the Here and Now—and we may therefore style it the moral ideal of Christianity, while the second deals with the spiritual and eternal nature of the soul; that is, more particularly with the Hereafter. This we may style the spiritual ideal. The two together give us the substance of Jesus' way of life.

IV. The Moral Ideal of Jesus.

Jesus taught and lived a very definite moral ideal. In other words, he claimed to know, and to be able to instruct others in a certain specific "way" in which to live. The early name for the gospel was, in fact, simply the "way." When Jesus said, "I am the Way," he expressed the same idea. The earliest non-canonical work dealing with the Christian religion now in existence—the so-called *Didache* or "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," styles itself "The Book of the Two Ways"—the two ways being the Christian way—the way of life—and the non-Christian way, the way of death. The first chapter in this interesting little volume begins with these words: "Two ways there are, one of life and one of death, but there is a great difference between the two ways."

The "Way of Life," as Jesus taught it in the Sermon on the Mount, and as Paul, interpreting Jesus, taught it in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 13 and elsewhere, involved three great ideals—one for the individual primarily, which we may style the ideal of Personal Righteousness; one for society, which we may style the ideal of Service, and one which comprehends both the self and other selves, which we may call the ideal of Freedom. Many interpreters of the gospel include the third under the other two, and say that Jesus simply taught a gospel for the individual soul and a gospel for society—that is, for individual souls in contact with each other—but we think it is easier and better to retain the threefold division.

The Christian creed means, therefore, a definite affirmation that we will strive to live toward at least a certain ideal for our souls as individuals and toward a certain ideal of society. To be a Christian does not mean that we shall live up to these ideals in their perfection, but it does mean that we shall try to do our best in that direction. Just what is comprehended in these ideals as Jesus taught and lived them, we shall try to explain, in detail, later.

V. The Spiritual Ideal of Christ.

The moral ideal of Jesus does not include all that is involved in his life and teaching. The moral ideal—the true way of life—

occupies much of his attention, as it must occupy much space in any scheme of human actions or conduct; but there is something needed besides morality, however high and noble that morality may be. There must be some affirmation regarding the end of life and the ground for our morality if we are to have a strong and vital grip upon our religion. This is furnished in Jesus' concept of the reality and presence of God in our lives and in his teaching regarding the nature, value and destiny of the human soul. Here is where Christianity differs from the greatest and best of the old pagan and the later non-Christian teaching. Jesus' consciousness of the reality of God and of the spiritual universe, and of the immortal worth and destiny of the human soul, gives a meaning to life which it would not otherwise possess. It is here that we touch the realm of the "supernatural," as we style it for lack of a better word, of the nature and value of prayer; of the certainty of a moral order in the universe, and, above all, of the blessed reality of the future life. Without these things the moral teaching of Christ would lose what we call its "dynamic"; that is, its power of realization in our human experience. Unless we believe that God is, and that he rules the world, and that we have a definite and lasting place in the eternal scheme of things, we are apt to grow discouraged trying "to be good," and the incentive born of our high and holy heritage as the "sons of God" is lost. The spiritual ideal of Jesus is therefore an essential feature of his teaching. Without this feature, Christianity would not have made much progress in the ancient world. It was the spiritual side of the religion of Christ—above all, its great message concerning the future life and the triumph over death and the grave furnished in the gospel of the resurrection—which swept everything before it when it was proclaimed by the early disciples. Quite a good deal, though by no means all, of the moral teaching of Jesus may be found in the writings of the Stoics and other heathen philosophers, but none of these teachers possessed the spiritual power and dynamic of Christianity, because they had no definite or positive message regarding the spiritual universe and the immortal heritage of the human soul.

VI. Summary Regarding the Creed.

We see, then, in summing up the question of the Christian creed, that it includes faith in Jesus as the supreme Lord of life and death, and as constituting the one and only perfect ideal for human imitation and realization. Jesus, with his teaching and example, points out the true and real way for both the individual and for society at large. Moreover, Jesus, with his consciousness of the

worth and value of the human soul, and of the reality and presence of God in the universe, gives new courage and power to all who will accept his ideal of life. He not only shows the way, but he also gives power to walk in that way. As he summed it all up himself, he is the Way, the Truth and the Life. The fact that he is the Life and the Truth makes it possible for him to enable his followers to realize the Way in their lives. Jesus shows us how to live, and he also gives us strength and power to live as we ought to live. To accept him in this twofold capacity as Lord of our lives is to make the confession of Peter: that he is the Christ, the Son of the living God, in the sense in which he intends it to be accepted. To do this is to accept the only creed which his church ever placed before men, and to which it asked, and still asks, their allegiance.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES.

John 6:26-69; John 14:6; Matthew 5, 6 and 7; Romans 12: 1 Corinthians 13.

As Jesus himself is the real creed of his church, all Scriptures dealing with his life and teaching have a direct bearing upon this lesson. The two great sermons of Jesus—the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Bread of Life—summarize his message from both the moral and spiritual points of view.

BLACKBOARD OUTLINE.

<p>THE CREED OF THE CHURCH } JESUS {</p>	<p>1. Moral Ideal 2. Spiritual Ideal</p>
<p>THIS CREED EXCLUDES</p>	<p>{ 1. Human Philosophy 2. Human Theology 8. All Human Speculation</p>
<p>"I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."</p>	

OTHER REFERENCES.

1. Zollars—"The Great Salvation," chapter on "The Creed that Needs No Revision."
2. Kershner—"The Religion of Christ," Part II. and Part III., Chapter I.
3. Kershner—"How to Promote Christian Union," Chapter VII.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. Meaning of the Words "Messiah" and "Christ."
2. What the Bible Creed Excludes.
3. What the Bible Creed Includes.
4. Meaning of Jesus as the Creed of His Church.

5. The Moral Ideal of Jesus.
6. The Spiritual Ideal of Jesus.
7. Christianity as a Life.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. Mention two methods in ordinary use for determining the meaning of words.
2. Which is the best method when Scriptural terms are involved? Why?
3. How are the words "Messiah" and "Christ" related?
4. What is their literal meaning?
5. What did the "Messiah" stand for to a Jew?
6. What mistaken view of the Messiah was prevalent among the Jews?
7. What did Caiaphas mean when he used the word? What did Peter mean?
8. What is our conclusion regarding the meaning of this word for us to-day?
9. What features are excluded in the proper definition of the Christian creed?
10. Why are these features eliminated?
11. How may we go about discovering the real meaning of the creed?
12. What two great features are included in the personality of Jesus?
13. Where in the Scriptures do we find summaries of his ideals?
14. What do we style the first feature? What the second?
15. What three specific characteristics are embodied in the moral ideal of Christ?
16. What is meant by the term "the Way"?
17. What does being a Christian mean?
18. Is the spiritual ideal of Jesus a necessary feature of his teaching? Why?
19. What does this ideal include?
20. What part has the spiritual side of Christ's teaching played in the progress of Christianity?
21. Sum up briefly the practical meaning of Christ's creed?

LESSON V. THE GOSPEL OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

I. Christ's Teaching Regarding the Worth of the Individual Soul.
 Perhaps the most striking feature about the teaching of Jesus was the new emphasis which he placed upon the value of the

human soul. The ancient world looked upon the individual man or woman as being of practically no significance. Human life was about the cheapest thing in the thought of the age. The Greeks, for the most part, taught that the individual counted for nothing; the sole consideration of importance being the nation and the race. The idea has been revived in modern times in the political ethics of the leaders of the German Empire. No matter how many individuals are sacrificed, if the interests of the state are conserved there is nothing more to be desired.

Over against this philosophy of the insignificance of the individual, Jesus taught that the one thing of supreme worth in the world is the human soul. Perhaps the most characteristic form in which his teaching found expression is the well-known passage in the Gospels where he puts the whole world on one side of the scales and one soul on the other, and then says that the latter item is the more important of the two. "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" was a new note in human history. Reflecting upon this passage, one of the profoundest authorities in the field of modern law has said that the greatest contribution which Christ made to the world's progress was his "discovery of the individual." In the eyes of Jesus, every man, however poor or degraded he may be, possesses something of infinite worth, and no effort can be too great or too costly if it will help such a man to preserve and make the most of this priceless treasure. This conception of the supreme and infinite value of the soul is the keynote of all missionary activity and of all genuine enthusiasm for human betterment. Any "Social Service" philosophy which is not based upon this idea is doomed to failure. As Professor Fosdick said recently: "The purpose of all social service is man's progress in character. The horrors of the white-slave traffic, of tenements in city slums, and of corruption in city government the evils of war and drunkenness and tyranny, all lie in this: that they debase, demoralize, and, in the end, utterly ruin the character of men. The infinite value of personality which immortality asserts makes any fight for social justice worth while."

The value and significance of every system of teaching is usually best understood by studying the methods of attack of its enemies. Perhaps the keenest opponent Christianity has ever had was one of its earliest adversaries—the heathen philosopher Celsus—who flourished in the third century A. D. The most brilliant features of the infidel writings of Volney, Voltaire, Paine and Ingersoll are borrowed outright from Celsus. Now, Celsus summed up his opposition to the teaching of Christ in these words: "The **Toot** of

Christianity is its excessive valuation of the human soul, and the absurd idea that God takes interest in man." No Christian could have put the whole matter better than it is presented in these words. "The root of Christianity" lies precisely in its "excessive valuation of the human soul." Let us proceed now to see what this "excessive valuation" implies.

II. The Christian Gospel of Character Values.

The emphasis of Jesus and of the early Christian teaching throughout was always upon the immaterial or spiritual values rather than upon the material. The kernel of the gospel is expressed in the words: "A man's life consisteth not in the multitude of things which he possesseth." In the parable of the rich fool, Jesus pictured vividly the folly of making material considerations first in life. Paul summed up the idea in his famous sentence: "The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are unseen are eternal." Of course the unseen and eternal things are the only things of real value.

Both Jesus and Paul lived out their philosophy. They never had any money or property to amount to anything, although neither of them objected to the ownership of money or property in themselves. What they did strenuously object to was making money or property first in one's thought, and thereby living primarily for the lower and transient, rather than for the higher and eternal, values. Of course these higher values make up what we usually style character. The idea of accumulating a million dollars would not have made any great appeal to either Jesus or Paul, although, as both of them kept treasuries for the help of the needy, it is not likely that either of them would have despised the million, if it came in the right way. But, as between making a million dollars and building up a little finer or higher type of character, they would not have hesitated for a moment. A gentle disposition, a passion for truth, a spirit of loving humility—any or all of these things, in their eyes, possessed real and permanent value, and hence could not be weighed in the scales with mere money or property considerations. The man who tells a falsehood in order to make money, or who sacrifices his high ideal of purity for the sake of sensual pleasure, Jesus would say, drives a tremendously bad bargain. He had no hesitancy in styling such a man a "fool." It is characteristic of our present un-Christian civilization that it usually reverses this order. The average man of to-day, perhaps even the average church-member, looks on the individual who sacrifices money or property rather than practice a little deception, as the "fool," instead of the man who does the reverse.

Christianity is, therefore, in its essence, and primarily, a character religion. It makes character the only consideration of real significance in life, and its sole purpose is to develop a certain type of personality. When it "saves" a man, it makes over his character in accordance with the ideals of Christ, and if it doesn't do this the man is not "saved." "Damnation" is simply the result of neglecting character development, and "salvation" is the reverse process. We are saved by deliberately fashioning our character and lives after the ideal furnished us in the life of Christ, and we are lost by drifting away from this ideal. The Lord knows his own, and he knows them because they are trying, at least, to follow his ideals and to be like him. This common pursuit of a common ideal produces a common fellowship which constitutes the glorious community of the redeemed.

III. The Christian Ideal of Character.

Character is a unitary conception in itself, but it has, necessarily, two sides. The one is the inner side, which is known in its fullness only to the soul itself and to God. The other is the side which is shown to others and which comes out in the dealings of the self with other selves. We usually style the one side the personal, and the other the social. There is no conflict between the two, for the right kind of personal ideal will always produce the right kind of social conduct, while, on the other hand, the right sort of social ideal will always produce a high type of personal character. Shakespeare makes Polonius express some very sound philosophy when he says:

**"This above all; to thine own self be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."**

He might just as truthfully have said: "If you are true to others, you can not be false to your own highest self."

In Christ's teaching, both the personal and social features of character development are thoroughly emphasized. He praised the rich young ruler for living true to the commandments, and then proceeded to drive home the social gospel by insisting that the ruler sacrifice his wealth for the good of the needy. Again, he summed up his teaching in the two commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind [the personal gospel], and thy neighbor as thyself [the social gospel]." James defines the Christian religion in the same way, as "visiting the widows and orphans in their affliction" (the social gospel), and keeping one's self "unspotted from the world" (the personal gospel).

What are the essential features of the personal gospel as Jesus taught it and as the early disciples tried to live it? The answer is both simple and complex. In its essence, Jesus taught a character gospel based on the Ten Commandments and the best morality of the Old Testament prophets. The chief virtues which he emphasized were the following: (1) Humility, (2) loyalty to duty, (3) kindness, (4) industry, (5) truthfulness, (6) chastity, (7) good citizenship, (8) honesty and (9) temperance. The writer once went through all of the Gospels, and the rest of the New Testament also, carefully tabulating every reference to personal character. He discovered that all of the virtues inculcated by Christ and his apostles could be grouped under this ninefold outline. Paul's "fruits of the Spirit" in Galatians is almost identical with it, with the exception that Paul groups the social virtues, at least in part, along with the personal in his summary. For a detailed analysis of these nine virtues, with the appropriate Scripture references, the student is referred to the author's "Religion of Christ" (Part II. and Appendix). It is an easy matter for any reader to take the New Testament and work out the outline for himself, if he is willing to use a little effort. Let it suffice to say here that when a man or woman is humble, is loyal to the duty before him or her, is kind to all, is industrious and frugal, is truthful and clean and pure, is a good citizen, is honest in all business relations, and temperate in all things, he is living up, in substance, to the Christ ideal of personal righteousness. All these things are distinctly and clearly taught in the Gospels, and all of them are emphasized and insisted upon in the Epistles. There ought to be, therefore, no difficulty involved in the matter of discovering what are the foundation principles of Christian character.

IV. The Restoration Position on the Subject.

Theoretically, there has never been any great divergence of opinion as to what constitutes Christian character. There is, in fact, no room for such divergence if the New Testament is accepted at its face value. Men who hold to the most diverse theological views agree upon this subject. Even Protestants and Roman Catholics agree here at least in theory. Practically, however, there has always been a wide gap between the ideal and its fulfillment. People will acknowledge that the Christ ideal demands humility, and will yet live anything but humble lives. Sometimes, it is true, they will try to twist the Scripture teaching so as to justify their own derelictions. We find so-called Christian ministers preaching hatred, for example, and yet these same preachers, if pinned down to the facts, will concede that hatred is un-Christian as a principle. The

same thing applies to the other virtues catalogued. Nothing, however, does more harm to the progress of Christianity than this gap between theory and practice, on the part of those who nominally profess their adherence to the ideals of Christ.

The Restoration movement means, of course, the restoration of the New Testament ideal of the Christian life as well as the New Testament ideal of the Christian church. This fact is occasionally obscured by an apparent overemphasis on the church ordinances. This is not the fault of the principles involved in the movement, but of the way in which they are sometimes proclaimed. The Christian life is the goal of the Christian church, and should always receive the major emphasis in preaching. The "old Jerusalem gospel" is, first of all, a character gospel. All of its adherents will concede this fact, we are sure, but not all of them live up to the idea in their practical ministry. We need more emphasis upon Christian character in all our churches, and there is never any danger that we shall go too far in this direction. Only to the extent that we truly develop Christian character, and manifest such character to the world, are we really Christians.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES.

It is impossible to give here all of the Scriptural references bearing upon the ideal of personal character. We again refer those interested in the subject to the author's "Religion of Christ"—appendix to Part II.—where We mention a few here which are typical:

1. On the subject in general (Luke 10:27; Gal. 5:22, 23; Jas. 1:27).
2. On the virtue of humility (Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48; 18:9-17).
3. On loyalty to duty (Mark 10:32-34; Luke 9:51; Acts 20:20-24).
4. On kindness (Matt. 5:38-48; Luke 18:35-43; Luke 22:50, 51).
5. On industry (John 5:17; 2 Thess. 3:10-12).
6. On truthfulness (John 8:32, 44-46; Rev. 21:8, 27).
7. On chastity (Matt. 5:8, 27-32; Eph. 5:3-5).
8. On good citizenship (Matt. 22:15-22; Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17).
9. On honesty (Matt. 6:25-34; Luke 12:13-21; Eph. 4:28).
10. On temperance (Luke 15:13, 14; Rom. 12:1; Phil. 4:8).

OTHER REFERENCES.

1. Kershner—"Religion of Christ," Part II., Chapter I.
2. Peabody—"Jesus Christ and the Christian Character," Chapters II., III. and IV.

3. Speer—"The Marks of a Man," Chapters I. and II.

4. Stalker—"Imago Christi," Chapters I., II., III. and IX. especially.

BLACKBOARD OUTLINE.

CHRISTIAN CHARACTER	{ 1. Personal 2. Social		{ 1. Humility 2. Duty 3. Kindness 4. Industry 5. Truthfulness 6. Chastity 7. Good Citizenship 8. Honesty 9. Temperance
		PERSONAL RIGHTEOUSNESS	

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. Christian Character as the Goal of Religion.
2. Christ's Emphasis upon Character.
3. The Essentials of the Christian Ideal of Character.
4. Personal Righteousness—Its Elements.
5. Practice versus Theory in Christianity.
6. The Restoration Position on the Subject.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. How did the teaching of Jesus differ from the thought of his age with regard to the worth of the human soul?
2. What did Jesus regard as the most valuable thing in the world?
3. How does his teaching in this particular affect the question of missions?
4. How does it affect the question of social service?
5. What is Professor Fosdick's testimony upon the subject?
6. What does Celsus say about the message of Christianity at this point?
7. Why is his testimony of especial value?
8. What expression of Jesus contains the kernel of his philosophy of life?
9. What is the central thought of the parable of the rich fool?
10. How does Paul express the same idea?
11. How does our modern civilization look at the question?
12. What is meant by "saving" a man or woman, in the Christian sense?
13. What is meant by being "lost"?
14. What two sides are there to Christian character?

15. Are these two sides exclusive of each other?
16. What is Shakespeare's testimony upon the subject?
17. How may we discover what is included in the Christian definition of character?
18. Mention nine virtues which Christ emphasized as belonging to the ideal of personal righteousness.
19. Is there any special controversy with regard to the essentials of Christian character?
20. What is the chief difficulty in the matter?
21. What is the Restoration position upon the question?
22. Mention some places in the New Testament where each one of the nine virtues in the ideal of personal righteousness is emphasized.

LESSON VI. THE GOSPEL OF SERVICE

I. The Nature of the Social Gospel.

We have seen that the personal and social gospels are mutually related and interwoven. There is no personal virtue which does not have its social expression, nor is there any social virtue which does not react upon personal character. Truthfulness, for example, is an individual virtue, and yet one can scarcely lie without lying *to* some one or *about* some one. Every individual is inevitably bound up with other individuals in the general scheme of things. When the apostle said, "None of us liveth unto himself, and none dieth unto himself," he was simply giving utterance to an axiomatic truth. With this fact in mind, it is, nevertheless, convenient to study the personal and social elements in character-building as, in a measure, distinct. Moreover, there are certain virtues which are peculiarly social in their nature and expression. We come, therefore, to a direct analysis and study of the social side of the Christian ideal of life.

That this side constituted a large part of the teaching of the Nazarene there can be no question. The whole idea of the "kingdom of God," which is so frequently emphasized in the Gospels, is social. While Christ invariably began with the individual soul, and while the goal of his teaching was individual and personal, he always emphasized the necessity for social improvement and betterment. Although he recognized the fact that any permanent and lasting social reform must start with the individual and must come from within out, rather than the reverse, he nevertheless taught the necessity for thoroughgoing and radical social improvement. He knew that social evils, while proceeding from individual sinfulness

and selfishness, also help to produce the same evils in the individuals subject to their influence. His gospel was much more than an isolated individualism. He constantly mingled with men himself, and he constantly taught the ideal and proper scheme of human relationships.

III. The Basis of the Social Gospel.

The basis of the social gospel taught by Jesus Christ lies in the two great principles of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. All men are potentially and rightfully the children of the one divine Father, and hence all men are rightfully brothers. Some are sinful and erring children, it is true, and need to be brought back to the divine fold from whence they have wandered; but, nevertheless, the Father's love goes out to them even when they have deliberately separated themselves from his affection and care. This is the meaning of the parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin, as well as of the wonderful picture of the Prodigal Son. God's love takes in all humanity. He is not, in any sense of the term, a tribal or ethnic deity. Here is where Jesus met with the greatest opposition on the part of his countrymen. The Jews regarded themselves as under the peculiar favor of Jehovah, and when the Galilean sought to include Gentiles and Samaritans in his scheme of things, he met with strenuous opposition. The Jew was an intense nationalist. He looked upon other races and peoples as deservedly under the divine displeasure, and he could see no use in trying to help them. Jesus, however, considered himself the "Son of man" and regarded his mission as one which embraced all humanity. It was this universal character of his teaching which brought down the severest condemnation of the Jerusalem authorities. Even the Twelve could not understand or appreciate it. It required a special vision to open the eyes of Peter, and it took a special miracle to convert Paul. A good many of the Jewish Christians probably never understood or fully accepted the world-wide sweep of the gospel.

But, not only was the social teaching of Jesus universal in its application, but still more was it revolutionary in its essential philosophy. Humanity had hitherto developed very largely along purely selfish lines. The "struggle for existence" and the "survival of the fittest" were the rules which governed its progress. "Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost," was the maxim in almost universal application. The great quarrel which Nietzsche has with Christ's teaching consists in the fact that it nullifies this elementary law of biology. Let the weak perish, and the strong and powerful survive, was the old rule. Help the weak

and let the strong use their strength to serve those who need their assistance, was the new rule of Jesus. The brute domination of selfish power gives place in the gospel of Christ to the law of unselfish service and sympathy. It must be conceded that this teaching was, and still remains, revolutionary. To be humble, to be meek, to prefer others' advancement to one's own, is a gospel which is still too "hard" for the bulk of humanity. The first law of nature seems to be to "look out for one's self," but Jesus taught that the first law of the new gospel is to look out for others. Our modern civilization betrays its essentially pagan and un-Christian character most clearly at this point. Competition is still the governing principle in social and business life. But competition, in ordinary experience, means the old jungle philosophy of the "survival of the fittest." It is essentially a Nietzschean, rather than a Christian, principle. Mutual co-operation and service are the Christian principles. The present social order does contain certain Christian elements. Competition is softened, and co-operation prevails or exists in spots, but the dominating influence is still, in large measure, the law of the jungle. It took the world war of 1914 to show openly how essentially pagan our nominally Christian civilization really was, and, for that matter, still is. Those who say that the war proves the failure of Christianity simply betray their ignorance of what constitutes Christianity. Christianity can not fail until it has been tried, and it has never yet had a trial. So far as embodying the essential principles of Christ's gospel of service is concerned, the so-called "Christian" nations have been, for centuries, about as far from the Christian ideal as they could well get. The civilization which has collapsed was never really Christian; it was, in its spirit and nature, pagan.

III. The Essential Features of the Gospel of Service.

There are two essential features in the social gospel of Jesus. We may style the one the law of love, and the other the law of rational direction. The first furnishes the motive power for the gospel, and the second furnishes the guiding principle by which that power is to be directed and utilized. The first is the ideal element; the second is the practical. Jesus enunciated the first when he said, "Love is the fulfilling of the law," and he expressed the second when he told his disciples that they should be "wise as serpents, but harmless as doves." He constantly embodied both principles in his daily life and teaching. His whole ministry was motivated by love, while, at the same time, by his use of his parables and in other ways, he manifested the utmost wisdom and tactfulness. Wisely directed, and, therefore, effective, service proceeding

from infinite love and sympathy sums up the nature and character of the entire social gospel of Jesus.

IV. The Ideal Principle—Love.

In a certain sense, the whole gospel of Christ may be expressed in the little word "love." On the divine side, it is embodied in John's wonderful sentence: "For God so loved the world, **that** he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on **him** should not perish, but have eternal life." On the human side, it is embodied in another passage from John, the beloved apostle: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you." Paul taught that the highest goal of the Christian is love, and in the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians he defined what **he** meant when he used the word. Any one who **reads** and meditates upon this chapter can easily understand the motive power, the driving force, of the Christian religion. If our nominal Christianity had even partially measured up to Paul's ideal, the world would long since have been transformed.

The essence of love, **as** Paul understood it, is good will. William De Witt Hyde is therefore close to the truth when he defines Christianity as the "gospel of good will." Good will toward everybody, even our enemies and those who mistreat and persecute us, is **the** very essence of Christ's social message. When Jesus said, "Love your enemies," this is what he meant. We may not always **be** able to have personal affection for everybody—in fact, this is both impossible and undesirable—but we can have good will for every one, and, if we are real Christians, we will and must have it. This principle forever rules out hatred, revenge, cruelty and bitterness toward any human being from the Christian vocabulary. So long as we hate anybody or wish him ill, no matter how badly he may have acted toward us, we are not really Christians. We may possess all the other virtues, but, if we lack this—the one central goal of our faith—we are but as "sounding brass or a clanging cymbal." Yea, though **we** have all faith, and bestow all our goods to feed the poor, and even give our bodies to be burned, without the one essential of forgiving love, we are profited nothing.

V. The Practical Principle—Rational Direction.

Love is the motive power of Christianity, but love alone does not exhaust the Christian gospel of service. Love must **be** guided by reason, in order that it may be able to gain its ends. We all know well-intending people who utterly fail to render any real service to those whom they desire to help, simply because they go about rendering the service in the wrong way. Shakespeare makes the fool in "King Lear," who was very much of a wise man in

reality, say of this sort of action: "'Twas her brother that, in pure kindness to his horse, buttered his hay." People who, out of "pure kindness," "butter the hay," do not do much good in the world. It is necessary that love should be tactful, reasonable, wise and prudent in order to be effective. Indiscriminate charity often does more harm than good. We should not only wish people well, but we should also use common sense in our efforts to help them. Every one who has tried to servo the needy knows how indispensable it is to act with the best judgment in affording relief. Otherwise, our good intentions go entirely to waste, or, worse still, actually do harm. Christianity is fundamentally a reasonable religion, and in nothing is it more reasonable than in the matter of service.

VI. Modern Interest in the Social Gospel.

The modern interest in the social gospel is of comparatively recent birth. Individual illustrations of the principle involved may indeed be found throughout the history of Christendom; perhaps the most notable example being the career of St. Francis of Assisi. Even St. Francis, however, while perhaps the most perfect embodiment of the spirit of Christian love who has lived since the days of the Christ himself, lacked the spirit of rational direction to no slight degree. The new, modern emphasis upon social service, on the other hand, tends to stress the practical side. This means that it strives to correct social evils in a rational and scientific way, instead of dealing as Francis did, for the most part, with the effect, without touching the cause. The danger now is that we shall go to the other extreme. We must be careful not to lose the note of idealism, the warmth and fervor of the divine love for men, in our efforts to be practical. There is a golden mean between the two extremes, or, rather, a perfect unity, which swallows up and harmonizes both of them if we will only grasp it. This perfect combination embodies Christ's ideal of service.

VII. The Restoration Position upon the Question.

The weakness of Protestantism, as a whole, has been in its halting emphasis upon the gospel of service. The one great strength of Roman Catholicism is in its insistence upon certain phases of the same gospel. Hospitals, orphan asylums and relief work generally mark the progress of the Roman Catholic Church in every land. While this has been true, on the other hand Catholicism has never manifested any great interest in that thoroughgoing social reform which strikes at the root of the problems of social injustice. The Restoration principles, in the nature of the case, include a plea for the embodiment of Christ's social gospel in its entirety. It

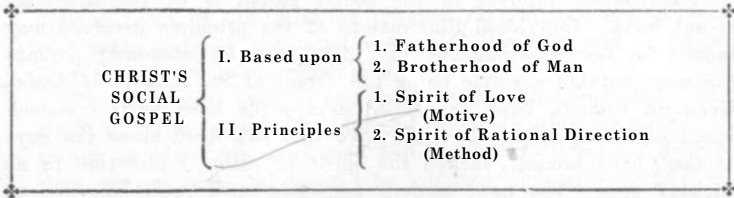
can not be claimed that the advocates of these principles have always fully realized this fact; but this, again, is not the fault of the plea, but of its imperfect application. More and more, it becomes incumbent upon all who hold to the Christian ideal of service that they shall make that ideal real in our social and national life. This is a task which devolves upon all of us, and it is a task from which we can not, and should not, wish to escape.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES.

Mark 10: 45; Luke 10: 25-37; Matt. 10: 16; 1 Cor. 13; John 15: 12; 1 John 3:14-18; 4:7-12, 16-21.

All of Christ's miracles and deeds of mercy and service bear directly upon this lesson.

BLACKBOARD OUTLINE.



OTHER REFERENCES.

1. Kershner—"Religion of Christ," Part II., Chapter II.
2. Rauschenbusch—(1) "Christianity and the Social Crisis."
(2) "Christianizing the Social Order." The best all-around books on the social gospel of Jesus.
3. Peabody—"Jesus Christ and the Social Question." One of the earliest, and still one of the best, books on the subject.
4. Vedder—(1) "The Gospel of Jesus and the Problems of Democracy."
(2) "Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus." Somewhat radical volumes, but worth reading and thinking about.
5. Conyngton—"How to Help." One of the best brief manuals of practical relief work.
6. Clow—"Christ in the Social Order." A more conservative statement of Christ's gospel of service.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. The Basis of the Social Gospel.
2. The Social Gospel and Internationalism.
3. The Social Gospel and Competition.
4. Love the Motive of the Social Gospel.
5. The Principle of Rational Direction.

6. The Modern Social Awakening.
7. False and True Ideals of Social Service.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. How are the personal and social virtues inter-related?
2. What was the attitude of Jesus as regards the importance of the social gospel?
3. What two principles furnish the theoretical basis of the social gospel of Jesus?
4. How did the Jews look upon Christ's teaching at this point?
5. How does the gospel of Jesus deal with the question of internationalism?
6. How is it opposed to the "survival of the fittest"?
7. Why was Nietzsche opposed to it?
8. How does the gospel of Jesus affect the law of competition?
9. Does the collapse of European civilization in 1914 prove that Christianity has broken down?
10. What does it prove?
11. What are the two essential features of the social gospel of Jesus?
12. How are these two principles related?
13. Give illustrations of both of them from the life and teachings of Jesus.
14. What is meant by love in the Christian use of the word?
15. What place does love occupy in Christ's philosophy of life?
16. What is meant by the principle of rational direction?
17. Why is this principle of great importance?
18. What can you say of the modern interest in the social gospel?
19. What is the possible danger involved in this interest?
20. State the prevailing Protestant and Roman Catholic attitudes toward the gospel of service.
21. What is the Restoration position upon the subject?

LESSON VII. THE GOSPEL OF FREEDOM

I. Freedom the All-inclusive Ideal.

As we have already observed, perhaps the majority of the interpreters of the Christian gospel divide the message of Jesus into the simple outline of personal and social virtues. Our duties as individuals and our duties toward others appear to cover the entire field of human relationships. And yet, back of these two classes of duties, both as a presupposition and as a goal, lies another ideal—the glorious concept of freedom.

about us are free also, we can not enter into the fellowship of the redeemed. Everywhere in the Scriptures sin is pictured as enslavement of bondage. The vision of the old prophet looked forward to the day when the Messiah would prove his claims by giving freedom to the captive and by opening the door of the prison for those who are bound. There was no theme dearer to the heart of Jesus than the glorious freedom of the sons of God.

Personal righteousness necessarily implies freedom. There can be no enforced goodness, and hence freedom of choice is a necessary presupposition of character-building. In the same way, the first service which one can render to others is to set them free. Freedom therefore lies back of both the ideal of Personal Righteousness and the ideal of Social Service.

While this is true, it is also true that freedom lies ahead of both of these ideals. No matter how good we may become as individuals, we shall never be entirely free until we reach the stage of perfection. So long as any sin or shortcoming mars our record, it means that we are, in some measure, in bondage. Likewise, until we reach the stage of perfect social adjustment there will always be some element of servitude in the social structure. Perfect freedom, therefore, marks the consummation of Christian character and Christian service. It is the one all-inclusive ideal of the higher life.

III. Different Phases of the Subject.

Freedom covers every conceivable field of human activity, and therefore includes a variety of features. We need not attempt any exhaustive analysis of the subject, but there are at least three sides which must be considered if we wish to gain any fair view of the teaching of Jesus. We may style these three sides (1) The Personal, (2) The Moral and (3) The Intellectual. The first deals with the general concept of human freedom, the second with the relation of freedom to character, and the third with freedom as the indispensable condition of the progress and development of the human intellect. No interpretation of the Christian religion is adequate or satisfactory which does not cover at least these three considerations. We proceed, therefore, to a brief analysis of what is included under each of them.

III. Personal Freedom.

One of the most striking features of human history is the story of the gradual climb upward out of oppression into some measure of freedom on the part of the bulk of humanity. The idea of slavery, in one form or another, is as old as the annals of the human race. When Jesus came into the world, the vast majority of human beings were slaves. The lot of a slave in those ancient

days was wretched almost beyond the power of imagination. The inhuman punishment of crucifixion was devised, in the first place, chiefly to terrorize the slaves. If a master thought he detected signs of insubordination on the part of his servants, it was no unusual thing for him to have one of them crucified in order that the poor wretch's lingering agonies might serve as an object-lesson to his comrades. One of the taunts commonly hurled upon the early Christians was that the God they worshiped had met the ignominious fate of a slave. Jesus, by his own sufferings and death, identified himself with the most downtrodden of earth's creatures in order to bring about their enfranchisement and salvation. It is noticeable that the Scriptures do not inveigh against slavery as an institution. What they do is simply to lay down certain principles, which, if observed, make slavery impossible. It has required a long time for these principles to leaven human civilization, and the leaven has not yet fully accomplished its work. While the old form of chattel slavery has practically disappeared, there is still a great deal of political and industrial servitude which is directly contrary to the teachings of the gospel. So long as caste or privilege, in any form, exists in the world, the Christian ideal of freedom remains unrealized. Just now practically the whole human race is engaged in a struggle which has been characterized by one of the principal protagonists as an effort "to make the world safe for democracy." The "democracy" referred to is probably far short of the ideal of Jesus, but, nevertheless, the process is a long step in the right direction. Men and women everywhere must be set free from the tyranny which makes higher soul development impossible before the kingdom of God can come upon the earth. This means industrial as well as political freedom, and the goal is still far off. Nevertheless, the world is moving in the right direction, and any one who will take the trouble to investigate the process will be forced to recognize the fact that the ideals of Jesus are the great motive forces back of the whole course of events.

Inasmuch as the highest possible development of every individual soul is the supreme object of Christ's mission, and inasmuch as such development is impossible without freedom, it naturally follows that such freedom is an indispensable condition of the progress of Christian principles.

IV. Moral Freedom.

There has been a great deal of unnecessary argument over the so-called "freedom of the will." Perhaps more dogmas and theologues have centered around this subject than around any other speculative question. One need only mention the word "predestination"

to call up a host of creedal dogmas. And yet the practical implications of the subject are exceedingly plain. Nothing is clearer to any unprejudiced student of the Scriptures than the fact that everywhere it is taken for granted that men *can* be saved and *can* accept the conditions of salvation if they *will* to do so. The whole matter of character development rests upon this elementary consideration. It would be the supremest folly to ask people to do something which is entirely beyond their capacity to accomplish. When Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," he certainly meant that it is possible for people to believe. When John said, "Whosoever will may come," it is obvious that he included everybody in his invitation. There is no ground for metaphysical speculation here. People *can* accept Christ, *can* fashion their lives after the perfect life of the supreme Teacher; in short, *can* be saved, *if they will*. Moral freedom is an axiom of Christianity just as it is an axiom of ethics. The preacher who does not believe that the people he calls to repentance *can* actually repent, will never accomplish much with his preaching. The question is not a theoretical, but a practical, one, and the practical answer is clear and unmistakable.

V. Intellectual Freedom.

Personal freedom and moral freedom do not exhaust the substance of Christ's teaching upon the subject. When he said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," he laid down the *magna charta* of intellectual freedom. He never intended his gospel to fetter the free thinking of men. Herein is where the attempts to bind the intellect by the means of philosophical dogmas and creeds run directly counter to his teaching. In our discussion of the subject of creed, we called attention to Mr. Campbell's vigorous protest against refusing to allow any one to think past "the thirty-ninth article." All such theological clamps are contrary to the ideal of intellectual freedom; the free and unfettered search for truth inculcated by Jesus. It is here that we find the common denominator of science and religion. Both alike search for truth—the one solely in the natural sphere, and the other extending beyond the finite into the infinite. There can be no real conflict between agencies which have so much in common. Whenever a conflict exists, it either means that science has encroached upon the rightful sphere of religion, or else that religion has received a false interpretation at the hands of its adherents. Dogmatic science and dogmatic theology are alike contrary to the ideal of Jesus. True science is always in harmony with true religion, and is a valuable instrument in accomplishing the work of Christianity.

VI. Freedom in History.

Of all the ideals of Jesus, the gospel of freedom has been the slowest, to receive the acceptance of the world. As we have already seen, personal freedom is still far from being universally realized. Moral freedom, while practically accepted almost everywhere, has been a bone of theoretical contention for centuries. Even to-day the new scientific determinism, as it is styled, refuses to concede any real freedom of action to the individual. Slowest of all has been the progress toward intellectual liberty. Human creeds and theological dogmas have been barnacles on the intellectual progress of the race for centuries. Ecclesiasticisms, denying any sort of freedom to those who have entered the pale of the church, have multiplied skeptics and have hindered the onward march of the gospel to a degree beyond calculation. The curse of religion has always been the rule of tyranny. Such tyranny is farthest from the thought and ideals of Jesus, but it has, nevertheless, been perpetrated again and again in his name. Fortunately, the days of autocracy, in religion as well as in government, are rapidly passing. The absolutism which has so long masqueraded under the name of Christianity is destined soon to fall, and to fall forever.

VII. The Restoration View.

One of the foremost features of the Restoration plea, from the beginning, has been its advocacy of the principle of freedom. In its attacks upon human creeds and dogmas, it struck at the root of intellectual tyranny, and, in its opposition to ecclesiasticism, it has been a mighty force in favor of the new era of religious democracy. It is the most democratic and the least aristocratic religious movement in existence. Herein it simply lives up to the gospel of freedom, which is one of the essential features of the church it seeks to restore.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES.

John 8: 32; Rom. 7: 4-6; Luke 4: 16-20. The entire Epistle to the Galatians is a plea for freedom from legalistic and ecclesiastical tyranny.

BLACKBOARD OUTLINE.

<p>THE GOSPEL OF FREEDOM</p>	}	<p>1. Personal Freedom 2. Moral Freedom 3. Intellectual Freedom</p>
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"Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

OTHER REFERENCES.

1. Kershner—"The Religion of Christ," Part II., Chapter III.
2. Campbell—"Campbell-Rice Debate," Proposition Sixth, Mr. Campbell's fifth address.
3. Campbell—"The Christian System," section on "The Kingdom of Heaven."

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. Nature of the Ideal of Freedom.
2. Comprehensive Character of the Gospel of Freedom.
3. Personal Freedom and the Teaching of Christ.
4. Moral Freedom and the Gospel.
5. Intellectual Freedom as a Christian Ideal.
6. Freedom and the Progress of Christianity.
7. The Restoration Plea for Freedom.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. How is the ideal of freedom related to the ideals of personal righteousness and of social service?
2. How does personal righteousness imply freedom?
3. How does social service imply it?
4. How does freedom lie ahead of both of the other ideals?
5. Why is freedom the all-inclusive ideal of the higher life?
6. What three features of the gospel of freedom are considered in this study?
7. What is meant by personal freedom?
8. What by moral freedom?
9. What by intellectual freedom?
10. What can you say about the institution of slavery in the ancient world?
11. What was the attitude of Jesus toward the problems of slavery?
12. What form of slavery still exists in the world?
13. How is Christianity related to the ideal of democracy?
14. Why is freedom an indispensable condition of the progress of Christian principles?
15. What is meant by the freedom of the will?
16. What are the practical implications of the question?
17. Does Christianity involve a belief in moral freedom? Why?
18. What was the attitude of Jesus toward the subject of intellectual freedom?
19. How are science and religion related?
20. Is there any real ground for conflict between them?

21. When conflict arises, how may we account for it?
22. Trace the progress of the ideal of freedom in human history.
23. Why has this progress been so slow?
24. What has been the greatest curse of organized religion?
25. What is the attitude of the Restoration movement toward the gospel of freedom?

LESSON VIII. THE SUPERNATURAL ELEMENT

I. The Gospel of the Here and Now.

A great part of Christianity, as we have seen, deals with the present life. In fact, there is a sense in which it may be said that Jesus was pre-eminently, and first of all, interested in this present-day existence. He was forever warning people of the necessity for utilizing wisely the opportunities of this life. Many of his parables were spoken for this purpose, especially "The Talents," "The Pounds," "The Tares," "The Wise and Foolish Virgins," "The Good Samaritan" and "The Last Judgment." In the "Rich Man and Lazarus" he emphasizes the fact that it is in this life that we make or mar our destiny for eternity. Hence the way we live here is the first and most important thing for us to think about. If our present-day lives are what they ought to be, the future will take care of itself. On the other hand, if we develop the wrong kind of character here, we shall have to live hereafter just as we have planned our lives in the Here and Now.

While there is, therefore, no gainsaying the immense emphasis which Jesus constantly placed upon the present life, it is also true that he had a very definite message with regard to the future. Our lives here are of special significance, he taught, because of what the future *may* mean to each one of us. This is the period of probation for us, the testing-time, and, because the goal we seek is of tremendous value, therefore our efforts to reach that goal should be proportionately earnest and strenuous. There is, in fact, no real separation of the present from the future in the teaching of Jesus. Life is one and continuous with him; and, because it is so arranged that what follows must always be dependent upon what precedes, therefore he placed especial emphasis upon the earlier stages in the process. These earlier stages come within the period of our time and space existence, and, for that reason, extraordinary importance attaches to that existence. Whether "heavenly cheers or infernal laughter" shall greet our "first step out of life or in it," as the poet puts it, depends upon what we do here, and hence our actions here are of the utmost importance.

II. The Gospel of the Hereafter.

Like all his other teaching, the message of Jesus regarding the hereafter is practical rather than theoretical. He never philosophized much about the nature of the future life; he simply asserted its reality and taught his disciples to live, day by day, in the consciousness of that reality. He knew that our material organization is such that no explanation of the future life is, or ever can be, in the nature of the case, intelligible to our mortal minds. To a child who knows nothing of arithmetic, the problems of the higher mathematics are inconceivable. On the other hand, when once we reach the stage where we *can* grasp the principles of higher mathematics, the elementary questions are very simple and clear. Just in the same way, from the standpoint of our earthly thought life, the facts of the eternal world are inconceivable, but when once we "pass on" into the eternal world the problems of this life, which disturb us so much now, will be very plain and clear. The higher stage of existence is unintelligible while we are still on the lower plane, but when we reach the higher plane the whole scheme of things on the lower plane will be open to us. Just now we must accept the higher plane on faith, recognizing the fact that some day "we shall know even as we are known."

Jesus himself always lived and acted in full harmony with the conception of the reality of the future existence. The things of eternity were more real to him than the things of time. He lived in the world, and yet he was not of the world. Always he recognized the fact that his true existence was spiritual, and that he possessed a heritage which was of infinite and eternal value. Paul and the early Christians in general had the same point of view. This ever-conscious faith in the reality of the spiritual order is one of the fundamental facts of the Christian philosophy as well as of the Christian experience.

III. Supernatural, Spiritual, Mystical.

Here we have three words which are often used interchangeably, and the meanings of which are not always clear to many minds. Exact and accurate definition of terms is an essential to a clear understanding of any question, and so it is well that we should subject these words to careful scrutiny.

The word "supernatural" means "above or beyond the natural," and is used to designate that order of existence which rises above the ordinary facts of our material existence. It is not to be inferred that there is any contradiction between the natural and the supernatural. Both alike owe their origin to a common source, and are responsive to a common guiding and controlling Power.

The supernatural begins where the natural leaves off, and to believe in it simply means that we accept a universe larger than the narrow realm of scientific knowledge and investigation. When Herbert Spencer taught his philosophy of the unknowable, he asserted the reality of the supernatural just as firmly as does the ordinary orthodox Christian minister. The difference between his view and the Christian interpretation consists in the fact that he taught the absolute "unknowability" of the supernatural, while the Christian has learned that, through the avenue of faith, it is possible to come into direct touch with the great unseen universe of God which surrounds and enfolds our little life of time and sense.

The word "spiritual" differs from "supernatural" in the fact that it is a more positive and vital and less mechanical term. "Supernatural" seems to imply a sort of schism in the universe, which is, of course, an altogether erroneous idea. "Spiritual," on the other hand, recognizes the actual existence of the infinite in the finite and of the divine in the realm of the human. The chief objection to the word is the limited and occasional uses which are sometimes made of it. The term "Spiritualism" is an illustration in point, for here the word is associated with a sectarian and partisan usage, which is apt to be misleading. Of course, neither the "supernatural" nor the "spiritual" can be exactly defined. Both terms belong to the infinite—that is, the unbounded—and, as the word "definition" itself means putting a boundary around the thing defined, it is impossible to "define" or bound a thing that, in its nature, is and must, for us, remain unbounded. Nevertheless, we may so far define the spiritual as to be able to recognize its existence and reality. It is possible to know that a thing exists, and even to know something about its nature and properties, without being able to exhaust all that it implies. Because we can not know *all* about God is no reason why we should not be able to know that he is, and to know something about his nature and attributes, especially as those attributes directly concern our own well-being.

The word "mystical" is now much used, especially in educational circles, as a substitute for both "supernatural" and "spiritual." It comes from a Greek word which means "hidden," and it is ordinarily defined as dealing with the unseen facts of the universe which are hidden from the view of the natural order. Unfortunately, it, too, has been used in narrow and restricted ways which have given it an unpleasant flavor. The theory of direct and immediate knowledge of the divine on the part of the human soul is usually denominated "mystical." The "mystics" in church history were people who believed in direct, and, what may be styled,

miraculous, communication between God and man. Properly used, there is no objection to the word *f*mystical," although, like "supernatural" and "spiritual," it is constantly subject to misinterpretation because of the impossibility of accurately defining the realm with which it deals.

IV. The New Testament and the Supernatural.

The New Testament, throughout, asserts the existence and reality of the supernatural. There is not one of the twenty-seven books which does not assume that there is an order of things higher than the material or scientific order about us. Christianity never was, and never can be, made a purely "naturalistic religion," if such an expression can be considered, in any sense, as legitimate. In the very nature of things, the Christian religion assumes, and must assume, that God and the spiritual order are real, and that they constitute the highest and ultimate reality. Whenever we try to explain all the phenomena of our faith on purely naturalistic or scientific grounds, we are certain to destroy the very basis of that faith. This does not mean that we attack or oppose science. It simply means that we assert that science, as we know it, can not include or explain *all* that there is in the universe. Shakespeare expressed the idea very well when he puts into the mouth of Hamlet the famous words:

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

The whole life of Jesus, as it is given in the Gospels, is unintelligible save upon the basis of an acceptance of the reality of the supernatural or spiritual order.

V. No Religion without the Supernatural.

It is readily seen, from what we have just stated, that the idea of the supernatural is a fundamental conception in religion, and especially in the Christian religion. When we take it out of the religious world, there is nothing left except a system of more or less incomplete, scientific ethics. The thing that gives religion its real meaning is faith in the reality of the supernatural. As the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews puts it: "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." Now, it is impossible to believe in the Christian God, at least, without believing in the supernatural, for it is very certain that the God of the Bible is not to be identified with blind natural laws or forces. The Christian God is above the material universe, although, as he is a rewarder of them that seek after him, he is also in, and interested in, the material order of

things. Nature is an expression of God's will, but God is above and beyond that which merely emanates from him. There are, in fact, things in nature which are foreign to God—sin, evil, death, disease, and many others. In constructing the universe, God permitted these things to come into existence, because, without permitting them, the universe could not have been made a part of the moral order; but they are, nevertheless, foreign and alien to him. Man was made free to choose good or evil, and, being free, he chose evil, hence sin and death entered into the world. God, however—the perfect ideal of righteousness and goodness and love—remains distinct from the lower order of human imperfections. Once we give up faith in this Ultimate Goodness, we have lost all hold upon religion, and in order *not* to lose this faith we must believe in the reality of some supernatural order beyond and above the natural.

VI. Faith and the Supernatural.

We apprehend the supernatural through faith. Hence faith is the first and fundamental characteristic of the religious life. We apprehend scientific facts through our senses and thus gain what we ordinarily speak of as "knowledge." But the supernatural is beyond the reach of the material senses, and hence it must be apprehended in some other way. Faith is the bridge which joins the material to the supernatural, and which opens the way for communion between God and man. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," or, as the Revised Version puts it, the "assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen." Faith "assures" us that the unseen and eternal things are real, and it is such assurance which makes the truly religious life possible. Science can not "assure" us, for the supernatural is beyond its realm, but, through faith, the soul leaps across the barrier and makes the spiritual universe its own. Hence faith is practically synonymous with religion. All truly religious souls must possess great faith, and all of them, from Abraham down to David Livingstone, have possessed it.

While faith goes beyond science and purely intellectual research, it is, nevertheless, based upon reason and facts. Faith is grounded upon evidence, otherwise it degenerates to credulity, and evidence must conform to our scientific and intellectual standards. We are to be able to "give a reason" for the hope that is in us, and it must be a good reason. God does not ask us to believe anything without subjecting it to the most careful scrutiny. All the claims made for the Christian religion are susceptible of being tested in this way, and there need be no fear that they will not stand the

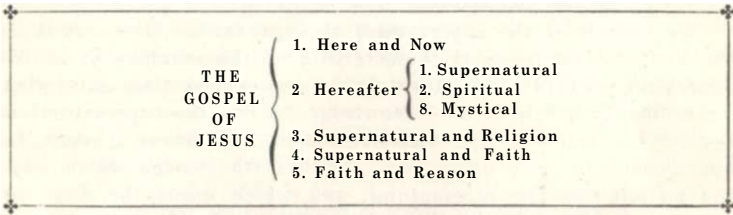
test. Our faith goes beyond reason, but it is, nevertheless, in the best sense of the words, a reasoned faith. The two extremes of skepticism, which denies the reality of faith, and of superstition, which is based upon an unreasoned faith, are alike foreign to the genius and spirit of Christianity.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES.

Heb. 11:1-6; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; John 6:27-40.

All references bearing upon the consciousness which Jesus possessed of the reality of the spiritual or supernatural order are appropriate for this lesson. There is scarcely a chapter in the Gospels where some such references may not be found. The passages selected above are only a few of the many Scripture texts which deal with the subject.

BLACKBOARD OUTLINE.



OTHER REFERENCES.

1. Kershner—"Religion of Christ," Part II., Chapter IV.
2. Campbell—"Christian System," Chapter III.
3. Milligan—"Scheme of Redemption," Book I., Chapter I.
4. Fleming—"Mysticism in Christianity," earlier chapters.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. The Meaning of the Supernatural.
2. Relation of the Supernatural to the Natural.
3. Religion and the Supernatural.
4. The Supernatural, the Spiritual and the Mystical.
5. Jesus and the Supernatural.
6. The Supernatural and Faith.
7. Faith as Related to Reason.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. Was Jesus especially interested in the present life?
2. Mention some parables which show his interest.
3. How do you explain this interest!

4. What was the attitude of Jesus toward the problems of the future life!
5. How did he connect the present existence with the one which is to follow it?
6. Why is it of so much importance that we should live right here?
7. What is the general character of Christ's message regarding the hereafter?
8. Why did he not seek to explain the mysteries of the future life!
9. Why is it that we have never been able to fathom the nature or character of the future world?
10. Does the fact that the future is inexplicable for us, at present, affect the reality of the life to come?
11. Is it possible to know that a thing *is*, without knowing a great deal else about it? Give an illustration.
12. Is the real Christian *sure* of the reality of the spiritual life?
13. Why is he thus sure?
14. Is his conviction a matter of scientific knowledge?
15. Upon what is it based?
16. What is meant by the words "supernatural," "spiritual" and "mystical"?
17. Is the supernatural necessarily "unknowable"?
18. What is the chief objection to the word "spiritual"?
19. Why is it impossible to define, with exactness, either the "supernatural" or the "spiritual"?
20. Who were the "mystics" in church history?
21. Why are all of these words subject to frequent misinterpretation?
22. What is the attitude of the New Testament toward the problem of the supernatural?
23. What is the necessary assumption of the Christian religion?
24. What is the attitude of Christianity toward science?
25. Can there be any real religion without a belief in the supernatural? Why?
26. What is the Christian idea of the relation of the Deity to nature?
27. What is the relation of faith to the supernatural?
28. What is faith? How does it differ from credulity?
29. What is the relation between faith and reason?
30. What two extremes, in this field, is it necessary for us to avoid!

LESSON IX. THE QUESTION OF MIRACLE

I. What Is Meant by a Miracle.

The word "miracle" is rather an indefinite term. In the original text there are at least six different Greek expressions used to convey the idea. Sometimes a miracle is, literally translated, simply a "glorious thing"; at other times, it is a "strange thing," and, at still others, a "wonderful thing," while the apostle John always uses the Greek word, which, in the Revised Version, is correctly rendered "signs," to express the miraculous deeds of Christ. Perhaps most people think of a miracle as a "marvel"; that is, as something bizarre and allied to the realm of the juggler or the sleight-of-hand performer. Herod had this idea when he wanted Jesus to work a miracle for him in the crucial hours which preceded the crucifixion.

Any one who studies the Gospel records, however, must come to the conclusion that John's definition of a miracle is the only correct one. Miracles are simply evidences of superhuman power, and were used for the purpose of convincing others that Jesus possessed such power. In the nature of the case, if Jesus Christ were the Messiah, God incarnate on earth, he must have possessed divine power. All the Gospel records prove that Jesus claimed to have, and actually exercised, such power. Just how he exercised it must forever remain a mystery to us, living, as we do, on the lower plane of human thought and knowledge. Students of fourth dimensional space know that there is nothing scientifically inconceivable about what appears miraculous on a lower plane, if you shift your point of view to the higher plane. The miraculous to the man on the lower plane becomes the matter-of-fact occurrence to the man on the higher plane. None of the miracles of Christ would appear to be miracles, using the word in its sense of "wonderful" or "strange," if we knew the nature and laws of the higher world of which those miracles prove the existence. Miracles, therefore, in no way, contradict the idea of scientific law; they simply show that the scientific laws thus far discovered do not explain all about the universe or its ways of working. It is only when a confessedly incomplete science assumes to be absolute that the miraculous has to be read out of court. It is this scientific dogmatism which, more than anything else, has disturbed the harmonious relations which should naturally exist between science and religion.

II. Miracles and Science.

The chief objection which the purely materialistic group of scientists has urged against miracles is that they contradict the

idea of the "uniformity of nature." There are two assumptions upon which this objection is based. The first is that we know all about the so-called "laws of nature," and the second is that there are no other "laws," save those with which we are acquainted, which are operative in the realm of human experience. Any careful student must acknowledge that it requires a great deal of dogmatic arrogance to make either of these assumptions. The real scientist has discovered, with Paul, that we know only "in part," and that we can only prophesy "in part." There is nothing in the realm of natural law which precludes constant discovery of many things not hitherto known, and often the new knowledge which is gained throws an entirely different light on what we fancied we knew already. Science is, in fact, the most unstable thing in the world. The chemistry or geology of a hundred years ago differs radically from the chemistry or geology of to-day, and it is not inconceivable that the science of a hundred years hence will differ still more radically from present-day teaching.

Science has a right to demand that any evidence regarding the presence of unknown or higher forces in experience shall be strong and conclusive; but it has no right, with David Hume, to say that "no amount of evidence can ever prove a miracle." Such an attitude is dogmatic and narrowing to the last degree. The truly scientific mind is always ready to consider evidence upon any question, no matter how distasteful may be the conclusions to which the evidence tends. The attitude of men like "Wallace, James, Hyslop, Crookes, Lodge and others toward the question of psychical research is characteristic of the genuinely scientific ideal. These investigators held themselves ready to carefully scrutinize any evidence dealing with the spiritual world, or with the miraculous, because they felt that their devotion to truth, as a whole, did not permit any other attitude. Some of the greatest scientists that have ever lived—among others, Newton, Agassiz, Kelvin and Romanes—have been devout Christians. Science leaves the question of miracle open; that is, it asks that adequate proof of all miracles shall be furnished; but it does not prejudice the case by saying that no evidence can ever prove a miracle.

III. Miracles as Signs.

In explaining the reason for healing the paralytic (Mark 2: 1-12), Jesus gave the true explanation of his use of the miraculous. He said: "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house." Here he makes it perfectly clear that the miracle was simply a sign or

credential of supernatural power. By showing the people about him that he possessed power and knowledge beyond the realm of ordinary experience, he proved his divine credentials as a spiritual leader. John, as we have seen, constantly refers to the miracles of Jesus as "signs." Signs they no doubt were, and, to the unlettered men and women of the Christian era, they were unanswerable signs. It is quite true that no such signs are needed to-day, for the simple reason that Christianity has had time enough to justify its claims as a spiritual and regenerative force in the world in other ways; and yet it is difficult to see how it could ever have secured a footing in the early days without the employment of the miraculous. It is worth noting that Jesus never worked an unnecessary miracle. His whole purpose in using his miraculous power was to lay the foundations of his claims as the spiritual leader of the race.

IV. God and the Miraculous.

If we recognize Jesus as divine, there ought to be no trouble about accepting his miraculous powers. The Being who could create a world could certainly heal a sick man or bring back life to one who had died. The fact of the case is that when we deny all possibility of the miraculous, we also deny God himself. The idea that the Creator does not possess absolute power over his creatures or the work of his hands is absurd. It is for this reason that most of the rationalistic thinkers who refuse to accept any evidence dealing with the miraculous are frankly atheists, or, at least, agnostics. Such people do not, however, really get rid of the question by dodging it. They deny the Biblical miracles, and yet nature persists in pressing other and quite as astounding miracles upon them. The origin of life is a miracle, the relation of thought to matter is a miracle, the problems of heredity are all miraculous. The pure scientist who will not accept the spiritual interpretation of the world has to face these miracles, like great question-marks staring him in the face every day. Of course, he can take refuge in agnosticism, but this helps him little, for agnosticism explains nothing. Surely, it is easier and more satisfying, mentally, to accept the plain Christian interpretation and frankly to acknowledge that "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." The scientist, in his ordinary every-day experience, meets miracles which are as hard to believe or explain as any of the "signs" given to us in the New Testament. If we accept the New Testament, however, there is a reasonable basis furnished us for explaining everything else. If we refuse to accept this basis, the whole subject is surrounded with darkness and becomes an inexplicable mystery.

V. The Criteria of Miracles.

What has just been written applies to the subject of the miraculous in general. When we come to the matter of believing in any particular miracle, we, of course, face the question of evidence. There are miracles and miracles. Doubtless many spurious miracles have been foisted upon the credulous. The church of the Middle Ages, for example, was prodigal in producing miracles. Such miracles need to be severely tested in order to escape the bondage of superstition. Because there is some counterfeit coin in circulation, however, is no proof that there is none that is genuine. Because false prophets have arisen is no argument against the true prophet. The very presence of the imitation is rather a proof that there is something true to imitate. Every miracle should be subjected to the closest scrutiny before it is accepted. This means that it must stand at least the following tests: (1) Was there a good reason for it? (2) Is there good and unimpeachable evidence that it actually took place? And (3) does it harmonize with the general principles of religious experience? Unless any given miracle can stand these tests, it is well to be careful about accepting it. It is quite as undesirable to become a credulous dupe as it is to become a dogmatic disbeliever. The safe middle ground lies between the two extremes. The true Christian, like the true scientist, is neither a dogmatic rationalist nor a superstitious fanatic. On the contrary, he is a man who keeps a mind open to the reception of truth, and who preserves his intellectual integrity at all costs. He is ready to accept the truth wherever he finds it, knowing that it is the truth, and the truth alone, which can make him free.

VI. Present-day Christianity and the Miraculous.

The miraculous has little appeal, as evidence, to the present-day Christian. There is good reason for this attitude in the fact that miracles, as we have already said, are no longer needed to establish the validity of the principles of the Christian faith. That faith has been fully tested in the experience of the past nineteen centuries and needs no further proof. The best type of Christian evidences is found in a simple historical statement of what the Christian religion has accomplished, when fairly tested, in actual experience. Jesus himself considered this line of evidence as superior to the miraculous credentials with which his religion began. He said that "greater works" would be done in his name than he ever accomplished during his earthly ministry. While this is true, it is also true that, to attack the earlier miraculous foundations of what afterward proved so helpful and inspiring, is both ungracious and unfair. We do not despise the simple lessons of childhood

which helped us to a higher and broader view of the world. It is cheap and easy to make fun of the miraculous, but such ridicule is a mark of neither profundity nor good taste. Without the miracles, Christianity, as far as we can see, would never have gained a footing in the world. If Christianity, therefore, means anything to us, we should not despise the means by which it was first established. We should rejoice that we have come into the larger heritage of the centuries, without casting contempt upon the earlier stages of the process. It is true that there is no reason for us to go back to the more primitive point of view unless our own spiritual needs seem to require it. If a study of the miracles helps our faith, as it helped the faith of the first followers of Christ, there is every reason why such a study should be made. If we do not need this kind of evidence to stimulate our spiritual life, there is still no reason why we should criticize its employment on the part of those who needed it in the past or may still need it to-day. In any event, we should remember that to deny all miracles or the reality of miraculous power is to deny the reality of God and the reality of his presence in the world. The two things stand or fall together, and we can not overthrow the one without overthrowing the other also.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES.

John 2:11; 4:54; 5:36; 14:12; 20:30, 31; Mark 2:1-12; Heb. 6: 1, 2.

BLACKBOARD OUTLINE.

MIRACLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nature 2. Purpose 3. Scientific Implications 4. Religious Value 5. Criteria R. Preaent-day Value
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OTHER REFERENCES.

1. Kershner—"Religion of Christ," Part II., Chapter V.
2. Bruce—"The Miraculous Element in the Gospels." Earlier chapters especially.
3. McGarvey—"Evidences of Christianity," Part II., Chapters IX. and X.
4. Warfield—"Counterfeit Miracles." The latest and best book on the subject.
5. Merrill and Warren—"Discourses on Miracles." A brief, but excellent, study.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. The Definition of Miracle.
2. Science and the Miraculous.
3. The Place of Miracles in Christianity.
4. God and the Miraculous.
5. The Criteria of Miracles.
6. Present-day Attitude toward the Miraculous.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. Define a miracle.
2. How does the apostle John use the word?
3. Is there anything unscientific about the idea of miracle? Why!
4. What causes the conflict between some scientists and the advocates of the miraculous?
5. What is the chief objection of materialistic scientists to the idea of a miracle?
6. What two assumptions underlie this attitude?
7. Why are these assumptions invalid?
8. What can you say about the instability of science itself?
9. What has science a right to demand in regard to the question?
10. What has it no right to assume?
11. Name some scientists who are fair in the matter.
12. How did Jesus use the miracles in his work?
13. Are the miracles needed as "signs" to-day? Why?
14. How is the idea of God involved in the question of the miraculous?
15. Does the scientist escape from the question by rejecting the Bible?
16. Mention some "miracles" from which he can not escape in his every-day experience.
17. Mention three criteria of miracles.
18. Does the fact that there are some spurious miracles prove that there are no true ones?
19. What two extremes should the Christian avoid in the matter?
20. What is the present-day attitude toward the miraculous?
21. How do you explain this attitude?
22. What are the best evidences of the truthfulness of Christianity for us today?
23. What should be our attitude toward the subject in the light of these facts?
24. What important issues are involved in the question!
25. Sum up the present-day attitude of the world's thought regarding the miraculous.

LESSON X. THE RESURRECTION

I. The Importance of the Resurrection.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the crowning miracle of Christianity. For this reason it is the storm-center of attack on the part of those who refuse to accept the religion of Christ. These attacks began quite early in the history of the church. In fact, it is due to them that we have the greatest exposition of the Christian doctrine of the future life to be found in the New Testament—the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians. There can be little doubt but that this splendid interpretation is the earliest word in regard to the subject of the resurrection now in existence. There is every reason to believe that 1 Corinthians was written before any of the Gospels; at least, as we possess the latter books to-day. Paul made the resurrection central in his preaching, and encountered the greatest opposition to the gospel which he preached on this account. The Athenians who heard his famous sermon on Mars Hill listened patiently until he reached the resurrection, and then the majority of his audience refused to follow him. He had almost identically the same experience in his defense before the Jews in Jerusalem and before Festus and Agrippa. Nevertheless, Paul never ceased to hold to the doctrine that without the gospel of the resurrection Christianity had no message of culminating importance to the world. "If Christ be not raised from the dead, then is our faith vain," is his definite and final pronouncement upon the subject. All the other apostles preached the same doctrine, as is clear from the New Testament narratives throughout. The resurrection, therefore, is one of the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith.

It is easy to see why this situation obtains. If Jesus Christ was conquered by death, his claim to be the Messiah obviously falls to the ground. On the contrary, if he really rose from the dead, everything else that he claimed for himself becomes easy to accept. The whole case, for the validity of the Christian teaching, therefore, stands or falls with the resurrection of Christ.

II. Theories of the Resurrection.

The evidence for the resurrection is unusually strong. The witnesses are numerous, and both their intelligence and character are indisputable. It has been well said that no other fact in history is so well attested or so strongly buttressed by testimony. In order to break the force of the evidence, the opponents of the Christian faith have used every resource of intellectual ingenuity. Notwithstanding this fact, more people probably believe in the resurrection to-day than at any other period of human history. The

shafts of skepticism have been hurled in vain against this citadel of the Christian faith. Nevertheless, in order to understand the situation fairly, it is well to recapitulate the strongest objections which have been made to the doctrine. Our space limitations are such that we can not go into these objections in great detail, but we can clearly indicate their nature and give them an adequate and fair presentation. The whole group may be summarized under the following theories:

1. That Jesus did not actually die upon the cross, and hence was not raised from the dead.
2. That Jesus died, but that he did not rise, the apostles and other witnesses being the victims of hallucinations or visions.
3. That Jesus died, but the apostles deceived the world as to the facts.
4. That the whole theory of the resurrection is a part of the history of religious myths and fables so common in the ancient world.

There are various shadings and interpretations of the above theories, but, in the main, this list covers the ground.

III. Discussion of These Theories.

Let us now briefly scrutinize the above theories and the evidence brought to sustain them, in order to see how well they explain the situation.

The first is very old, and yet it is still held by a few people living to-day. Its latest embodiment in literature is found in George Moore's novel entitled "The Brook Kedrith," published only a few years ago. The theory is so fanciful, however, that it has received very limited acceptance at any stage in the history of the church. The chief objection to it is found in the question as to the after life of Jesus, if he did not really die on the cross. He was known to many people in Judea and could scarcely have escaped recognition. Moreover, if he still lived and saw a false gospel preached in his name and many people being martyred by reason of their faith in this gospel, how could he have remained silent? That the Jesus we know in the Gospels could have practiced such deception would be a greater miracle to believe in than the resurrection itself. If Jesus did not die on the cross, his after career must have been one of such fraud and deception that, to those who have carefully studied his previous life and character, it becomes inconceivable.

Moreover, Jesus was executed according to the Roman law. Now, the Romans were very strict in all matters of the kind, and, while it may have occasionally happened that a condemned criminal has escaped after having legally been put to death, such cases, in all countries, are confessedly rare. Furthermore, with a Roman

guard over the grave and a man physically weakened, as Jesus must have been after the crucifixion, it is difficult to see how he could have escaped.

And, after he escaped, where would he go? Can we think of Jesus hiding away or remaining always in hiding and unknown? His friends would certainly want to find him, and his enemies would have a still greater interest in producing him, for this would have destroyed the new gospel at a single stroke.

All these considerations make the hypothesis of Jesus escaping death on the cross so improbable that very few, in any age, have been willing to accept it.

2. The second theory grants that Jesus died on the cross and that he was buried as the Scriptural narratives indicate. It says, however, that the disciples and the others who saw him after his resurrection were the victims of hallucinations and subjective visions. It does not dispute the honesty of the New Testament witnesses, but says that they were deluded. This is the most popular objection to the fact of the resurrection. It presumes that a great many people, at different times and in different places, were all subject to the same hallucination. Now, if this be true, it is the one and only instance in human history where it occurred. Individuals sometimes have hallucinations, but that eleven different people, at one time, and five hundred at another, should all have the same hallucination *at once* is unthinkable. It is characteristic of the hallucination theory that it requires one to believe something which is fully as contradictory to ordinary experience as is the resurrection itself. To a Christian it is more so, for, with his view of the universe, it is nothing incredible that one should rise from the dead, while it is altogether incredible that so many witnesses should all have the same illusion.

Then, in addition, we have the problem of the empty grave. If the grave were not empty, why did not the Jerusalem authorities silence Peter and the other Christians by simply producing the body of Jesus? But if the grave were empty, how does the hallucination theory explain the facts?

3. The third theory asserts that the disciples were dishonest and preached what they knew to be untrue. Aside from the character improbability of this position, what had these men to gain by risking death and torture in order to preach what they knew to be false? There was no earthly profit in the enterprise for them, and if they were liars and hypocrites, they must have known that there could be no reward for them hereafter. The disciples, while mostly unlettered men, were certainly gifted with ordinary common sense.

The improbability of the third position is so obvious that only the most uncritical skeptics have been willing to accept it.

4. The fourth theory practically goes upon the ground that all of the Scriptural narratives are false, and that the whole fabric of the Christian religion is a myth, like the mythological stories of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Some adherents of this theory deny that Christ himself ever lived. The early existence of the Christian records, however, and their widespread quotation, as well as the early historical facts dealing with the progress of the church, make this theory untenable. To resolve all the Gospel records into thin air is to assume that the greatest and most influential force in modern history had no real foundation. If such a thing were true, it would constitute a far greater miracle than the resurrection itself. Christianity is here, and it must have come from somewhere. To say that it is all based upon a myth is to make an assertion which not only lacks historical proof, but which demands far greater faith than anything which is required in the Christian religion itself. This position therefore involves us in greater difficulties than those from which it presumes to deliver us.

IV. Evidence for the Resurrection.

Passing from these man-made efforts of skeptics to escape from the actual facts as given in the New Testament, let us notice, briefly, the strong evidence in behalf of the resurrection. First, there is the testimony of the witnesses mentioned in the Gospels. There are eleven appearances of Jesus (sometimes reduced to ten) mentioned in the New Testament. These may be given as follows:

1. To the women at the tomb (Matt. 16: 1-8; Matt. 28: 1-10; Luke 24: 1-9).
2. To Mary Magdalene alone (John 20: 11-18).
3. To Cephas (1 Cor. 15:5; Luke 24:34).
4. To two disciples on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-32).
5. To the eleven without Thomas (John 20: 19-25).
6. To the eleven with Thomas (Luke 24: 33-49; John 20: 26-29).
7. To seven disciples at the lake of Tiberias (John 21:1-23).
8. To the five hundred (1 Cor. 15: 6).
9. To James (1 Cor. 15:7).
10. To all the disciples (great commission) (Matt. 28: 16-20; 1 Cor. 15: 8).
11. At the ascension (Acts 1: 6-11).

Moreover, Jesus appeared later to Paul himself, as is recorded in the Book of Acts and in the apostle's own confession in 1 Cor. 15: 8. Second, the Christian gospel was based upon the resurrection and owed its success largely to this teaching. As already noted,

if Christ did not rise from the dead, the whole fabric of Christianity was builded upon a falsehood. If a tree is known by its fruits, such results from a false foundation are inconceivable. Third, the resurrection is the natural consummation of the teaching of Christ. He would not have been the Christ without it. It is the normal crowning and completion of his mission to the world.

For these and many other reasons which we have not space to recapitulate here, the Christian accepts the resurrection of his Lord as a cardinal article of his faith.

V. The Forty Days and the Ascension.

Jesus appeared frequently to his disciples during the forty days between his resurrection and his ascension. We are not to suppose that all of these appearances are recorded in the New Testament. Enough of them, however, are given to furnish a basis for a reasonable faith in the fact, and that is all that is demanded. The nature of the resurrected body is not clear. Some think that throughout the forty days Jesus wore his earthly body; others, that he used his spiritual body, at times materializing it in order to prove that he was alive for the benefit of his followers; still others think that there was a half-way stage before he finally took his resurrection body when he ascended to heaven. No special theory is essential, provided we accept the fact of the resurrection itself. The problem is naturally a difficult one because it deals with the future life and the nature of the spiritual world. Doubtless we shall not understand all that is involved until we rise to the higher plane of existence in the world beyond the grave. It is enough for us to know now that he lived after death, and that, because he lived, we shall live also.

VI. The Second Coming.

Closely allied to the problems of the resurrection and the ascension is the question of the "Second Coming." In the first chapter of Acts, the disciples who were present at the ascension, we are told, were notified that "this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven."

The early church believed ardently in the second coming of Christ. Some of its members looked for his return during the apostolic period, and the apostle Paul, in the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, warned those who held to this view that many things must transpire before the event would take place. Later, the Book of Revelation gave an added emphasis to the subject.

Christians to-day hold to many different interpretations and theories of the second coming of our Lord. With these theories

and believes this handbook can not deal in detail. Let it suffice to say that the *fact* of the second coming, in some form or other, is made clear in the sacred writings. Just how and when the event will take place is a matter upon which there is room for wide difference of opinion. The attitude of the Christian toward the subject, whatever particular view he may espouse, should be that of the author of the final book in the Bible in his farewell words to the world: "He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus."

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES.

The final chapters of the four Gospels and the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians are the chief references for this lesson. On the question of the second coming of Christ, read 1 and 2 Thessalonians, especially the second chapter of the latter Epistle.

BLACKBOARD OUTLINE.

<p>THE RESURRECTION</p>	<p>{</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Importance 2. False Theories <li style="padding-left: 2em;">Evidences 4. The Appearances 5. The Resurrected Body 6. The Second Coming <p>}</p>
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OTHER REFERENCES.

1. Kershner—"The Religion of Christ," Part II., Chapter VI.
2. McGarvey—"Evidences of Christianity," Part III., Chapters X., XI. and XII.
3. Orr—"The Resurrection of Jesus." The most complete one-volume work on the subject.
4. Milligan—"The Resurrection of Our Lord." An older volume than Orr's, but an excellent work in every respect.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. Importance of the Resurrection.
2. Objections to the Resurrection.
3. The Appearances.
4. The Resurrected Body.
5. Present-day Attitude Toward the Subject.
6. The Second Coming.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. What place does the resurrection of Jesus hold in the Christian religion?

2. How is the fact of its importance made clear by the testimony of its enemies?
3. What section of the New Testament contains the earliest testimony to the fact of the resurrection?
4. What place did the resurrection occupy in Paul's teaching?
5. Why did he give it this place?
6. Have the attacks upon the resurrection succeeded?
7. Mention four of the theories held by those who refuse to believe in the resurrection.
8. Give the arguments against the theory that Jesus did not die on the cross.
9. State the arguments against the "hallucination" theory.
10. Give the arguments against believing that the disciples deliberately taught what they knew to be untrue.
11. State the case against the "mythical" theory.
12. What is the final conclusion regarding the case against the resurrection?
13. How many "appearances" of Jesus after his resurrection are recorded in the New Testament?
14. State the circumstances attending each of these "appearances," as far as they are recorded.
15. Mention two arguments for the validity of the doctrine of the resurrection aside from the testimony of witnesses to the fact.
16. What can you say about the character of the resurrected body of Jesus?
17. State three theories in regard to it.
18. Is it possible to give an entirely comprehensive explanation of the subject? Why?
19. What is the Christian doctrine of the "Second Coming"?
20. What mistake was made by many of the early disciples in regard to the "Second Coming"?
21. What should be our attitude toward the question to-day?

LESSON XI. THE FUTURE LIFE

I. Importance of the Problem.

The value of the resurrection as an essential feature of Christian doctrine is apparent from even a casual study of the issues which are involved. In all ages the three great postulates of any reasoned concept of religion have always been scheduled as God, Freedom and Immortality. Religion must have a God, or it is obviously a meaningless term. However much, too, we may juggle with words,

unless there is such a thing as moral freedom, it is not difficult to see that both ethics and religion, in their ordinarily accepted definitions, become impossible. No less necessary to the idea of religion—and certainly of the Christian religion—is the postulate of immortality. The gospel of values, which is fundamental in Christianity, asserts that the Christian character, when once formed, shall not be lost. But if "the dead rise not," and if there is no future existence, then Christian character is certainly wasted—at least, so far as the individual is concerned. The idea that the Christian religion is a good thing for this life, and that therefore no other life is needed, is altogether foreign to the conception of Paul and the other apostles, as well as to the teaching of Jesus himself. Paul said conclusively (1 Cor. 15:19): "If we have only hope in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable." He evidently regarded the doctrine of personal immortality as an essential feature of his faith. It was for this reason that he laid such stress upon the resurrection of Christ. Christ's resurrection was to him a certain proof of our own, and because Christ conquered death, he was assured we shall, at some time, conquer the great foe of humanity also. Hence he made the resurrection, carrying with it personal and assured immortality for the Christian, a fundamental feature of his gospel,

III. The Question in History.

The problem of immortality is very old. The Greek writers are full of it. The most striking contribution to its solution in Greek thought is found in Plato's "Apology" and "Phaedo," which purport to contain the final words of Socrates upon the subject. It is unnecessary to recapitulate Plato's argument here. Let it suffice to say that, however strong it may be to many minds, the sentiment of humanity is pretty unanimous in agreeing that it is inconclusive. The best it does is to establish a presumption in favor of immortality, and a presumption is concededly far from conclusive proof. The difference between Plato's contribution to the subject and the contribution of Jesus Christ is the difference between theoretical agreement and practical demonstration. Plato proved, more or less conclusively, that the soul, of right, *ought to be* immortal; Jesus Christ proved, by actually rising from the dead, that it *is* immortal, and that the future life does not belong to the realm of theory, but to the realm of fact. "It is easily seen that there is a vast difference between the two positions.

The Greeks were not the only people who were interested in immortality. The ancient Egyptians, long before Plato, taught that the dead are raised and that they have to face a final judgment.

Similar ideas were prevalent among the Romans and the other people of the ancient world. Everywhere there was the most intense interest in the subject, an interest which gathered strength, both by reason of the importance and the difficulty of the question. The universal and omnipresent fact of death has always made the matter of immortality one of commanding interest and vitality. "If a man die, shall he live again?" is a question which will not down, and, however summarily the idea of the future life may be dismissed, it is certain to revive again every time a human being stands beside an open grave or weeps for the loss of one whose voice has been stilled by death.

III. Immortality in the Old Testament.

The Old Testament has no certain word with regard to personal immortality. There are various passages, notably in Job and in the Book of Psalms, which appear to assert the reality of the future life, but, when carefully scrutinized, they are seen to be far from conclusive. How inconclusive they are, is readily seen from the existence of the Sadducees, one of the great religious parties of the Jews, which, while accepting the Old Testament records, held to the idea that there is no such thing as personal existence after death. The best one can do with the Old Testament, so far as proving immortality is concerned, is to say that, like the teaching of Plato and Socrates, it establishes a presumption in favor of the doctrine. Upon this question, as well as upon many others, the old covenant simply points the way to the fuller revelation made by the gospel of Jesus Christ in the new dispensation.

IV. The Teaching of Jesus upon Immortality.

The teaching of Jesus, as we find it in the gospel records and as it was later elaborated in the preaching of the early apostles, is very clear and direct upon the subject of personal immortality. The whole assumption of Christ's message is that the human soul survives bodily death. In his argument with the Sadducees, as given in Matt. 22:23-33 and Mark 12:18-27, Jesus positively asserts the reality of the future life, while the parable of the rich man and Lazarus draws the veil from the unseen and gives us a direct and powerful picture of future conditions in the life beyond the grave. Of course, the supreme contribution which Jesus made to the subject is found in his own resurrection. As we have already noted, this contribution was in the nature of an actual demonstration rather than a theoretical argument. One fact about the resurrection, which is sometimes overlooked, is that it is not, and was not intended to be, an example of the first case of actual life after death. On the contrary, it was simply a proof, clear and unmis-

takable, of the reality of something which could not otherwise be definitely proved. One of the characteristics of the future life, up until the time of the resurrection, was that it could not be proved by actual demonstration. The grave, until Jesus arose from it and proved to his followers that he had thus arisen, remained the "undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler returns." People, when they died, "passed on" into the future life, but failed to return to prove the fact that they actually had "passed on" into another stage of existence. Jesus, by his divine power, broke the silence of the ages and came back to show the way to others. What was new in the resurrection, therefore, was not the fact, but the proof of the fact. Before this event took place, men had no sure and definite data upon which to base a certain and unshaken faith in the life beyond the grave. After the resurrection, however, the proof of the reality of the future life was so clear that men were justified in staking everything upon it. Hence the resurrection marks the great climactic point in the history of the doctrine of immortality.

The apostles, one and all, preached the resurrection of Jesus Christ as the one unanswerable proof of future personal existence after death. Paul was especially emphatic in the matter, but there is no reason for believing that the other apostles were less enthusiastic in proclaiming the same gospel. The early Christians went to martyrdom cheerfully because they were assured that there was laid up for them a "crown of righteousness" after their enemies had done their worst. Christianity became known everywhere as the gospel of the future life. Many Christians even sought for martyrdom in order to make sure of their inheritance. They were willing to suffer everything here if they could but attain to *he glorious resurrection from the dead.

V. Moral Value of the Doctrine.

The moral value of a fixed and certain conviction of immortality is at once seen to be very impressive. If a man once thoroughly believes in the future life, it is certain that his belief will exert the most profound influence upon his earthly career. A new value is given to everything he does when he looks at his actions, as Spinoza said, "under the form of eternity," instead of "under the form of time." There is a new dignity given to his life, and he can not afford to be guilty of small and petty deeds in the light of the great inheritance which God has entrusted to him. This is what the moralists style "the deterrent value of immortality." Men will hesitate about jeopardizing the interests of their eternal existence if they are assured that they actually possess such an existence in

definite prospect. How many sins and crimes this belief in a future life has forestalled, no one can say. There are a few "high-brow" scientists, like Spencer and Huxley, who apparently do not need such a stimulus in order to live clean lives, but the vast majority of people are constructed along different lines. Take away the belief in immortality from the world and it would mean the multiplication of suicide and of every other form of evil. Hamlet's famous "to be or not to be" soliloquy is a case in point. The "dread of something after death" makes the average man hesitate about flying "to evils that he knows not of," and the stronger his conviction that there is something after death, the greater will be his hesitancy in the matter. The responsibilities of the future life are far greater deterrents than are all the judges or juries or legal codes that have ever existed.

VI. Present-day Attitude toward the Question.

The great war of 1914, and after, has been fruitful in arousing a new interest in immortality. So many lives have been summarily snuffed out during this war period that the subject has come home in a very direct way to millions of people. It seems impossible that such a large number of bright young men, in the very prime of life, should die like extinguished candles and never be heard of again. Hence, there has come a world-wide revival of the belief in personal immortality. This has naturally brought with it a renewed interest in Spiritualism and other similar phenomena. It has also helped to center the attention of millions of men and women upon the gospel of the resurrection. Before the war, greater emphasis had been laid, in most countries, upon the ethical, rather than upon the spiritual, message of Jesus; but since the war the emphasis has been largely reversed. It is now pretty thoroughly recognized that the gospel of Jesus regarding the future life is a feature of supreme value and importance in his religion.

Before the war a large group of scientists had become interested in an attempt to demonstrate scientifically the reality of the future life. These men organized what is known as the "Society for Psychological Research." As a result of their investigations, many of them were led to believe that immortality can be, and has been, scientifically proved. In consequence, a number of these investigators became devout Christians from the evidence afforded by science alone. The majority of those who have read and studied the evidence submitted by the "Psychical Researchers," as they have been styled, perhaps fail to regard that evidence as conclusive. Nevertheless, the striking character of much of the proof submitted must be acknowledged by every thinking person who is familiar with it.

Psychical research has undoubtedly contributed not a little to the general belief in immortality now present throughout the world.

Among the eminent scientists and literary authorities who are, or have been, "Psychical Researchers" may be mentioned: F. W. H. Myers, the former president of the society, who was led from skepticism by his researches to become a devout Christian before he died; Prof. William James, the philosopher; Alfred Russell Wallace; Sir Arthur Conan Doyle; Sir Oliver Lodge; Prof. James H. Hyslop, of Columbia; Sir William Crookes, and many others of equal prominence in the field of scientific discovery.

Summing up the question, we may say that there is more universal sentiment to-day in favor of a definite belief in the future life than has existed in any other stage of human history. The Christian who accepts unhesitatingly the great fact of the resurrection of Jesus, and the further corollary of his own personal resurrection, can now rejoice because the whole world is more and more coming to realize the truthfulness and certainty of one of the great and cardinal essentials of his faith.

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES.

Matt. 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 16:19-31; John 14—the entire chapter; 1 Corinthians 15—the entire chapter; 2 Cor. 5: 1-10; Phil. 1: 21-24.

BLACKBOARD OUTLINE.

THE FUTURE LIFE	}	1. Importance 2. Problem in History 3. O. T. Testimony <i>i.</i> Testimony of Jesus 5. Moral Value 6. Question To-day
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OTHER REFERENCES.

1. Kershner—"The Religion of Christ," Part II, Chapter VI.
2. Brown—"The Christian Hope." One of the best historical studies of the doctrine of personal immortality.
3. Mackintosh—"Immortality and the Future." One of the latest and best presentations of the subject.
4. Seth—"Ethical Principles," Part III., Chapter III. An excellent discussion of the metaphysical questions involved in the subject.
5. Barrett—"On the Threshold of the Unseen." The best summary of the results of psychical research.

6. Fosdick—"The Assurance of Immortality." The best brief volume on the subject.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. The Place of Personal Immortality in the Christian Religion.
2. The Voice of History and of Philosophy upon the Question.
3. The Testimony of the Old Testament.
4. The Testimony of Jesus.
5. The Testimony of the Apostles.
6. Moral Value of a Belief in Personal Immortality.
7. Immortality and the Great War.
8. The Testimony of Modern Science.
9. Present Aspect of the Question.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. What are the three great postulates of religion!
2. Why are these postulates essential!
3. Why does the gospel of values demand immortality?
4. Is Christianity, in any sense, a gospel for this world alone?
5. What did Paul say upon the question?
6. Why did he stress the resurrection so much in his preaching?
7. What has Greek philosophy to say about personal immortality?
8. Does it furnish any conclusive proof of the future life?
9. What does it do?
10. How does the contribution of Greek thought differ from the contribution made by Christianity to the subject?
11. What was the ancient Egyptian teaching regarding immortality?
12. Why has the subject always come up again and again in universal experience, even after it has been dismissed by the philosophers?
13. What does the Old Testament say about the future life?
14. Is its testimony conclusive? Why?
15. What is the value of the Old Testament testimony?
16. What was the position of Jesus in regard to the future life?
17. Give illustrations of his teaching upon the subject.
18. What was his supreme contribution to the solution of the question?
19. Was the resurrection the first case of the survival of personality after death?
20. What was the essentially new feature about it?
21. What was the attitude of the apostles toward the question of the future life?
22. What is the moral value of a belief in immortality?

23. What does Hamlet's famous soliloquy prove in regard to the deterrent value of such a belief?

24. What influence has the great war had upon the subject of personal immortality?

25. What do you know of the "Society for Psychological Research"?

26. Mention some eminent scientists who have been affiliated with it.

27. What is the net result of the evidence that has been secured?

28. Sum up the present-day status of the doctrine of personal immortality.

LESSON XII. THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF PRAYER

I. The Nature of Prayer.

Perhaps few features associated with the Christian religion have been more confused in the minds of Christians or have been subject to more misapprehension than the subject of prayer. The reason for this is easy to see. Prayer is the means of communication between the human and the divine, the connecting link between the two worlds of the seen and the unseen, and just because it belongs to both worlds it is difficult to analyze or fathom in all its details. Faith and prayer are closely allied, for both are bridges across the chasm which divides the material world from the spiritual world. Faith comes first, for, without faith, prayer is a mere empty formality; but, on the other hand, there can be no vital or fruitful faith without prayer.

Prayer, in its essence, is communion. It is the lifting up of the human spirit to the divine atmosphere in which it finds its real freedom and joy. It is the conscious realization of the fact of God and the divine life in our human experience. We come to *know* God and to *know* the blessedness of his gracious purposes through prayer. There has never been, and never will be, a really religious being who has not experienced, or can not experience, the reality and power of prayer.

Of course, with this view of the subject, it is readily seen that mere petition—begging or asking for things, and especially material things—is not prayer. Prayer naturally includes petition, but petition is a subsidiary feature. The vital thing is communion. Hence, too, it follows that mechanical or formal "prayers" are foreign to the real nature of the subject. Public prayer is a religious exercise which has value in its own way, but is very rarely real prayer. Jesus clearly taught this truth when he told his dis-

ciples not to pray in the market-place, but to go into some secluded room and pray in secret. He himself prayed in this way. Often he went off upon a mountain or to the desert, or somewhere else apart from his disciples and from the throng of people, in order to pray. Prayer touches the innermost springs of the human soul, and these are not to be exposed to the profane gaze of the multitude.

It is a mistake, also, to regard prayer as of merely subjective value. Doubtless the subjective feature is very important, but the unseen world is somehow so related to the seen that prayer has a direct influence upon objective realities. Prayer accomplishes things in the material world, although we can not tell just how it operates. Tennyson recognized this fact when he said:

**"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend!
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."**

When Jesus performed one of his most notable miracles, succeeding in a case where his disciples had lamentably failed, he said, "This kind can come out by nothing save by prayer" (Mark 9: 29), thus recognizing the fact that prayer does accomplish actual and tangible results in the world.

III. The Purpose of Prayer.

The purpose of prayer has been, in large measure, indicated in the section just preceding. Primarily, prayer is intended to strengthen our spiritual life, to give us power to live up to the highest ideals we know, and in every way to draw us closer to God. Secondly, prayer enables us to accomplish things which would otherwise be impossible for us in the world. It is not necessary here to recapitulate the many "answers to prayer" with which the history of the church is filled. After every allowance for coincidence and exaggeration has been made, there still remains a bulk of instances which are unexplained and inexplicable, save upon the theory that prayer does accomplish things in the objective world. It is no argument against this position to say that many prayers are unanswered. Many prayers lack the first essential of real prayer—that is, faith; others are of such a character that their best answer is by denial, rather than by fulfillment of the petitions. One of the best-known illustrations of so-called "unan-

swered prayer" is embodied in the experience of Jesus in Gethsemane. He prayed for the cup to pass, and the cup did not pass. And yet, in the highest sense, his prayer was really answered, for he was given strength to bear the burden and to complete his work.

Let us suppose, for a moment, that the cup had passed, as Jesus prayed for it to pass. Can we not see that such a result would inevitably have meant the thwarting of his whole earthly ministry? The same thing is doubtless true of all real or sincere prayers which remain apparently unanswered. Our heavenly Father knows what is best for us better than we know it ourselves, and he would not be the wise and loving Father that he is if he gave us everything which, like thoughtless children, we ask for in our ignorance and blindness.

Another example of "unanswered prayer" in the New Testament is the case of Paul's "thorn in the flesh." What the "thorn" actually was, no one can say, but we know, from the great apostle's personal confession, that he prayed earnestly for its removal. And yet it was not removed, but, as something better, he was given the assurance—"My grace is sufficient for thee"—and Paul doubtless was the stronger and better Christian because his prayer was answered in God's way, rather than in his own.

All true prayers are answered; of this we may be assured. Moreover, they are always answered in the way which will mean the most for our highest and best interests. This fact the Christian may rely upon, and this is all, as an obedient and dutiful child, that he needs to know.

III. Jesus and Prayer.

The life of Jesus is one long illustration of the supreme value of prayer. From the beginning of his public ministry, down until it closed in the very shadow of the cross, Jesus was constantly bearing witness to the necessity and value of the prayer life. It is especially noteworthy that, in great crises such as those upon the Mount of Temptation, after the feeding of the five thousand when they wanted to make him an earthly king, even against his own will, and, last of all, in the Garden of Gethsemane, he is specifically recorded as engaging in earnest prayer. Moreover, he taught his disciples to pray, and also taught them how to pray. The model prayer which he gave to the world has in it all of the essentials of sincere and devout petition to God. This prayer, it will be observed, covers the whole ground of Christian experience and duties. It emphasizes especially the vital interests of the soul and of the kingdom of God in its universal application, but it also touches the field of our material needs and of our daily temptations.

It inculcates personal righteousness and the forgiving of others as essential elements in the prayer life, and it guards against the daily pitfalls which threaten to ensnare the soul of the Christian.

It is worth noting, also, in regard to the great subject of Christian union, that Christ did not attempt to legislate disunion out of existence, but that he was content to pray for the union of his followers. Here, undoubtedly, he pointed the way toward the true spirit in which this great subject must be approached, if disunion is ever to be conquered, even to-day.

IV. Mistaken Views of Prayer.

We have already referred to some of the most common errors in connection with the subject of prayer, but it may be well to recapitulate these errors a little more in detail. There are at least three mistaken attitudes which are frequently assumed toward the question. We may classify these three attitudes as (1) the skeptical, (2) the legalistic and (3) the superstitious.

The skeptical attitude looks upon prayer largely as bathos and moonshine. It is the attitude of the coldly rational mind, which can not understand anything which can not be reduced to a syllogism. The average scientist is apt to assume this attitude toward the subject of prayer. Because he can not understand everything about the fact, he disputes the existence of the fact. Such a man rarely attempts to pray, and when he does attempt it, he is conscious all the while of a species of insincerity. There are a good many intellectually loyal Christians who belong to this class. Such people never go to prayer-meeting, or, if they do go, are terribly bored. They are the people, also, who never have a family altar in their homes. Even at the best, they miss much of the spiritual content of their religion, and their lives are harsher and less fruitful as a result of this fact.

The second attitude is, if anything, worse than the first, because it has in it, at least, a touch of hypocrisy. The people who belong to this class are the people who "say their prayers" as a matter of form, but who never, or, at least, seldom, actually pray. These people gradually lose what confidence they may once have possessed in prayer, or else they come to regard it as a sort of mechanical fetish which will bring them things they need, if they go through the forms correctly. There is nothing more deadly to the real spirit of prayer than is this attitude. Prayer, above everything else, is loving and real, a vital spiritual force in the world. To reduce it to set, legalistic forms is to kill it. It is not "saying prayers" which counts in the religious life, but, rather, feeling, acting and living them. Christ himself warned his disciples against

using "vain repetitions," "as the heathen do," and insisted upon the vital nature and character of prayer.

The third attitude—the superstitious—is closely allied to the second, with this difference, however, that it contains an element of emotion which is always absent from the legalistic conception. There are hosts of superstitious Christians, and there is nothing about which they are more superstitious than the subject of prayer. To them, prayer is a kind of magical rite which has power to make over the universe in accordance with their own wishes and desires. Such people are apt to bring the whole subject into disrepute with their more thoughtful and intelligent neighbors. Between the two extremes of skepticism or rationalism and superstition lies the safe middle ground of a really sane and vital prayer life.

V. The Prayer Experience of the Christian.

Every Christian should, more and more, learn to grow in the prayer life as a part of his inner religious experience. Prayer, like everything else, needs to be cultivated and encouraged. There are many ways in which this can be done. Mr. John R. Mott has testified that for many years his prayer life was unsatisfactory to himself. At last, he began to read everything he could upon the subject and to bury himself in the writings of the great spiritual masters of the race, including, of course, the New Testament writers. He finally reached a stage where prayer meant much more to him and where he could for himself realize its supreme power and value.

Every Christian home should have a family altar, and every child in the home should be taught to pray. The subject should not be treated mechanically or made tiresome, but it should be seriously and earnestly studied and practiced in daily life. It is not so much the prayer words which count, but it is rather the prayer attitude, and there is no substitute for this attitude in any real Christian experience. No child who learns the real meaning of the two words, "Our Father," as applied to the Divine Being, need ever to be taught further what prayer really is. It is because so few people actually believe in the divine Fatherhood, at least in any vital way, that prayer means so little to them. Once we come to see God as our real Father, we have little difficulty in appreciating the full significance of the nature and power of prayer.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES.

Matt. 6:5-15; Matt. 26:36-46; Mark 9:17-29; Luke 11:1-13; Luke 18: 9-14; 2 Cor. 12: 7-9; Col. 4: 2-4; 1 Thess. 5: 17, 18.

These are a few only of the most notable New Testament passages which bear upon the subject of prayer.

BLACKBOARD OUTLINE.

PRAYER	}	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nature 2. Purpose 3. Mistaken Views 4. Testimony of Jesus 6. The Model Prayer 6. The Devotional Life
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OTHER REFERENCES.

1. Darsie—"Before the Throne." One of the best devotional works in Restoration literature.

2. Ainslie—"God and Me." An ideal interpretation of the inwardness of the spiritual life.

3. McGarvey—"Sermons," Sermon XXIII. on the efficacy of prayer. Interesting especially because it shows how a man of the keenly intellectual type of the author may also possess deep spiritual appreciation.

4. Mott—"Intercessors the Primary Need." A brief pamphlet worth its weight in gold to any one who has not found the secret of the prayer life.

5. Cave—"A Manual for Family Devotions." The best manual for the family altar in Restoration literature.

6. Fosdick—"The Meaning of Prayer." One of the most popular modern books on the subject.

7. Tileston—"Great Souls at Prayer." The best collection of prayers thus far published.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. What Prayer Is.
2. What Prayer Accomplishes.
3. The Prayer Life of Jesus.
4. Subjective and Objective Views of Prayer.
5. Prayer in Church History.
6. The Devotional Life.
7. The Restoration and Prayer.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. Why is the nature of prayer subject to misunderstanding?
2. What is the relation of prayer to faith?
3. Can there be any really religious life without prayer?
4. Is prayer simply petition?
5. Is public prayer a real illustration of the prayer ideal?

6. Is prayer of purely subjective value?
7. What does Tennyson say about prayer?
8. What is the primary purpose of prayer?
9. What is its secondary purpose?
10. How do you explain "unanswered prayers"?
11. Give two illustrations of "unanswered prayer" from the New Testament.
12. Were these prayers really unanswered?
13. Is any real prayer ever unanswered?
14. Sketch the prayer life of Jesus.
15. Give and analyze the model prayer which he taught his disciples.
16. What are the most striking features of this prayer?
17. How are prayer and Christian union related?
18. Mention three mistaken attitudes toward the subject of prayer.
19. Analyze the skeptical attitude.
20. Analyze the legalistic attitude.
21. Analyze the superstitious attitude.
22. What is the duty of every Christian in regard to the prayer life?
23. How may we grow in the devotional life?
24. Why do many people fail to appreciate the value of prayer?