

THE CHURCH AND THE SACRAMENTS

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BY

P. T. FORSYTH, M.A., D.D.

SOMETIME PRINCIPAL OF HACKNEY COLLEGE, HAMPSTEAD, AND DEAN OF THE
FACULTY OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON



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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

MY position is neither current Anglican nor popular Protestant. I write from the Free Church camp, but not from any recognised Free Church position—having regard, so far as I can, to the merits of the case, to early history, and the experience of religion. The ruling tendency is an effort to moralise this and other parts of theology by interpreting instead of abolishing.

The view here taken is neither memorial and Zwinglian nor is it High Catholic. It is sacramental but not sacramentarian, effective but not sacrificial. The Sacraments are not emblems but symbols, and symbols not as mere channels, but in the active sense that something is done as well as conveyed. Account is taken of the early influence of the pagan mysteries. The audience is Free Church, but the treatment means to be Great Church.

It may be expressly noted in advance that the Word does not mean the Bible, but the whole medium of communication between God's soul and man's. As this was gathered to **a head** in Christ, Christ is the unique Word of God. And since Christ is gathered to a head in the atoning and redeeming Cross as the incarnation not of love only but of grace, the Word is there in the most pointed way. It is the Word as **an** act and not simply as an exposition of God, Who acts not as a genial Father but as a redeeming Father. But as this crucified Christ comes home to a man it makes him active, **and** it makes him vocal. So he preaches God's gospel Christ. The Word that was preached from God to him he preaches **to** the world. The Word works faith, and faith works the word. We repeat with interest what God **says** to us. The **Word** is, therefore, God's new creating act on us, and then it is the act of our word through which God new creates. Since it comes from God it is pre-eminently a deed, as all the Creator's words are; as it goes out from man it is pre-eminently a word, through which God's deed works in a sacramental way. As it comes from God the Word is the

Son; as it comes from Christ through His Church it is the Spirit, the Gospel.

The Lectures were in substance delivered to students and not to scholars. This it is hoped may help to explain, where it may not excuse, two things: first, some amount of repetition; and second, a thetic rather than a dialectic note. The occasion was one for instruction rather than discussion.

There is something which Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in their extreme forms underprize, and that is the Gospel as the power of a Holy God for our moral redemption in a kingdom. The Free Churches have tended to idolise *liberty* at the cost of the truth and power which makes liberty—at the cost therefore of reverence, penitence, and humility. They have made a good servant a bad master. The Catholic Churches have tended, on the other side, to idolise *unity*, to sacrifice the Church's holiness to her catholicity, and to lose the moral power of the Gospel in a type of piety or in canonical correctness of procedure. They have sought unity in polity. That principle is here held to be fundamentally as wrong as the other, which seeks unity objectively in a mere moralism, or subjectively in a frame of mind. As to the sacraments, it may be surmised that the writer holds a mere memorialism to be a more fatal error than the Mass, and a far less lovely.

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The Kingdom of God has become more prominent in the theology of the last century than at any time since the Reformation, and the conception of it more ecumenical and less ecclesiastical or sectarian. The great service of Ritschl here. The criticism of him. His failure to appreciate the good in Pietism.

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FROM the meliorist's point of view it is a world more or less satisfactory, for, fast or slow, it is moving on; but from the ideal standpoint it is a world so unsatisfactory that there is no hope except in a change greater than any idealism can bring about. To the morally earnest it is a world more lovely than good, and more interesting than hopeful. Towards the very good it is indifferent or hostile. An inch of moral progress costs a wealth of moral pains. It is a world of broad roads but narrow views, of rich ambitions but poor prospects, of full blood but meagre ideals, or its large ideals are of a low kind. It is uncertain about all the unseen, and not sure even of the seen in its constant flux. It has no charter even of this life, which is the horizon of all it thinks good. It is not happy when it looks back, and it is not comfortable when it looks forward. Sin, death, and judgment bulk differently to different people, but upon the race as a whole they lie as a load, and a frost, and a fear. Life

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is prosaic, except at a time like this, when it is tragic. It ; aimless self-seeking in more or less protest against itself. And many have almost welcomed the tragedy of war to escape from the humdrum of peace, from the ennui, the vacuity, that makes them dread to be alone. Well, change is a divine instinct. The more that men are the victims of life's passing change, so much the more do they need a change fundamental. We need a radical change if life is to rise above its changes, or its monotony of change. The worst cross is the fear of crosses, and we need the Cross to save us from it. We need a change into the power, freedom, wealth, and poetry of life, a change from an atomism in which we wilt to an air in which we bud and bloom, from the final dreariness of self to the wealth of the sonship of God, from a drab and egoist religion to the religion of a world organised for grace and glory. That change means the change from the realm of egoism to the Kingdom of God; and this we do not attain, it is the gift of His grace in Jesus Christ and His Cross. To bring that Kingdom in, and set up the moral communion of man with God, man, and nature in history, is the task given to the Christian Church in being charged with the mystic Gospel of the Cross and its atonement as the moral basis of the Kingdom. It is, by a regeneration, to realise in man, his history, and his society, the image of God as his destiny from the first. But the process is very slow and very arduous. It needs the faith that it has been done to do it.

God was the Lord of creation on its very first day, and not only on the Sabbath, when all was done. And the New Creator is as much King to-day, when we are but at a stage of the new creation, as He was when He laid its foundation-stone in the Cross, or shall be when the completed Kingdom is giver; up to the Father. Father He is indeed. Yet royal **Father**. It is the Kingdom that fills the prayer which invokes the Father. And the Son always spoke of such a Kingdom rather than of a home. Nothing is more characteristic of the Bible than its sure faith, amid its deep sense of the world's evil, that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth in holiness, and that His historic victory at last will not make His power or right but will only exercise it in a fulness of

time. We are in the midst of the greater week of the New Creation by One to Whom a thousand years are always as one day.

It is only of late years that the Kingdom of God has taken a ruling place in theology. That is a striking and significant thing when we remember the place it took in the mind and action of Jesus Christ. The credit of restoring it to a corresponding place in the thinking of Christ's Church belongs largely to Ritschl. In the name of the Kingdom he made the supreme interest of theology ethical and social, and gave a place to the Church which it had not had since the break with Rome. Attention, he said, had been over-engrossed with the idea of personal redemption; whereas the system of belief should not be regarded as a circle, with that one centre, but as an ellipse, with the two foci of the Cross and the Kingdom. With such a position, of course, the temptation was strong to treat the Cross as the religious centre, and the Kingdom as the ethical, and so to divide the Gospel. But Ritschl did not fall into the danger in that blunt form, though he did not escape it altogether. For him the Kingdom was a religious idea, because, however ethical, it was wholly of grace, it was the gift of God rather than the attainment of man, and because it was entirely dependent on the forgiveness of sin.' It was founded by Jesus, in bringing the supreme gift of absolute grace and not merely of spiritual help—all that went before being but its dawn. But though that was so with Ritschl's theory, though it was at least as religious as ethical, in effect he did cast all the light on the ethical side, and the more religious and supernatural side fell into the shade. The ethic of the redemption did not rise to a real atonement. It was not mystic enough. The effect on man eclipsed the effect on God. The Kingdom became for him moral and social action inspired by love. This is all of a piece with his aversion to Pietism, his neglect of the doctrine

⁴ This great point marks off his view from that of many who lay stress on the ethical nature of the idea. The centrality of forgiveness stamps redemption with a moral nature at its mystic source.

of the Spirit, and his evasion of the idea of the holy as a perfect harmony in God of the moral and the spiritual.

The disciples of Ritschl have in this, as in some other respects, gone forward by going back upon their master. **It is** recognised that in the teaching of Christ the Kingdom is spoken of as present no less than future. It is constituted by a final Presence and not only a final purpose. That is to say, on the one hand it is the *summum bonum* now. It is the soul's joy. It is the Christian's possession at every moment. Time is abolished in the Spirit. The believer already belongs in Christ to the future, and the future is already his. He has the redemption. But on the other hand it is also the Christian's *moral ideal*. It needs time to come home. Only by moral development is its perfection projected. Only by moral effort, discipline, and experience does **the** believer become the Christian he is. He must acquire his legacy. This, of course, is a paradox. But then paradox, where mystery is not only dark but aggressive, not only dim **but** absurd, is the very nature of Christianity as spiritual. Christ's is not the religion of common sense and mother-wit. **The** great practical problem of Christianity is to incarnate **the** paradox, and reconcile these two ideas of the Kingdom in a working fashion for experience. Every form of Christianity is to be judged by its spiritual success in so doing. If Ritschl did not succeed it was because he was too shy of **the** idea of atonement; and he was that because he did not **give** its due place in God to the idea of the holy, and especially the Holy Spirit. The holy is the Christian and ethical form of the mystic. The supreme and omnipotent thing is not mystic love but holy love. We have the two factors perfectly blended only in the revelation of holy love, **of** the holy (ethical) as the redeeming (religious) principle. **But** that is done only in the Cross as love's real atonement to the holy, as the Kingdom effected in a soul universal and eternal. And we return thus to the one centre which unites **us**, instead of two which distract and divide. If the supreme **act of** the moral world (and therefore of its Sovereign God and Father) was in the Cross of our redemption, then it was **in** that Cross that the Kingdom was set up. But that Cross **was** not simply the martyr height of Christ's moral fidelity,

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it was the crucial act of a present holy God Who in love deals morally and once for all with His own righteousness there. In that act we have the identity of the moral and spiritual; and we have it as a gift, for we could never effect it. It is singular that an ethical mind like Ritschl's did not make more of *holy* love than he did.

Ritschl's successors have corrected him in the moral stress they put upon the super-ethical side of the Reformation. If the issue is in the conscience, it is in the mystic conscience of the holy and not only of the just. Kaftan allows to Nietzsche that there is a region beyond good and bad (though it is not cut off from them), beyond good and bad in the matter of conduct or event—the region of personality, whence are the issues of good and evil. There is in the moral soul a holy of holies which we only reach through the holy place of ethic, but which is beyond it. The holy is the nature and destiny of the conscience, and at once its source and its superlative. There is in the soul, and in the revelation to it, that which the ethical alone does not meet, because ethic is too much modelled on the kind of relation that exists between man and man. It is the region of the love of God and of the peace and joy of it in our moral experience, the region of love as holy, the region of the Christ Whom having we possess all things. It is not true to say that the only way of serving God is to serve man. That cuts out worship. And without worship, passing into a communion with God, which is ethical unto holiness, even work for the Kingdom may cost a man his soul. The soul needs a worshipping Church to keep it alive and aloft. It is more true to say that the radical way of serving sinful man is serving a holy God, that the love and worship of God is the true self-love of mankind, and that the only effective way to the fellowship of man on any scale is the communion of Christ. We can only love man in a Christian way by loving Christ's God more. Work for man is dependent on the soul's supreme energy of worshipping God when we are not thinking about man, and when we forget our own soul and its prospects in our Saviour. Our Christian love of our fellow goes round by way of our Lord. The moral intercourse with God, centred in a real and holy atonement, is therefore the school

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in which love is saved from being mere spirituality, is rear, d to a true personality, and creates a society of persons living in the holy, and working together for the Kingdom and its righteousness. The most vital doctrine for the Church, and the mystic source of all Christian ethic, is a creative atonement. It lacks atmosphere, and all that atmosphere means for a Church, to say that the Kingdom is but the organisation of society in love. The Kingdom is not conduct, nor is it sympathy—for sympathy itself needs an atmosphere if it is to be spiritual, a finer glow in warmth. The Kingdom is not wholly public. In its root it is inward and holy, but, because holy, therefore inward, with love's bias to outward and social effect. Truly, it is sometimes necessary to protest against a type of pietism which can make piety silly, ridiculous, and feeble. But it is a mistake fatal for the Church's health and influence to ignore and depreciate that side and source of the Kingdom as Ritschl did. The fault of Pietism is when it cherishes a kind of religion without mind on the one hand or society on the other, when its love becomes either self-engrossed or even erotic, when it seeks to withdraw from social, national, and historic life, when it cossets a conscience introspective and scrupulous, cultivates spiritual sensibility more than moral personality, and acquires more religious taste than weight. But the whole history of that noblest of the sects, the Quakers, shows how unnecessary such seclusion is for justice to the inner light, and how a light that lighteth every man goes out into the love of men and the amelioration of society.

The Kingdom is therefore at once both a possession and a problem. It is that relation to God in which we have all things, yet in which also we have to win all things. It is a present relation and a future society. It is the society of the timeless and eternal. In the New Testament it is not only at once supernatural and ethical, nor only present and future at once, come and coming; it is also both a relation to God and a society of God. It means sometimes the relation of kingship (as in the Lord's Prayer) and sometimes a society of such relations (as when we are said to enter the Kingdom). It is there when we are filled in heart with the fulness of a holy God, and it is there when by historic process the fulness

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the whole earth becomes His glory. It is the new love, living to be the new I-lumaniy.

There is nothing so prominent in Christ's teaching as the Kingdom of God. And about that Kingdom there was nothing to His mind so sure as that it was the gift of God. It came to the world from His grace, and not from effort of ours. It was not man's achievement, it descended out of heaven from God. We put that in modern but inferior language when we say that the moral ideal, the social millenium, can only rest on religion. It rests not only on religion but on evangelical Christianity, *i.e.* on the faith that answers grace. We do not contribute to the Kingdom, we only work out a Kingdom which is ours wholly because our God works it in. The central thing in the Kingdom is not a state, nor a feeling, nor an act of ours, but it is an act and gift of God. To say that is not easy. It needs a real and thorough religion to say it. If we do not rise above c thic we cannot say it. Ethically we remain but Pelagian. Morality is bound to insist on that contribution of ours which religion that has risen to faith knows to be itself the gift of God at His moral height of holy love.

Christ was as sure as Paul was about the absoluteness of grace and the equal dependence of every man upon it. Such _{is} the teaching in the parable of the labourers in the vineyard—so much abused by the Socialists. Christ was not thinking there of social conditions at all, of equal rights between man and man, but of equal dependence—the equal dependence of every man, however good, on the free gift and absolute grace of God. That is the only final equality between men—their absolute dependence on the grace _{of} God. In the same way He spoke more than once of the childlike mind as the condition of entering the Kingdom "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," He said, caressing the children. But it was not as citizens of that Kingdom that He treated them, only as symbols of it. They might or might not become citizens. Now we are always prone to interpret Christ by our hearts instead of our hearts by Christ. And

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we are accustomed to think that Christ was making a remark of beautiful sentiment about the ^implicity, or the docility, or the innocence of children (which are often less obvious to the nurses than to the parents). But it is the relation of the child rather than the sentiment that Christ would teach—treating the child as a parable rather than an instance. Whether they are engaging children or not, children they are. That is to say, they are entirely dependent **on** their parents. Everything their egoism desires or has comes from their father. It is his gift. That they may be little conscious of the fact does not alter it. That they may be more exacting than grateful does not affect the fact that they are but receptive; and they are the better children as they feel and own it. They do not owe themselves to themselves. It is another parable of absolute grace, as distinct from the Pharisaical synergism which thinks of claim and reward. In relation to the Kingdom we are all in the position of children. For everyone alike it is a gift of free love, something to be taken, as children but take and do not earn.

It is not enough to say that the Kingdom of God is identical with the spirit of sonship. For that might be compatible with a conception of Fatherhood which eliminates all the holy majesty of love that was most distinctive **of** Fatherhood in Christ's mind. His Father was the Father **in** Heaven in such a sense that the whole prayer that so invokes Him is preoccupied with His *Kingdom*. It is remarkable that Christ, who spoke so incessantly of the Father, spoke no less incessantly of His Kingdom and not of His family. Even the Lord's Prayer, with Father for its first **note**, goes off at once into the Kingdom and not the home, **and** there remains. That means that the vital thing in Fatherhood for Christ was that holiness which made the **Father** royal. If "Father" is the first note, "in Heaven" is the keynote—the Father of an infinite majesty. His grace **makes** Him more of a kingly Father than a kindly; so that **His** love, more holy than hearty, has not its due analogy in a **happy** father who is the comrade of his boys. That is to say, it was not a relation of love simply, but of love holy and **yet** gracious—which combination is a great miracle. The **Father** in Heaven meant for Christ the holy Father. The

unship is the sonship of *holy* love. Be perfect, be holy, said Christ, if you are to be the sons of the Father in Heaven. That is to say, the moral element in the love was of its essence, the ruling element and not only the sympathetic—*thou shalt* love. The sanctity was not a mere halo to the love but the texture of it. The idea of a realm's righteousness was more vital than that of family love, and more inseparable from love divine. It gave it its nerve and nature, so to say. And the citizenship of the Kingdom was not a response to love, and the return of its pure affection, but it was a response to grace and its forgiveness. It was a matter of receiving everything as a gift, our very souls as a prey, and of setting up no such claim upon God as made Israel Pharisaist, and turned the nation to be God's creditor instead of His servant and noble slave. The Kingdom, the Church, is more than the society of love. It is the society of grace, of love holy to wicked men. It is not a society that turns to cultivate a life of grace, but the society created by it, by a grace miraculous in being both holy and forgiving. The divine society rests on that moral miracle. Or have you not yet come to feel how miraculous it is?

The Kingdom therefore is set up by more than filial love. It has more than an affectional atmosphere; it has a moral constitution. Its King shall reign in righteousness. It is not simply the sense of sonship to the infinite benignity; it is not just the fine fellowship of the dear Father; it is the practical worship of the holy Father. It is not the response to love natural but to love wonderful and incredible, love which rises to grace and sovereignty. And it orders its goings by an ethic of grace, *i.e.* of the holy, not simply of the kind—of the holy which makes the love miraculous, and not simply of the paternal, which makes it just what we should expect.

All this is of great value when we come to ask what the relation is between the Kingdom and the Church. **It is** certain that Christ founded the Kingdom. He knew He was founding the New Covenant, the Kingdom as a relation.

He also founded, though not in just the same way, the Church. How do they stand to each other? If the Kingdom of God is only an ethical idea, then it is very different from the Church. It may by some be thought to be higher—it **may** be held to be the end for which the Church is but the **means**. **It** may go on as the converted State when the Church had ceased to exist. But we have seen that the Kingdom is more than ethical, that it is religious, holy **with** an absolute ethic; that it is a moral gift, *i.e.* that it is founded on the justifying grace which founds the Church, **on** Christ's fulfilment and satisfaction of the Father's holiness; that the hope of all its coming is the reality of it as **come**; that we can thus enter a heaven which has not yet **arrived**. Its foundation is the soul's relation of sheer faith, **loving** obedience, and close communion with God both in piety and practice. It rests on that kind of morality which **regards** the holy, and takes shape in forgiveness and eternal life. That is to say, it is created by that which created the Church—by the New Covenant. The real foundation of the **Church** was the founding of the New Covenant—the **Gospel**. Christ at the end was more engrossed with the **founding** of that Covenant than of the Church. That again **is to say** that what founded the Kingdom also founded the **Church**. Therefore they are the same.

The Church is not a means to the Kingdom, but the Kingdom in the making. It is the new relation, the **kingship, in** so far as that has become a distinct society. It is the family hearth or focus of the children of God. Truly the Kingdom's action is wider than the Church, for the **kingship** of God works outside that in a luminous penumbra. **But** in so far as the Kingdom of God is not just a holy relation but a holy society, the Church is the Kingdom of **God**. The mystic nature of the Kingdom is conserved in **the** Church, the moral nature of it conserves the Church itself. Inside the Church it works as holy **love**, outside it as **holy** righteousness. And the Church is made righteous by **it as** society is made holy. If the Kingdom were left without **the** Church it would become a moral pedantry. If the **Church** were left without the Kingdom, the moral, historic **and** social element would be lost from it in mystic spirituality

of an individual kind, cumulative rather than creative. The Church would then fall to groups of people so minded, or clubs for mutual improvement of a religious kind. The public element, the element of righteousness, would be too otiose and pacific. The note of fraternal intimacy would submerge the world of public good, as the inferior Christianity tends so often to do.¹ The holiness would be lost in the love, and the love itself lost in society. But if the Kingdom is as supernatural in its possession of a holy God as it is practical for social righteousness, if it is as spiritual as it is moral, and as present as it is futurist, then the active Church, as distinguished from the pious group, is the Kingdom of God inchoate. And each several Church has its right as it partakes of this great Church.

The sin of man has not destroyed the power of God. It has only refused it; and, in refusing it, it has but changed its mode of action on man. It has not in the least weakened it. God is no less King because of man's sin. His kingship takes another shape. He has resources to deal even with that revolt. It is a delusion, even of religion, to think of the kingship of God at work in heaven only, and not on earth or in hell. He is Lord as absolute in all three as in one. His holy will is clone not in heaven only but on earth. And the irresistible pressure of that holy will is as real in hell as in heaven, though it acts differently on His creatures' wills. His loving will is at work on earth without man's will, and in hell against man's will, as surely as it is in heaven with it. The kingship of God does not fail, and it is never weary. There is no doubt about its purpose, and none about its result.

There is no idea, no power, which it is so needful to carry home to either State or Church as the Kingdom of God, if only because it is the only power that opens our eyes to the Kingdom of Evil and the course to take with it. It is with an organisation, a conspiracy, of evil that we have to do, and not a mere bias. This Kingdom of God is the grand International, if our eyes could see it, since it gauges the whole

¹ As, for instance, when a minister makes kindness criminal by recommending a needy brother to a pulpit regardless of what his record shows this will mean for the Church.

moral situation of man and has no illusions. Amid international changes it is the shaping power, whether we **have** vision to see it or not. And the number of those who do not see it makes as great a danger as the number ranged against it. The chief charge against popular religion is that it has blinded that eye, and taken that *flair* away. With the decline of faith goes the discernment of spirits. **The** Church, which is there for the Kingdom, which as I **say is** indeed the Kingdom inchoate, has yet done much to **debase** the idea of God's Kingdom into man's paradise, and simply to transfigure an egoism it ought to regenerate. **It has** made God's reign a mere auxiliary to man's glory or comfort.

Goodness is a realm; and there is a realm of evil. Each is spiritually against the other. If the other world has a King, there is also a prince of this world; and there can be **no** peace except in a complete victory, so that such a war **shall** never be again. Most people live in an armistice, and **many** only drag on with the war; but the High Command **on** both sides knows the only terms of the end. Yet we cannot sort men into their camps. As we cannot certainly **decide** in individual cases who is a subject of God, so we cannot say that so-and-so is naturalised under Satan. The two sides do not understand each other nor the campaign—**only** the heads do; for the good do not readily see into evil, **nor** do the evil understand the good. The victory must be left to Him Whose holiness gives Him the true measure and **meaning** of evil as the evil can never take the measure of **good**. The light shines into the darkness, but the darkness **does** not take it in; therefore it can neither escape nor defeat it. Its trickery is good, but its strategy is poor, and its diplomacy stupid at the last. And the power, which came in **gleams** of light, goes on to flashes of lightning; which are the judgments of God upon things civil and religious, on **State** and Church, on culture and crudity, on the progress **and** peace wherein the soul sinks and rots, and eternity is **banished** from the concern of time.

The more we dwell on the nature of the kingdom of heaven the more we are driven, by the very earnestness of the conflict, where Christ was driven—to the belief in a kingdom of evil very active and very intimate. To lose the sense of that kingdom of evil means, or it follows, the slackening of our sense of the Kingdom of God. And to grow in the knowledge of God's Kingdom is to grow in the insight into Satan's. The brooding of the dove with us is not yet the full presence of the Spirit if it extinguish the serpent wisdom of the Holy Ghost. It is an ineffective guilelessness that is not shrewd enough to know the world, nor passionate enough to feel its fires. There is an incarnation of the evil one as well as of the Holy One; though its king has neither the moral power nor the spiritual courage to appear as a historic person. For he cannot reduce himself to such limitation, nor empty himself to the form of a servant. He only acts in avatars and not incarnation, or he suborns picked servants full of the unholy ghost, or societies of culture which are the habitations of cruelty. The disbelief in Satan has much injured the belief in Christ; for of course to make light of the enemy is to make light of the Victor. We lower the whole level and tension of the conflict if we discard a war in heaven and think of God's antagonist as only human, or only a principle. The Lord has a controversy not with His people only but with a rival king and strategy. History, like Scripture, has suffered from piecemeal treatment without a conspectus or a plan. And the final conspectus is not in the compass of the philosophic historians who track tendencies and combine events, but it belongs to the apostles of a moral gospel which gives us the last teleology in a kingdom of moral souls won on the scale of the world by the conquest of its prince. For philosophic history, with all its power of insight and combination, yet does not, as such, realise evil or measure its final power. It does not gauge the grand conflict nor take home the victory; indeed, it shows some tendency to moral insouciance. The philosophic historian can grasp the idea of the

untoward, or of the slow, or the sick, but not of evil. And yet we cannot grasp the notion of evil, as we cannot of good, apart from history and from the Cross in it. The sphere of history is the element in which the Kingdom of God acts. The idea of the Kingdom of God is not to be grasped without a sense of evil which flows from the sense of the holy, and from the experience of its salvation. The Kingdom of God is not civilisation. It is not even spiritual culture. The war has come, among other things, to destroy that ready fallacy of peace, as if the Kingdom could come (human nature being what it is has sunk to be) by evolution, even by spiritual evolution or the culture of piety. It does not come by a Church of spiritual culture, but by a warfare with spiritual wickedness in eminent places, not to say in estimable people. Its foundation is in a crisis, not in an education—in a redemption and a repentance. Both Church and Kingdom owe more to conversion than to mere moral growth. So far the eschatological views of Christ's teaching are right. There is an organised power of disorganisation which wrecks all the organising power of culture, and the ordered methods of education; or it chains these things to its **car**. And it is with that power that the kingship of God alone can deal. The chief danger to organised civilisation is an organisation morally uncivilised; it is not mere disorganisation. It is not decay; it is positive hostility scientifically ranged. And salvation is the organisation of the holy; it is the Kingdom of God, of the Holy Father.

There is a type of inward religion—the mysticism of imagination or reflection rather than action—which has neither the taste nor the faculty for historic revelation, is without the national note, and shows small affinity for the Kingdom of God won on the Cross in a national issue. **It is more** concerned with its conventions, conferences, movements, and programmes than with the great orbits of the Lord's movement among affairs, or His righteous goings among the nations. Its saints have neither the national nor **the** ecumenical sense. They are sectary; not valueless—far **from** it—but still sectary. They are saints of a group in such **a way** that they are not citizens of the Kingdom, having more spiritual faculty than moral force, with soul but not moral

s- and more ready for martyrdom than choice in its isions. They are without sacrificial sagacity. Truly the blood of Christ's martyrs is the seed of His Church. But all martyrs for conscience are not martyrs for Christ. All in it tyrs are not mules, but some mules are martyrs, and stiffer for their self-will more than for God's will. That is because they have more spiritual interest than moral insight, and their conscience is more touchy than taught. Their cult tends to be sacrifice for its own sake. There is nothing the mystic should more study than history as the site and school of the Kingdom. For it was its vehicle. To dwell on the inner life and its devotion without an equal interest in its outer form and action is not the spirit either of the Incarnation or the Atonement. Truly the Kingdom of God comes not with observation—unless the observation is very deep. Yet it does come amid observable things, and we wait for the manifestation of the Sons of God. It is a long process, this redemptive evolution. If the evolution of creation is slow, the evolution of redemption is slower still. Moral progress is always slower than civilised; for each conscience has to start afresh, while each mind enters on the long legacy of device and culture. The Kingdom comes slowly, for it faces an Empire long and ably prepared. It has stage after stage. We begin with nature, or God over us. We go on with grace, or God with us. We end with glory, or God in us. We begin with the revelation of the Father and His power. We pass to the revelation of the Son and His love. We end in the revelation of the Spirit and His holiness. But these three are one. The revelation of the Father remains in that of His Son. And Father and Son remain within the revelation of the Holy Spirit, where the Kingdom covers all and pervades all. This is the theological way of putting it. There are other ways less deep. The historian of moral progress would put it in his way. He might appeal to the mentality of the present hour by tracing the development and refinement of human freedom. He might trace the ascent of the conflict with evil—with evil in nature, evil in the soul, and spiritual evil. But it would all be still the story of the coming of the Kingdom of the thrice holy God, the growing reign of

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The revelation with which the Church is charged carries in it the secret of the New Humanity, whether it come by grace or by judgment. But the chief victories for freedom have been won against an empire of tyranny.

The Kingdom of God in Christ is the key of all history, and the Church has the power of that **key. It** was the revelation which made both that first made a comprehensive view of history possible. The first to construct a philosophy of history was St. Paul, by his theology of universal redemption. The only final unity of man is objective in God's purpose of grace, not subjective in the touch of nature, which makes us often more kin than kind. Had that redemption by grace been but mystic illumination, and had the coming of Christ been but light, there would have been no such vision of universal history, and no such institution as a Church to correspond. For the inner light is but atomic; it lights each several soul; and its breadth is but multitudinous, it is not organic. It is cosmopolitan, it is **not** catholic. But the revelation in Christ was action much more than light. It was redemption, not illumination. **It** was power, and social power, it was not mere presence. **It** was therefore a matter of history, where men do act, and **not** of thought, where they do not. It intended not a new sect but a new Humanity, which was to 'put out on the stream and not preach from the shore. In so doing it was **bound to** make mistakes, but not such mistakes as if it did **not**.

Two great mistakes have certainly been made about revelation. First it has been treated as if its element were **truth** and not action. It has been offered as something **to hold** instead of something to obey. **It has been thought to be a** notional theology (or still worse a theosophy) instead of a moral energy of God. It has regarded Christ as the **great** theophany instead of the great—I wish the word **theurgy** had not been stolen for mean uses, it is what I **want** here. And the second mistake **about revelation has**

been to treat it as the divine arcanum of a Church instead of the moral key to the whole of history, and the regeneration of the whole of Humanity. No wonder people do not care about redemption or regeneration when they have been made to regard such words as the technical terms for certain processes that were the secret of certain spiritual syndicates. How are we ever to reclaim words like these for their true Christian use? There are many thinking men who are driven to believe that *the* interest of Humanity is the historic and moral interest; how are we to convince them that the supreme interest of that conscience is that it should be redeemed? That is a question we cannot stop to discuss here. But this may be said. So long as the Cross is regarded as a device for the benefit of a few instead of the moral crisis of the race, so long will its advocates seem but sectaries without moral purchase on the race. So long as the Kingdom of God is regarded as but the extension of a private company's operations (as many view missions), so long also will it be an ineffectual thing. It will be regarded as one of many rival enterprises, all pushing to the front, instead of the suzerain and overlord of them all. And it will be left to its luck in the struggle. But it is not the extension of a private enterprise promoted to increase the shareholders of a joint-stock religion. It is the dominant power and final goal of history, if there be a God, if He has most to do with history, if His holy morality is the nature of things, if His Son is not simply the Head of the Church but the King of Humanity, if His cross is the turning-point of moral being. We can only get mankind to attend to the Kingdom of God if we can make it appear for what it is—the inmost core, the ruling principle, the moral ultimate, the spiritual dominant, the new creation, and the final purpose of Humanity. And the theology of the Church must be adjusted thereto, the message of the Church must be so delivered, the nature of the Church must be so defined. The regeneration it preaches is *the* moral issue of the world. Only thus can we change the German view of Humanity, as manure for the intensive culture of favoured races, to the Christian view of it as a family of nations to be loved, gossiped, and saved. The real organising principle of the race is what it is in

Christ—the life of the Kingdom of God. The coming of the Kingdom is the growing organisation of spiritual Humanity **under** the Church's moral gospel and King of holy love. It is **the** moralising of every affection, thought, and enterprise by **the Holy Spirit**—which, if it do reside in the Church, yet goes **to business daily** in the national world.

There are some moments when a vast and mixed audience **are** gathered critically round a rare man whose words are **themselves** deeds, and who has to make himself good with **such a public**. Which at last he does, and they are fired **and** lifted to forget wholly the things that part them in the **moral** passion of the things to which he makes them move as one soul. As he began his task it was as if he passed **down** the alley of one of those grim Safe Deposit buildings, **where** to right and left were but cells guarded and sealed. **But** as he went on the gates fell down and it was as if the **very** jewels in the cells were warmed to melt their caskets **and** pour out into the golden street. Such an occasion, or **such** an image, might offer us a symbol of that which one **day** will be the state of society, unless Christ has come and **spoken** in vain of His Kingdom.

The Word of the world's moral redemption by holy love **must** seize the conscience in the world's great heart.

"And hell itself shall pass away
And leave its dolorous mansions to the peering day."