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NEW MEN IN CHRIST JESUS

NEW MEN
IN CHRIST JESUS

Talks on Personal Religion

by

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LONDON : THE EPWORTH PRESS

PUBLISHED BY
THE EPWORTH PRESS
(FRANK H. CUMBERS)
25-35 CITY ROAD, LONDON, E.C.1

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New York . Toronto
Melbourne . Cape Town

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Made in Great Britain
First published in 1951

SET IN MONOTYPE BASKERVILLE AND PRINTED IN
GREAT BRITAIN BY THE CAMELOT PRESS LTD.
LONDON AND SOUTHAMPTON

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FOREWORD

I HAVE RECEIVED many requests for copies of the sermon on 'The Doctrine of the Trinity' which was broadcast in the B.B.C. Home Service on Sunday Evening, 4th June 1950. It was a studio service, and the music was sung by a choir of the Huddersfield Glee and Madrigal Society, conductor Mr Harold Sykes. I am grateful to him and to his choir for their kindness and sympathetic efficiency on this and on other occasions also.

To this sermon I have added one sermon and four talks which have been broadcast at various times. The sermon on 'Providence and the Individual' has not been broadcast. The sermon on 'The Holy Spirit and the Personal Life' was broadcast three years ago in the Home Service. The four talks were broadcast in the 'People's Service' in the Light Programme in January 1947.

I wish to express my thanks to the British Broadcasting Corporation for their courtesy in agreeing to the publication of these scripts. In particular I am grateful to the Reverend Eric Saxon, Religious Broadcasting Assistant for the North Region, for his many suggestions for the improvement of the scripts, and for his continued kindness and patience in 'producing' me on many occasions during the last five or six years.

The reader is asked to note that the seven chapters are sermons and talks. They are not literary essays. They were written to be heard rather than read. I have kept the direct, personal style, with its colloquialisms and its broken sentences, and have made the minimum number of alterations.

N. S.

LEEDS

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

MY SUBJECT this evening is the Doctrine of the Trinity. It is not a popular doctrine in any sense of the word. Most people know little about it, and few of us manage to get really enthusiastic about it. I imagine quite a number of you easily get impatient, and want to know why on earth anybody should spend time on it in these modern days. Why keep these worn-out phrases and thousand-year-old credal statements? I agree that worn-out phrases and suchlike ought to be kept in museums or on the top shelves of libraries, accessible to people who like that sort of thing, but out of the way so that they do not obstruct the flow of modern thought. But the Doctrine of the Trinity is not a museum piece. Old, it certainly is. Out of date, it certainly is not. It is essential to the Christian Faith, the keystone that holds the arch.

But perhaps I had better say exactly what the Doctrine is. We declare that there is one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father is one Person, the Son is another Person, the Holy Spirit is yet another Person. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God; yet there are not three gods, but One God. Each is equally God. It is wrong to say that they are parts of God, and that all taken together they make the One God. No. One God. The Three Persons are distinct; that is, the Father is not the Son, and the Spirit is not the Son. Every Person by Himself is God.

There is another thing I must say. This doctrine is much spoken against on the ground that it is wholly intellectual and theoretical; and sensible, practical men

have neither the time nor the patience for such things. 'Let us', they say, 'have done with all this theology. What we want is practical experience. All this fancy web-spinning is a waste of time. Let us have the simple gospel.'

But you just cannot have it as simple as all that. It is like cavalry twill. It is no use saying that you must have cavalry twill with a simple weave; you just cannot have it. If you have a simple weave, then the cloth is not cavalry twill. The complex weave is essential to the twill. You cannot have the cloth without it.

And further, I would say that this particular doctrine more than any other depends upon actual human experience. To talk of it as being wholly theoretical is sheer ignorance. This much at any rate is true: if there had been no theorizing and thinking things out, we would never have talked about the ONE; if it had been all theorizing, we would never have talked about the THREE. This, I imagine, is exactly contrary to what most people expect. The talk about the THREE is due to the actual experience of men and women. That is where to start, is it not? Practical experience. It is being really modern, really scientific, and up-to-date.

So let me go back nineteen hundred years and talk about what happened then, and about men's actual experience then.

Jesus was born in Palestine. He was a Jew, brought up in a pious Jewish home. The first Christians were all Jews: all the disciples, and the first apostles, including Paul of Tarsus. That means this: the first Christians had no slightest doubt about God, the Creator of all things, the One God of the Old Testament. They believed in one God and none other but He. Those were the days when some verses from the Bible known as the *Shema* were becoming enshrined as the central core of Jewish belief—they begin: 'The LORD thy God, the LORD is One' (Deuteronomy six,

four, you remember). The pious Jew still fixes a copy of the *Shema* in a little cylinder on his door-post, and binds it on his hand when he prays. Judaism was the one religion of those days which stood firm for a belief in One God and none other but He. On every side there were people who worshipped a multiplicity of gods, worshipped them separately at their own shrines, or rolled two or three into one. There is plenty of evidence as to the trouble and persecution into which the Jew walked open-eyed, because he insisted on his strict, unrelenting, monotheistic faith.

So much for the first wave of Christians: they were firm believers in the One God. The second wave of Christians were mostly Gentiles, but Gentiles who had been attracted in the first instance to the Jewish faith. You remember how often in Acts, we are told that in the synagogues of Asia Minor there were both Jews and Greeks. These Greeks were Gentiles who had accepted the Jewish religion for two reasons: one, the excellent moral standards of the Jews in contrast to the laxity of the pagan world; two, the Jewish belief in One God, once more in contrast to the crowds of gods and godlets everywhere worshipped. This means, you see, that none of the first Christians, neither first wave nor second wave, had the slightest doubt about the One Creator-God. So far, so good; but there was this Man, Christ Jesus. There is a certain amount of evidence in the Gospels that He Himself claimed to be divine, but this is abundantly plain: in the first years after the Resurrection and Pentecost, those men and women who had known Him in Galilee and Jerusalem grew more and more sure that this Jesus was God, truly God, God living a truly human life—not an ordinary human life, because it was not ordinary: a truly human life. More than that: He was not a part of God, a phase of God, an activity of God, or anything like that—but God. As Saint Paul put it: 'In Him there dwelleth

all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.' They were quite sure that He was God and yet how could this Jesus have made the heaven and the earth and all the rest? The net result of this is that Jesus is God and the Creator is God: different, yet One.

So far, so good: or, if you do not want things to get complicated, so far, so bad. To put it quite plainly: if you want, yourself being human, to be able to explain the Nature of God fully and completely in human terms, then here is your first big fence. You can dodge the fence if you like, and there are two ways of doing it. One is to say that Jesus is not truly God; the other is to say that human nature is divine. But neither of these fits the experience of the first Christians, and you, my friend, are the one that is theorizing, making the evidence fit your theory and your human categories. The only way to dodge the fence is to run off the course.

But this is not the end of complications. There was the incident of the gift of the Holy Spirit, recorded in the second chapter of Acts. It is a strange story of men who started by being scared, and suddenly became bolder than lions: of frightened men, conscious only of their weakness, who suddenly became very sure of what they said and did, full of a strength that was not their own. The facts are these. The more they thought of that Pentecost experience, they and succeeding generations, the more they were convinced that that also was a genuine experience of the Presence of God. Once again, not a part of God, nor a phase of God, nor an activity of God, but God, really and truly God, this time entering into men's hearts and lives, changing them, making them different, transforming them, binding them into a new fellowship. But He was different from the Jesus of Galilee, and different again from the Creator-God: different, but nevertheless, One only God.

So now things are more complicated than ever: Creator-God; Jesus-God; Holy Spirit-God. Their experience made them unshakably sure of the three, and succeeding generations have been equally sure. I must emphasize this again. It is the *experience* of Christians which makes them certain about the Three. But then, whatever man may say about the Three, there can be but one God. And that is the dilemma. We have to say three and we have also to say one; and whoever denies either is speaking contrary to the truth. The problem of those who formulated the Creed centuries away back was how to include both statements, and they did it by using the word which we translate as 'persons'. We therefore say 'three Persons in one God'. The word 'persons' is not really satisfactory, but we have to use *some* word, and it is the least *unsatisfactory*. But it is not as unsatisfactory as most folk make it out to be. Most folks use the word 'person' to mean 'individual', thinking of a man all isolated and wholly independent of everybody else. There is no such thing. We are not isolated each from the other. We are set in families, in groups, villages, townships, and the rest. What a lot of lonely men and women there were during the war years, especially when the man was away for years, away at sea or in the Far East, and husbands and wives did not see each other for ages! You see, husband and wife are two persons all right, but they are not two individuals. They are different, but they have grown so much together that when they are separated, neither is really complete. How can you be complete, when the other bit of you is away in Asia, or in the middle of the Pacific? If you try to think of three persons even more at one than any husband and wife can ever be—and then still more at one several times over—that is the sort of thing we are trying to say about God, though even then we are just stumbling along with human words and

human ideas. Actually we cannot expect to do anything but stumble along when we talk about the Nature of God, because His thoughts are not as our thoughts, and His ways are not as our ways.

But what does this Doctrine of the Trinity mean for you and me where we are right now, this summer evening of June 1950? This is what matters most.

The essential thing is that He is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. We can say that of God the Father, and of God the Son, and of God the Holy Spirit. It is equally true of all three Persons: the Father is always the Father, always was, and always will be: similarly for the Son, and again: similarly for the Holy Spirit; and each is God, was and is and is to be.

It is very easy to get confused here, and to think that the Father is superior and older. Indeed, there are occasions when the New Testament writers themselves tend to talk that way. I rather think that many people, if they have any picture at all of God in their minds, and not just a sort of oblong blur—I rather think that many people picture the Father as sitting on the Throne, with the Son and the Spirit sitting on the steps, or standing beside. We tend to think of the Father as being older than the Son, because there was a particular time when the Son was born a man. And similarly we tend to think of both Father and Son as older than the Spirit, because there was one particular occasion when the Holy Spirit fully manifested Himself to men. Looking at it from our side, there certainly is a succession: first God the Father, then God the Son, and lastly God the Holy Spirit. But looking at it from the other side, the eternity side, there is no succession—no first, second, or third, and no precedence in authority, or in glory, or in honour. God is always Creator, always Saviour, always Comforter, though that last word 'Comforter' means comfort *out of* sorrow,

effectual comfort which dries up all tears for ever, and it means convincer, changer of men's hearts and lives.

Now to deal with each of these in turn—Creator, Saviour, Comforter.

God is always Creator, better still, He is always creating. That means more today than ever it meant, with our modern ideas of a changing world, an expanding universe, and so forth. The old idea was of a God who made the world complete and then sat back to watch it work. We are getting away from this idea of a static God, back to the Bible idea of an always active God: God is not so much One who is, but rather One who DOES. He is always the same in the sense that He is always doing the same thing. He finds a thousand and one different ways of doing it, but always the same thing, bringing new worlds into being, creating new organisms, active all the time, running the world, and running it consistently. Now, that is important, so very important that we usually clean miss it altogether. It means that we can trust things, and we can trust causes and effects, we know that the world is run consistently. Some philosophers may argue about cause and effect as the human way of thinking, but the fact remains that we live our lives on the assumption that the same cause produces the same effect, and that assumption works very well. Nobody could ever learn from experience otherwise. For instance, how queer life would be if the law of gravity changed round irresponsibly a day at a time. We would never know whether it was a ceiling day or a floor day, an upside-down day or a right-side-up day. That sounds silly, I know, and it *is* silly, because the world is not made in such a silly fashion. It is a steady world. We can build on the experience of yesterday; whatever purpose or sense there is in the world one day, it is just the same purpose and just the same sense next day. More than that, right is always right, and wrong

is always wrong. It is a world of consistent justice, though not of individual justice. Here we get cropping up once more that distinction between persons and individuals. It is a personal justice, but not an individual justice, because we are none of us so isolated from each other that justice *can* be individual. Our lives are interlocked at every point, so that we all benefit from the good, and all suffer from the wrong. And in so far as we love each other, we gladly would have it so. I want no happiness for myself unless my wife and family can share it, whether they deserve it or not. I want to share in their sorrow and trouble, whether I deserve it or not.

But this business of suffering for and with people is bringing me over to speak about God the Son. You see, God loves every man just as we love our loved ones, only more so. That is one reason why He came into the world to share our sorrows and tears, that, please God, by His love and grace we might share His joy and happiness.

Jesus Christ, God the Son—He was begotten so far as this world is concerned, but never created. He is called the Son because He was born, and therefore the Son of the Father, the Father who is in Heaven. This 'in Heaven' does not refer to any place where He is, but to a state. It means that He is not subject to the changes of this mortal life, as God the Son was subject to them for some thirty or so years. God the Son bridges the gap between God and man, a thing the philosophers had never been able to do. God bridges the gap by Himself becoming man for a while. His purpose was a double one: to show us what God is like: to save us from our sin. He came to show us what God is like—pure and lovely and of good report: healing the sick, making the blind to see, making the deaf to hear, *touching* lepers to cleanse them, raising the dead to life, sharing the sorrows of men, bearing with them the load of the results of their sin, dying for us—and all for love of

us. Jesus died on the Cross bearing the results of man's sin, both of plain wickedness and vengefulness, and also of the enlightened self-interest of the good and respectable people. That is what happened to Jesus because of man's sin nineteen hundred years ago. That is what happens now, for that is part of what the Doctrine of the Trinity means to you and me now. What is true of God the Son once, is true always.

And in God the Son we can see His so great love for us: He died for you and for me. Nobody can show greater love than that. For you and me, here and now, that means this: We can be sure that if and when we do see the error of our ways and earnestly desire to be different, then we are forthwith fully and freely forgiven. We can start again where we are right now, and though penalties always have to be paid, for us and for others, yet I can start with a clean sheet before God, and so can you. This is the message of Christianity. It is for men and women who know their need and are truly repentant for sins past. If you are sure that you have no need of Him, and see no particular need for repenting and changing your mind and heart, then there is nothing here for you—not yet, not until you do know your need. Until then, you must go somewhere else. Try these philosophers, and moralists, and the psychologists who have no use for religion; perhaps they can help you. This Christianity is for men who, however late in the day, come to be conscious of sin. And this Jesus Christ, God the Son, is still alive, still loving you, still dying because of you and for you, sharing, whether you will or no, whether you know it or not, still sharing in the sorrow and trouble you are heaping up for yourselves and others, and sharing it because He loves you with a love that far outdistances every human thought.

And lastly, God the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. God the Holy Spirit is that power of God which can enter into

a man, transform him, make him different, change him, make a new man of him. This Doctrine of the Trinity means that God can make a new man of you here and now, just as He made new men of those folks in that upper room so long ago. You do not have to struggle for years to make yourself better before you can know this transforming power in your own experience. You can know it now, and increasingly know it as the years pass by. I wish I could explain in precise terms what this life in Christ is. I have been a preacher for over thirty years now, and I have been trying all the time. It means knowing that God is near, being actually conscious of His presence day by day, receiving both the will and the strength to do the things that are well-pleasing to Him, being able to resist temptation, to take all sorts of knocks and still remain the same, above all finding a true happiness and peace that not all the knocks of a rough-and-tumble world can destroy. It is this life in God which is eternal life. It is this life in God which persists after death, when all else is doomed to die. It is God's great gift to mortal man, the one way in which we can get free from this self-interest which brings tears and death in its train, the one way in which we can get free from this mortality which otherwise binds us fast in chains which no man can loose. And the offer is to you and to me, and it is NOW.

II

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE PERSONAL LIFE

IF I HAVE to speak to you about the Holy Spirit and the personal life, then it will have to be personal, very personal. You can read about the subject in books, and you can sit in your armchair and think it all out, but if you do nothing about it apart from reading books and thinking about it in an academic sort of way, then you will never come within a thousand miles of this matter of God the Holy Spirit and the personal life. The reason is this: the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was not a matter of thought and speculation first and then a matter of experience afterwards; it was actually a matter of personal experience first, and we have been trying ever since to get it all thought out.

You remember, perhaps, the story that is told of Lord Palmerston, who was Prime Minister in the eighteenth-fifties and sixties. He found himself listening one day, though very impatiently, to a sermon on 'Everyday Religion', and as he went out of the church he was heard to mutter to himself: 'Things have come to a pretty pass when religion is allowed to invade the sphere of private life.' The fact of the matter is that if your religion does not invade the sphere of your private life, then it is not *your* religion at all: indeed, some of us would say, and I know I for one would say it, that it is not a religion at all.

Religion must be personal. It is not a collection of ideas about God and man and the world: it is about God and you, God and me. This linking up of God and you, and God and me, is the work of the Holy Spirit.

He links up God and you: He links up God and me. Further, because He links you with God and equally links me with God, He also links you and me together—but that is another story, of which more anon. For my part now, I must insist on this. My subject does not mean the Holy Spirit and everybody in general, and it does not mean the Holy Spirit and anybody. It means the Holy Spirit and you: it means the Holy Spirit and me. I am quite sure of this: unless you can first talk from your own personal experience about the Holy Spirit and you yourself, then you are not in a position to talk about Him at all. Further, to talk about the Holy Spirit and everybody in general, is to use words that can be wholly misleading, unless first you are quite sure and clear about the relation between the Holy Spirit and the individual.

So I must begin by being personal, and I think I cannot do better than begin by telling you how I come to know what I do know about it all—not that I know everything about Him and His work, not by a very long way, but I do know something, and that at first hand. That is why I am making bold to speak to you about Him now. Indeed, I have no other qualification.

How then did I myself come to realize the importance of 'The Holy Spirit and the personal life'? This way.

You will remember that when Jesus died on the Cross, He died alone—I mean alone so far as His friends and supporters were concerned. There were two brigands there, one hanging on either side of Him—but where were His friends? They just were not there, except the anonymous 'disciple whom Jesus loved'. Has it ever puzzled you that they were not there? It puzzled me for years. I can remember quite distinctly as a boy, forty years ago, sitting in the back pew of the Methodist Chapel in Grammar School Road, North Walsham, trying to puzzle it all out. There were the preachers, talking about Jesus,

how wonderful He was, many a deed of mercy and love, but especially 'how He steadfastly set His face to go up to Jerusalem', well knowing that there was a cross waiting for Him at the end of the road. That impressed me: no milk-and-water Jesus here, but brave, solidly brave, and I thought He was superb how He stood up to all the mighty bearded ones during that last week. They got no change out of Him for all their cleverness. I used to say to myself: 'What a man to follow. I'd follow Him to the world's end—aye, and over the edge of the world, too.' Why then did He die alone? Was there none there in His day who felt as I did in my day?

And what about the folk in Galilee who had heard Him and seen Him? Those whom He had healed, the blind, the deaf, the lame, the lepers, and the lunatics? I said to myself: 'If He had healed me, I would have kept close to His heels for ever.' But they did not. There was a time, during the first preaching in Galilee, when they crowded round Him so that he scarce had leisure even to eat, but then they turned away from Him. Why? Many of them shouted for Him on Palm Sunday, but they howled for His blood on the Friday—and then jeered at Him, or passed by on the other side.

And then, what about the disciples? They had been with Him for the best part of three years. They had heard most of everything He said, had seen most of everything He did, and, I expect, had had all sorts of private talks with Him. Would you not have thought that they would have stuck to Him? If Jesus had indeed that strange compelling power that the preachers are always declaring, then where were the twelve? We all know what had happened to them. One of them had betrayed Him; one had denied Him; the rest had left Him and fled. And these were the men who had spent the best part of three years in closest companionship with Him.

And yet again. I wonder how many men and women saw Him die? There must have been a good many thousands, because there were at least a million Jews up for that Passover. Thirty years later the attendance was three millions, so we are safe enough in saying one million. That is a lot of people. If it is true that there is a compelling power in the Cross, then why were not a few thousand of them converted on the spot? But they were not converted. The most that we know of is two—one of the brigands and the centurion, the Roman sergeant-major who was in charge of the execution squad, and we cannot be too sure of just what exactly he meant. But why so little effect?

And so to the Resurrection. What a lot of convincing they took! There is the last chapter, for instance, of the Gospel according to Saint John, the story of seven disillusioned men who went back to the fishing. They caught nothing, till Jesus caught it for them. But how slow they were to recognize Him on the beach in the morning! It says that this was the third time He appeared to them—the third time, mark you, the third. I used to say to myself: 'I jolly well know that if I had seen Him but once, I would have believed.' But for them it was the third time, and still they were slow, for the most that happened was that they got together in that upper room, and locked the doors, and prayed, and were frightened.

The sum total of what I have been saying is this. If all that the Christians say about the wonderful love of Jesus, the example of His life, and the drawing power of His Cross—if all this is true, then why was it that at the time it was all apparently so extraordinarily ineffective? For years I never could answer that question. The only comforting thing about it was that if people took so little notice of Him in those days when they could see Him and

hear Him, it is not in the least surprising that so many of them take so little notice now. But that is cold comfort for the Christian.

But one day, I bought a book, quite a little book. It cost me sixpence. That sixpence solved my problem. The book was Benn's sixpenny reprint of Dr R. J. Campbell's *Life of Christ*. When I had read the first chapter, I closed the book, and said: 'That is it. I have been looking for that for twenty years. Now I know.' The title of that first chapter is 'The Story told by the first Christian preachers'. Dr Campbell started with Pentecost. Of course he did. That is where to start, because that was the time when they were convinced into action. These men and women, about a hundred and twenty of them, suddenly became possessed of an exuberance of spirit and a supernormal state of joyous confidence that drove them out into the open street with the glad tidings: 'This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.' Why did this happen then, and not before? The story is told in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and it says that 'they were all filled with the Holy Spirit'. And so they were, every separate one of them. They had been told, so Luke says, to wait there till power came to them from on high, and then on the first day of Pentecost, the Day of Power according to the Jewish liturgies, this power came. It was the power of the Holy Spirit, descending upon each separate one of them, filling them, taking charge of them, driving them out boldly to speak of Jesus that He is both Saviour-God and Christ. On this day Christianity sprang to birth; the Church was born. They were all there together, and they were praying together. They were a community bound together by a common love for their Lord, but the whole group was quickened into life when those as-it-were tongues of fire settled upon each separate one of them. I

am most insistent upon this: every separate man must have this experience of the power of God in his own heart and life, and it is then that the community of which they are part becomes a quickened, a living whole.

The fact is this: apart from this effective work of God the Holy Spirit in the individual man, the whole Gospel is of none effect. The normal man, even more now than then, regards the whole affair as foolishness and as having nothing at all to do with him, out of date, outgrown in the onward march of man, and so on and so forth. We all know that the only sort of conviction that is at all convincing is the sort that makes a man do something about it. If a man is to be as convinced as this about the truth of the Gospel, then something has got to happen inside him which will make him think and act differently from before. This change is the work of the Holy Spirit.

This is stated quite clearly by the apostle Paul in the second chapter of first Corinthians, and I have found it to be true in my own experience of men and women. Paul says that the ordinary man does not accept what the Christians say about the spiritual gifts which God gives to men. It is all foolishness to him. He is not able to understand what you say. A man has to be spiritually minded before he can understand such things. Paul means the ordinary man, physical, mental, psychological—the sort of man we all are by nature, the ordinary man who has no use for religion and does not go in for that sort of thing. He has not got the necessary equipment. It is not a question of culture, or of cleverness, or of social status, either of having these or of not having these. What is required is the capacity for understanding spiritual things. What is more: it is not a question of some people being born that way and some not. Nobody is born that way, though perhaps some of us have had the good fortune to be born into a Christian home and have therefore had

a much better chance of being able to look at things from the right angle.

This faculty of understanding spiritual things is something which has partly to be cultivated by the man himself, but in the last resort it is God's own gift to men. It arises from the actual indwelling in us of the Holy Spirit. But there are certain things we have to do. We have, so to speak, to prepare the ground. I have known this change to take place in two ways. I have known it to happen suddenly. I have seen definitely wicked and irreligious men suddenly turned right round and become different from what they were before. They have still had a lot to learn about Christianity, but that there has been a sudden and definite change in them, no one who knows them can possibly deny. They have become convinced of their desperate need that God should effect a change in them, a change of heart, a change of attitude. And it has happened. I have also known it to take place gradually. Men have set out to learn how to listen to God. They have been willing to consort with men and women who obviously know what they are talking about, and they have been prepared to learn to appreciate the atmosphere which belongs to Christian worship. They may not have been conscious of any definite change at any particular moment, but there has come a time when they have looked back and have said to themselves: 'Now I look at things in a completely different way from that I did (say) two years ago. I am a different man.' In each case, suddenly or gradually, a change has taken place, and it has been due to the dwelling in them of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is bearing witness with their spirit that a change of outlook, a change of life has taken place.

But in the main, there are two conditions which men must fulfil, if they are ever going to see any sense in Christianity. It is because many men and women do not

fulfil these conditions that they see nothing in it, and have no use for it.

The first condition is that we must realize that we are not dealing with an experiment in a laboratory. In a laboratory experiment the aim is to be as impersonal as possible, and we go to the utmost trouble to keep ourselves out of the experiment, and not let any personal likes or dislikes intrude. That is a perfectly sound attitude, and the marvellous achievements of the scientists in our time have been due to that attitude more than to any other one thing. In a completely impersonal, detached way they have patiently experimented and have faithfully followed wherever the evidence has led them. That is the way to think things out philosophically, too. But here we are dealing with something that is essentially personal, so very much so that if you start by cutting the personal element right out, you are bound to get no answer, or if you do get what looks like an answer, it is bound to be the wrong one. What sort of a marriage would it be, if a man set out in a detached, theoretical sort of way to get married? If he decided, for instance, that it would be a good thing to get married, fixed upon the woman who seemed likely to fulfil the proper conditions, arranged to get her examined scientifically, physically, mentally, psychologically, and whatever other way there may be, and then, supposing that all went well so far, made a proposal to her in a strictly impersonal way? There would be no marriage. He would soon get sent about his business. Marriages are not made that way. They may or may not be made in heaven, but they are certainly not made in a laboratory. There must be a personal basis.

No man can ever come to know what religion is, if he goes about it that way. He has, from the very start, cut out the only pathway by which he could ever reach his destination. If you want to know for yourself what religion

really is, the last book to read is a history of the origin and development of religion, one of those excellent scientific text-books which study the ways and thoughts of men in an objective, academic way. They are excellent books, most of them, and most interesting to read, for we are all of us interested in what Andrew Lang once called the devices of the naughty natural man. But if you yourself want to know what religion is, that is not the way.

On the contrary, you must start off by making some attempt to get to know God personally. The analogy of courtship holds here also, though now only partly. There is no need for you to seek to commend yourself to God. He knows all about you already, and much more than you think. But you must make some attempt to know Him. This is why Christians pray, and keep on praying. Those first followers of Christ may have locked themselves up in that room, and they were undoubtedly all of them thoroughly scared, but they did one very sensible thing, the most sensible thing they could do. They prayed. They did therefore fulfil one essential condition for the advent of the Holy Spirit in His convincing power.

The second condition is that you must be eager and expectant. The analogy of human relationships holds here again, because they are necessarily all personal, and so is this. We all know that the laggard lover is no lover at all. Similarly, if you are going to seek God at all, you must seek Him earnestly. All this matter of the Holy Spirit and personal life is for men who know their need of God, and are satisfied that human ambitions and programmes are not enough, however excellent they are. I believe that apart from Christianity, this world is doomed. I believe that apart from this saving, transforming work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men and women, there faces us nothing but disaster, born of our selfishness and our continued inability always to do the good that we know.

I used to think and say once: 'What can I do about all this? an ordinary man like me, without very much money and without any social status, and not knowing anybody in particular who has the power of making changes in the way things go. What can I do?' But I do not think that way now, and I do not talk that way now, because now I know that I am the only man who can do anything. By that 'I', I mean you also, all ordinary folks like you and me. I believe that when a sufficient number of ordinary folks like you and me become thoroughly convinced in our hearts and minds about the things of Christ, become possessed with the Power of the Holy Spirit, transformed into the sort of men and women we have always longed to be, then, I am fully sure, there will be a change.

God has chosen a queer way of bringing His Kingdom in. I suppose He could have done it in any way He pleased, but He has chosen to bring it in through ordinary folks like you and me, by the Power of the Holy Spirit working in each separate one of us, and binding us together into His Church. He is waiting until ordinary folks like you and me are willing to pray about these things, and are willing to seek Him earnestly. Then it is that once more we that believe shall be of one heart and soul, and then it is that Pentecost comes again.

III

PROVIDENCE AND THE INDIVIDUAL

As for you, ye meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive (Genesis 50²⁰).

THE STORY is thoroughly well known, how Joseph is sold by his brethren into Egypt as a slave. He finds himself in prison, and then, by one of those waves of unexpected good fortune that we have learned to associate with tales of the East, he suddenly finds himself swept out of prison, left high and dry on a throne, second only to that of Pharaoh himself. More important still—both for us and for the *dénouement* of the story—he saves his brethren from starvation, and himself becomes their patron in a new prosperity. The scheming of the brethren had been cramful of evil, begotten by malice out of jealousy, but it all ends in happiness and prosperity for all concerned.

I have chosen this text because I have heard the verse used more than once by a certain type of religious-minded person in support of a doctrine of Providence which has always seemed to me to do far more credit to their hearts than to their heads. I mean the notion that everything is bound to work out all right in the end: the sort of sentiment expressed in that tag of Browning's: 'God's in His heaven, all's right with the world.' Or again, we get the same kind of thing in the Authorized Version of Romans 8²⁸, 'All things work together for good to them that love God', a statement which is not true so far as this world is concerned, so maybe it is just as well that it is a wrong translation.¹

¹ The correct translation is in the margin of the Revised Version. (See p. 36, *infra*.)

So far as I can make out, almost everybody in these days DOES think this way, that, somehow or other, everything is bound to work out all right in the end. The ordinary man, Lord Balfour's famous 'man in the street'—he thinks this way. I rather think he has also come to the conclusion that he cannot do very much about it himself, but he supposes it will be all right. Meanwhile he may as well make the most of his present opportunities, just as his betters have done before him. Most theologians and most people who write religious books are sure that everybody is going to be saved at last, and that ultimately even a fallen world is going to be set up straight again, and thenceforth it will run smoothly on well-greased wheels. But, most surprising of all, those modern intellectuals who deny the existence of a personal God, who hold that there is no purpose observable in things, but that if you look back you can see a direction—these people, quite sincerely and honestly, apparently find themselves able to face the future with an equanimity which is only slightly disturbed by the disasters of the last forty years. Where in the wide world (and for them, it has to be this wide world, because they have no other)—where in the wide world such men can find any ground of confidence whatever for the future passes my comprehension altogether. They least of all are the men who ought to be accusing anyone else of wishful thinking. It is true that Mr H. G. Wells lost his confidence at the last, but his disciples had learnt their lessons too well to be influenced by a teacher who at long last had cleared his mind of the false premise of a lifetime.

It is plain that there is a general providence, in the sense that when and where the sun shines, it shines for all alike, good and bad. And the same is true for the rain; in some parts of the world, too little and too late; in other parts of the world, too much and too often. But whatever

rain there is, and wherever and whenever, it is for all alike. There is no discrimination. Again, it still is substantially true that there is food enough for all, and that our problem is one of distribution rather than production. I use the word 'substantially' because I am far from sure about it, even when it is clear that profits and wages and varying standards of living are included in 'distribution'. There is a time coming when it will not be true that there is food enough in the world for all, unless the problem is seriously tackled on a world-wide scale. Already the fact that the unprivileged of the world are getting more food is creating a problem in supply. Unesco has been holding a full-scale inquiry into the problem. The threat of food shortage is sufficiently serious for the governments of the world to be taking in hand the cultivation of the half-fertile territories of the earth, tracts of country which can never be cultivated for profit and so are outside the scope of any system of private enterprise. That ground-nuts scheme, for instance: we all have our opinions concerning that, for whatever they are worth, but one thing is plain: the whole affair would never have been handed over by the original interested parties if they could have seen their way to handling it without loss. The Federal Government of the United States of America is doing everything it can to bring back into some sort of productivity those lands which greedy farming and soil erosion have rendered barren. Anyone who has seen a dust-storm in the prairies of Canada knows that here is a problem which demands more than a local solution. The fact of the matter is that we are already in the last days when it is possible for any intelligent man to hold to a doctrine of Providence which says that God provides food for everybody in profusion whatever men may do. The resources of the world are limited, and another war, even on the scale of the last (and it is silly already to talk that way), will make serious

inroads on those natural resources of the world which are commonly called the gifts of Providence.

This easy-going, optimistic, 'liberal' doctrine of Providence belongs, so far as Europe is concerned, to an age that has passed away. It belonged to the age of commercial expansion and what was called 'Empire Building'. In those days, the men who were on the top of the wave could see plainly the workings of Providence in their own world. They had every reason to be satisfied. The rest, the submerged, the unprivileged—they, too, believed in Providence, but what they did not find here in charity they looked for in another world, beyond the grave. After all, this pleasant, confident, comfortable notion of Providence is not really involved in Matthew 5⁴⁵—that is the verse which talks about the rain on the just and on the unjust. What is said there is that what God gives so far as the natural world is concerned, is given to all without any discrimination of any kind. There are no priorities there. Nothing is said about everything being all right in the end. Matthew 5⁴⁵ says that everything was all right at the beginning.

I mentioned the growing world food problem in relation to the new standards of living for those who scarce had any standard at all, those amongst whom, not surprisingly, the seeds of Communism find a tropically fertile soil. This food problem comes to the fore in another way, and here the medical profession is responsible, though with our entire approval. I came across this aspect many years ago, listening to a man home from India. He said that the British Medical Service in India was responsible for the growingly recurrent famines in India. The British Medical Service in pre-war India was superb. He said that it was common talk out there amongst Hindus that the British were stopping the cholera goddess and the small-pox goddess from fulfilling their function

of keeping the population down. The doctors were beginning to be able to control cholera and small-pox, with the result that the population was outstripping the production of rice. More mouths to feed, a rapidly rising population, and, in these days with the general dislocation of economy in Malaya, less rice than ever to go round. Something similar is tending to happen here. Years ago, we got diphtheria, and we died. Now, we are immunized, and we live on. We live on to get pneumonia. Years ago, we got pneumonia and probably about fifty per cent of us died. Now, Mr Winston Churchill can get it two or three times, and still in his seventies be as active as ever, far too active for his political opponents and perhaps for some of his friends also. An aged gentleman like General Smuts, who has lived a hard and vigorous life for over half-a-century can get on to his feet again.² Now, thanks to the new drugs, we live on even through streptococcal infections. We live on until we all, old soldiers or not—until we all 'simply fade away'. But all the time the population is increasing more rapidly than of old. Even the mass slaughter of modern war cannot stem the tide. More and more people are living to be old; more and more mouths are hungry to be fed. And the world is limited; limited in age, limited in resources of every kind. The idea of a bounteous God who gives us all things richly to enjoy in profusion is dangerous. It never existed except in fanciful dreams of a distant Golden Age. It was never more than a less-than-half truth, an idealized Arcadia that never was. I knew an astronomer once who was the most short-sighted man I have ever met. He was an expert on multiple stars. He could not see a thing less than a million million miles away.

There is another aspect of this popular notion of

² This address was given at the time when General Smuts seemed to be recovering.

Providence to which I would direct your attention. (I may as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb.) It is the problem of individual justice, the fate of the individual. We are all of us faced with the questions: 'What have I done to deserve this?' and 'Why should this happen to me?' Doubtless we ourselves have asked these questions in times of disability and distress. If we have not voiced them, it is not for want of thinking them. The reason for the questions is this: we most of us believe in our hearts that in this world the good man ought to meet with good fortune. It is more than likely that we ourselves consistently think that our own goodness is seriously underestimated by whatever gods there be. But what justification is there in our experience of the world that this is true? What evidence is there that there is in this world any principle at work which ensures any sort of prosperity or happiness for this or that particular good man? By 'this world' I mean the world they talk about at Lake Success, the world of the economists, the politicians, and the men of affairs generally. There is no guarantee that the good individual will meet with any better fate on this earth than the wicked individual. High-explosive bombs and atom-bombs are no respecters of persons. 'Those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, think ye that they were offenders above all men that dwell in Jerusalem?'—or those that died in the East End of London, or Dresden, or Hamburg, or Hiroshima? There is no guarantee that the good individual will meet with any better fortune on this earth than the wicked individual. The reason is simple, quite simple. There is no such thing as an individual in that isolated, individualistic sense of the word. The modern notion of an individual is an illusion, born of a false analysis and nurtured by a bastard, unscientific psychology. No man is so isolated that what happens to him is the result of his own

actions only. It is very rarely indeed that a man can properly come to any conclusion depending on himself alone, his own personal opinions, and his own personal desires. We are members one of another, set in families, in groups, in nations; living in a world where it is becoming more and more true that everybody is sitting on everybody else's doorstep—or, to be more accurate, in the doorway of everybody else's flat. It is not enough to say that if every man in Britain were honest, the good Briton would prosper, because what happens in this country, as we of this generation know only too well, is not the result of what is done in this country alone. If it is true that in this world happiness is the result of right action, that happiness could never be realized in experience unless all men everywhere were honest; and even then we would have to begin again and reckon with earthquakes, hurricanes, and the like.

And, THEREFORE, I do not believe in this easy-going, pleasantly optimistic notion of Providence which strays off hopefully into the future. I do not believe in a notion of Providence which speaks in terms of an unlimited prodigality of material gifts. There are certain gifts which God has given to all men in common, but as soon as you begin to talk about separate people, immediately you get into trouble.

What is it then that I do believe in?

Let us get back to the Joseph story. Everything there worked out well for all concerned, except only for the baker, and he was only on the fringe of the story, any way. But all this did not happen in any automatic or *laissez-faire* sort of way. No; not it. Things worked out as they did, because of Joseph. It was because, in the midst of all that crowd of men, all of them pulling all sorts of ways—in the midst of all that crowd—there was one man, Joseph, who feared God and sought to do His Will. And

through that one man God worked to bring great good to pass to save many people alive. This brings us round to the proper translation of Romans 8²⁸: 'God works with them in every good thing, with those whom he has called according to His purpose.' This is true. The verse has nothing at all to do with what is commonly called Providence. It is concerned with the Work of the Holy Spirit.

It comes to this. We have a doctrine of Providence, a backward-looking doctrine. It concerns what has happened in the past. It concerns those natural resources of the world which God has given to all men in common. There is a limit to those gifts, and in many ways in these days we are getting within measurable distance of that limit. Only so far; only so much, and the resources of the world are at an end. Then comes disaster, death, and, so far as this world is concerned, the end of things created. All this is a world of justice. What mankind as a whole sows, that mankind as a whole reaps; and because we are all bound together on one round earth, we share the harvest indiscriminately, for weal or for woe. The Providence comes in in the providing that is done. What we do with what is provided is our business. It may prove to be our own funeral. Whether or not it will mean that, and when, remains to be seen, because there does come a time when there will be no dipping in the 'kitty' for any more.

There is also a forward-looking Doctrine of Providence, and, in contrast to the other, an unlimited Providence. It concerns what is going to happen in the future. This is a Doctrine of Grace, and it is inseparable from the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit. It is this. Men are called, and whosoever will, may come. Men are called to be stewards for the Kingdom of God, stewards of those limited natural resources of the world which God has given to the sons of

men. It may be that if these gifts are properly administered, that is, administered to the glory of God—it may be that if these gifts are properly administered, they can be prolonged indefinitely, so that the kingdoms of this world become in actual fact and experience the endless Kingdom of our God and His Christ. 'Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.' As I say, perhaps these gifts can be indefinitely prolonged. I do not know. But if the principle of nuclear fission can be extended beyond the present small range of atomic numbers at the top of the scale, extended throughout the whole gamut, and if the enormous reserves of energy are not squandered by the selfish and unruly passions of men, who knows what God has already laid up even here for those who love Him and do His holy Will?

Who knows? Yes, WHO knows? Nobody knows, and therein lies the modern crisis. No nation can trust another; one man scarce can trust another. At root we cannot even trust ourselves. We know that every one of us is shaped like a shallow funnel, and inside this funnel is the Self, a little rolling ball that will persist in rolling down right into the centre. For this Self of ours persists in getting right into the middle of our picture. Whether we were made that way or whether we have come to be that way, I leave the philosophers and the theologians to decide. Certain it is that we are all like that now. I judge that this is what our fathers meant when they talked of Original Sin. It is not that this Self, in itself, is necessarily evil. Self-preservation has played an important part in the development of the world and its life—the most important part of all if the evolutionists are anywhere near right. And a proper self-respect is good. The man who does not respect himself, respects no one else. What is evil, is the way in which this Self becomes the centre of our thinking and acting, so

that it is as true of us as it was of ancient Israel that 'we have turned every one to his own way'. This way there lies the disruption of society, a wandering away to be lost in the desert, betrayed by the mirage of our own self-projection.

We have had a generation which has deprecated talk of conversion, spoken of it as a survival from an uncultured age, with sin as a psychological maladjustment, and man as a creature who requires only a proper environment and the absence of frustration in order to grow into a spiritual Apollo Belvedere. Much of modern psychology aggravates the disease, for it increases the natural emphasis of man on his own Self as being the necessary object of all his attention. There never was a time in the history of the world when talk about conversion made more sense, now that man has dug right into the very entrails of the universe. Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation. There is a blessedness free for all. It is the blessedness of the sons of God, the blessedness of all who fear Him, and love Him, and seek to do His Will. Here, however limited this world may be, however fast bound in circumstance we may feel ourselves to be—here there is no limit: no limit to what the Holy Spirit can accomplish as He works through—yes, through every separate one of us. For though on this horizontal plane of earth we are all bound together, yet in the perpendicular world of God's action, we are, each one of us, a separate individual through whom God can work to accomplish His Will here. And He can work, if so be we turn to Him in humble faith and true devotion—He can work, through you and through me, to bring to pass, still as it was that day in Joseph's time, to save many people alive.

IV

THE NEW YEAR

NINETEEN-FORTY-SEVEN. There is a horrid finality in the way that last figure keeps clicking up. Like one of Hutton's crisp drives through the covers; crack with the middle of the bat, and then, it seems only a split second later, crack against the boundary fence. That's that. Next ball, please.

And Old Father time is still batting, nineteen hundred and forty-seven not out. He plays his Test Match to a finish, and no mistake. He is the stone-waller *par excellence*. He really has got time on his side; all the time there is; he *is* time. I can see him now, thoroughly well-set, all bowling alike to him, and once a year he sweeps one round to leg with that old scythe of his. He never hurries. One run a year is good enough for him. And every year's end the Great Umpire calls 'Over', and there is another year gone into the past. 'Time like an ever rolling stream . . .'

Yes, every year the Great Umpire calls 'Over', and then we begin again. Begin again. That is what the New Year stands for—beginning again. That is why the first month is called 'January'. It is so called after the Roman god, Janus. Some say he was an old Etruscan god, and that his name means beginning. He was supposed to have two heads, one to look backwards into the year that has gone, and the other to look forward into the year that has come.

We have all sorts of customs connected with this beginning again, because there is a general notion that everything depends upon how the New Year is born. The idea is that whatever is done on New Year's Day is done

all the rest of the year. Why, twenty-four years ago this very New Year there was a one-day strike in the West Country, on the ground that if they worked that day, they would find themselves working hard all the year. I have read, too, that in Devonshire the housewives used to make the soup with whole peas on New Year's Day instead of with split peas, because the split peas will split the luck for the year. Perhaps they still do it. I do not know. A lot of these old customs are dying out.

Up in the North here, the dominant custom is that of first-footing, though even that has not the vogue it had in days gone by. The first person to cross your threshold in the New Year has to be a man, and in most districts he has to be dark. Up Berwick way, where I lived as a boy, he had to bring in a piece of coal and put it on the fire; and then there were the *guysers*, who sang a traditional local herring-song: 'What will you do with the herring's eyes?' and so on, couplet after couplet with the solo-question and the chorus-answer, and dealing with every smallest detail of the herring's anatomy, sometimes with answers that were surprising.

But a lot of these customs have gone this last thirty years. My impression is that the 1914-18 War had a great deal to do with it. I think it was partly due to the fact that we had to cut out all sorts of things—things which for a good many of us never really got replaced, because the bleak years came again so soon. I doubt whether we have looked forward to a New Year with any real hope of betterment since, say, nineteen-nineteen or nineteen-twenty. We have hoped and wished for a better fortune with the New Year, it is true, but it has been a despairing hope. We never really expected very much.

Up to nineteen-fourteen we had an enthusiastic belief in human progress. There was an inevitability about it. The thing was sure. We were bound to go from good to

better, and on to best of all. We still think in terms of a progress that is certain, but there is not much enthusiasm about it. The thing is sure, but. . . . So we try to bolster ourselves up with a forced gaiety and we say cheerily: 'Don't worry; it will all come right in the end.' I think that people who talk that way are a public menace; but I can see why they do it. They are trying, in their way, to deal with our modern half-hearted optimism.

We still believe a good time is coming, but we are 'browed off'. If only we could be really sure again, really sure that we are indeed going to get a better world, really sure that one day we shall be warm in the winter time, really sure that we shall all be able to buy extra things at reasonable prices, really sure that one day things will get anywhere near normal—then we might be able to get some of that resilience back again: 'Hail, smiling morn', and all that sort of thing.

We can do this back-to-the-wall business as well as anybody, better than anybody, and we have done at least our share of it. But there is not any fun in it. We can laugh at trouble with the best of them. Like Mark Tapley, we can take a real pride in being cheerful under the most depressing circumstances, but—why should it always rain? We want some of the sunshine, too. If only we could get back some of the old, cheerful confidence in the future, we would not get so tired of this continued pulling against the collar. There is a hymn I like to sing sometimes: 'Through the night of doubt and sorrow.' I sing it to that old tune AUSTRIA. I sing it sometimes because I am altogether sure it is right, and I step it out with the best of them. Other times I am still sure it is right, but I sing it to keep my courage up.

I will tell you where I think it is that we have gone wrong, and what we ought to do to get it put right.

When we think about a Happy New Year, we think

about something new happening *outside us*. All these New Year customs are to do with 'luck', trying to get things to go right. We do not quite know what we mean by 'things', but it is something somewhere else. And as long as things did go more or less right, we kept the customs going, and half-and-half believed in them. But this last thirty years, things have been too much for us. Perhaps the folks in authority have got some sort of control of events, but ordinary folk like us do not seem to have any control, and we are beginning to suspect that they have not any control either. No wonder we are 'browned off', and try to comfort ourselves with 'Don't worry, it will all come right in the end'.

Nay, friend, it will not do. That is living in a fool's paradise. It is dope. There was a time when religion was used as a dope, drugging men to be content with bad conditions here, doping them with the promise of glorious conditions in heaven. The modern dope is: Be content with what you have got now; things are bound to come right in the end; do not worry. The modern dope is the promise of glorious conditions, not in heaven, but on earth, at some time in the indefinite future, if we just let things take their course.

It seems to me that if things are really going to come right in the end, then somebody has got to do something about it. And that somebody is you and I. You see, if anything new is ever going to happen, it has got to happen inside us, inside every one of us, inside you and me. You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. And you cannot make a new world out of folks who do not care, or out of folks who wait for things to come right and do not do anything about it. It does not make sense. No. New men for a new world.

Do you remember Mr Micawber? He was always expecting something to turn up. Something did turn up

for Mr Micawber in the end, but have you ever noticed that Dickens made a new man of him in between?

It is not an unheard-of thing that a man should be changed into a new man. I have seen a decent man fall for a pretty face and an evil heart, and something new has happened inside him. He has gone bad, rotten through and through. I have seen a bad man fall for a good woman, and she has made a new man of him. We have all seen in our time, one man make a new nation, and lead it to disaster. No. It is not an unheard-of thing: it is quite a common thing in fact. It happens when one person can kindle in the heart of another a passion and a devotion which swallows up everything else.

Now THIS is what Christianity is, and not just good thoughts and fine ideals; not just happiness in heaven, but NEW MEN HERE AND NOW. And the Person who can kindle in our hearts this devouring devotion is the Lord Jesus Himself. He can make new men of us, this Baby that was born in Bethlehem of Judaea, this God who lived a truly human life, who died for us on a Cross, who was raised again from the dead, and still is alive to strengthen and to guide, as I for one can testify.

If he were only a man, He would not do for me now. I have been let down too many times by men. (Do you remember the first time, perhaps when you were still a boy—you found that someone did not know everything, this someone you thought the most wonderful person in the world?) We are thinking this week-end about the Test Match.¹ I was taken as a small boy to see the best bat in England, and he was out first ball. I shall never forget the desolation of that day. And it has happened many a time since, over other things than cricket, more important things. And I have seen it in the eyes of those

¹ This address dates originally 5th January 1947, whilst the Third Test Match was being played at Melbourne.

I love best when I have failed them for the first time: a strange, surprised look, a look that makes you want to hide and then to brave it out by adding injury to disappointment. No. No man is good enough in an ultimate time of desperate need. We have all got feet of clay.

And again, if He were only God, He would not do for me. I could never be sure that He would know and understand. How could He know, if He had never been utterly weary as I am many a time, as you are many a time? How could He know, if He was never tempted as I am tempted many a time, as you are many a time? But He *is* God and He *is* man, and that is why He DOES know and CAN make new men of us. I speak what I know. If perchance you think, as you may easily do, that all this is just talk, parson's talk, then go your own way now; but one day when you are up against it, and do not know which way to turn—THAT day, remember what I have been saying this morning, and I am sure it will then be just the word you are wanting to hear. I only know that I shall follow Him to the world's end.

POOLING RISKS AND RESOURCES

EVERY morning when I get up, I think—no, that is not right, because some mornings it is such a scramble that there is not any time to think. *Some* mornings, shall we say?—the mornings when I get up at the proper time, on these mornings I think: Thank goodness things go on the same way today as they did yesterday. I do not think that way when I get downstairs and have to start on the chores. I think other things then. But have you ever thought how much we depend upon the regularity of things? Sun rises, crosses over, sets. It has done that ever since there was a sun in the middle and an earth to spin round it. I suppose it will keep on doing it for a long, long time yet. And then the ‘laws’ of gravity are always the same: at any rate, up is always up, and down is always down. We actually do depend every minute of our lives on things running regularly and smoothly in this natural world, and we depend upon it so very, very much that it is silly nonsense to suppose there could ever be any change. ‘Burning sun with golden beam, silver moon with softer gleam; rushing wind that art so strong, clouds that sail in heaven along’—and all of it just as true now as when Saint Francis of Assisi wrote it in the early thirteenth century.

This sureness and regularity is the basis of human life. We depend always on the same causes producing the same effects—every time the same. I was saying last week, you may remember, that if anything new is ever going to happen, it has got to happen inside somebody first: the idea was that it is not much good hoping for a new start

in the new year unless we make a new start inside ourselves. Outside it is always the same, churning on and on, yesterday, today, and for ever—same old laws at work every time, because even the very changes work by the same old rules.

This natural world with its regularity is the basis, and we have got to live our lives on it. It is because it is all reasonably stable that we can build with a measure of confidence. But there are some uncertainties. When we are on the young side, we say: 'Jolly good job; that adds to the spice of life,' but as the years pass by and the responsibilities pile up on us, it is bread-and-butter that matters more than spiced-cake, and we want security first.

Civilization is the process of cutting out the uncertainties and making everything more secure. I suppose the basis of civilization is discovering how to store food. The weather changes with the seasons, and in most parts of the world you cannot grow anything any time. The first step would be storing the harvest to try and make it last till the next harvest, or gathering animals into domestic herds so that there was always meat available in the pantry down the valley. But big advances in civilization could not be made until men had learned to produce more than enough for one year and had learned to deal with the carry-over in case the next harvest should be a failure. The biggest advances have come with the discovery of how to can food and keep it over a period of years, though I understand that we have not really solved that problem yet. They tell me that quite a lot of people are suffering these days from skin troubles, nothing very serious, but they are stubborn and do not respond properly to treatment, and perhaps the reason is that some of our canned food has been stored too long.

Anyway, we shall solve that problem some time, I have

no doubt, though if we all get more sense and avoid another world war, we shall not have the same problem again. But all the time we are trying to cut out the uncertainties, to find out all the causes and their effects, so that where we cannot control the cause, we shall know what to do about the effect. Social Insurance is an admirable example of the fruits of civilization. We none of us know when we are going to be ill, and illness can bring poverty and disaster, and the nearer we are to the poverty line, the more serious it can be. So we pay into a common fund in good time, to help whoever has the bad times. And none of us knows when death is coming. There is one thing certain about it—it is bound to come some time, so we try to pool our resources and then everybody's relatives will be able to go along as smoothly and as regularly as possible in spite of it.

But the curious thing about all these uncertainties, I mean uncertainties of sickness and the uncertainty of the day of death—the curious thing about them is that it is only your illness or my illness that is uncertain. Everybody's illnesses all lumped together is not uncertain. The figure keeps pretty well level except for the aftermath of war. Whilst the day of your death and the day of my death are uncertain, yet we know within a pretty small margin how many people will die in Britain this year, and we can make provision for it. It is true, therefore, in a real and proper sense that 'The more we are together, the happier we shall be', or, to put it more accurately: 'The more we work together, the better chance we all stand of happiness, because the sharing of the individual uncertainties adds up to a communal certainty.' I am quite sure myself of this: nobody can be happy unless he has got security. There can never be any security on this earth until we have learned to pool our risks, and to pool our resources so as to deal with the risks. That is common

sense, is it not? It is reasonable. You do not need to be religious to know that.

Well, if there is going to be any happiness on this earth, then we have got to pool both risks and resources. I think we are beginning to see that this is not only a national business, but an international business as well. Another thing, nobody can deny that we have gone a long way this last hundred years, and we all of us have great hopes that if only we can clear up our present mess, we ought to be in for much better days. And I think these better days will come, if—and, to my mind, it is a very big IF.

I expect you have found, just the same as I have found, that it is one thing to work things out on paper, and it is quite another thing to work them out in people. If only everybody always acted sensibly, and if only everybody always took a broad view, then we should soon be there—that, I firmly believe. But then we do not. The trouble is that neither you nor I always act sensibly, and we will persist in looking at things from our own point of view. We stand at our front door and look as far as the front gate, or we stand at the back door and look round the backyard, and we say, 'Now, what can I do' (more likely, 'What ought the Town Council to do?') 'to make my place better?' 'When are those dustmen coming to empty that bin?' 'If people would keep their cats in their own garden . . .', and so on. It is natural for us to look at things from our own point of view, and I suppose it is only human to fly off the handle sometimes. Yes, it is natural. That is what makes some of us so worried about this atomic bomb business and all those tremendous new machines that are being developed. It is natural for even the best-intentioned people suddenly to act irrationally, or to act selfishly, especially when other folk are acting unreasonably. We stand an awful lot, most of us (though

I think we often make it more than it is because we impute bad motives where there are none), but we stand an awful lot, and then suddenly we get fed-up and throw things about, or lash out with our tongues on whoever happens to be nearest. Most times it is at home that we let ourselves go. That is a pity, and it is usually grossly unfair; but on the whole maybe it is just as well that it *is* there, if it has to be anywhere, because that is where they love us most, and are most likely to make allowances. The pity is that it has got to be at all, because these sudden bursts of irrational behaviour can do a very great deal of damage, and sometimes things can never be put right again, for the cause and effect business works here also, you know.

I have been talking about people who aim to act reasonably and do realize their duty to the community, but there are other folks who acknowledge no duty at all to the community. There is a type of business man like that, and there is a type of workman like that. I suppose we get them in all ranks of life and in all professions. I mean men whose philosophy of life is quite plainly to get on themselves and not to care twopence whom they trample on in the process. I expect we can all see how that has come about. It is that natural my-back-yard or my-front-garden attitude run loose. Perhaps they have given up trying to be decent citizens; maybe they never bothered at all, but when men get like that, they can ruin a whole generation. We have seen that happen in our time in Adolf Hitler. I hope we have seen, too, how the utter selfishness of some groups gave him the opportunity, because it ought to be plain to all of us by this time that Hitler did not just happen on his own. He was, at any rate in part, a reaction to human selfishness elsewhere, natural human selfishness, if you like. Yes; it was all very natural, just as every kind of action for our own preservation is natural, but my point all through this talk is that it

is this NATURAL human behaviour that keeps on putting into the direst peril even those good things that it naturally builds up.

The solution, as I see it—and this is the Christian solution—is that something has to be done about human nature. Further, since we have got to deal with something that is natural in human nature, then there has got to be a fundamental change right inside every one of us. And the change has got to be in the working out of this very natural way of looking at things from our own point of view. I work it out this way. I do not see that any amount of talk about the good of the community is going ultimately to help us. It is all true that our happiness on earth is going to come from pooling risks and resources. But the plain fact is that ordinary human ideas of brotherhood are not strong enough to stop our natural self-centredness from breaking through and smashing it all up. It is a most curious thing that with all our improvements in social well-being, we are in a more dangerous situation than ever. It is an illusion to think that scientific knowledge is bound to make better men or to create better conditions. Science enables us to do more efficiently whatever it is that we have decided on other grounds to do. If you want to cure disease, science will help you to do it better. If you want to spread disease, science will help you to do that better. If you want to cultivate the arts of peace, there is nothing like applied science for doing that. If you want to fight a war, there is nothing like science for doing that. It is very evident to me, and I think it must be very evident to you, too, that we must get behind the problem of the application of our scientific knowledge, away back to the very root of all our human actions. I maintain this: as long as there is in all of us (and that means in you and in me) this natural human tendency to think of things from our own point of view, we can never hope for anything

better than to scrape out of one crisis into the next.

The importance of the 'wondrous Cross' concerning which the Christian has so much to say, is that there we see One who did not put Himself first—not ever. God came into this world as Christ to be a real man, but a new sort of Man, to set a new fashion, to fight for men in a new sort of way, 'a second Adam to the fight, and to the rescue came'. He came to rescue us from this dilemma whereby all our best can so easily and does so easily become our worst, because of this self-interest. That is just where flesh and blood did fail in Adam, as the hymn puts it, in that natural human selfishness. Christ did strive afresh against the foe, and He alone can prevail, because in Him alone there is an inner core of selflessness. Now, there is our pattern, our pattern of the Human Race that can be. And it can be, when we (that is you and I), when we have an earnest desire to be like Him—plus something else. That something else is a firm trust that God does definitely give the necessary will and strength to every man who will go His way.

Two things: a firm desire to be like Him; a firm trust in God that God Himself will give you the will and the strength.

VI

TWO WOMEN AND HOW THEY SUFFERED

‘**W**HOOEVER would have thought he would take it that way?’ I wonder how many times we have every one of us said that to ourselves. It must have happened many and many a time, because different people take things so very differently. You have to know people very well indeed, if you are going to be reasonably sure as to how they are going to take things. You can live with people for twenty years and more, and then occasionally find them doing the queerest things imaginable, things you would never expect them to do—at least that is what I am told every now and again. Yes: people do take things differently. It is not so much that things are different. It is the people that are different. You only have to go to a political meeting to find that out. Some think the candidate is the answer to all the world’s prayers. Others are quite sure he is the world’s worst. Same man, same speech; different ears with different people behind them.

You can see it in the street any day in the way folks walk along the pavement. Some keep to the left, some keep to the right, and some do not keep anywhere. Some look where they are going, and others expect you to look out for them as well as for yourself. Some go straight ahead and never see a thing. Others notice everything—at least, not quite everything: I do not think that anybody notices everything except a well-trained policeman. All of them different, but it is the same street for every one of them, and the same everything else. To some it is ‘a strait and thorny road, and mortal spirits tire and faint’, whilst others cut along as eagles cut the air. It does matter

what sort of a road it is, but it matters still more with what sort of courage you walk along it.

Look at the different ways in which people stand up to trouble. I am thinking particularly of two women I once knew who had rheumatoid arthritis. They are both dead, many years ago now, long before the doctors could do as much as they can now in relief and cure. As we all know, there is no disability which calls for more fortitude and determination, and I think the way in which lots of sufferers keep up a cheerful courage is marvellous. But these two women. One of them never shaped at all. She was told that she must do her best to keep about, and that she must not give in on any account. She did give in, practically straight off. It was not out of stubbornness or contrariness, and she was not one of these people who seem to take a pleasure in being miserable. She just was not made that way, and she went rapidly from bad to worse. She was always asking why she should be the one to suffer. Poor woman; she had a dreadful time, and so did everybody else.

The other woman, when I first met her, was already confined to her bed. She could not move, let alone get up. She could do nothing but remain in a sitting position. They told me that she had come to the point when it was plain that she would have to spend the rest of her life in one position only, so far as her back and legs were concerned. She was given the choice, and she chose sitting up, because she could see more that way. When I first saw her, there she was sitting up in bed in the kitchen corner, and joining in all the family life, family jokes and all the rest. What a woman! Never have I seen a woman so curled up and stiff, and never in all my life have I seen a woman so cheerful and stout-hearted. She was that sort of woman. Her trouble was particularly bad, and it was aggravated by the general conditions under which they

all had to live, but for courage—I have seen brave men and women in my time, lots of them, but never have I seen bravery and courage like that.

I can tell you what made the difference. There were several factors in it, I have no doubt. For one thing, the first woman had no fight in her, never had; and the second woman had fight enough for fifty. There were contributory causes in that. The first woman had led an easy life, and had never run up against trouble to any extent. The second woman had never had much else. She had had to struggle against poverty all her life, her and her people before her. But these differences are not decisive. They do make a difference, and the needless inequalities and injustices in our social system have deserved every censure. I hope that they have not continued too long, because there comes a time when people will not listen to reason. They just pack up, and there is an awkwardness that gets bred into the bone. But as I say, such differences are not decisive. Not all comfortably brought up people are soft when trouble comes their way; and bad conditions create far more weaklings than fighters. Most people succumb to bad conditions. My experience leads me to believe that those who are spoilt through being brought up softly, would equally be spoiled if they had been brought up roughly; and the fighters would be fighters anyway.

The decisive factor in this particular case was religion. When I went to live in that place as a young minister, keen, not long out of college and very anxious to help, they told me about her, almost as soon as I got there. So I said to myself, 'Now, here is a case where I can do some good,' and off I dashed to see her. My idea was to talk to her about the strength which I knew even then God can give to men and women, and to pray with her. But I learned something that day. I found out that she had forgotten

more about trusting in God than I had ever known; and that from her bed there, all crippled and stiff as she was, she had given hope and courage to many a body that needed it. She knew what trusting in God meant, and that was where she got her fight and her courage from.

I am not saying that people who are not religious cannot be brave and courageous under such circumstances. But I am saying that never anywhere have I seen such courage, and never anywhere have I seen anybody bring such positive good out of such obvious evil. And another thing I am saying is this: In my experience, which is as varied as most people's—in my experience, the people who most often and most effectively bring positive good out of obvious evil are those people who have a firm and fixed faith in God, and I wish there were more of them.

I have been talking about the different ways in which people stand up to trouble. Now I want to say something about the different ways in which people crash because of success. The one is as common as the other.

We can see it much more easily in other people than we can see it in ourselves. I expect we all of us know people who have got on in the world, and they have been spoilt by their very success. We notice it most in men who start in a humble way, but they have ability and they have made the most of their opportunities. Sometimes they have made their own opportunities, and they have got on. I am glad. I like to see people get on, and be successful in whatever it is they undertake, as long as it is good and wholesome, but not when they grow into people who can think and talk about nothing except themselves and what they have done and how much they have made. Sometimes they grow into such terrible people that nobody will have anything to do with them, not, that is, in the way of true friendship. They themselves cut their old friends, and

the folks they try to mix with will not have anything to do with them, because they are outsiders, anyway. They dig their own pit. There is a strange sort of justice in this world, by which people are apt to get exactly and precisely what they ask for. The man who is all for himself, gets left to himself to enjoy himself by himself. Things work that way. Folks who live for themselves end up by living by themselves. And sometimes their pride in their own success traps them into making a colossal mistake, and they come crashing down. Nobody is particularly sorry for them.

But I know men, and I expect you do too, who are very successful, and have never lost that sense of comradeship and that proper modesty which is the basis of all true friendship. Success has never spoiled them, and the more they have prospered, the more they have risen in the esteem of those who know them. God bless them and prosper them every one.

But what I am interested in most of all is that something inside which makes them what they are. How *can* we every one of us meet with both success and failure, good fortune and trouble, and yet not be destroyed and beaten down?

There are two ways of doing that, so far as I can see. One is good, but the other is better.

The first is good, but negative. It is a way of preventing ourselves from being influenced improperly by either the one set of experiences or the other. This way is to cultivate an objective way of looking at ourselves. It is to sort of stand outside ourselves and watch ourselves in much the same way as we watch other people. I try to do that myself over most things I do, especially over every kind of speech I have to make; and I recommend it generally. I expect there are dangers in it, the psychologists will tell us, but at any rate it does prevent us from

taking criticism too personally. It is very difficult to listen patiently when somebody else is pointing out where we have gone astray or where we might have done this, that, or the other more successfully. And even if we ask people for their candid opinion, it still is easy to take that criticism badly. But if we cultivate the habit of watching ourselves doing things from a professional point of view, we can control that personal element which really causes all the trouble. I think it is true to say that trouble beats us only when we are thinking how badly we are done by, and that success beats us only when we are thinking how well we ourselves are doing. The idea is to sit by the track as our own trainer, and judge ourselves both for good and for bad, as someone in whom we are perhaps specially interested, but not quite thinking about ourselves as ourselves. That, amongst other things, will enable us to laugh at ourselves, which I think is a very good thing to be able to do.

But this way, good as it is, is negative. What is really wanted is something positive. It is not a question of just avoiding something bad either in trouble or in success. It is a matter of bringing something really good out of both. What is required, then, is some way of taking us out of ourselves, of stopping us thinking about ourselves either as failures or as successes. Some try to do this by working for the good of the community, and I would be the last to deny that they have some considerable success. But I have found this—and I think that here we have the whole crux of our modern troubles—I have found that this is not a big enough motive to keep us going all the time. Most of us meet with such disappointment in working for the good of the community, that in time we give up trying. Or we meet with so many people who take advantage of us when we try to act decently that we stop bothering. Look how easy it has been with these fuel cuts

to start off with good intentions, and honestly to do our part by reducing our consumption of electricity in the hope that the cut will be avoided, and after a while, when the cuts seem always to come just when they are most inconvenient, to say: 'I had better get up a quarter-hour earlier and get that heater on a little earlier, and then when the cut comes I shall be all right.' But it is wrong, and it is just that kind of attitude which makes post-war recovery more difficult than it need be, and it is difficult enough, heaven only knows.

It comes back to the same thing for me every time, whichever way I turn. Ordinary human benevolence is not enough. Working for the good of mankind is not enough. They are good, very good, but they are not good enough. It is a good thing to love one's country, but, as Nurse Cavell told us many years ago now: Patriotism is not enough. It is a good thing to love one's fellow men, all of them, whoever they are, but I have never yet met anybody that can do it. Those who have come nearest to it are those who love God with all their heart. And it is there that you get the motive that is big enough to put all these thoughts of self in the proper place, which is right at the bottom of the list; and yet at the same time to infuse men with an objective which will keep on keeping on urging them to the highest endeavour.

VII

THIS SELF OF OURS

I THINK it is high time we each one of us got ourselves pinned into a corner, and kept ourselves there until we have given ourselves a really good dressing-down. We are forgetting one thing these days that matters a very great deal. I think that from the ordinary work-a-day point of view, it is by far the most important thing today. By 'ordinary work-a-day' point of view, I mean absolutely practical, up-to-date, and a real matter of bread-and-butter.

You remember that slogan we used to hear during the war (or was it the war before the last?): It all depends upon ME. I expect we heard it and saw it so often that we scarcely took any notice of it at all, treated it as a sort of background noise; and perhaps we were inclined to shrug our shoulders and say: 'Here is some more of that pep-talk.' There are times, and this is one of them, when we ought to realize that pep-talk can be about something we ought to know without having it dinned into us again and again and again. This business of 'It all depends upon ME' is a case in point. In the last resort, it all does depend on you and me, and I reckon that it is true about pretty well everything. We have all often heard people say, 'That is a jolly good idea'—and that is all that has happened. I know I have often said that, but I have not always done something about it. If only we could get people to do something about it, every time they really agree that 'it is a good idea', we would soon be where we want to be. So this morning I hope to have something to say about bridging that gap. How can I get

myself to do what I agree to be a good thing to do?

Let us try to get down to it, and deal with ourselves fair and square. We will not worry about the people next door, or those folks down the street, or that hard-faced, tight-lipped man we see on the seven-fifty each morning. Because, if we once start to talk about what they do not do, we shall not get finished in time to deal with ourselves. We hope they are listening too, and taking it to heart the same as we are here.

How can I get myself to do what I agree to be a good thing to do? No; that will not do. It is too general. Let us try to get it tighter than that. Let us deal with the thing that touches us most keenly. I was talking about it a fortnight ago—this natural human selfishness of ours, and the curious way in which it seems to pull down even the good we do. For instance, we know that our happiness on this earth is going to come from pooling both risks and resources, but we are all inclined to prefer ourselves to be putting in the risks and other people to be putting in the resources. It is not that we are wicked; we are just human. But that is the kind of thing that stops us from ever getting anywhere.

It is easy to talk about brotherhood. But why *should* I bother about the other fellow? I have to work for my living, and look after the wife and the family. I am prepared to give half-a-crown to a man who is in real need, and I do not mind a bit for the hospital, but I do not see why I should deprive myself of what comforts I have managed to collect. I look after myself, and keep myself respectable, and I do my best to give the youngsters a good start. What is wrong with that? The answer is that there is not anything wrong with it, but that it is just that sort of thing multiplied a few million times over through this country and through every other—it is just that and no more than that, which has landed us where we are

now, and is more than likely to land us in a worse mess hereafter, if something is not done about it. It is true—is it not?—that human selfishness has landed us in this post-war mess. Hitler and his Nazis in the first instance: if they had not been out for their own at everybody else's expense, things would never have gone the way they have gone. And what about the selfishness in all sorts of places that gave Hitler his opportunity? Because Hitler did not just spring out of nowhere.

All this human selfishness, as I have said time and again, is very natural, but natural as it is, it has got to be altered, and I cannot for the life of me see how it is going to be altered except through something outside human nature, and through something bigger than human nature. If I did not believe in God for other reasons, I would be driven to say that there must be a god somewhere if all that we love and cherish is not going to end in an unholy smash. I do not see anything else for it, unless some outside power can change this nature of ours, which in spite of all its possibilities for goodness, has in it all the time the roots of its own destruction.

Now this is where Christianity comes in. I believe that Christianity does provide the solution. That is one reason why I am a Christian. And the longer I live, and the more I know my own thoughts and desires, the more I am absolutely certain that nothing and no one but God Himself can bring about the change that is essential.

How can God bring about this change? Do you remember that hymn, 'On all the earth Thy spirit shower'? The writer talks about reversing every law of sin. That means precisely what we are talking about, because there is not a sin in the calendar that does not arise from this selfish motive that is embedded so deeply in human nature. Now, is it true that God the Holy Spirit can do this? Because, if it is true, then here is our solution, and He is

indeed a Power that can transform human nature just where it needs to be changed.

Let me tell you how I came to believe in this. I have mentioned this before, but it will bear mentioning again. Take the story of the twelve disciples, those men whom the Lord Jesus chose to be with Him. What a poor crowd they were in the end, on their own showing, because the Gospels are built up on their testimony! They are based on what they saw and heard. We know, for instance, that Mark sat down and wrote what Peter said. When Jesus was arrested in the Garden, they all ran away forthwith, except Peter, who did stop long enough to make a bit of a fight about it. But even Peter denied Him afterwards. Fancy! the twelve of them! One betrayed Him, one denied Him, and the rest left Him and fled. In a way I do not blame them altogether, because it was no picnic to get arrested round Passover time. The Romans were always expecting a rebellion at Passover, and they were none too particular in the way they suppressed any slightest hint of one. The best time to stop a rebellion is before it starts. But that was no sort of way for the disciples to go on, clearing off and leaving Him alone like that. If those men who had been with Him in such close contact for so long left Him like that, it is not at all surprising that thousands of people today should hear about Jesus and His death on the Cross, and should do nothing about it. That does not surprise me in the least. But let us get on with the story. The Lord Jesus was crucified, and He hung there until He died, with a brigand hanging on either side of Him. So far as we know no one bothered, apart from one of the brigands and perhaps the Roman centurion. There were two or three women who watched from a distance, and Joseph of Arimathea, not of the twelve, braved the authorities to give Him decent burial. Then, on the third day, the Lord Jesus was raised from the dead. The

disciples had many doubts about it at first. That again is not surprising, but what always puzzled me is that they did nothing particular about it. So I am not in the least surprised that thousands of people now-a-days should hear about the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and even believe that it happened, and yet at the same time should go about their business as usual as though it had never happened at all. But the story still goes on. It tells about a little company of men and women who were full of fear, and got behind closed doors in an upper room. They were troubled beyond measure about the way in which things were going, how everything had gone dead wrong. And they prayed and kept on praying; which was a very sensible thing to do. It is what everybody does, each man in his own fashion if he is in a big enough fix. They prayed for courage and strength, and then one day they had a most extraordinary experience. They experienced the Presence of God Himself in their midst in a way they had never known before. He made them very sure about Christ. They became sure that He was God living a truly human life. They were convinced that God loved them as much as Jesus said He did, as much as to die for them on that Cross. Out of all their uncertainty there was born a tremendous enthusiasm and a great strength. God Himself gave them the strength to do the things they longed to do, and to be the men they had longed to be. That is how the Power came to change them and to make them different people right inside.

I speak of what I know. I have read about it in books. I have heard other people talk about it. The reason why I am sure about this is that I myself have found something of this strength. But there are conditions attached. It is a gift of God free enough, but we must realize in the first place that God must do something for us which we cannot do for ourselves. If it is natural for you to be

self-centred, so self-centred as to ruin everything through it in spite of all you want to do, then you cannot change yourself, any more than you can lift yourself up by your own belt. Somebody must lift you, if you are ever to be lifted. Somebody else must change you, if you are ever going to be changed. First you have to recognize that. Next, you must pray and be thoroughly in earnest about desiring this change. But I do know this, that if you keep on praying, then one day you will find this change come to pass, and you will be a new man. Paul called it 'a new man in Christ Jesus', and when we get new men like that, what a world it will be. I hope I live to see it. It really will be a world worth living in.

Most Holy Spirit, guest and guide of our wayward hearts, bestow upon each one of us Thy manifold gifts.

Spirit of Wisdom, abide within us, deliver us from self-deception and error. Guide us into Thy truth.

Spirit of holy fear, awaken us to watch and pray, lest in our way of wilfulness we stumble and fall.

Spirit of holy love, rest upon us, we pray. Cast out from our hearts all bitterness and envy and uncharitableness. Strengthen us for selfless service.

Spirit of holiness, hallow our work and our play. Let Thy beauty be upon our homes. May Thy fellowship bind us close together in a solid fellowship that nothing can destroy.

Our hearts lie open before Thee, O God. May it please Thee to make them Thy temple and dwelling-place. Change us, O God, to be new men in Christ Jesus. AMEN.