

This little book may have piqued your curiosity so that you desire more information and thinking about the Bible, God and the Lord Jesus Christ. It may have answered your questions. It may have been the last bit needed to make you want to call on the Lord Jesus Christ to be delivered from the guilt of, power of and penalty for sin. Here is a suggested model prayer:

Father in Heaven, I know that I am a sinner and deserve your judgment for my sin and sins. I believe the Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, came to this earth to be a substitute and take the judgment for my sins and the sins of the whole world. I am sick of sin. I am turning from my sin to you through the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe He rose from the dead and am trusting his person and work for my forgiveness and salvation. Thank you, Father.

or another model:

Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.



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THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF Agnosticism



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THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF AGNOSTICISM

A young American was sent by his firm to work in Moscow. Before he left home he had drifted from conventional church-going into vague agnosticism. He felt no need for any religion.

In Moscow he found himself getting more and more dissatisfied with his agnosticism. It was too negative. Although he was not aware of having met any Christians in that great city, he got an urge to read the Bible for himself. He must see if Christianity was true after all. He had a New International Version of the Bible (who put that in his luggage?), and he began to read it every day.

He got as far as the first Book of Kings in a month. Keen to continue his search for the truth while on holiday, he bought another NIV Bible the day he arrived for his visit to Scotland. He had left his original copy in Moscow in case he had problems at the border.

Next day, near the ruins of an old castle, he bumped into some Christians who urged him to switch from the Old to the New Testament. "Not yet," he said, "I want to get an overall impression of the whole Bible." Why was this man dissatisfied with his agnosticism? What did he mean? Where does the word "agnosticism" come from anyway? To answer this last question we have to go back over a century.

It was Professor T. H. Huxley¹ who introduced the word "agnostic" to members of what was known as the Metaphysical Society in 1869. Writing afterwards, he said, "When I reached intellectual maturity and began to ask myself whether I was an atheist, a theist, or a pantheist; a materialist, or an idealist; a Christian or a freethinker, I found that the more I learned and reflected, the less ready was the answer, until at last I came to the conclusion that I had no part with any of the denominations except the last.

"Most of these good people . . . were quite sure that they had attained a certain 'gnosis' (knowledge or inside information) and had, more or less successfully, solved the problem of existence; while I was quite sure that I had not, and had a pretty strong conviction that the problem was insoluble.

"Most of my colleagues in the Metaphysical Society were -ists of one sort or another . . . so I took thought and invented what I conceived to be the appropriate title of 'agnostic.' It came into my head as suggestively antithetic (a good contrast) to the 'gnostic' of Church history, who professed to know so much about the very things of which I was ignorant; and I took the earliest opportunity of parading it at our Society. To my great satisfaction, the term took."

A modern standard dictionary defines an "agnostic" as "one who denies that we can know the absolute or infinite, or prove or disprove anything beyond the material phenomena of the universe, though such may

exist." Agnosticism is defined as "the doctrine of the agnostic."

But there is sometimes quite a gulf between etymological derivation and modern usage. Some of us, for example, may remember an old prayer commencing with "Prevent us, O Lord in all our doings . . ." penned when the word "prevent" simply meant "go before!" The word "agnostic" has also suffered at the hands of its users. In the modern world many use the adjective of themselves in an absolute or relative sense, yet obviously mean by it several different things. It doesn't require much discernment to observe at least three distinct categories or groups of agnostics. Of the first two it must be admitted that they are perfectly logical positions, although this cannot be said of the third. But there are certain factors which, once they enter into our consciousness, make it impossible to hold any of these positions any longer. In this sense we may even speak of "the impossibility of agnosticism."

THE INDIFFERENT AGNOSTIC

This kind of agnostic is characterized by contented, almost defiant, ignorance. This attitude finds expression in such phrases as, "I don't know, and quite frankly, I couldn't care less. I'm perfectly happy as I am, and have no time for people who want to interfere with other

people's lives!" He might add, "You mind your own business, and I'll mind mine." But his absorption in his own affairs can scarcely be interpreted as a denial of the existence or validity of facts which he has not investigated personally. All we may say is that he brushes these aside as being totally irrelevant. "What's it got to do with me? I'm not religious."

THE DISSATISFIED AGNOSTIC

This kind of agnostic also confesses to ignorance, and the more intellectual he is, the more disturbed he is at his ignorance. No other branch of knowledge has eluded him like this. In discussion with someone who claims to know he may say, "I don't know, but I'm willing to investigate . . . I haven't a clue. Have you? If so, do tell me. I'll try anything once."

Possibly he has met inconsistent persons and other religious people whose lives can't hold a candle to those of some philanthropic materialists he has met or heard of. But somehow, materialism doesn't intrigue him as it used to in the days when he was an infallible and omniscient student. While he makes strenuous efforts now and then to forget life's enigmas, he really wants an answer to such questions as "Why are we here?" "Where do we go when we leave here?" without losing his interest in "How does it work?" and "Can we take it

to pieces and observe. . .?" He is no longer taken in by the fallacy that description is explanation, a fallacy so often unrecognized in popular teaching of the theory of evolution, his credulous acceptance of which had previously led inevitably to his dismissing the very idea of an initiating Creator, free to interfere in the world He had made.

THE DOGMATIC AGNOSTIC

This is the kind of agnostic on whom the mantle of Thomas Huxley has fallen. He claims that no one can know anything of God or of the supernatural world. Nothing outside the material world can be known or proved. He says, tersely, "I don't know. You don't know. Nobody knows. Nobody can know." No one can call this man "indifferent." He takes his agnosticism more seriously than many Christians take Christianity. And his outward life may put that of some professing Christians to shame.

The factors which make it possible to talk rationally in terms of the "impossibility" of agnosticism vary, naturally, with each position. Take the first, the indifferent agnostic. There comes a day when those who couldn't care less begin to care intensely. To know that death is not far away can make those who have lived only for pleasure sit up and think. Even the most skeptical may

begin to doubt the wisdom of his own stand.

Voltaire, who initiated so many into the art of ridiculing anything that seems to be supernatural, cried on his death bed, "O God, save me. Jesus Christ, save. God, have mercy upon me. Jesus Christ, have mercy upon me."

Thomas Paine, author of the widely circulated *Age of Reason*, provides another example. During his terminal illness he was looked after by Mary Roscoe of Greenwich, New York. He asked her if she had ever read any of his writings. When she said that she had read very little of them, he asked for her candid opinion, adding, "from someone like you I expect a correct answer." She told him that when she was very young, his *Age of Reason* was put into her hands, but that the more she read in it, the more confused and distressed she felt, and finally she threw the book into the fire. "I wish all had done as you," he replied, "for if ever the devil has had any agency in any work, he has had it in my writing that book." As she nursed him, she repeatedly heard him saying with intense feeling, "O Lord! Lord God!" or, "Lord Jesus! Have mercy upon me." There seem to be good grounds for believing that written retractions of his previous views were destroyed by his former associates after his death.¹

There is a practical impossibility about the second position, that of the dissatisfied agnostic, if he is willing to experiment. The man who seeks will most surely find, so long as he looks in the right place and manner.

We don't expect to find our examination results pinned up in the telephone box nearest to our house, convenient -- or embarrassing -- though this might be. But we should be disappointed if we did not find them in the approved place on the advertised day.

When it comes to faith in a God who is alive and active today, we have words of the highest authority, "Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."² We cannot prove or disprove these statements without asking, and we cannot ask without receiving. If we claim to have asked already in vain, we cannot have asked aright. God has said, "You will surely find me, when you seek me with all your heart."³

The third position, that of the dogmatic agnostic, needs to be examined rather more closely. Generally, this man is well grounded in a scientific approach to life which, he feels, leaves little room for a personal God. The scientific method is commonly regarded as starting with observation by the senses. But to reach that point there have to be many assumptions; for example, that I exist, that my senses function normally, that they have an affinity with those of previous observers, that the sense-data correspond to reality, that there is an organic unity between yesterday, today, and the unobserved tomorrow. No reasonable person objects to the

scientist making these assumptions. Yet no scientist can amass overwhelming or conclusive evidence, and say he has final proof. All he can say is, "My assumptions seem to work and supply a good explanation of phenomena." Neither science nor philosophy can prove anything absolutely.

Now if a theologian gives due deference to scientific statements, while protesting against unjustifiable scientific dogmatism, he is surely entitled to expect similar respect for assumptions in his realm. Sir Edmund Whittaker said at one time on a BBC radio program (in a reply to Sir Fred Holye): "When, from the purely intellectual point of view, we compare the arguments for the existence of God with the proofs of Einstein's General Theory of Relativity, I should say that the theologians have it." But the indictment that can be brought against many agnostics today is that they are ignoring the evidence, treating it as beneath their contempt -- a grossly unscientific and unfair attitude. This attitude is understandable only in the light of Christian teaching, which reveals the great gulf between the spirit of Christ and the spirit of the natural man, however well educated and moral that man may be.⁴

When it comes to material things we are credulous and amazingly gullible. When it comes to the realm of the spirit many of us unconsciously slip into an attitude which we should instantly disown if we were to follow it to its logical conclusion. What we do is virtually to assert, "My ignorance equals factual impossibil-

ity." The reasonable attitude we should have is, "I don't know, but I'm willing to put myself in the hands of one who does," as we do with a surgeon, or dentist, or pilot, in their respective spheres. Some of us who pride ourselves on our rational attitude to things are of all people least rational when it comes to the things of God.

Ignorance is understandable. Contemporary Christian propaganda is generally not of superlative quality. Unwillingness to investigate, or to face the consequences of taking a stand as a Christian in a neo-pagan civilization, is also understandable. But it is very difficult to understand people claiming the right to say that God is unknowable while there are data which they decline to investigate, and more than one valid experiment to which they are afraid to submit.

There are those who maintain that there are no data; that in the nature of the case it is impossible to have any data. I would not suggest that many such are suppressing the evidence, because I know from experience that most, if not all, are genuinely ignorant. One of the purposes to this brief enquiry, therefore, is to suggest positive lines of investigation.

Herbert Spencer, regarded as one of the foremost apostles of agnosticism, pronounced a dictum which any thinking person must surely accept. He stated that just as no bird has ever been known to fly out of the heavens, so no man has ever been known to penetrate with his finite mind the veil that hides the mind of the Infinite. Therefore, he postulated, the Infinite may not

be known by the finite, so agnosticism is secure.

His dictum is fool-proof. But his deduction does not follow, based as it is on inadequate data. He infers, without any grounds in his dictum for so doing, that the Infinite is equally incapable of penetrating the veil. This reduces the term Infinite to absurdity. An Infinite that is unable to express itself is less capable than finite mortals, who are forever making themselves heard. And an Infinite that is capable of self-expression and is aware of the perplexity and need of man, yet fails to break through the veil, is less moral than mortal man. What man would stay in shrouded silence if he were the Infinite and knew that a word from him would resolve a thousand human complexes, integrate shattered personalities, mend broken lives, bring coveted light to baffled minds, and healing peace to disturbed hearts?

But, says someone, what right have we to assume that we should, or ever could, think in terms of "Him" instead of "I"?

There are various ways of meeting this objection. For example it is possible to infer that any existing Infinite must be the absolute, sovereign Cause of all finite substances or gasses, atoms of constituent atomic particles. By a myriad observations we know of no effect greater than its corresponding cause, not even atomic chain reaction with possible accompanying devastation. By analogy, then, on what rational grounds could we assume that an effect such as personality (the supreme

distinguishing mark of man in the animal world) was produced by a cause which lacked what it somehow managed to produce? Do you say, "Evolution explains that perfectly, without admitting any need of a Creative Personality"? Inadequate data once more! Evolutionary philosophy has no room for a personal God, but let us distinguish between philosophy and scientific fact. The observable facts tell us much about processes of development, but are absolutely silent about ultimate origins. The only scientific facts we have are neutral, open to the Christian or the materialist interpretation.

But far outweighing any conclusions that may or may not be reached by reasoning, is the fact that with our finite minds we may know of the Infinite only what the Infinite is pleased to reveal. And we may know that the Infinite is personal, not from any ontological or teleological argument, but from the fact that the Infinite has revealed Himself (Himself) as a person, exercising on an infinite scale the attributes of a personality. There is no logical reason why we should not say, "There is a living God. He has spoken in the Bible. He means what He says, and will do everything that He has promised, both in mercy to those who will trust Him, and in judgment against those who rebel." He has revealed Himself supremely in the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. He has acted in history. History is in fact His story, not man's. He has broken into the space-time continuum which is His own idea, subject to limitations He has imposed; He will

break in again one day in judgment. He has come into the world He made in the Person of Jesus Christ, the God-Man. Before time was created, Christ existed essentially in the form of God. But He did not count equality with God as something to which He must cling tenaciously. Instead He took the form of a servant and humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death. And that death was on a cross.⁵ Is it reasonable to reject the fact of Christ's complex person because we have no philosophy for the fact?

Charles Bradlaugh, one of the leading lecturers on agnosticism of the 19th century, constantly reiterated, "We have no quarrel with Jesus Christ, only with Christians." In Jesus' days on earth, His enemies found no fault in Him. Yet He made the most stupendous claims for Himself, such as authority to forgive sins and to determine the destiny of all mankind. Why were they unable to convict Him of sin? Because He never sinned in deed, knew no sin in thought, and in Him was no sin in embryo. A sinless man? Yes, the only sinless man the world has ever known!

But surely death and corruption should have no claims upon the sinless man. Precisely. They had none. It was not for His own sins, but for ours, that He went to death, voluntarily. Death had no claim upon Him because He never sinned. He was the eternal Son, the great Creator and Sustainer of the universe, the Infinite Cause of all things finite. But He didn't come into this

world to give us a demonstration of power. He came to show His love in action as well as in word. He healed the sick. He dealt with psychological and spiritual disorders that still baffle our experts. He restored sight, speech, and hearing. He even raised the dead. His crowning achievement was to lay down His life and take it again.⁶

These things happened in history in what we now know as Israel. And it requires less faith to believe that they happened, and were recorded by honest men, than to believe that they never happened, but that these same men invented the amazing character of Jesus and attributed imaginary miracles to Him.

To deny with Hume the possibility of miracles may save us the trouble of examining the evidence, but is not by any means the way out of all difficulties. This approach raises more questions than it answers. To abandon prejudice and admit the tentative nature of our so-called "fixed laws" is a more truly scientific approach. There are limits to the human mind, and modern man must admit them.

God is not incompetent. He can reveal Himself. The designer of speech is not inarticulate. He Himself **has** spoken! Knowing man's need, He has revealed Himself. He disclosed some of His thinking by the mouth of His prophets recorded in the Old Testament. He has spoken as much of His mind as we need to know through the life and lips, deeds and death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, His Son, His exact im-

age, who said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father," and, "There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it."⁷

What has God said in speaking like this? He has spoken of His infinite love toward mankind. He couldn't care more. He has said that He made us for Himself, for a personal relationship with Him. He wants us to find out His will, to do it here on earth, and then enter His visible presence to share unbroken fellowship with Him.⁸ He speaks of our freedom to choose, given to us that we might choose to love Him and love one another with real love, because we want to, not because we have to. He speaks of freedom abused, man losing his way, and losing touch with Him. He speaks of His hatred of sin, in all its forms: human self-sufficiency, rebelliousness, ingratitude and pride. He speaks of love so great toward the sinner that He sent His Son to take the sinner's place -- my place -- to endure the condemnation due to human sin, so that a free and righteous pardon might be available for everyone.⁹

Thomas Bilney was a conscientious law tutor at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He had no problems about God's existence or His creative power or His right to judge mankind. He was a sensitive man and his problem was how could he make himself acceptable to God? How could he find forgiveness? How could he be sure of

heaven when he died?

He had confessed his sins regularly to the chaplain. He had submitted to all the penances suggested -- fasting, pilgrimages, donations to the church. But nothing he did brought him the peace he longed for. He overheard some of his students discussing a book recently banned by the Pope, a ban which naturally made it more interesting to students! This was the Greek/Latin New Testament which the great Dutch scholar, Erasmus, had been working on at Queen's College.

It took three years for Bilney to pluck up courage to buy a copy. The consequences were remarkable. "At my first reading," he said, "I chanced on these words, 'This is a trustworthy statement, worthy to be received by all, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am worst . . .'"¹⁰

His first reaction to the last part of his sentence was, "No way! I, Bilney, am the worst of sinners. There couldn't be anyone worse than me." Then he thought, "The Bible tells the truth, Paul must be right, so I must be the runner-up. And if the worst can find mercy through the death of Christ for sinners, the runner-up can find mercy, too."

Later he wrote, "That one sentence so uplifted my heart, despairing as it was with a sense of my guilt before God, that immediately I felt a marvelous comfort and peace." No more fruitless attempts to merit God's favor.

Shortly after this he started the first group Bible study in Cambridge, secretly, in the White Horse Inn, then in King's Parade. To this came Stafford, lecturer in Divinity, Frith, Professor of Mathematics, and eventually Hugh Latimer, the University Chaplain, later Bishop of Worcester, perhaps the greatest preacher ever heard in England.

These men all found God speaking to them through the Bible. Bilney himself has been called "the Father of the English Reformers."

Literally thousands of students at Cambridge have heard God speaking to them through the English Bible since that significant day in 1519. God makes Himself known to individual people in our day every bit as effectively as He did in Bilney's day.¹¹

"But I don't believe that God has spoken," someone may object. "I have never heard Him speaking." Failure to hear a broadcast, forgetting to tune in, does not prove that there was no transmission. Cutting a lesson is not the same as the lesson not being given. The fact that we went to a lesson but failed to understand it all, is no proof that the teacher did not know what he was talking about! And the fact that we have neglected the Bible, or never extracted much from the small portion we have read, does not mean that God has not spoken in the Bible. There is a vast difference between skimming through a Gospel casually and reading to hear what God has to say to us. The chief difficulty about the latter lies in the realm of the will, rather than of the

intellect. We have to be willing to do what God says when we hear Him speak.¹² But we go our own way so often and we want to continue going our own way. We don't want Christianity to interfere with our lifestyle. Unconsciously we prove the Bible to be true on a major issue, because this is the Bible picture of man, not the utopian, progressive view of modern humanistic philosophy!

"But," we may protest, "I am afraid of trusting myself totally to someone of whom I know so little." Ignorance may seem to be a plausible excuse. But we need not remain in ignorance. The information if available, historical evidence for the facts concerning Jesus Christ, literary evidence concerning the documents containing those facts, psychological evidence concerning His disciples, and experimental evidence concerning ourselves as we are and as we may become through contact with Him -- all these are branches of study open to our most careful investigation. But which of these lines of approach should the non-specialist take to begin with? Strangely enough, the answer is "None of them." They maybe extremely useful and profitable later, but we should start with the most important evidence of all, that which concerns the identity of Jesus Christ. He Himself is the heart of the faith, at the very center of all Christian data. It is possible to know for ourselves that the prophet of Nazareth was and is the very Son of God. No secondhand conviction can satisfy us here.

A small document, inspired by God Himself, was

produced by the apostle John. It was written especially for those who are uncertain that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and therefore are hesitant to trust Him. There are many whose prejudices and scepticism have been dispelled through reading this document. My father was brought from Jewish scepticism to Christian faith through reading the Gospel written by John, and acting on what he read. Countless others could be cited.

One of the earliest sceptics, Thomas, said, "Risen! Jesus alive again? Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." John records that, confronted with the risen Christ, Thomas fell at His feet crying, "My Lord and my God."¹³

John anticipates readers saying, "It was all very well for Thomas! Of course he would believe, faced with such evidence! Why is there no such evidence for us? Trying to believe only intensifies our doubts."

The answer to doubts is facts, and here, says John, are the facts. Expose yourself to them. God speaks through them. Read them, and re-read, as if your life depended upon them; for in the deepest sense of all, it does. Here lies the secret of eternal life.¹⁴ To neglect the secret is to reject the life.

But as you read, do bear in mind that you are not merely studying another subject. A merely passive subject of human investigation is certainly not a living God who can satisfy the longing of the human heart. How-

ever sceptical you may be, surely you can say, "O God, if there is a God, show me the truth about yourself as I read." Some may say that they have read this gospel and found nothing. I have yet to meet one such person who was not determined to stay on the fence. God gives light to those who will obey it, but He does not pander to our intellect with flashes of irrelevant illumination. If you are willing to do God's will, as you persevere in reading, you will become aware that you are in the presence of a real, living personality showing Himself to be utterly trustworthy, summoning you to turn from self-centered living and the idols of modern materialism,¹⁵ calling you to trust yourself to Him and follow Him to the end. He demands our allegiance, not our admiration.

Many contemporary scientists have missed the way by thinking that they were meant to be masters of Nature only, while their own human nature could lie unmastered through their neglect to become servants of God, Nature's God. What a contrast to Kepler: "I am thinking God's thoughts after Him," and Sir James Simpson: "The greatest discovery I ever made was that I was a great sinner and Christ was a great Saviour," and Sir Ambrose Fleming:¹⁶ "We must not build on the sands of an uncertain and ever changing science . . . but upon the rock of the inspired Scriptures." The host of sceptical scientists who have never opened their hearts to God's truth can never outweigh the testimony of those who have humbled themselves to cry to God for light

and found -- Him.

If we still persist in the claim that God is unknowable, then we are obliged either to deny the historicity of the data concerning Jesus Christ, or, if the records are accepted as true, to label Him as an unprincipled deceiver. We are also forced to ignore or libel the testimony of over sixty generations of Christians, many of whom have suffered death rather than deny what they have known to be true, and the testimony of contemporary Christians of all nations and classes, all degrees of intellectual attainment, all levels of academic life and all branches of science, that God is faithful to His promise.¹⁷

We may deny the facts concerning Jesus Christ, and claim that because we think we have no objective proof Christianity cannot be true. But if we are suppressing factors inconvenient to our own theory, we cannot claim to be rational, and at the same time hold on to our dogmatic anosticism. Any philosophical method claiming to overthrow the factual basis of the Christian faith would also invalidate all other historical facts, and such a method can always be turned upon itself to reduce its own principles to uncertainty.

We are at liberty to say that we do not know God, and that we do not want to know God, preferring to live without Him (which is the essence of sin), but we are not entitled to say because of this attitude that God cannot be known. God may be known, not as a piece of music, a book, a formula, a locality, or a sensation, but

as a living Person. We may know a relationship with Him. The terms of the relationship are clearly stated in the New Testament. We must confess our need, and turn to Jesus Christ as the answer to it. We must admit the truthfulness of His diagnosis of our disorder, which has spread to the whole of society, and we must submit to His treatment. When we turn to Him as the One who died for our sins, and ask Him for forgiveness, and put ourselves completely into His hands we will know that we have experienced the miracle of new birth, described in John, chapter 3. A totally new life has begun. Lingering doubts about miracles begin to vanish, as God speaks to us through the Bible, and we reply in prayer and thanksgiving. We have passed from spiritual death to spiritual life, and earthly life begins to add up in a new way.

But this is not to say that in such a relationship we have all the answers. There are a number of questions on which a Christian must remain profoundly agnostic, for example, the origin of evil, the exact time of creation, the date of the coming judgment of all men, his own future. The Christian's certainty does not land him into a fool's paradise in which he claims to know everything. He is aware of the limitations of his knowledge and is equally aware of his ignorance. What he knows does not paralyze his capacity for research in the realm of the unknown. But he is not relying on his unaided intellect to penetrate the veil, nor is he bitterly disappointed when he comes up against some insur-

mountable barrier, and has to echo the words of Moses, Israel's ancient lawgiver, "the secret things belong to the Lord our God; but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever . . ." ¹⁸ Now we know only in part, but there is coming a day in which we shall know fully, even as we are fully known. ¹⁹

After listening to an address which included much of the material found in this booklet, Sir Hector Hetherington, then Principal of Glasgow University, made the following significant remarks:

"There are issues on which it is impossible to be neutral. These issues strike right down to the roots of man's existence. And while it is right that we should examine the evidence, and make sure that we have all the evidence, it is equally right that we ourselves should be accessible to the evidence.

"We cannot live a full life without knowing exactly where we stand regarding these fundamental issues of life and destiny. And therefore we must decide ourselves, and you must decide yourselves." ²⁰

And what we decide, we must make known. "Everyone who acknowledges me before men," says Jesus Christ, "I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven." ²¹

E N D N O T E S

¹Memoirs of Stephen Grellet, ed. Seebohm (3rd ed., 1870), pp. 74, 75.

²Luke 11:9, 10.

³Jeremiah 29:13.

⁴Romans 1:18-22.

⁵See Philippians 2:6-8.

⁶Romans 5:6,8; John 10:10-18; 19:1-37; Matthew 20:28.

⁷John 14:9; 12:48, 49.

⁸The antithesis of Hoyle's "Eternity of Frustration".

⁹See Leith Samuel, *The Answer to Guilt*, (Victory Booklets)

¹⁰I Timothy 1:15, 16.

¹¹John 5:24; 10:9,10; I Peter 3:18.

¹²John 7:17.

¹³See John 20:24-31.

¹⁴John 3:15,16; 5:24; 10:28.

¹⁵Acts 14:15,16; 17:30,31; I Thessalonians 1:9,10.

¹⁶Kepler, the astronomer who discovered the elliptical movement of heavenly bodies; Simpson, the doctor who discovered chloroform, the first anaesthetic; Fleming invented the thermionic valve basic to T. V., etc.

¹⁷See, e.g. John 1:12; 6:37; Revelation 3:20.

¹⁸Deuteronomy 29:29

¹⁹I Corinthians 13:12.

²⁰See Joshua 24:15; John 3:36.

²¹Matthew 10:32,33.

R E L E V A N T NEW TESTAMENT P A R A G R A P H S :

"Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished -- he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies the man who has faith in Jesus" Romans 3:20-26.

"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" Romans 5:6-8.

"I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. What benefit did you reap at that time from the things

you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" Romans 6:19-23.

"But what does it say? 'The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,' that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, 'Everyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.' For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile -- the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved'" Romans 10:8-13.

"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions -- it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of this grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith -- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" Ephesians 2:1-10.

"At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone" Titus 3:3-8.

"To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 'He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.' When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls" 1 Peter 2:21-25.

For further reading:

Reason in the Balance

Phillip E. Johnson, Professor IVP—\$20

Law School, University of California, Berkeley
Reason in the Balance is about God, sex education, evolution, abortion, the search for a grand, unified theory in physics, what our public schools should teach, the basis of law, the meaning of reason and a few other things that matter.

Mere Christianity

C. S. Lewis Simon & Schuster—\$6

C. S. Lewis was a professor of Medieval and Renaissance Literature at Oxford and Cambridge Universities who wrote more than thirty books in his lifetime, including *The Screwtape Letters*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, and the *Space Trilogy*. He died in 1963.