

APPENDIX

There is really no problem before the world today, whether it pertain to matters of a constructive or destructive character, which does not find its solution, . at the last analysis, in its relation of affinity or antagonism to the Christ of God, the Man of Nazareth and the Son of Mary-the God-man. The great world-war now being waged has its roots in religion, or rather in irreligion, and back of that in the fundamentally determining principles of Theology. To listen to some of the speeches and watch the actions of the preachers and theologians of today, especially in the nations more immediately involved in the struggle, one might think that the only principles to be considered were those which fall within the political, economic and commercial horizon. But as a matter of fact all economic and commercial considerations are conditioned by the principles of ethics, and at a lower depth these are in turn determined by the principles of theology.

And the central fact in theology is the Person of Jesus Christ and His relation to God on the one hand and to man and the world on the other. The antagonistic attitude of the nations to the Christ explains everything; and for this attitude the religious and theological leaders of the people are most responsible. This being so it follows of necessity that before the world moves, or is moved, out of the present chaos and into a place of rest and peace, the conflict must take on a religious character, and there must come a time of persecution for the true people of God which will work the same havoc in the Church which is now being wrought in the State. Neither the Church nor the State have been willing for eighteen hundred years to give the Christ His rightful place. And more than that they never will until they do so under the compulsion of theocratic necessity. Psalms 2 and 110. In reference to the claims of the Son of Man I wish to make a somewhat lengthy quotation from "The Place of Christ in Modern Theology," by Dr. A. M. Fairbairn. He is speaking of the work done by historical criticism to recover for the Church the true conception of the Christ:

"Now, the historical spirit could not do its now destructive and now constructive work and ignore the Supreme Person of history. He has left the mark of His hand on every generation of civilized men that has lived since He lived, and it would not be science to find Him everywhere and never to ask what He was and what He did. Persons are the most potent factors of progress and change in history, and the greatest Person known to it is the One who has been the most powerful factor of ordered progress. Who this is does not lie open to dispute. Jesus Christ is a name that represents the most wonderful story and the profoundest problem on the field of history-the one because the other. There is no romance so marvelous as the most prosaic version of His history. The Son of a despised and hated people, meanly born, humbly bred, without letters, without opportunity, unbefriended, never save for one brief and fatal moment the idol of the crowd, opposed by the rich, resisted by the religious and the learned, persecuted unto death by the priests, destined to a life as short as it was obscure, issuing from His obscurity only to meet a death of unpitied infamy, He yet, by means of His very sufferings and His cross, enters upon a throne such as no

monarch ever filled and a dominion such as no Caesar ever exercised. He leads captive the civilized peoples; they accept His words as law, though they confess it a law higher than human nature likes to obey; they build Him churches, they worship Him, they praise Him in songs, interpret Him in philosophies and theologies; they deeply love, they madly hate, for His sake. It was a new thing in the history of the world; for though this humble life was written and stood vivid before the eye and imagination of men, nay, because it veritably did so stand, they honored, loved, served Him as no ancient deity had been honored, loved, or served. We may say, indeed, He was the first being who had realized for man the idea of the Divine; He proved His Godhead by making God become a credibly, conceived, believed, real Being to man.-The wonderful thing in the story is, that what in the abstract would have seemed impossible romance is in reality the most sober fact; while out of the story, when viewed in relation to the course of human development, rises for philosophy the problem, Can He, so mean in life, so illustrious in history, stand where He does by chance? Can He, who of all persons is the most necessary to the orderly and progressive course of history, be but the fortuitous result of a chapter of accidents?" pp. 6, 7, 8.

It will be conceded by the majority of those who take an interest in theological problems that within the bounds of the British Empire the now passing generation has produced no theologian to surpass Dr. Fairbairn in vigor of thought, in comprehensiveness of outlook and in moral earnestness. But as a matter of fact neither in his hands, nor in the hands of any of the men of his generation, has the Historical Method accomplished the task which by its own free choice it has set itself. It has not recovered the Christ of the four Gospels. The proof of this charge is by no means difficult.

No sensible Bible student can deny that the Christ of the New Testament is the Messiah of the Old Testament. The A.V. and R.V. have to a great extent concealed this fact by their wicked suppression of the Greek article, which in the Gospels generally precedes the word "Christ." Peter said to the Master, "Thou art the Christ." Here the Revisers are good enough to insert the article, but why not do the same every place it occurs? The Prophets of Judah and Israel could not for a moment contemplate the Messiah (the anointed One) without thinking of Him as the coming King of Israel and of the Gentile nations. And in the days of primitive Christianity the disciples of the risen Lord could not read the words "the Christ" without the same thought of the Theocratic rule of the Son of Man on earth and in the heavens during the period of Israel's Golden Age as pictured and featured by Patriarchs and Prophets from the days of Abraham and onwards.

What I want to affirm is that the teachers and pupils of the so-called Historical School have done absolutely nothing to recover this conception of the Christ; but on the contrary have done all in their power to keep it out of their theology, out of their Christology and Soteriology. It is both amusing and pathetic to witness the perplexity

of one of Scotland's most dignified and celebrated theologians, and belonging to the same school as Dr. Fairbairn, as he puzzles his brain in a fruitless effort to discover the personality of the King referred to in the Second Psalm, whom Jehovah is soon to set upon "His Holy Hill of Zion." There are two things which are supremely characteristic of the men of this school, namely, the extraordinary fund of knowledge which they possess concerning the technicalities, conventionalities and absurdities of the Higher Criticism; and at the same time their profound ignorance of some of the elementary truths of Christianity. This recalls the pertinency for the present day of some touching and trenchant words spoken by the Master nineteen hundred years ago:

"I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Luke 10:21.

It may be stated as an inflexible postulate of sound exegesis, that any interpretation of the Bible which denies to Israel the comfort and inspiration of its Messianic Hope; and thereby denies to Jesus Christ as the Son of David and the Son of Abraham His right and place and glory as the primal heir of the Davidic and Abrahamic Covenants; and thus shuts Him out from that which was dearest to His heart as a Man, and for which He became incarnate; namely, that He might regain as Federal Head of the New Creation, all and more than was lost by the first man in intellectual dignity, moral worth and terrestrial sovereignty, is wholly alien to the truth of revelation, antagonistic to the Holy Spirit and subversive of the Divine Plan of the Ages, and at the same time extensively contributory to the out-working of the mystery of iniquity; and is therefore to be set aside as utterly destitute of Divine sanction and to be shunned by every true child of God. In short, postmillennialism, the so-called historical method and the higher criticism, are simply so many ways of expressing the same thought and tendency and purpose—the universal conspiracy to keep the Christ of God from the sovereignty of this world. Men seldom know the real nature of the thoughts and theories they cherish in opposition to the will of God and the claims of His Christ; but the prince of this world who inspired them does. Man's ignorance of the real nature of dynamite does not in the least affect its destructive power. So with Antichristianism in all its phases.

The number of theologians in our modern educational institutions who can see the real truth concerning The Christ of the N.T. and the Messiah in the O. T., can be counted on the fingers, while it is clearly apprehended by thousands and tens of thousands of people in the humbler walks of life.

From a literary and artistic standpoint the above quotation from Dr. Fairbairn is beautiful and full of tender pathos; but from a logical and theological and historical point of view it is characterized by a large amount of subtle error. For example, he dwells much and eloquently on the idea of "developement." But as a matter of fact

the only development this age knows, or can know, is that which in moral character modern nations have in common with ancient Babylon, Greece and Rome. Morally and spiritually the last fifty years have been characterized by retrogression and apostasy, and the proof of this indictment is found in the present condition of the nations of Christendom. And the process of devolution is yet a long way from its destined goal. And in working out that destiny we may be sure that modern theology, while remaining Christian in name, will operate hand in hand with modern politics, commerce and militarism. Dr. Fairbain says as quoted:

He (Christ) yet, by means of His very sufferings and His cross, entered upon a throne such as no monarch ever filled, and a dominion such as no Cwsar ever exercised."

That is nothing more or less than pure sentimentality. The fact is that this very dominion is exercised by the greatest and most relentless enemy of the Christ. Either this or the Bible is not true, and the present World-War is simply a fantastic illusion the imagination of soldiers, politicians and diplomatists. I John 5:19.

In further proof of what I have said about the inability of modern theologians to recover the historical Christ, I wish to quote from another of the foremost leaders of religious opinion in England during the last century. I refer to Dr. J. B. Lightfoot, Bishop of Durham. It is doubtful if there is anything in print on the Fourth Gospel which is more to the point than the following quotation when taken just as it stands and interpreted according to its plain grammatical sense:

"The narrative and the discourses alike are thoroughly saturated with the Messianic ideas of the time. The Christ as expected by the Jews, is the one central figure round which all the facts are grouped, the one main topic on which all the conversations hinge. This is the more remarkable, because the leading conception in the writer's own mind is not the Messiah, but the Word, the Logos, not the deliverance of Israel, but the manifestation of God in the flesh. This main purpose is flung out at the opening of the Gospel, and is kept steadily in view in the selection of materials throughout the work. But it does not once enter into the mind of the Jews, who are wholly absorbed in the Messianic idea. Nay, the word Logos does not once occur even on our Lord's own lips, though the obvious motive of His teaching is to enforce this higher aspect of His person, to which they were strangers.

And I cannot but think that this distinct separation is a remarkable testimony to the credibility of the writer, who, however strongly impressed with his mission as the teacher of a great theological conception, nevertheless keeps it free from his narrative of facts, though obviously there would be a very strong temptation to introduce it, a temptation which to the mere forger would be irresistible.

The Messianic idea, for instance, is turned about on all sides, and presented in every aspect. On this point we learn very much more of contemporary Jewish opinion from the Fourth Gospel than from the other three. At the commencement and at the close of the narrative-in the preaching of the Baptist and the incidents of the Passion-it is equally prominent. In Galilee (1:41, 46, 49; 6:15, 28, 30 sq.), in Samaria (4:25, 29, 42), in Judea 5:39, 45 sq.; 7:26 sq. 40-43; 8:30 sq.; 10:24), it is the one standard theme of conversation. Among friends, among foes, among neutrals alike it is mooted and discussed. The person and character of Jesus are tried by this standard. He is accepted or He is rejected as He fulfils or contradicts the received ideal of the Messiah." Biblical Essays, pages 23, 24.

I repeat that nothing could be more delightful than that. Just as it stands there is evidence of penetrating insight, subtle and exhaustive, analysis, and a mental grasp which, so far as the letter is concerned, leaves nothing to be desired. As a word picture it is simply exquisite. Now watch the famous Churchman as he steps back from his canvas and pelts the beautiful picture with the mud of traditionalism, rationalism, and postmillennialism.

"The topic of our Lord's discourse with the Jews is not the Logos, for which his auditors would feel neither predilection nor interest, but the Messianic expectation, in which they were thoroughly absorbed. It was shown that the Messianic conceptions are not the ideas as corrected by the facts, but the ideas in their original form, not yet spiritualized, but coarse and materialistic still, reflecting the sentiments, not of the second century, but of the early years of the first; in a word, Jewish, not Christian." page 145. Alas! how are the mighty fallen! According to this we are not to interpret the former quotation in the light of its plain grammatical sense. On the contrary we are to look at it through the bespattered lenses of second century philosophical theology. In other words, John and Peter and James who shared the common Messianic expectations of the Jews generally, made a great mistake when they dreamed of a literal fulfilment of the promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and cherished "politico-theocratic hopes"; and that even the great apostle of the Gentiles who about the year A. D. 60, when standing before King Agrippa and the Jewish Hierarchy declared, "And now I stand and am judged for the (literal) hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) ; unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come (in the MessianicMillennial Kingdom): for which hope's sake King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews," was also the insensible victim of a cruel delusion. Poor Paul and Peter and James and John, how they are to be pitied for their stupidity when looked at in the light of modern rationalism and also in the light of the apostatizing Church of the second century.

Note specially the following words in the last quotation

"It was shown that the Messianic conceptions are not the ideas AS CORRECTED BY THE FACTS, but the ideas in their original form, NOT YET SPIRITUALIZED, but coarse and materialistic still, reflecting the sentiments not of the second century, but of the early years of the first; in a word, Jewish, not Christian."

Is not that the very essence of post-millennial rationalism. What a suicidal and revolutionary inversion of the inflexible order of God's ordaining when we are invited to look, ethically and theologically, at the utterances of inspired men in the first century and interpret them in the light of the truth as known or not known in the second century, when as Dean Stanley says, that the Church had become, or was becoming, a part of the political systems of the world. This is the curse of theology-reading and studying the Bible in the light of historical theology as exhibited in the successive centuries of "this wicked and adulterous generation." Think of the absurdity of it-"The ideas as corrected by the facts." The "facts" he refers to here are not facts at all but the absurd fictions of such men as Philo, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen.

The plain fact of the matter is that the Lord Jesus Christ in all His teaching up to a certain point encouraged the Jews in what the orthodox theologians designate with contempt as "coarse and materialistic" hopes, for in no other way can the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants ever be realized. God Almighty gave the promise of the Land and the Kingdom to Abraham and David in the most literal sense and in the face of the anticipated unbelief of this Church Age, and confirmed it with an oath. Gen. 22: 11-19; 15:5-7; Heb. 6:11-20; 11:13, 39, 40.

It was only when the Jewish Hierarchy attributed the miracles of Jesus to the Devil, and thus rejected the Christ as their Messiah and true King, that the offer of the literal Kingdom was withdrawn, and for the time being postponed. But that very Kingdom shall yet be established in awful majesty and irresistible power. Acts 15:14-18, and Amos 9:11-15. We must not cQnfound postponement with abolition.

Which is the more productive of evil? To give out falsehood which is openly antagonistic to the truth of the Bible; or, under the profession of loyalty to truth as revealed in the Word, to fully accept the great doctrines of the Bible and then so interpret and construe them as to prevent their meaning and falsify their purpose? What will be, in the Day of judgment, the penalty pronounced on those who are responsible for the fabrication and perpetuation of this deadly spiritualizing process of postmillennialism whereby the traditions of men are substituted for the living truths of God's Word? Surely this is holding down the truth in unrighteousness, Rom. 1:18.

The following are some of the grounds on which believers will be excluded from the Messianic Kingdom during the Age to Come:

An unforgiving spirit. Matt. 18:35.
Clinging to the world and its principles. Luke 18:18-30.
Inhumanity. Luke 16:19-31.
Not going on to perfection. Heb. 8:1-18.
The works of the flesh. Gal. 5:19-21.
Putting stumbling blocks in the way of God's little ones. Mark 9:38.
Professing the truth and not practicing it. John 13:17.
Cherishing a spirit of discord and division in the Church. Gal. 5:19-21.
Pride. Mark 10:15, 24, 31.
Carnality. 1 Cor. 3:1-15.
Not feeding the flock. Matt. 24:45-51.
Taking away the key of knowledge-substituting man's theories for God's truth. Luke 11:52.
Taking the sword. Rev. 13:10.
Yielding to the natural love for self-preservation. John 12:24, 25.
Lack of spiritual fruit in the life. John 15:6.
Being workers of iniquity-profiting by the evil principles of the world in commerce, politics, or in any way. Luke 3:13-27.
Lack of fidelity in little things. Luke 16:10. Defrauding the laborer of his proper wages. James 5:1-5.
Monopoly of natural opportunities. Isa. 5:8, 9.
Murmuring-the sin of Israel. Num 14; 1 Cor. 10:1-10.
Lack of watchfulness. Luke 21:2, 36; Ezek. 33. Failure to fight the good fight of faith. 1 Tim. 6:12; Rev. 3:14-20.
Turning back. Luke 14:25-33.
Lack of fidelity in teachers and preachers. Ezek. 33; Matt. 24:45-51.
Impurity. 1 Thess. 4:6, 7; 2 Cor. 12:19-21; Heb. 12:14.
He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches. Rev. 2:7.

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