



How to Live

*In a Topsy
Turvy World*

Desmond Ford

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Dedication

To Elène

A farmer went out to sow seed.

*It fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was
sown.*

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Chapter One

The world we live in ...



The title of this book is taken from life. Myriads have asked the question in the past, and millions today are still asking it. How can I live in a world that is rapidly spiralling downward? If one is normally intelligent there is no way out of the inquiry.

Philosopher Bryan Magee, former Oxford University professor, came close to a breakdown when the question haunted him. Here are some of his reflections at that time:

Quite apart from any considerations of self: politics, business and the professions were in themselves nothing, and the daily life and work of the world just a lot of meaningless vanity. People busied themselves in offices and factories, or hurried to and fro between these and their homes; markets and concourses teemed with crowds, traffic crammed the streets, buses and trains ran, airplanes flew, telephones rang; everywhere there was bustle and noise, strain and striving, people jostling and worrying and getting ill, pursuing leisure, pleasure and possessions as frantically as they worked. And to what end, ultimately? None at all. In fact, whether they realized it or not, they were just doing these things repetitively for their own sakes, and would go on doing so until they and everything else disappeared into total darkness. The whole thing was absurd in the most serious sense of that word. Even on their own terms the politics and business of the world were absurdly evanescent....

The world is governed by false values. People in all societies seem anxious to do what they think is the done thing, and are terrified of social disapproval. They set their hearts on getting on in the world, being thought highly of by their fellows, being powerful, acquiring money and possessions, knowing “important” people. They admire the influential, the rich, the famous, the well born, the holders of rank and position. But none of these things have any serious

relationship to merit: as often as not they are ill gotten, and nearly always they are partly dependent on chance. None of them will protect a person from serious illness or personal tragedy, let alone from death. And none of them can be taken out of this world. ...

They are the tinsel of life, glittering but worthless.

Confessions of a Philosopher, pp. 253-254, 257

Michael Green in *Runaway World*, page 7, agrees with Magee:

The ever quickening rat race, the political double talk, the almost compulsive addiction to (and conditioning by) television, the endless preoccupation with sex, the glossing over the ugly fact of death are some of the ways in which our generation tries to “get away from it all”.

Such is the world in which we live. How then should we live? Every conscious hour we are making choices, and these choices depend largely on our view of reality. Is the universe a jumble of incongruous matter and our world an insignificant dot holding human bacteria? Or is it something more? Are we but mere meaningless clots of coincidental atoms? What a great way to begin the day—look in the mirror, repeating that last sentence. Will it nerve you for the battle of existence?

Dag Hammarskjöld, former Secretary-General of the United Nations wrestled with these questions. Here is his conclusion:

I don't know Who—or what—put the question. I don't know when it was put. I don't even remember answering. But at some moment I did answer yes to Someone—or Something—and from that hour I was certain that existence is meaningful and that, therefore, my life, in self-surrender had a goal.

These are not questions that can be constantly deferred. None of us has a guarantee on tomorrow. This world is not only confusing, but dangerous. Only about three per cent of people die of old age. Many—particularly, but not solely, in third world countries—die young. The chief cause of death in the West for people under 45 years is suicide.

We use vehicles, and survival does not depend just on our driving skills but on those whom we encounter. Five times as many drivers on the road are under the influence of drugs than incapacitated by alcohol.

And these wonderful bodies of ours sometimes inherit problems that can erupt at any time cutting short our days.

In earlier decades if you had been male and a certain age, you may have been called to Vietnam whether you wanted to go or not. Thousands of Australians and five times as many Americans perished in a war that had no validity. Three out of every four persons in the West die either of cancer or heart disease. Life is no picnic.

Elie Wiesel endured Auschwitz and after his deliverance he wrote this:

The opposite of love is not hatred
The opposite of hope is not despair
The opposite of mental health is not madness
The opposite of remembering is not forgetting
In every case the opposite is nothing but indifference.

He knew well what historians have concluded—that the seeming equanimity of much of the population of Germany under Nazism was in fact indifference. The greatest problem in the world is not the existence of terrible wickedness or malice—it is human weakness and our infinite capacity for self-deception.

What then are our options? Pascal, the real inventor of the basis for the computer, said there are only two. In choosing one view of life and duty we have everything to lose and nothing to win if we are wrong. On the other hand, if we choose the other and are right, we have everything to win and nothing to lose. That should carry some weight with intelligent enquirers.

Something else needs to be said. Actions have consequences. The jails, the hospitals, police mortuaries and VD clinics testify that certain types of choices can result in terrible pain and a truncating of freedom and health. Every action has a corresponding reaction. The old proverb says ‘whatever we sow that also shall we reap’.

In a world of pain we must remember that we are only conscious of evil because goodness is yet the rule. The great gifts of life, and the closest to us, are our abilities to move, eat, see, sleep, hear and think, certainly not money, fame or power. What if every smell was a stench, every touch a sting, every sound a discord, every sight ugly and every taste bitter? Be not deceived—life was made for joy by One who loves us. The main cause of sorrow is not the world nor life as God made them, but wrong choices by human beings.

It is vital we become familiar with the names, lives and theories of those who have moulded our present culture. Names such as Copernicus,

Galileo, Newton, Darwin, Marx, Nietzsche, Einstein and Freud rank high on the list. Two nineteenth-century writers foretold elements of our modern culture, and it is supremely important that we understand their contributions to our world.

Our troubled dangerous world was foreseen

Frederick Nietzsche came from a long line of Protestant ministers. As a young man he used to practise preaching to all the birds that would listen. But after reading *The Origin of Species*, he gave up on God. A brilliant writer, he influenced millions including Hitler and Mussolini. Here is his parable *The Madman*:

Have you not heard of that madman who lit a lantern in the bright morning hours, ran to the marketplace and cried incessantly “I’m looking for God, I’m looking for God!” As many of those who did not believe in God were standing together there, he excited considerable laughter. “Why, did he get lost?” cried one. “Did he lose his way like a child?” said another. “Or is he hiding? Is he afraid of us? Has he gone on a voyage? Or emigrated?” Thus they yelled and laughed. The madman sprang into their midst and pierced them with his glances.

“Whither is God?” he cried. “I shall tell you. We have killed him—you and I. All of us are his murderers. But how have we done this? How were we able to drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon? What did we do when we unchained this earth from its sun? Whither is it moving now? Away from all suns? Are we not plunging continually backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Gods, too, decompose. God is dead, and we have killed him.

“How shall we, the murderers of all murderers, comfort ourselves? What was holiest and most powerful of all that the world has yet owned has bled to death under our knives. Who will wipe this blood off us? What water is there for us to cleanse ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too much for us? Must not we ourselves become gods simply to seem worthy of it? There has never been a greater deed, and whoever will be born after us—for the sake of this deed, he will be part of a higher history than all history hitherto”.

Here the madman fell silent and looked again at his listeners; and they too stared at him in astonishment. At last he threw his lantern on the ground, and it broke and went out.

It has been related further that on the same day the madman entered divers churches and there sang his *requiem aeternam deo*. Led out and called to account, he is said to have replied each time, “What are the churches now if they are not the tombs and sepulchres of God?”

The Portable Nietzsche, p. 125

In 1849 Fyodor Dostoyevsky had been sentenced to the Gulag, accused of political plotting. In his Siberian prison he studied the New Testament unceasingly, and the results are seen throughout all of his books. In *Crime and Punishment* we have the following account of a mysterious dream that encapsulated his foreboding regarding the future of civilization:

He dreamt that the whole world was condemned to a terrible new strange plague that had come to Europe from the depths of Asia. All were to be destroyed except for a very few chosen. Some new sorts of microbes were attacking the bodies of men, but these microbes were endowed with intelligence and will. Men attacked by them became at once mad and furious. But never had men considered themselves so intellectual and so completely in possession of the truth as these sufferers; never had they considered their decisions, their scientific conclusions, and their moral convictions so infallible. Whole villages, whole towns and peoples went mad from the infection. All were excited and did not understand one another. Each thought that he alone had the truth and was wretched looking at the others, beat himself on the breast, wept, and wrung his hands. They did not know how to judge and could not agree what to consider evil and what good; they did not know whom to blame, whom to justify. Men killed each other in a sort of senseless spite. They gathered together in armies against one another, but even on the march the armies would begin attacking each other, the ranks would be broken and the soldiers would fall on each other, stabbing and cutting, biting and devouring each other. The alarm bell was ringing all day long in the towns; men rushed together, but why they were summoned and who was summoning them no one knew. The most ordinary trades were abandoned, because every one proposed his own ideas, his own improvements, and they could not agree. The land too was abandoned. Men met in groups, agreed on something, swore to keep together, but at once began on something quite different from what

they had proposed. They accused one another, fought and killed each other. There were conflagrations and famine. All men and all things were involved in destruction. The plague spread and moved further and further. Only a few men could be saved in the whole world. They were a pure chosen people, destined to found a new race and a new life, to renew and purify the earth, but no one had seen these men, no one had heard their words and their voices.
pp. 528-529

These lines from Nietzsche and Dostoyevsky have much to teach us about our world. They predicted our World Wars and the resulting ambiguity and relativism of post-modernism (post-modernism was born with the belief that God was dead—the result was pluralism, a thousand views on any issue and all certainties forbidden). Its complete fulfilment is yet future. Secularism is practical atheism, and its spiritual emptiness will continue to produce anarchy and destruction.

The question arises: Why is there such confusion of thought regarding life, conduct and destiny in our day? Literature, as well as history, as we have seen, offers answers. For centuries, most writers cherished the belief in right and wrong, rewards and punishments and a day of judgment. Consider such books as *Mill on the Floss*, the Waverley novels, the books of the Brontë sisters, Jane Austen among others. In the twentieth century literary motifs changed. Voyage, isolation, doubt and hell became the fashionable themes. And hope was omitted, as in one edition of Encyclopaedia Britannica, Joyce and Proust changed the thinking of many moderns and not for the better.

Not only have recent novelists diverged greatly from their predecessors, but some have even changed in midstream, or near the close of their writing careers. H. G. Wells departed from his optimistic stance and at the close of his life wrote *Mind at the End of Its Tether*. He declared, 'There is no way out, around, or through the impasse'. For about a thousand years, the West in literature and life echoed the ancient Greeks and Romans regarding the certainty of moral values. The Christian philosophy held sway until the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. Beginning with Copernicus and then Galileo, followed by the French encyclopaedists, Marx, Darwin, Nietzsche and Freud, culture was transformed as regards its moral and religious beliefs. Literature has followed the new trend, and also the behaviour of readers and non-readers alike.

Following the Second World War, the sensate emphases of the naughty nineties (1890s) and the roaring twenties (1920s) swelled into the youth revolutions of the swinging sixties (1960s), which included political protest with university and civil riots.

God's funeral proclaimed, and everything else begins to die

In the words of Paul Tillich:

When the nineteenth century came to an end on 21 July 1914, the philosophy of existentialism, which until then had been held by a tiny, sensitive minority, became the dominant experience of the age.
(Cited by Nathan Scott, Jr)

After the Second World War, humanity seemed like a reeling, bloody giant. Not only two World Wars, but also the Great Depression of the twenties and early thirties, as well as the influenza epidemic, which took millions of lives after 1918, convulsed the ethical and moral convictions of the West. It really did look as though God was dead. And if God were dead, man—as once known—was dead also. With his death went meaning and hope.

Now, there was no right and wrong, no good and evil—only convulsion, pain and chaos. The only demand was for courage. Life, indeed, was ‘a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, but signifying nothing’. It appeared just ‘a dusty scuffle across a parched terrain’, or a mere ‘fuss in the mud’, or a ‘stir in the slime’. No one could logically speak of right and wrong, good and evil, better and worse, or even use the word ‘ought’. After all, thinking was only itching, for man was a creature not intended by the universe but merely a product of chance. Choosing to murder was the same as preferring strawberries to spinach. If God were dead, so was morality.

Philosophers such as Berdyaev, Shestov, Heidegger, Jaspers, Sartre and Marcel helped further the new life view of existentialism. It is reflected in music. Listen to Stravinsky's *Petrouchka*, Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, Alan Berg's *Wozzeck*, Bartok's second *Quartet* and the composers who have followed them. In Art, see the canvasses of masters like Picasso, Rouault, the early de Chirico, William de Kooning, Jackson Pollock and Hans Hofmann.

When we turn to literature the story is the same. Read Rainer Maria Rilke, Hart Crane, Robert Penn Warren, Gottfried Benn, Conrad, Kafka, Malraux and Faulker. Decades ago, Trilling wrote, ‘There is scarcely a

great writer of our own day who has not addressed himself to the ontological crisis, who has not conceived of life as a struggle to be—not to live, but to be’. Nathan A. Scott, Jr, in a tiny booklet entitled *The Broken Center*, has splendidly summarised the theme of these paragraphs.

The chief exponents of the arts in our day view the human race as a temporary planetary eczema. The cry goes forth that humanity has been abandoned “in some blind lobby ... or corridor of Time. And in that dark (there can be found) no thread”.

Robert Penn Warren, *Brother to Dragons*, cited by Scott, p. 26

No wonder Pitirim Sorokin refers to ‘the pathological bent in literature, painting, and sculpture’. He enlarges as follows:

In these fields the “heroes” are the Babbits, the Elmer Ganttrys, the warped and morbid characters of Hemingway and Steinbeck, Chekhov and Gorki, D’Annunzio, and the like, consisting of insane and criminal types, hypocrites, the disloyal, the wrecks and derelicts of humanity, interspersed here and there with mediocrities. The criminals and detectives of our “relaxation literature” and “thrillers” only serve to emphasize the point. In the field of drama most of the personages, as in Chekhov’s, Gorki’s, and O’Neill’s works, are morbid, warped derelicts or downright criminals, or at best, sheer mediocrities. Even more striking are the pathology and vulgarity that prevail in our motion pictures. The main prescription of the typical scenario is very simple. A society girl falls in love with a gangster, which demonstrates that he is not a gangster but a hero. Or else the roles are reversed, a prostitute ensnaring a juvenile society “sucker”. In the two cases the “moral” is much the same. Statistical studies show that from 70 to 80 per cent of all cinema offerings concentrate on crime and sexual love.

The same trend is exhibited by contemporary European and American paintings and sculpture.

To sum up, contemporary art is primarily a museum of social and cultural pathology. It centres in the police morgue, the criminal’s hideout, and the sex organs, operating mainly on the level of the social sewers. If we are forced to accept it as a faithful representation of human society, then man and his culture must certainly forfeit our respect and admiration. In so far as it is an art of man’s debasement and vilification, it is paving the way for its own downfall as a cultural value.

The Crisis of Our Age, pp. 66-67

Woody Allen, Ted Turner and other notables have told us of the impact such cultural samples had on their personal ambitions. If we add *Dallas* and other similar popular presentations of our own time to the Turner Classic Movies of Television we find abundant support for Sorokin's thesis. *Driving Miss Daisy* does not have a lot of company. While recent films have been more sophisticated, they have not been more moral. When the Hays censorship rules were dropped from Hollywood productions in 1968, the amoral results were immediate.

We have concentrated on Hollywood's heyday before it had serious television competition. But more should be said. Movies, even at their worst, often included elements of altruism and heroism, which undoubtedly influenced for good millions of susceptible young people. Also, in the second half of the 20th century, there have been series such as *Gunsmoke*, *Bonanza* and *The Big Valley*, with definite ethical emphases, in strong contrast to the later *Dallas*. A small proportion of films stand out above the majority—films such as, *King of Kings*, *Ben Hur*, *Sergeant York*, *Gone With the Wind*, *Casablanca* and *Yankee Doodle Dandy*.

In the seventies there were books, which made a huge impact on society. These included Paul Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb*, B. F. Skinner's *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, and Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth*. All three were faulty in their basic teachings, but had tremendous influence. Following the seventies came 'a pungent mélange of apocalyptic dread and conspiratorial fever' (Francis Wheen, *Strange Days Indeed*, page 9).

Because for the first time in history it is in human hands to destroy the world, ethics have resumed their earlier importance. They are the one absolute for human survival. The fact we are still here according to one news commentator on the nuclear issue is 'sheer dumb luck'. In 1983 the world was again within an ace of destruction, as in 1962 with the Cuban crisis. Gleams from the sun in USA gave a watching USSR official the impression that USA had launched five nuclear weapons. Had that Russian jumped quickly to a wrong conclusion we might not now be here. Keep in mind that President Reagan authorised the expenditure of over 100 million dollars for Star Wars. Thousands of nuclear weapons were aimed at the supposed enemy both by USSR and USA. No wonder three million people in 1983 made crowd protests in various cities of the West against nuclear armaments.

To add to the confusion of the post-war world the issue of racism burgeoned. Thousands of blacks had been lynched in USA between 1880

and 1920, and after World War 2 some returning coloured army officers were seized at their home stations and put to death. Following the assassination of Martin Luther King there were riots in over 125 cities of USA. The killing by the National Guard of four students at Kent University did not help matters. Only the TV coverage of the cruelties inflicted on blacks in the south by police and their dogs changed the thinking of millions. Special musical compositions (as different from current music as chalk from cheese) including, 'We shall overcome' nerved the blacks in their non-violent protests. It became apparent that the famous *Declaration of Independence* was only intended for whites. The unavoidable issue was right versus wrong. The Chicago political convention in 1968, when police dealt cruelly with thousands of protesters against the Vietnam conflict, added to the instability.

America, the most gifted country the world has ever seen, has suffered terribly from its wealth and 'freedom'. The sharp division between good and evil has been blurred. One writer has suggested that:

American culture is a kind of cancer that is metastasizing throughout the globe. ... America has more guns, more suicides, more abortions, more divorces, more drugs, more pornography, and more fatherless children than almost any other country.

I would like to add from my own experience: 'more courtesy, more generosity and more religion'. But it also has more television, more Hollywood, more crime and more abuse of freedom.

In a nuclear age, where global obliteration can only be prevented by ethics, we are forced to enquire concerning their genesis. All agree that ethics are based on a worldview, what the Germans call a *Weltanschauung*. Because our current prevailing worldview has slipped from the moorings of millennia there seems little hope for our culture, and indeed, our survival. For thousands of years in the West there was almost universal agreement about the reality of right and wrong. Most literature and all litigation was based on that distinction.

The Graeco-Roman culture of centuries was based on an idealistic philosophy that held to the absoluteness of right and wrong. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Horace, Virgil and Cicero, represent that view. When that conviction slipped in the fourth century B.C., in the Hellenic world, and again in the Roman world between the third and the fifth centuries A.D., disintegration and collapse followed.

Experiments in living which failed

Following World War Two, the sensate emphases of the gay nineties and the roaring twenties swelled into the youth revolutions of the 1960s, including many university and civil riots. Not only the global catastrophic events we have mentioned helped spawn moral anarchy, but also the chief figures of intellectual thought in recent centuries contributed significantly.

When Copernicus deflated our natural ego by showing what a tiny spot in the universe our world was, rather than its centre, the masses were cowed by the idiotic concept that quantity was more important than quality. Isaac Newton proved that the universe was actually a great mechanism, and while he was a devout Christian, his readers often were not. Such people could assume that a God was not really a necessity; natural law could care for everything. Darwin suggested that, after all, we were only first cousins to the apes, and the Genesis record of creation was not to be trusted. Marx jumped at the opportunity for scientific validation of his theories of materialism and asked if he could dedicate his book to Darwin (but the offer was refused).

Nietzsche concluded from his reading of *The Origin of Species* that God was dead. Sigmund Freud further demolished human worth by teaching that we were all under the tyrannous control of our sex hormones. In between Darwin and Freud, Einstein was hailed as a genius—one who could be trusted in all things. His theory of relativity was misconstrued and resulted in the myth of moral relativism, which Einstein firmly repudiated to a deaf world. So God ceased to be (Nietzsche), as did man (Darwin made him only an animal) and mind (Freud). There really was not much left that had value.

It was youth who chiefly absorbed the revolutionary concepts. Though decades would render most of them into mundane orthodox figures seeking wealth and status. While the fires of post-adolescence burned fiercely, they changed the western world—for a time. Historians and sociologists have recorded the spreading fires of illicit freedom.

In a review of British culture in the 1960s we find the following:

Unlike many Americans, the British used permissiveness to mean much more than Dr. Spock's easy-going childrearing techniques before the sixties, or moral anarchy thereafter. One of the most illuminating definitions of the word came in 1967 from Tim McGrath, the editor of the underground newspaper *IT*. He

characterised it as one “manifestation” of a whole “new attitude”. “Permissiveness—the individual should be free from hindrances by eternal Law or internal guilt in his pursuit of pleasure so long as he does not impinge on others”.

The legal restraints to which McGrath referred concerned issues of morality. They had been undergoing wholesale reform since the late 1950s, transforming the relationship between state, society and individual. Print censorship was relaxed in 1959 and that of drama in 1968. Citizens won the right to take their own lives in 1961 and murderers got to keep theirs after 1965. Off-course betting became legal in 1960, as did abortion and male homosexuality in limited fashion in 1967.

The National Health Service Family Planning Act of the same year extended access to contraception regardless of marital status, while the Divorce Reform Act of 1969 dissolved marriages that had undergone ‘irretrievable breakdown’ after two years in consensual cases and five years in contested ones. ‘The primacy given to freedom, pleasure and sexuality necessitated a rethink of morality and religion’ (*The Permissive Society and its Enemies*, edited by Marcus Collins, pp. 2,3).

One wonders whether McGrath was drunk when he wrote that the only restriction on behaviour was that it should not ‘impinge on others’. Most of our behaviour does so impinge in one way or another. What he wrote, however, fits most of the Western world, not just Britain.

Atheism Became Secularism, and Secularism Became Nihilism

In recent decades the two commandments at the heart of the Decalogue, those concerning worship and the family, have died for the majority in most communities. Over 70 per cent of couples live together before marriage, and if the tie is publicly made, it is usually by a secular authority, not a churchman. As for worship, what is that? For centuries in the West it was a sin to violate the Sabbath. After the Industrial Revolution the sin gradually became fashionable, until today it is not even recognized. Herein lie the seeds of sorrow and death.

The philosophy of secularism is post-modernism, and its key word is Tolerance. Concerning the latter the mystery writer Dorothy Sayers once wrote:

In the world it is called Tolerance, but in Hell it is called despair ... the sin that believes in nothing, cares for nothing, seeks to know nothing, interferes with nothing, enjoys nothing, hates nothing, finds

purpose in nothing, lives for nothing, and remains alive because there is nothing for which it will die.

But what actually is post-modernism? Well, it is all around you, at school, university, the factory, or the office. Most of all you will find it at home on your TV screen.

James. W. Sire, in his *The Universe Next Door*, page 215, is illustrative:

There has been a movement from (1) a “premodern” concern for a just society based on revelation from a just God to (2) a “modern” attempt to use universal reason as the guide to justice to (3) a “postmodern” despair of any universal standard for justice. Society then moves from mediaeval hierarchy to Enlightenment, universal democracy to postmodern privileging of the self-defining values of individuals and communities. This is a formula for anarchy. It is hard to think of this as progress, but then progress is a “modern” notion. The “premodern” Christian had too clear a view of human depravity, and the “postmodern” mind has too dim a view of any universal truth.

Sire is telling us that relativism and ambiguity and individual views of freedom characterise this latest human craze of thought. Some things are indeed relative, but if we make everything relative absolutes die, and no society so practising can survive. No society has ever lasted which rejected moral absolutes. The Hellenic culture and the Roman Empire in its last centuries demonstrate these facts.

Secularism in our day reeks with postmodernism. The worst thing about its chief gods such as television is their practice of the absence of God. We have forgotten that where there is no God there is ultimately no man, no meaning, no hope, no right or wrong and certainly no forgiveness or eternal life.

‘By their fruits you shall know them’. What are the fruits of secularism and post-modernism? Alcoholism-related driving accidents, the high incidence of coward punches, family violence, jails, hospitals, morgues, the courts and venereal disease clinics provide the answers.

There are facts about modern life which should be given their due weight. Here are a few:

1. Only about three per cent of people in the West die of old age. For most, death is the result of unwise life-styles. We could say that most people don’t die—they suicide.

2. On the roads there are five times as many drivers under the control of drugs as there are under the influence of alcohol.
3. About one in every four homes in the West has self-induced suffering because of alcohol.
4. To use again the conclusions of Philosopher Bryan Magee, most people live without long-term objectives, and spend their days fidgeting, or chasing ‘butterflies’.
5. In the lifetime of many of us there have been repeated genocides. Over a million died, for example, in Rwanda as Hutus chased and decapitated Tutsis.
6. There have been over one hundred minor wars since the end of World War Two. In the twentieth century more died by violence than in all previous centuries put together.
7. Slavery is more widespread today than ever before in history. It is mainly trade in sexual promiscuity made possible by the forcible induction of young girls particularly in Asia. More money is now made out of pornography than almost any other business. It rivals the drug trade.
8. Nearly half the world lives on one and a half dollars a day or less, and 21,000 children die of hunger every 24 hours—one and a half million per year. Western families usually throw out enough food that could sustain life in the third world, and every week online and in gambling casinos, Australians waste money that could save the hungry, educate them and provide them with sanitation.
9. Kidnapping is one of the chief professions of the West.
10. In certain professions considered to exist for the physical well being of humanity, millions of dollars are garnered in from sufferers on false pretences. The pharmaceutical industry is one of the foremost culprits. Drugs are used by millions and then often withdrawn as premature deaths multiply. Some leaders in modern medicine have succeeded in so raising the levels for acceptable numbers in medical tests that millions of normal people have now become patients. Many patients are labelled with a disease simply because of a number, not because of symptoms. So, when the abnormal total cholesterol figure changed from over 240 to over 200, an additional forty-two million people in USA were categorized as in danger. In fact 200 is about average for the US population. Besides that, about half of those who have heart attacks have normal

cholesterol. Prior to the late-twentieth-century doctors gave medicine only to patients with disease symptoms. That is no longer the case, and unnecessary risks and anxiety have been widely engendered. All therapy has a risk element. Be aware that multitudes are diagnosed as having diabetes, high cholesterol and osteoporosis, who will never develop symptoms or die from their supposed problem. See the book *Overdiagnosed* by Dr. H. Gilbert Welch for abundant evidence of this unfortunate trend in modern medicine.

Recently, reputable medical journals printed that the use of beta-blockers for heart patients had caused 800,000 deaths in Europe over the past five years. That is worse than genocide. Most medical therapies have not been thoroughly tested. Despite these adverse facts about some aspects of institutionalised medicine, if you have a healthy well-read doctor whom you trust, and you have a real problem with symptoms, don't walk to him—run. And thank God for him.

11. Hospitals and schools, which should be guides in physical habits of health, often encourage the use of 'food' that is unhealthy. Hospitals create many of their own patients.

12. Though tobacco and alcohol and refined foods are the chief causes of death in the West, governments feel hamstrung and unable to curb this slaughter.

13. Billions of people exist in counties made dangerous by political instability.

Of course, there are many events of tremendous importance for our world that happened in the 20th century.

They include:

1. The vast increase in scientific understanding of the universe. The discovery that the universe was not eternal (the 'Big Bang') agreed with Genesis 1:1 that the universe had a beginning and therefore a Beginner.
2. Before the last decade of the 19th century medicine mainly worked by the placebo effect. That has by no means ceased, but now for over one and a half centuries medicine has been characterized by scientific research and testing. The doctors of earlier centuries were often not much better than 'medicine men' of ancient tribes. That is not true today. Yet, despite this, even

modern medicine is often more of an art than a science. All science is ‘falsifiable’ and therefore requires constant adjustment. But we have witnessed the unravelling of the human genome, stem cells rejuvenated, and cloning and many other scientific advances.

3. Concern about global climate change induced by humanity. This is still hotly debated, perhaps because of ‘paid’ scientists supporting those who profit by fossil fuels.
4. The rise of militant Islam. This does not mean that most Muslims agree with terrorism. Your chance of being killed by a terrorist compared with your likelihood of dying from heart disease is one in 17,000.
5. The spread of democracy. At the beginning of the 20th century democracy was very rare. That is not true today, despite China and perhaps Russia. Democracy is the fruit of Christianity, and when Christianity ceases to prevail, democracy becomes the tyranny of the majority.
6. The knowledge explosion. A schoolboy now has at his fingertips (or in his pocket) more information about science than existed when the first atom bomb was exploded. The Internet has become an ‘inquire within upon everything’. Cults dependent on historical errors are now losing their support.
7. Nanotechnology—the miniaturization of all mechanical items. This means that the day will soon dawn when an atomic weapon can be carried in a purse or pocket. Automation—robotics—has also joined the list of scientific advances.

The facts to which we all have access make it clear, despite tremendous scientific advances that transform our culture for the better, that there is something terribly wrong with the way we are living. We can go with the crowd and inherit pain, disillusionment and loss, or we can follow the beat of a different drummer and find joy, fulfilment and life everlasting.

The chief cause of our moral malaise

Why are so many intelligent people unbelievers? Just as valid is the opposite question: Why are so many intelligent people believers? It is a great mistake to think that intelligent Christians are rare. Statistical studies show that just about as many scientists are believers as unbelievers. The same is true in many other fields. Whether in law,

medicine, politics, teaching and other professions, Christians abound. But let us return to our first question. The primary reason is certainly not dishonesty. There are innumerable atheists who live lives that would put to shame many professed Christians. They do so because their moral instincts assent to the Christian ethic whether they believe in God or not. Many have been brought up in Christian homes. But the doctrine of organic evolution has precipitated unbelief in the Bible on a gigantic scale.

In a considerable number of cases the reason for unbelief is the supposed moral freedom it grants, accompanied by the certitude that we are a chance product of the universe. Julian and Aldous Huxley were quite open in declaring they were glad to be able to reject the idea of God, because it meant they were unhampered in following their natural desires—particularly in the realm of sex. Aldous Huxley was a very likeable man but he felt no compunction in bedding any desirable woman he could solicit. Here are his words:

For myself, as, no doubt, for most of my contemporaries, the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument of liberation. The liberation we desired was simultaneously liberation from a certain political and economic system, and liberation from a certain system of morality. We objected to the morality because it interfered with our sexual freedom.

Ends and Means, p. 273

Next, we offer an illustration from a recently deceased top scientist of our day, Stephen Jay Gould; the last words are very significant:

We are here because one odd group of fishes had a peculiar fin anatomy that could transform into legs for terrestrial creatures; because comets struck the earth and wiped out dinosaurs, thereby giving mammals a chance not otherwise available (so thank your lucky stars in a literal sense); because the earth never froze entirely during an ice age; because a small and tenuous species, arising in Africa a quarter of a million years ago, has managed, so far to survive by hook and by crook. We may yearn for a “higher” answer—but none exists. This explanation, though superficially troubling, if not terrifying, is ultimately liberating and exhilarating.

The Meaning of Life, edited by David Friend and the editors of *Life Magazine*, p. 33

Gould was a splendid writer and a great scientist. But like all others he had no claim to infallibility. Ian Tattersall, leading paleoanthropologist, showed more sense and humility when, after Gould's death, he wrote in his 2009 book, *The Fossil Trail*, as follows:

What we think today depends very largely on what we thought yesterday. If the entire human fossil record were to be discovered tomorrow and to be studied by experienced paleontologists who had developed their skills in the absence of any preconceptions about human origins, I am pretty sure that (after the inevitable bout of intellectual indigestion) a range of interpretations would emerge that is very different from what is on offer now.
p. 275

In an earlier work written in collaboration with Niles Eldredge we find a very honest account of evolutionary affairs:

With the spotty evidence at our disposal we can construct an almost unlimited number of scenarios to account for the final arrival on earth of modern man, and at this point we are unable to make clear choices between any of them. The general pattern, if you will, is chaos.

The Myths of Human Evolution, p. 155

Between the appearances of these two well-known books, Richard Leakey stated in a public documentary (PBS):

If pressed about man's ancestry I would have to unequivocally say that all we have is a huge question mark. To date, there has been nothing found to truthfully purpose as a transitional species to man, including Lucy. ... If further pressed, I would have to state that there is more evidence to suggest an abrupt arrival of man rather than a gradual process of evolving.

The statement was never retracted, despite enquiries in correspondence. More on this subject a little further on.

What should be the Christian reaction to Gould and similar writers? First of all, we should avoid the folly of despising science. If science can put men on the moon it is worthy of our deep respect. However, while we must not despise science, neither should we worship it. Human beings are involved, and humans are very fallible indeed. *The fact that experts differ proves the point*. For example, cosmologist Steven Weisberg wrote: 'The more the universe seems comprehensible, the more it also seems pointless'. But Paul Davies, not a professed Christian, took the opposite

view. He concluded his book, *The Mind of God*, by asserting that a universe that produces self-aware humans cannot be the 'minor by-product of mindless, purposeless forces. We are truly meant to be here' (p. 232).

Some fundamentalist reactions to evolution should not be followed. The attempt to prove a young earth has failed. There are about fifty methods of ascertaining the age of the earth, and they are congruent. The fossil forests of Yellowstone even by themselves are very convincing. The Bible chronologies never end up with totals of years because they are only memoirs of key individuals and are not complete. Matthew chapter one drops out several names found in Old Testament chronology. 'Father' can mean ancestor, and 'begat' likewise. The Bible has many examples, and these facts are not challenged. If the chronological list of Genesis 11 is complete it would be teaching that Noah and all the post-diluvian patriarchs were contemporaries with Abraham—and only lunatics would urge that. The Bible often bypasses swathes of time without notice. In Matthew 21:33-41 we find Jesus condensing millennia in a few verses.

Nature is God's other book, and it is to be revered. But to expect perfect knowledge in any field is to ignore what daily experience regularly teaches us—we know very little about ultimate reality. Even the slightest particle in nature contains mysteries way beyond our best scientists. In many areas of our ignorance we must remember the words of Jesus: 'What is that to thee, follow thou me' (John 21:22).

But the chief reason for unbelief among the intelligentsia is the failure to consider the reasons for Christian faith. In our day the discovery of the anthropic principle by physicists has led many unbelievers to change their minds about God. The odds are now recognized as trillions to one that the universe and humans could have come about by chance. All the known laws of physics have as their ultimate purpose to produce—us! If one studies in succession the writings of Paul Davies, one finds that progressively he has developed more and more room for theism. He is not a Christian, but he now firmly believes that the evidence from physics proves that mankind is not here by chance. 'We were meant to be here', he declares. His words regarding the DNA code are worthy of our consideration:

Life is more than just complex chemical reactions. The cell is also an information storing, processing and replicating system. We need to

explain the origin of this information, and the way in which the information processing machinery came to exist. ... The problem of how meaningful or semantic information can emerge spontaneously from a collection of mindless molecules subject to blind and purposeless forces presents a deep conceptual challenge (Cited by Flew, *There is a God*, pp. 128,129).

Antony Flew is the spiritual father of many well-known atheists. He has engaged in more well-known debates supporting atheism than any other man. But now he has changed his mind and become a convinced theist. Francis Collins, former head of the genome project, has written concerning Flew's book: "Towering and courageous. ... Flew's colleagues in the church of fundamentalist atheists will be scandalized". Since his conversion to faith Flew has been dialoguing with the Anglican bishop N. T. Wright and has forthrightly expressed his view that Christianity has more going for it than any other system of belief. Here are some typical lines from Flew's book:

The philosophical question that has not been answered in origin-of-life studies is this: How can a universe of mindless matter produce beings with intrinsic ends, self-replication capabilities, and "coded chemistry"? Here we are not dealing with biology, but an entirely different category of problem (p. 124)

The important point is not merely that there are regularities in nature, but that these regularities are mathematically precise, universal, and "tied together" (p.96).

In what is probably the best book in print regarding the opening chapters of Genesis, the author Henri Blocher—with his eye on evolution and the anthropic principle—has this to say in his appendix:

The mutations observed until now are on a very small scale, are nearly always lethal or deleterious, and are incapable of giving rise to complex organs. Darwin himself had written: "When I think of the eye I become feverish," but recent discoveries show that the eye is not the only subtly composed mechanism; the tiniest cell constitutes an automated factory of unimagined functional complexity, which requires ... "an exquisite symphony of co-operation." ... The DNA code contained within a cell carries as much information as a library ... the idea that such perfect arrangements could be the fruit of an accumulation of chance events is simply unthinkable. You might as well say that Concorde assembled itself all on its own, thanks to a

succession of chance events, starting from minerals dissolved in the sea. ... The calculation of the probabilities can contribute to the case: a combination of one hundred elements (which is much simpler than a cell) could be formed by chance at the odds of ten to the 158th to one (whilst the total number of electrons in the universe is 10 to the 80th); even with a billion attempts per second, it would need billions and billions times more time than the billions of years it took the cosmos to form. ... Neo-Darwinism is mathematically impossible

(*In the Beginning*, pp. 225-226).

It is possible to be overawed by arguments that cannot stand the test of time. Regularly we see programmes on television telling us how the universe was formed, but Encyclopaedia Britannica states that no theory about the origin of the solar system has ever found general acceptance. And there is no evidence that accidental mutations can ever add information to DNA, yet all current theories of evolution depend on multitudes of supposed mutations. Noam Chomsky raised the problem of how the myriad of factors in human language could have evolved.

As mentioned earlier, a chief reason for the failure of intelligent unbelievers to study the credentials of Christianity is faith in the doctrine of organic evolution. I would like to say more on that topic. Only a tiny proportion of atheists have ever given evolution the study time it demands. Most who assent to evolution do so because it is fashionable so to do.

They should consider the confession of one we have referred to earlier—Ian Tattersall (probably the most respected and well known of all paleoanthropologists—acknowledged as an expert in fossil hominids). Tattersall has repeatedly written that the present state of evidence for organic evolution is '*quaint and naïve*' and will certainly be banished in coming decades. The dust cover on his 2002 book, *The Monkey in the Mirror*, states: 'Evolutionary theory isn't a finite set of conclusions based on overwhelming evidence. It is our evolving effort to make sense out of a handful of incomplete fossil remains'.

The back cover of the book says the author is attempting to answer the most controversial questions on human origins. It gives as one of those questions: 'With only a handful of incomplete fossil remains, how do we know?'

Carefully observe the use of the word ‘handful’ in the preceding quotes. Because museums often have huge numbers of fossils on display, many have assumed that most of these have to do with the arrival of humans. But that is not the case.

Bill Bryson’s *A Short History of Nearly Everything* has several statements about human origins that are almost as impressive as the one from Leakey. Here are a few:

Until very recently it was assumed that we were descended from Lucy and the Laetoli creatures, but now many authorities are not so sure ... not only was Lucy not our ancestor, she wasn’t even much of a walker. pp. 393-394

The first modern humans are surprisingly shadowy. We know less about ourselves, curiously enough, than about almost any other line of hominids. It is odd indeed, as Tattersall notes that:

The most recent major event in human evolution—the emergence of our own species—is perhaps the most obscure of all. Nobody can ever quite agree where truly modern humans first appear in the fossil record (p. 404).

Modern human beings show remarkably little genetic variability—“there’s more diversity in one social group of fifty-five chimps than in the entire human population” ... we are recently descended from a small founding population (p. 410).

Before me is Ian Tattersall’s *The Monkey in the Mirror*. I have marked about twenty statements in the book, which would surprise most evolutionary scientists. Tattersall is no neophyte, but the Curator of Human Evolution at the American Museum of Natural History. He recently won the W. W. Howell’s prize of the American Anthropological Association. Tattersall, of course, believes in evolution. But it is this fact that makes his concessions so remarkable. For example:

If the transformational notion were accurate, histories of continuity should clearly show up in the structure of the paleontological record. Yet, if the truth be told, the fossils themselves had never really borne out this expectation. Indeed, Darwin himself had been well aware that the record was rife with discontinuities. He had, however, explained away this awkward fact with the now-familiar claim that the expected intermediates had simply not yet been discovered. In Darwin’s day, with a much more limited record than we have now, this was at least a tenable proposition. But well over a hundred years

and many millions of fossils later, the essential picture has not changed at all. The more we learn of the fossil record, the sharper the image becomes of species as real, bounded units, with births, histories, and deaths. They tend to appear quite suddenly in the record to persist for varying but often remarkably long periods of time, and then to disappear as abruptly as they had shown up. ... What we don't often see, however, is compelling evidence of the gradual transition of one species into another (pp. 37-38).

On page 45, Tattersall points out that other prominent paleoanthropologists have commented at length on the fact that the hoped for 'infinite number' (per Darwin) of intermediate species have just not turned up. It is this fact that led to the theory of punctuated equilibrium from Gould and Eldredge. Distinguished physicist, Gerald L. Schroeder, in his *The Science of God* comments:

We may never know the full truth of our origins. No less an authority on evolution than Ernest Mayr, professor emeritus of zoology at Harvard University, former curator of the American Museum of Natural History, and avowed lifelong advocate of Darwinian evolution, has finally come to admit that the origin of our species is a "puzzle" (to use his word) that may never be solved (p. 127).

Mayr has a lot of scientific company. Many have used terms similar to 'puzzle' when discussing the origin of mankind. Consider these lines from Michael Denton, a man I greatly respect, having shared a lecture platform with him a few years ago: "The 'mystery of mysteries'—the origin of new beings on earth—is still largely as enigmatic as when Darwin set sail on the *Beagle*" (*Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, p. 359). The same writer continually warns against our natural hubris and reminds us of our ignorance. For example, on page 201 of the same book, he writes:

Even known organisms, despite all we have learned of their physiology, biochemistry, embryology and ecology are still very much black boxes and only a fraction of their total adaptive complexity is understood. We still do not have anything approaching a complete description of even the simplest bacterial cell.

Denton speaks of 'the universal experience of paleontology' and points out that the most continuous and exhaustive researches 'have never yielded any of Darwin's intermediate forms'. Note the word 'any', for desperate evolutionists insist that there are a few. The few compared

with the myriads missing are also not true intermediates. Says Denton on the same page:

The intermediates have remained as elusive as ever and their absence remains, a century later, one of the most striking characteristics of the fossil record (p. 162).

Further on he gives evidence for his conclusion that ‘the possibility of life arising suddenly on earth by chance—is infinitely small’ (page 323). And again:

It is surely a little premature to claim that random processes could have assembled mosquitoes and elephants when we still have to determine the actual probability of the discovery of one single functional protein molecule! (p. 324).

Mathematician, David Berlinski, raised some issues that have never been answered. He wrote about the assumptions involved in any theory to the origin of life that ignored God. Here they are:

First, that the pre-biotic atmosphere was chemically reductive; second, that nature found a way to synthesize cytosine; third that nature also found a way to synthesize ribose; fourth, that nature found the means to assemble nucleotides into polynucleotides; fifth, that nature discovered a self-replicating molecule; and sixth, that having done all that, nature promoted a self-replicating molecule into a full system of coded chemistry.

These assumptions are not only vexing but progressively so, ending in a serious impediment to thought. ... All questions about the global origins of these strange and baffling systems seem to demand answers that the model itself cannot by its nature provide.

Commentary, February 2006.

In 1954 George Wald, Nobel Laureate, and Harvard University biology professor, wrote an article for *Scientific American* claiming that time alone could do what seems impossible—create life. In 1979 the Journal republished the article with a retraction. I quote:

Although stimulating, this article probably represents one of the very few times in his professional career when Wald has been wrong. Examine his main thesis and see. Can we really form a biological cell by waiting for chance to form combinations of organic compounds? Harold Morowitz, in his book *Energy Flow and Biology*, computed that merely to create a bacterium would require more time than the

Universe might ever see if chance combinations of its molecules were the only driving force.

Schroeder, *Ibid.*, pp. 83-95

A classic in the field of scientific theory is Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. He points out that science of necessity employs a type of shorthand. It comes up with theories, which appear to resolve known facts calling for a resolution. But with the passage of time the current theories prove unsuitable for coping with new information and new insights. The need to change is recognised, but only very slowly fulfilled.

The Bible is not an *Enquire Within Upon Everything*. It is a book describing the lost estate of humanity, its causes and its cure. Its purpose is not to include what we call science or even history. The science of salvation is its burden, and all its history is tailored to that end. Centuries ago, when Calvin commented on Genesis chapter one, he advised his readers to study astronomy for information about the solar system. God never tells us what we can find out for ourselves.

Chapter Two

Light has come into the world



Let us now look at biblical evidence that could save the world, banish indifference, and change your mind. Because of their faith in evolution very few intellectuals have ever considered the evidence supporting the supernatural origin of the Bible. Yet a single hour so devoted could change everything for the open-minded. Let me illustrate that fact.

The Ancient Prediction of the Servant of the Lord

In the last three verses of Isaiah 52 and the whole of the following chapter is a prophecy regarding one who is called the Servant of the Lord. None can say that this was written after the events prophesied, for it belongs to a book written centuries before Christ was born. In 1947, when the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, immediate attention was drawn to the scroll of Isaiah. It was found that this fragile ancient document (over 2,000 years old) proved the authenticity and reliability of the text of Isaiah long cherished by Christians and Jews alike.

Let us notice the wording of the prophetic passage:

See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.

But as there were many who were appalled at him—his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness.

So will he sprinkle many nations, and kings shall shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.

Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken.

He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.

After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life, and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.

Therefore, I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.

Those familiar with the chapters describing the crucifixion of Christ will immediately be struck by the congruence of this prophecy with what happened to Christ. So close is the relationship that many atheists have

been converted by this Old Testament passage. We will draw attention to some of its most striking features:

1. This sufferer was sinless (see 53:9).
2. He suffered for the sins of others (53:4,5,6,8).
3. Though he would die, his days would be prolonged and he would see his followers (53:9,10).
4. Those who believed in him would find peace and spiritual healing (53:5).
5. Despite the cruelty done to him he would not complain or retaliate (53:7).
6. Kings and nations would be amazed by the account (52:14,15).
7. He would have no external advantages (53:2).
8. The consequences would be tremendous, involving the great and the strong (53:12).
9. His death would be the result of judicial action, not an accidental one or the result of mob violence (53:8).
10. Wounds and stripes would be part of his suffering (53:5). The word translated *wounded* is literally *pierced*.
11. His mental suffering would be intense, comparable to the bodily pains of childbirth (53:11).
12. His death would not be instantaneous, but lingering and gradual (53:12, 'poured out' suggests duration of time).
13. Though tormented and abused, men would recognize him as wise and prudent (52:13).
14. Despite his pain, he would intercede for the wicked (53:12).
15. In his death he would be accompanied by wicked people, yet his burial would be honourable as though he was wealthy (53:9).
16. His death would be an atoning sacrifice for sinners (53:10; 52:14). The sprinkling mentioned is the same word used in Leviticus 16:14-19 for the Jewish sacrifices.
17. His sufferings were voluntary (53:7,12).

It should be kept in mind that both Ezekiel and Zechariah referred to the coming Messiah as the Servant (Eze. 34:23; Zech. 3:8).

This passage alone is sufficient to prove that supernatural power inspired the Scriptures. There is no literature in the world, though we survey all of history, that matches this to the least degree. How the proponents of atheism wish they had something as miraculous to prove their case! What would not Ian Tattersall, a leader in the field of human evolution, give for some evidence as conclusive to prove his case?

The promise of an end to sin and bringing in righteousness

But we have hardly started yet in this matter of offering evidence for the reliability of the Bible. Let us next consider Daniel 9:24-27:

Seventy “sevens” are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.

Know therefore and understand that from the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed one, the ruler, comes, there shall be seven “sevens”, and sixty-two “sevens”. It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in time of trouble.

After the sixty-two “sevens”, the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.

He will confirm a covenant with many for one “seven”. In the middle of the “seven” he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple, he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, and the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

Consider verse 24. Have such glorious promises ever been uttered by uninspired man? What a mouthful! All evil to be done away with, and perfect righteousness ushered in to take its place! All this to be accomplished by one who would be both a king and a priest—even the promised Christ! (The Hebrew term for Messiah is used of both kings and priests in the Old Testament. Daniel is saying that the coming One would be a Melchizedek—a king-priest). What a shock to find that the One who would do such wonderful things would be so hated as to be murdered! Not so surprisingly we are told that there would be consequences for such a dastardly deed. But another surprise! A holy

nation and its holy temple would know suffering and destruction without cessation! How could it be that a holy nation would bring its Messiah to a cruel end? And it would never repent, though beloved by God. Sad indeed is the forecast that to the end of time there would be desolations.

More has been written on these verses than the average person could read in a lifetime. They have occasioned antagonism by being too remarkable to be true, and so every effort has been made to twist and turn them and avoid their plain meaning. (The present writer after seventy years of study has written a book examining the truths and errors found in discussions of Daniel 9:24-27. It is titled, *In The Heart of Daniel.*)

We offer the reader just one succinct appraisal of this prophecy:

It is, however, undeniable, that Daniel foretold that the Messiah would come within less than five hundred years from a decree granted for rebuilding Jerusalem; he showed that he would be put to death by a legal sentence (for so the word implies) and he expressly predicted, that in consequence, Jerusalem and the temple would be desolated, and the nation of the Jews exposed to tremendous punishments, of which no termination is mentioned. Within that time, Jesus of Nazareth appeared; he answered in every respect to the description given of him by all the prophets; he was put to death as a deceiver, yet vast multitudes became his disciples, and Christianity gained a permanent establishment. After a time, Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed; and the state of the Jews to this day is a striking comment on this prediction. How can it then be denied that Daniel spoke by divine inspiration? Or that Jesus is the promised Messiah? Both these important points might be fully demonstrated by this one prophecy, even if it stood single; how much more when it is only one star, so to speak, in a resplendent constellation, or one among a great number of predictions, all of which combine with united evidence to demonstrate the same grand truth.

Thomas Scott, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, Vol. 2, p. 688

In the heart of this prophecy it is foretold that the Messiah would be 'cut off'. So, like Isaiah 52-53, the atonement on Calvary is made the heart of this divine message. That theme is introduced in the first verse, which speaks of the coming atonement for iniquity. But more must be said. This prophecy uses eleven Hebrew words that are found also in Leviticus 16. Why is that important?—because Leviticus 16 is the only chapter in the Bible which details the great Day of Atonement that prefigured

Calvary. Furthermore, the great prayer of chapter nine which precedes the prophecy has been recognized as a Day of Atonement prayer! There is no way an honest scholar can fail to see Christ and his death at Calvary in this brief prophecy. Keep in mind that Daniel, as with the rest of the Old Testament, was translated into the Greek language (the LXX or Septuagint) hundreds of years before Christ's birth at Bethlehem.

A final point, nowhere else in the Old Testament do we find the words 'atonement for iniquity' or 'everlasting righteousness'. They were reserved for this unique prophecy.

The Promise to Abraham that he would be a great nation

Consider now the sevenfold promise made about four thousand years ago to a tent-dweller living in the desert. Genesis 12:2,3:

I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples of the earth will be blessed through you.

Never before or since was such a promise made to any person! More people reverence Abraham today than any other person who has ever lived. Jews, Muslims and Christians claim him as their spiritual father. From his descendants came the Scriptures, the gospel and the Christ—the three greatest blessings ever vouchsafed to humanity. Because of this promise the Jews have always believed that one day their faith would be known throughout the whole world. Not only their religious beliefs, but also many concepts related to those beliefs now govern most thinking in the Western world. Thomas Cahill wrote a great book called *The Gifts of the Jews*, and he pointed out that we cannot even get out of bed in the morning, or cross a road without being in some sense Jewish. These concepts include monotheism, science, education, freedom, the Decalogue (Ten Commandments), the Sabbath and concern for the underdog. Perhaps most important of all, the Jews taught the world that time is like an arrow going to its mark. All other ancient societies considered time to be cyclical, which in effect meant that nothing had value; nothing could change the future, for all things were repeated infinitely. In other words the Jews gave just reasons for believing that every human being is infinitely important.

Note the words of R. W. Church written concerning the Jews over a hundred years ago:

All around was darkness; with them was this little speck of light. All around were “gods many and lords many”—gods of the mountains and the valleys, of the heavens and of the earth, of the living and the dead, worshipped and trusted in by each nation, or tribe, or household. Out of them all, they had been selected to know the name of the One Almighty and Eternal. They, and they alone, knew the truth about the world, its origin, and its government. ... But from the first they were taught, that they knew this in order that the world might know it. ... How it was to be—how the knowledge and the blessing with which they were charged was to be passed over from them to the multitudes of the heathen—how the Gentiles were to be fellow-heirs with them—this was not told them. ... This is one of the things, which make the religious history of the Bible unique in all that we know in this world.

Yet, with all its narrow exclusiveness, with all its insignificance, with all its isolation, amidst an uncongenial world, stationary when others were advancing, lost in its little corner while others were dazzling mankind with their glory and their might—Israel obstinately maintained the same conviction that its faith and worship were to be the faith and worship of mankind. ... Is there not something perfectly overwhelming to mere human judgment in the audacity with which Psalmist and Prophet—the Psalmists and Prophets of an obscure race, cut off by barriers physical and moral from the great scenes of human history—dare to claim for their faith, for their God what no one else dared to do—the inheritance of all the nations, the spiritual future of all mankind?

Pascal, pp. 145-150

Despite the unbelief of our times it remains true that the spread of what was once the faith of an unknown tribe is the most significant event of all history. And no one would ever have predicted it—except inspired prophets. And now we await the fulfilment of a similar phenomenon—the Christian gospel offered to all on the fringe of eternity. Be assured that it, too, will be fulfilled.

To understand better what R. W. Church was saying, read the last verses of Psalm 22, Isaiah 2, Micah 4 and Malachi 1:11 for a start.

My words will never pass away

Turning now to the New Testament we find a prediction that could have come only from the lips of someone insane, or from—God! Matthew

24:35: 'Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away'.

First, consider the contrast: heaven and earth versus words thrown into the air. The most permanent is to be dissolved, and the most transitory will be perpetuated. This is the very opposite of what human wisdom would predict. And who said it?—a peasant in little Palestine. This was a peasant who had none of the things we use to perpetuate our words. No television, no radio and no printing press. Yet twenty centuries have been filled with those words of his. We use them at times of birth and death, amid sorrow and joy. They strengthen the weak and encourage the toiler. They give hope to the penitent sinner. Kings and princes—rulers of empires—and garbage collectors and street sweepers, scientists and physicians, university professors and newly arrived students, old and young, the living and the dying—all cherish them and live by them. The words have no parallel in all history.

No man made such claims as he who spoke the words of Matthew 24:35. He claimed that all authority in heaven and earth had been given to him, that he had complete control over nature, that the angels were his, that he was the Saviour of the world and could forgive sins because one day he would judge all men, that he existed before Abraham and shared God's glory before the creation of the world, that all should love him more than self or family. If he were good, then he was also God, for good men do not lie. Consider that Socrates taught for forty years, Plato for fifty, Aristotle for forty, but Jesus for only a little over three years. Yet the influence of those three years infinitely transcended the 125 of the Greek philosophers. And while the works of Plato and Aristotle (Socrates left no writings) contain many things now considered ridiculous, the opposite is true about the words of Christ. As he claimed, he has indeed been the Light of the world, inspiring love, mercy, courage and truth. Men are influenced by Moses, by Paul and by the great figures of history, but none of these have been loved as Christ has been loved. Millions today would gladly die for him. They have found in him the key to life and the answer to the question: 'How then should we live?' When these facts are kept in mind we can understand why Christ would make the prediction that his words would influence mankind through all coming ages.

How tragic that cognitive dissonance, carelessness and willing unbelief have robbed millions of what could have transformed their lives for time and eternity! 'The great enemy of truth is often not the lie but the myth'.

Men have bought too readily the myth that the Bible can safely be ignored as an outdated fallible book. Darwin came to believe that and, although a man of many virtues, misled the world in consequence. Marx believed that and spawned a system that murdered millions in the Gulag and throughout the largest country on earth. Hitler believed that and enveloped the world in blood and tears. Freud believed that and misled millions into thinking that their sex organs, not their brains, were absolutely primary. Nietzsche believed the myth and went mad.

What a different world it would be if only one verse of Scripture were believed and cherished. 'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whosoever believes in him might not perish but have everlasting life' (John 3:16). Add to that Romans 4:5 that God justifies the '*ungodly*', and Romans 4:8 that the sins and failures of true believers are never reckoned against them, and Romans 4:10 that we were saved by Christ while we were yet his enemies, and Romans 5:18 that the whole world was legally justified by the atoning sacrifice of Christ. All anyone needs to do, however vicious and however fallen, is to accept the gift. 'Whosoever will' may come. Such wonders are beyond human invention.

Chapter Three

How then should we live?



A few simple guidelines can save most of us from unnecessary pain of body and mind, failure and loss here and hereafter. They all spring from Scripture. In summary the guidelines are: Trust and obey ‘for there’s no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey’. Practice gratitude in everything, regularly count your blessings and live just one day at a time. Spend much time with the words and deeds of Jesus, particularly on the Cross. Believe in the infinite love of God regardless of all ‘seemings’. Take Romans 8:28 very seriously: ‘All things work together for good to those who love God’.

Put first first. Practise prioritising. Jesus loved to use the word ‘first’. See Matthew 6:33; 5:24; 7:5; 12:29; 13:30; 22:38; 23:26 and many other verses. Christ has counselled us to give the things of God priority in our hearts and lives, to recognize unselfish love as our first duty, and to begin the work of changing the world by changing our own habits.

We should never forget that eighty per cent of what we do only has twenty per cent of importance for our lives, whereas twenty per cent of what we do has eighty per cent of value. Be sure and know what falls into that twenty per cent—the gospel, faith and obedience, love to God and man, care of your family and the temple of God—your body and service to the needy.

May I venture to be very specific? The wisest person on earth is he or she that recognizes that they own nothing—that all they have belongs to God. Conscientious stewardship is a primary mark of the Christian, after love to God and man. Health and wealth and opportunities are all to be dedicated, fulfilling the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20. We will not regret on Judgment Day anything we have invested for Christ. Fidgeting and the chasing of butterflies are not for us. Life is too brief, and golden opportunities too rare. It would be good if everyone repeatedly asked themselves these questions: ‘What have I rendered for

all the gifts I have received? Is the world any better for having me in it? What eternal value do most of my activities have? Will I be proud on Judgment Day of the way I have lived, or has it all been cafeteria style—self-service? Remember always that the greatest sin is not murder, or prostitution or stealing, but self-centredness.

The Bible does not teach that the body is a sack of dung housing the jewel of a soul. The best Bible scholars of the world have long ago rejected that fable. Scripture teaches that our body is holy, and it is to be preserved in the best possible condition for service. This means that we will not follow the follies of the world. Remember that most people do not die; rather they kill themselves. Ninety per cent of deaths are caused by what is put into the mouth, which includes cigarettes, alcohol, processed foods and unnecessary drugs. The ‘fight of faith’ is 100 times easier for the person blessed with health of body and mind, but that health is usually the result of good habits.

‘What God has joined together, let not man put asunder’ applies primarily to marriage, but the principle can be extended. Refined sugar, refined grains and refined fats—processed foods—kill more people than wars. The modern supermarket is a mausoleum of dead foods (except for the produce section). The chief rule in nutrition—one agreed upon by over forty advisory bodies across the world—is this: ‘Eat fresh, whole food, chiefly of vegetable origin’.

As many people die every year from sedentary living as from tobacco. We all sit too much. Wherever possible there should be at least one hour of physical activity a day. Walking is the best all-round exercise. You can listen to gospel messages and Scripture, and pray and plan as you walk. Such exercise has the added benefit of filling the lungs with fresh air. The air in the average home is not conducive to health. Sunshine and fresh air are not luxuries but necessities for frail human beings. Exercise is conducive to excellent body function, which means you will get more benefit from less sleep than most people. Nevertheless, remember that the fourth command of the Decalogue is reminding us that we are made to live by the rhythmic principles of work and rest.

In all these matters it is imperative that we understand that God’s requirements are an offering of infinite love. To do good is good for us. Evil is live spelled backwards. Sanctity and sanity belong together. Purity is paradise, but sin is suicide. So when we hear the call to service let us remember that only service for others can deliver us from the tyranny of

self. Practically all the great and revered teachers of the ages have taught this. Consider these words from Jesus:

I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life (John 12: 24,25).

Fulton Oursler tells us in his book, *Why I Know There is a God*, of his meeting with Albert Schweitzer:

It was on one of his rare sabbaticals from his outpost in the equatorial inferno of West Africa that we broke bread together. ... Across the table from me sat a man who had given his health, his money, and his every breath to the service of his God. A concert organist, a world-renowned Biblical scholar, a writer and philosopher, he had at the age of thirty given up these various careers and entered medical school, thence to bury himself in the disease-cursed jungles of the Congo. ... He and his wife opened their hospital in an abandoned chicken-coop at Lambarene. Their whole lives had been dedicated to the care of pygmies and cannibals.

Schweitzer told Oursler that every Christian should have a second job—the caring for the needy. This unselfish labour would bring blessing on both the helper and the helped.

Listen again to Oursler:

Without such spiritual adventures, said Schweitzer, the man of today walks in darkness. He loses himself in an atmosphere of inhumanity. ... He cannot rescue his manhood merely by seeking escape in alcohol, shows, or gambling ... but (only) by means of personal action, however unpretentious, for the good of his fellow men. ... Our great mistake, as individuals, is that we walk through our life with closed eyes, like blind people, and do not notice our chances. As soon as we open our eyes and deliberately search, we see many who need help, not in big things but in the littlest things. Wherever a man turns, he can find someone who needs him. ... Begin anywhere—in office, factory, and subway. There have been smiles across a tramcar aisle that may have stayed the purpose of a suicide. Each friendly glance or sign or hail is like a single ray of sunshine, piercing the darkness we ourselves may not dream is there. ... Whenever I have given myself out in any way for another, I have

experienced union with the eternal. And so I possess a cordial, which secures me from dying of thirst in the desert of life.

pp. 30-39

Helmut Thielicke has a great quotation on page 119 of his book, *How to Believe Again*. Here it is, ‘Self-sacrifice—the being-there-completely-for-the-neighbour—is the only effective remedy for neuroses and depression’.

He continues by quoting Luther: ‘He lives the best who does not live to himself; and he lives the worst who lives to himself’. Thielicke stresses that the peace of God is only available to the self-forgotten person, and the only place where any of us can find God is where he chooses to be present—in our fellow man. See page 120.

Stephen Neill in his *The Eternal Dimension* reminds us that ‘frustration is the great disease of the modern world’. ‘Sweden is the country that has the highest standard of living, the lowest rate of church attendance, and the highest suicide rate’. See page 9.

The devotional life—what it means to worship

‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God’. Those who do not search the Scriptures daily as for life, and who do not pour out their hearts to God continually can hardly claim to be Christian. What a way to treat our best Friend! Speak to no one of a day until you have spoken to God. And be courteous enough to let him reply through his Word as interpreted by the indwelling Holy Spirit. Let not a conscious quarter hour go by without communion with God. Take to him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too small for him to notice and in which he takes no immediate interest. The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there was not another person on earth for whom he gave his beloved Son.

To study the Bible properly one needs the helps that are readily available. Buy a Strong’s Concordance and learn how to use it. Secure books that discuss the essence of each Bible book giving its theme and emphasis. *Explore the Book* by J. Sidlow Baxter is worth owning, as well as *The Outlined Bible* by Robert Lee. These are not infallible, but they are marvellously helpful. Buy a good Bible Dictionary such as the one printed by the Inter-Varsity Fellowship called *The New Bible Dictionary*. Remember as you study the Bible it is better to read one chapter six times than to read six chapters at one sitting. Carry away something you

can think about during the day. Memorise your favourite promises. Perhaps write them out. Never forget: whatever gets your attention gets you.

Buy and read often that great classic *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life* by Hannah Whitall Smith. Also secure her *The God of all Comfort*. Read for inspiration the classic biographies of great Christians, such as *To the Golden Shore* (the life of Adoniram Judson), *Servant of Slaves* (the life of John Newton), *The General Next to God* (the life of William Booth of the Salvation Army) and hundreds of others. For special blessings read the sermons of Charles H. Spurgeon. Keep in mind that an orb of glowing coal becomes cold if separated from other burning slabs. Worship begins but never ends in solitude. Find a church where the gospel is always preached and love manifested. Other things are only secondary.

Be certain to know and live by the true gospel (otherwise your conscience will condemn you many times a day).

In order to live life to the fullest and to be of service to God and man we must be very clear on what Scripture calls 'the everlasting gospel'. It is not well known even in religious circles. Despite all the divisions within Christianity and paganism, there are only two religions in the world, and most people are following the wrong one.

From the time of Adam's sin, all false religion has sought to clothe its nakedness by its own works in order to meet the gaze of God. But true religion brings the sinner to God as an empty-handed beggar, depending only on that which God himself has provided—the sacrificed Lamb.

False religion has ever said: 'Be holy and God will love you'. On the other hand, those who have discovered true religion echo Scripture's words, 'This man receives sinners' (Luke 15:2); God 'justifies the ungodly' (Romans 4:5), and Christ 'has gone to be a guest of a man who is a sinner' (Luke 19:7).

While false religion makes the creature and his works central, true religion makes the Creator and his works central. Thus we see the Jews coming to Christ and asking him, 'What shall we do that we might work the works of God?' Jesus responded, 'This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he has sent' (John 6:28-29). The Pharisees emphasised what they should do, but Christ put his emphasis on what God *had already done* in sending him, the Redeemer.

Why was the Cross needed if men could save themselves by their own works?

False religion majors in law and minors in love. True religion majors in love and minors in law. The first majors in what God requires of us, and the second majors in what God has done for us. One religion puts its stress on Christ our example; the other puts its stress on Christ our substitute. One is a religion that leads to bondage, despair and death. The other is a religion that leads to joy, salvation and life everlasting.

Saul, the Pharisee, belonged to the first religion, and as to righteousness under the law he was blameless (Philippians 3:6). But Paul the Apostle belonged to the second religion, and he wrote: 'I through the law died to the law that I might live to God' (Galatians 2:19; see also Romans 7:4). Paul knew that the Law was the foundation, the pillar and bulwark of the universe and as sacred as God himself. Nevertheless, he condemned law as a method of salvation, while using it still as a standard. In Galatians 5:4, he wrote, 'You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace'.

'Higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for his children'. If no human thought can reach God's ideal, then what about our actions? Climbing up to heaven by Mount Sinai (representing the Law) is a risky business. One slip and we are finished. The law demands a perfect nature, perfect motives, perfect feelings, perfect thoughts, perfect words and perfect actions. It requires that every motive, feeling, thought, word and act be the best possible at every moment of time. It was fine for our first parents when they were unfallen. No wonder that when Paul, the sinner, looked at the Decalogue in the sight of Calvary he said, 'I died' (Romans 7:7-14).

To break the law once brings not only guilt, but also incapacity. Because of Adam's fall, from the very first moment of volitional living, we are guilty of selfishness, impurity, vanity, pride and hatred. We have marred our soul and deserve death. The slightest sin is an infinite sin, for it is done against God who is an infinite being.

A religion of law always fails, because law cannot motivate or forgive. The New Testament repeatedly contrasts law and grace, works and faith. Paul says about salvation, 'If it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace' (Romans 11:6).

Paul's name heads fourteen Epistles, and every one of them is closed with a prayer for grace. Paul calls the gospel 'the free gift of God'.

Thousands have been kept out of the kingdom of God because they did not realize that salvation is a gift. Many today think they must do something to merit salvation. Paul says of his countrymen:

Israel, who pursued the righteousness which is based on law, did not succeed in fulfilling that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. ... Being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law, that everyone who has faith may be justified (Romans 9:31-32; 10:3,4).

The law says, 'This do and you will live'. But grace says, 'Live and you will do'. The law says, 'Pay me what you owe'. But grace says, 'I frankly forgive you all'. The law says, 'The wages of sin is death'. But grace says, 'The gift of God is eternal life'. The law says, 'The soul that sins will die'. But grace, 'Whosoever believes has eternal life'. The law says, 'Make a new heart for yourself'. But grace responds, 'a new heart I will give you'. The law says, 'Cursed is everyone that does not continue to do all the things written in the law'. But grace replies, 'Blessed is he whose sin is forgiven, whose transgression is covered'. The law says, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart'. But grace says, 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us'.

When the law was proclaimed at Mount Sinai, 3,000 died in a matter of days. When the gospel was proclaimed at Pentecost, 3,000 were given new life. 3,000 sermons on the law alone will not convert one person. One sermon on the gospel can convert 3,000.

I am not downgrading the law, which is eternal, infinite and holy. I am saying that law can never save. The law can only be truly obeyed when the heart is filled with the love of Jesus Christ in response to his love for us.

No one can obey God without loving him, and no one can love him unless convinced that God has first loved him. The thief on the cross had been through plenty of law, but it had not helped him. When he saw Love incarnate, he was saved eternally.

To run and work, the law commands,
But gives me neither feet nor hands,
But better news the gospel brings,
It bids me fly and gives me wings!

The Bible designates all false religion as ‘Babylon’ God is ever calling his people out from Babylon. The Babel builders of old had a self-centred religion. They said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top into the heaven, and let us make a name for ourselves’ (Genesis 11:4). It is interesting that no one today knows the name of one of the Babel builders! They went to all that effort to make a name for themselves and to make their own way to heaven, but failed miserably. Their type of religion brought heaven too low, and made man too tall. All false religions use the wrong materials—mud and slime. Apart from God, we are all mud and slime. Animated mud. All false religion depends upon human efforts to reach heaven and to find an acceptable name.

On the other hand, Jacob is an example of true religion. He was a twister, that is what his name means. When his conscience smote him as God wrestled with him, he confessed that he was a rotter and scoundrel, a moral weakling. Then God gave him a new name—Israel. Earlier in a dream, Jacob saw a great ladder from heaven to earth, with angels of God ascending and descending on it. This was the opposite of the Tower of Babel. God provided the connection—the ladder, which represents Christ. God connected heaven and earth because man could never do it. Then Jacob said, ‘this is the gate of heaven. This is the house of God’ (Genesis 28:17). He found that God was nearer than he thought. True religion teaches that God is very near penitent sinners.

Near, so very near to God
That nearer I could not be,
For in the person of his Son,
I am as near as he.

Let us focus for a moment on how God solved the sin problem. We were ruined by our first representative Adam, and we had nothing to do with that. The good news of the gospel is that we have been redeemed by our second representative Jesus—the second Adam, and we had nothing to do with that either! Romans 5:10 states, ‘While we were yet enemies we were reconciled to God’. 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 tells us how this happened. Christ was reckoned as being what he was not, that we might be reckoned as being what we are not.

The good news of the gospel is that our sins—past, present and future—were crucified with Christ and nailed to his cross. Therefore, the law has no more power to condemn us as believers than it has to condemn Christ. If we do not see our complete death in him, sin will reign in us. No sin can be crucified, either in heart or in behaviour, unless it has first

been pardoned in conscience through the precious blood of Christ. When the guilt of sin is not removed, the power of sin cannot be subdued. Sin ceases to reign in us only after we have received the forgiveness of sin (Romans 6:14). The gospel announces that *all* men and women were justified at the Cross (Romans 5:18). ‘Whosoever will’ may accept it and be saved.

The gospel is not good advice, nor good views. It is good *news*. What we could never do for ourselves, God has done. Now, whoever comes to Christ cannot be cast out, for every kind of sin and blasphemy can be forgiven. This remains true through the believer’s *entire* existence, not just at conversion. Justification is ongoing, as long as we keep trusting in the merits of Christ alone.

I hear the words of love,
I gaze upon the blood,
I see the mighty sacrifice,
And I have peace with God.
I would not work my soul to save,
For that the Lord has done,
But I would work like any slave,
For love of God’s dear Son.

That is the everlasting gospel. It alone can show us how to live. To proclaim and live it is our chief duty in life. To those who joyously fulfil this privilege they will find that religion is not a drudgery, a boredom or a burden, but rather a festival, a revelry and an everlasting song!

Sursum Corda! Lift Up Your Hearts!

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The security and confident happiness of childhood is for most people thrown into disarray by the experiences of the later years.

We find the world is not what we expected. Instead it is as though we have been thrown into a whirlpool with a thousand threatening vortices.

**Why is our world like this?
Are there some keys to understanding it,
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How should we live?**

This volume traces the historical reasons for our world's ideological and existential chaos. It demonstrates that the cosmic bleeding giant, of which we are a part can only be survived by those who know and live the Christian gospel. The nature of that gospel is described so clearly that none need miss the blessings purchased by Christ for each one of us.

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