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THE INTELLECT OF CHRIST

by

FRANCIS O. REISINGER

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
College of Religion

Division of Graduate Instruction
Butler University
Indianapolis
1942

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Independent and creative though he was, the Apostle Paul, in his opening chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, acknowledges indebtedness to almost everyone. Were we as wise and candid as he, we would do the same.

In seeking to make due acknowledgment of help received in writing this thesis, it is realized that the debt of obligation extends all the way back to a one room country school, and beyond. Many of more recent date have been of service, either directly or indirectly. From each Instructor with whom I have done work in Butler University, has come something worthwhile, which in turn has left its impress upon this thesis.

Especial mention should be made of my advisor, Dr. Arthur Holmes, who has given not only valuable assistance in preparing this thesis, but has pointed out, also, possibilities for preaching and reflection arising from the present treatment of the subject.

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CHAPTER I.

THEOLOGICAL DEFINITIONS OF CHRIST

In the past, theologians formulating a Christology have usually defined Jesus in theological and metaphysical terms. They have, in their attempts to understand the person of Christ, studied and defined his nature. In doing this, their emphasis has been upon "essence," which has been chiefly understood in terms of substance. The theologians of the Nicean tradition concluded that Christ was an hypostasis or person with two natures, i.e. human and divine. As a Person he was one, for the two natures combined together in a way beyond our comprehension to form a single unity in one person, in the sense of Boethius who put it thus: "A person is an individual substance of rational nature."¹ This is a definition that describes a person in terms of an unknowable substance.

The difficulty with this kind of definition is that it leaves us almost as much in the dark as we were before. It does not help us much in understanding Christ, or, in fact, any other person. Who knows what a substance is? If we reduce a person to a substance and ultimately explain him as such, we may then

¹Anicius Boethius, *Contra Eutychen et Nestorium*, Theological Tractatus, tr. by H. F. Stewart and E. K. Rand, c. 3, p. 84; (Wm. Heinemann, London 1918); mentioned by C. J. Webb, *God and Personality*, Gif Lec. p. 48. See also B. H. Streeter, *Personality*, 1928, stating a person cannot be defined; cf H.E.R.E. *Personality*, J. E. Taggart, Vol. IX p.773; to be a person must be aware of himself.

ask: What have we? Is this substance a mass of matter? Is it solid, liquid, or gas? If it is a spiritual substance, what does that mean?

As a matter of fact, the best way to understand a person is to understand what he does. It is that which he does to us, which for us possesses meaning and value. An understanding of this kind is one which may truly make a difference in us. Perhaps a functional definition is the only kind that can be given after all; certainly it is the only kind which affords us a description which is truly helpful. We define a person as a self-conscious organism that thinks, feels, and wills, knows it, and directs these processes to some extent.

In the New Testament, and especially in the four Gospels which are explicitly devoted to the task of setting forth Jesus, the emphasis unmistakably is upon that which Jesus said and did. We have a functional definition of Christ in each of the four Gospels. We have, therefore, a crystal clear picture of him, one unclouded by philosophical speculations; one which we can understand; one which has meaning and value for us. We can understand this Jesus of the New Testament, because we are told what he said and did, which means that we know something about what he thought, felt, and willed. Even a child can enter deeply into an understanding of his person. We can all appreciate and love him.

For some time the emphasis remained right here where the New Testament put it. With all of his Rabbinical training, and

his fondness for rabbinical argumentation, St. Paul definitely puts the emphasis upon what Christ did for us and what he does in us. He may be classed as a theologian and a great one, but his emphasis was practical rather than theological. The churches he founded and nurtured, and the work in general which he accomplished, is sufficient proof of this. As Christianity came into conflict with surrounding paganism, with Gentile philosophy, and with sects within, the emphasis was gradually shifted. More and more philosophical did the definitions of Christ become. The emphasis seems to have been less on appreciation and more on definition. From 300 to 500 during the period of the Nicean Councils, the emphasis was shifted from right living to right thinking, or as we say, from goodness to orthodoxy.

Justin Martyr, himself a converted philosopher, is usually given the credit--or discredit, as the case may be--for giving Christian thought its first great impetus toward philosophical speculation. As the first Christian Apologist, he was naturally interested in vindicating Christianity in the thinking circles of paganism. According to Professor Adolph Harnack, for connecting philosophical theology with the baptismal confession, Justin Martyr is, "in a certain fashion, the first framer of church dogma."¹ But Harnack adds that this is "doubtless in a very tentative way." Much more decided opinion comes from Alvan Lamson, writing in the last half of the nineteenth century, who

¹Adolph Harnack, History of Dogma, trans. Neil Buchanan (Little, Brown, and Co.) Vol. 2 p. 220

says:

4

Aristides is called by Jerome a 'most eloquent' man; but what his philosophical opinions were, we are not informed; nor is it known how far he may have been chargeable with having taken the initiatory step in destroying the simplicity of the Christian doctrine, which disappeared amid the decided Platonism of Justin and his successors, especially the great teachers of the Alexandrian School. That the writings emanating from this school, along with those of Justin, who led the way, introduced darkness and error into the theology of the period--error which was transmitted to subsequent times, and from the overshadowing effects of which the Christian world has not yet fully recovered--admits, in our opinion, of no denial.¹

The Alexandrian School of thinkers, without doubt, did much to formulate a theological Christology and to express it in philosophical terminology.² In this period, the Logos doctrine of the person of Christ became dominant. The term "logos" carries both a Greek and a Jewish meaning. By the Stoics it was used to indicate the active, quickening principle. By Plato it was used as the "Archetypal Idea." Philo uses it much in the sense of the Platonic "nous." It is "reason" (ratio).³ It appears in the prologue of John's Gospel and is identified with Christ, where the Greek word appears presumably to express the idea conveyed in the Old Testament by the use of the phrase, the word of Jehovah. $\aleph \dot{\imath} \aleph :$ $\aleph \aleph ?$ ⁴ Mr. G. T. Purves is of the opinion that John, "adopted his logos phraseology

¹ Alvan Lamson, The Church of the First Three Centuries, (Boston: Horace B. Fuller, 1873) p. 22

² H.E.R.E. Art. Alexandrian Theology, By W. R. Inge. Vol. I p. 308

³ *ibid*

⁴ See, I Sam. 3:1, 7, 21; 15:23; I Ki. 13:1; Ps. 33:4,6; Amos 8:12; Jonah 1:1; Micah 4:2

because in both Jewish and Gentile circles, the term was familiar."¹ John's use of the term, clearly, is more practical than philosophical because he proceeds immediately to define it in terms of the incarnation of it in Jesus.² His treatment may suggest a protest against Gnostic philosophy with its many "logoi" between God and the world, and their doctrine that flesh and all matter are evil.³

As for the Jewish Christians, Jesus was accepted as the Messiah. He was The Anointed One, The Christos, a doctrine supported from prophecies and clearly stated in the New Testament.⁴ This is attested by the Ebionites with their Adoptionist Christology.⁵ In the stream of Jewish Christianity, the strict unitarianism of Judah was always zealously guarded, even though that meant in some respects the subordination of the Christ. Among the Gentile Christians, the significance of the Messiah was not always made clear. For them the term had indeed but little meaning.⁶ For all Gentile thought, the salvation of men required the action of a God. This along with their immersion in Greek philosophy naturally produced the attempts to ascribe to Jesus the metaphysical attributes of Deity.

¹H.D.B. Vol. III, Art. Logos, By G. T. Purves p. 132

²Jn. 1:1 ff

³H.E.R.E. Vol. VI, Art. Gnosticism, by E. F. Scott p. 231
See also, H.D.B. Vol. II, Gnosticism, by A. C. Headlam p. 187

⁴Matt. 16:13 ff; Luke 7:19; Mark 11:1-10 et cetera

⁵Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church p 39
(Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918)

⁶Adolph Harnack, op. cit. Vol. I, p. 184

The well known history of the Christological disputes which culminated in the Nicean-Chalcedonian orthodoxy (325-451) is too long and involved even to sketch in this paper, but the idea that the Triune God is ousia, hypostasis, or some underlying substratum or substance is present throughout. While the controversy between Athanasius and Arius began over the attempts of the latter to subordinate Christ to God, when the party lines were drawn at the first Council of Nicea in 325, these lines were soon determined by differences of opinion over the being of Christ, which being was understood, it seems, largely in terms of essence. In attempting to define the person of Christ and to determine his relation with the Father, the Council split into three parties, the right and left wings and the middle or mediating party. The Arian Party insisted that Christ was ἑτεροούσιος, different in being or essence. The Athanasian party insisted that Christ was ὁμοούσιος identical in being or essence. The Eusebian Party insisted that Christ was ὁμοιούσιος, likeness in being or essence.

This may now appear to be merely a quibble over words, but in the thinking of those distant people, the substantial differences were worth dying for. The Athanasian view eventually won and was written into the creed, though not without fierce and long lasting opposition. A revision and enlargement of the creed was made at the Council of Constantinople in 381 A. D. The western text of the Constantinopolitan Creed was then given as follows:

1. We believe in one God the Father Almighty,
Maker of Heaven and earth
And of all things visible and invisible.
2. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only
begotten Son of God
Begotten of the Father before all worlds;
Light of Light,
Very God of Very God
Begotten, not made
Being of one substance with the Father;
Of whom all things were made;
3. Who, for us men, and for our salvation,
Came down from heaven,
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary
And was made man ¹

But this definition was not sufficiently inclusive to give a satisfactory statement of the matter to all, nor sufficiently exclusive to rule out the possibility of error and confusion. Nestorians appeared with a view of the double being of Christ. Monophysites appeared who regarded him as a Middle Being neither human nor divine. Long after Chalcedon there were bitter Christological disputes mostly pertaining to the nature of Christ to humanity.

The Council of Chalcedon affirmed the duality of the natures and the unity of the person.

Two natures, without confusion, without change, without rending, without separation, while the distinction of the natures is in no way destroyed because of the union, but rather the peculiarity of each nature is preserved and concurs into one Person and one Hypostasis.²

¹Quotation from Philip Schaff, Creeds of Christendom,
(Harper and Brothers), Vol. I, pp. 27. 28

²H.E.R.E., Vol. IV Art. Councils and Synods (Christian) D. Stone
p.191

In a general way the formulations of Nicea-Constantinople-Chalcedon remain the generally accepted teaching of the Church, both Catholic and Protestant, concerning the person of Christ. Even so recent and so able a mind as Dr. Philip Schaff feels that there is peculiar excellence in the Chalcedonian Creed; that by it the "essential elements of Christological truth" are preserved, and the "boundary lines of Christological error" are marked out.¹ That it served to draw boundary lines and that it differentiates between later orthodoxy and heterodoxy is true enough. That it gives us any understanding of Jesus Christ, suitable for inspiration to aspiration, or a guide to conduct, is extremely doubtful. Whatever its merits may be certainly much more remains to be added to it. Schaff admits that much mystery remains. The creed, inasmuch as it interprets Christ in terms of a metaphysical essence (substance), leaves us facing the mystery of an unknowable which can not be understood by human reason. The Christ of the Creeds is a baffling problem, whereas the Christ of the New Testament is a redeeming Person.

There are today reasons for a new emphasis in Christology. While large sections of the Church still formally adhere to the old formula, many never stop to reflect upon what it may mean. It therefore reflects a faith that is barren of results in the influencing and ordering of life. If a man does stop to consider the meaning of the creeds formulated by councils or the

¹ Philip Schaff, op cit p. 34

definitions made by theologians, he is apt to succeed only in puzzling himself more than ever. So the ancient descriptions of the Man of God live on, partly because they lie isolated and insulated from serious thought, and are accepted because of their hoary antiquity and supposed authority, as being the pronouncements of ecumenical Councils and, therefore, the very acme of orthodoxy. To suggest deviations from the creedal formulations of Nicea or Chalcedon is almost sure to be taken as a repudiation of the Trinity and to be considered as the rankest heresy by those who have practically no concept of what the doctrine of the Trinity may mean.

Danger of a deadening formalism always lurks near when a doctrine is held merely because it is considered as authoritative and not because it is seen to be intrinsically valuable, or definitely desirable, or altogether indispensable. Now a doctrine of the person of Christ which attempts to make its definition in terms of an unknowable "substance" creates just this situation. It attempts to define the more familiar in terms of the less familiar and tends to muddy the waters instead of settling them. Strife and confusion instead of peace and understanding are the result. If the doctrine be soft-pedaled, still it may not be easy to maintain a robust faith in a very real and living Person, if the definitions of that One are shrouded in mystery and fogged with philosophical speculations.

This is the chief trouble with creeds. Men still try to hold by them even when they repudiate them with mental

reservations, equivocations, rationalizations, and allegorical subterfuges. This is not only a sin against intellectual honesty but may also have serious repercussions in the realm of moral integrity. Moreover in such a situation, it is easier for skepticism, infidelity, and cynicism to flourish. The genuine body of Christianity may be wounded by the sharp thrust of someone who is trying to cut away some unworthy garment in which Christianity has been wrongfully clothed.

Another trouble with an authoritative creed is that it prohibits further thought on the subject. If it was written in terms of a philosophy which was current at the time, that philosophy may long since have passed into the discard. In spite of the fact that creed makers may be trying honestly to state a genuine truth, that truth may be endangered seriously because of the very form of its expression. It is legitimate, even imperative to offer definitions to the best of our ability, but these should stimulate and encourage further thought on the subject and must not be made the test of faith. We cannot save a truth by embalming it. We cannot destroy a truth by using it. In the stream of human experience it finds its life again, in fact never loses it.

There is undoubtedly a great truth involved in the Nicean and post Nicean Christological discussions. The doctrine of the Trinity seeks to express something which is fundamental in human experience. But the question arises: is it best stated in that way?

There is no doubt value in the creedal formulations. But is there not a better way to state our definitions? Our idea of substance at best is ignorance, admitted in Locke's own words: "Of substance we have no idea of what it is and only a confused idea of what it does."¹

Only our mental processes constitute knowledge. Only spirit with spirit can meet. Therefore, the sum total of our knowledge must be stated in terms of thinking, feeling, and willing, or the processes of consciousness; and whether our knowledge is reasoned or revealed, or both, this is still true. The only thing of which I can have first hand knowledge is my own mind. The only thing I can be immediately aware of is mind. We define a spirit functionally as that which thinks, feels, and wills; and functional definitions in these terms bring us nearer than any other to an understanding of the being of anything or anyone. For practical considerations, we may agree with Sir Henry Jones: "A thing is what it does."²

There are further values of the most practical kind derivable from a functional definition of Jesus. If we understand Jesus in terms of what he thought, felt, and willed, we shall know how we should think, feel, and will. In this way we truly shall catch his spirit and become true followers of him. In this way we shall become like him and be united with him and

¹Cf John Locke, Essay on Human Understanding, 1690 Bk. II
Ch. XXIII

²Sir Henry Jones, A Faith That Enquires, (Macmillan Co., 1922)

with God the Father. This kind of definition is edifying, truly builds us up. This is where the emphasis should be. This is where the emphasis should always have been. This is where we must put the emphasis or we shall cease to be Christian in any vital sense of the word. Only by understanding the reason, the emotions, the purposes of Jesus, and by bringing ourselves into harmony with these, shall we find that redemption which is salvation indeed. Some may reject Jesus and follow another. At least the issues are clear. The Christian is a Christian because he believes that Christ has the "words of eternal life," The importance of this study cannot therefore be over-estimated both for its bearing on Christology and also for its bearing upon the practical activities of the church as expressed in evangelism by which men are converted to Christ; in religious education, by which they are built up in him; and in worship.

Our attempts to understand Jesus in this manner should lead to a greater appreciation of his person and a more effective service in his name. The tragedy of fruitless discussion is emphasized in one of Dr. Halford Luccock's sketches.

Before the Christian Church in North Africa there unrolled the opportunity to win a whole continent for Christ. Not often in history, before or since, had conditions seemed to conspire so as to make possible the swift extension of Christianity over so vast an area. But they were 'discussing something'. All their energies were being spent in acrimonious doctrinal controversies. They were so busy slaughtering each other's arguments, and finally each other, that they had no strength or desire to unite against paganism. Jesus was saying to them, 'Go ye into all Africa' and 'lo I am with you always.' But they were too busy with their epithets and arguments.¹

1. Halford E. Luccock, Preaching Values (The Abingdom Press) 1928
p. 75

In this thesis we shall be interested in giving a functional definition of the person of Christ. We might define him in terms of bodily behavior, or as a social being. We shall limit our field to the mind of Christ. To study his intellect, emotions, and will, gives us a comprehensive understanding of his mind and a functional definition of his person. Such a description of Jesus would provide us with a Christology which would be both understandable and useful. Lack of space compels a further limitation in this thesis. We must confine our study of the mind of Christ to his intellectual processes. Even here we must make a further limitation and omit detailed description of his perceptions, which we assume were normal. This leaves for consideration those most important mental processes consisting of memory, imagination, reason, understanding, and judgment and leaves out his emotions and will. We stay very close to the New Testament and shall attempt to illustrate his intellectual processes by quotations, mostly from the four Gospels.

It is the purpose of this thesis to set forth the intellectual processes of Christ as a partial definition or description of his person. It is our conviction that the superhuman or divine character of the person of Christ is revealed in his intellectual processes, and that they would be further revealed and emphasized in a similar study of his emotions and his will as they were expressed in his love and his purpose.

No one could be more conscious of the limitations of this study than the author. Nevertheless such a study has enormous value. It is vital in nature but partial in scope. And, anyway, the Person of Christ defies all definition and overflows all description. We understand as best we can, and then we must love, worship, and adore.

CHAPTER II

THE MIND OF CHRIST IN YOUTH

Before taking up our study of the memory, imagination, and reason of Jesus, it will be well to give attention to his youth, to those growing years when he was becoming a man. This will possess value because it will help to indicate the sources of his knowledge and the manner in which his personality developed.

It must be made very clear that our attempt to present an analysis of the intellect of Christ can succeed only partially. In the first place, the records of his life are very fragmentary. This is particularly true of the first thirty years of his life, those years of growth in mind and body. Even the account of his public ministry is abbreviated, and as John tells us with respect to his own account: "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book."¹

In the second place, the character of Christ was so unique that, even if our records were fuller, the task would still remain difficult. The case is further complicated by the fact that we have no first hand information concerning the inner life of Jesus because he left no written documents, so far as we know. The picture we have of him is produced by the manner in which he impressed himself upon those who knew and

¹John 20:30

companioned with him.

Nevertheless, there is no reason why an analysis of the intellect of Christ should not be good as far as it goes. The gospel writers do give us an intelligible picture of him, and a discriminating choice is evident in their selection of material. Moreover, the fact that we know Jesus through the way in which he acted upon his contemporaries, ^{means that} we are the more easily enabled to define his person in functional terms. While the disciples sometimes proved to be slow in their apprehension of the ideas and purposes of Jesus, they do seem, nevertheless, to have faithfully recorded his words, even when they did not understand them. They seem to have been slow in apprehending the extent and nature of the Kingdom.¹ Still the implications of Jesus' teaching concerning the kingdom are very clear. They had difficulty in understanding why suffering and death should come to their Master, but the picture is presented in vivid detail. We, therefore, may have reasonable assurance in concluding that when we analyze and understand Jesus as he is set forth by the Gospel writers, we have a picture of him which is scholastically satisfactory and functionally adequate.

Luke has drawn the curtain ever so slightly on the boyhood of Jesus, but that glance is most illuminating. The one simple statement which covers his life (exclusive of the infancy narratives) to the age of twelve is packed with significance:

¹Acts 1:6 "Lord dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel," See also Chapters 10, 11, and 15. of Acts

"And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him."¹ From this we learn that Jesus grew not only in a normal manner, but that his was a healthy growth. He was not sickly. He was not bothered with physiological or psychological disturbances. He was a vigorous lad. There is no suggestion here of abnormality, either in mind or body.

Jesus was becoming filled with wisdom. Certainly he would be instructed, as would all Jewish children, in the history of his race, in the learning and traditions of his people, in the Messianic hopes of his nation. This would especially obtain in a pious home such as his undoubtedly was.

He learnt as all Hebrew boys learnt by heart the collection of the sacred writings. He drank deep draughts of those dear dreams and hopes which all Hebrew mothers kept clean and bright in the cupboard of their faith."²

The home in Nazareth, the synagogue, the streets and market place, the passing caravans, the visit or visits to the Holy city; all provided Jesus with a rich fund of knowledge, with data which he afterward used with such remarkable wisdom in illustrating and otherwise setting forth the nature and extent of the Kingdom and the essential qualities pertaining to those who would become members of it.

The visit to the Temple at the age of twelve throws much light forward and backward in the life of Jesus. We are

¹Luke 2:40

²T. C. McClelland, The Mind of Christ, (Thomas Crowell & Co.) p. 35

interested in the unusual manner in which Jesus responded to this new environment into which he suddenly came. Luke's account of this visit does much to reveal to us the quality of his intellectual, emotional, and volitional processes. The perceptions which were his of the scenes around him were, we have no reason for supposing, otherwise than normal and the same as those of his childhood comrades. But his handling of them and the meaning they came to have for him were certainly far different from that belonging to anyone else in the group. Along with others he doubtless possessed a boyish enthusiasm in visiting the city so dear to his people and in seeing the Great Temple venerated by all.

We are justified in saying that for Jesus the city and temple possessed peculiar charm because he associated it much more closely with the God of Israel, the Heavenly Father, than did any of his boyish comrades.

It was His Father's city whose streets He trod; His Father's house He visited for prayer; His Father's ordinance the crowds were assembled to observe; His Father's name, too, they were dishonoring by their formalism and hypocrisy.¹

It is very probable that it was this visit to the Temple and the conversation with the Rabbis which gave that first great impetus to his understanding of the unsatisfactory state of religion as it was conceived, practiced and administered by the religious leaders of his day. As a boy in Nazareth he was

¹Int. Standard Bible Ency. Art. Jesus Christ, John J. Maclaren
Vol. III P. 1634

likely already aware of imperfections among the townspeople back home, now it would be plain to him that even the religious leaders were falling short. Because of his intelligent insight,

It is not at all improbable that the teachers failed to satisfy his mind with their answers to his questions. ... on this occasion was at least begun that process of painful discovery of human imperfections which he had to pass through to qualify himself for his work... that he might be able to save. He had to discover how great was the need of salvation. That sad lesson was not improbably begun at this first visit to the temple.¹

Because of his emotion of love, his sensitive spirit would recoil at every manifestation of human unkindness, and his keen intellect would be quick to detect any misapprehensions of Scripture, especially if these did violence in any way to human well being. While the doctors were amazed at his understanding and his answers, he was doubtless just as amazed at some of theirs. That sturdy will of his, which seems already to have been tied to the will of God and intent on accomplishing His purposes, would make it easy for him to tarry long enough even to miss the caravan returning home.

When Jesus explored Jerusalem with the natural curiosity of a boy and the devoted sentiment of a Jew, it was for him the Holy City of his ancestor David. He saw the same things along the streets and in the shops as the rest of the boys in his company saw. In street and shop and temple, the same perceptions came to all. But how differently Jesus responded to them. Very

¹A. E. Garvie, The Inner Consciousness of Jesus
(New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son) pp. 111, 112

different indeed was the meaning they had for him. The difference lay not in the perceptions themselves, but in the work of his emotions arousing his understanding. Jesus saw, heard, and felt the same things, but for him they revealed a Father's love and a human negligence, which were not understood by his companions.

Following the Temple experience, Jesus returned to Nazareth and was "subject" to Mary and Joseph.¹ Of these years when youth developed into young manhood, we know very little. Again Luke gives us a summary statement. From this we learn that Jesus' growth continued in a normal manner. For this period of eighteen years we have the simple statement of Luke: "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."² When we see him next in his appearing at Jordan, we sense his full orbed personality. There is nothing contradictory of the early years but rather the rich fruitage of those eighteen years of growth. During these years Jesus was gathering a wealth of experience. We may say that his response to his environment throughout was characterized by that same quality of emotion and understanding which was so clearly present in earlier years, and which gave to his mind meanings so different and so much more valuable. He was securing an understanding of the issues of life so essential to the work of salvation.

¹Luke 2:51

²Luke 2:52

It has been pointed out that the environment in and around Nazareth itself was most stimulating. Nazareth, though in distant Galilee, was far from an out-of-the-way place. As the land of Palestine was in the midst of the nations, so Galilee was in the midst of commerce from afar, at one of the crossroads of nations. The environment was rich and stimulating in different ways.

In the little hill town was the solitude for the quickening of the spiritual sense, and just a step away was the stirring atmosphere of the thronging world, the unveiling of the race. (On the hill top just outside the city he could see the main caravan route crossing Palestine on the plain below) In this seed plot, Jesus grew secretly and silently. No eye may search out the subtle agents which in the workshop of his soul wove those vast ideas and ideals which made him what he was.¹

From Luke's account of the mind of Jesus in his youth, we learn that he was bright, possessing keen insight, deep understanding, a strong emotion and a consecrated will. Luke tells us that the grace of God was upon him. We know therefore that there was something winsome about him, something strongly suggesting the good, the beautiful, and the true. From the picture which the gospel writers have given to us, we may conclude that in his childhood Jesus embodied the characteristics of ideal childhood, and in his manhood he embodied the characteristics of ideal manhood. Both as a child and as a man, Jesus represented what ideal humanity ought always to be.

Jesus, we may say, is to be distinguished from other

¹T. C. McClelland, op cit.

men in the matter of his intellectual life, mainly in the use which he makes of his memory, his imagination, and his reason. Therefore, we need not spend time discussing the perceptions of Jesus. These, according to our records, were normal. Jesus saw, heard, and tasted as other men. He ate, he slept, he woke, he grew tired and hungry, and was refreshed as other men. Jesus was a flesh and blood man possessing the appetites and passions, even the physical characteristics common to all men. There is no doceticism in the Gospels. There is no asceticism in the Gospels. Jesus did not condemn the flesh but taught men how to purify it, use it, and glorify it. The later ethical dualism between matter and spirit had no roots in him.

Jesus did do considerable teaching for the purpose of instructing and persuading us to use our bodies and our minds effectively in the service of God and of man. In order to accomplish this with the maximum of results, or in order to attain the ideal results, we must think, feel, and will in the way which will build morally perfect individuals in an ideal society. Our intellectual processes must attain the true; our emotional processes must attain the beautiful, our willing processes must attain the good. This is the major problem facing humanity. These are the important matters to consider in a study of Christ. In the present study we are considering the intellectual processes only. To a phase of these, the memory, we now turn.

CHAPTER III

THE MEMORY OF CHRIST

It is our purpose in this chapter to discuss the intellect of Christ as it functioned in memory. We define memory as William James defined it.

Memory proper, or secondary memory as it might be styled, is the knowledge of a former state of mind after it has already once dropped from consciousness; or rather it is the knowledge of an event, or fact, of which meantime we have not been thinking, with the additional consciousness that we have thought or experienced it before.¹

How strong was the memory of Jesus? We have no way of answering this question as it relates to past events in his own life or ^{to} the experiences of his associates. In the first place, his life was short and his public ministry very brief indeed. During these days of ministration, his life was so crowded that there was little opportunity for reflections of the past. Jesus lived out on the cutting edge of life. He was definitely in the present tense. He did not dwell backward in the past or leap forward into the future. He lived in a dynamic present and met every contingency head-on. Had he lived to be an old man reaching the age of reminiscence, and had he written some of his thoughts down or transmitted them orally, we would have more comprehensive data respecting his memory. But he did not live to old age, neither did he set down in writing anything, so far as the records indicate, except the time he wrote in the sand.

¹William James, *The Principles of Psychology*
(Henry Holt Co., 1890) Vol. I p. 648

There is one suggestion, however, which would seem to indicate that he treasured many things in memory and spoke of them as occasion required. His comparison of the Scribe to the householder who "bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old"¹ would seem to indicate an experience of memory not unfamiliar to himself. That he was quick to recall incidents when they enabled him to enforce some moral or religious teaching is shown in the incident when some came to him speaking of Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices; and doubtless there was the taunt that these Galileans were sinners beyond others. Immediately he remembers an incident when a tower in Siloam fell killing several inhabitants of Jerusalem and asks if this proves any special perfidy on their part. Then follows his admonition showing how even his memory served the great purpose of his life, which was to bring men to moral perfection. "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."²

But there is another and an excellent source for determining the memory of Jesus, which fully substantiates his ability to recall that which he needs, when he needs it, in the carrying out of his great purpose. This is clearly illustrated in his ability to remember and ^{to} quote Scripture. Scattered through the Gospel records are numerous references of his to

¹Matthew 13:52

²Luke 13:5

writings contained in the Old Testament. These he appears to have used in at least three well defined ways: First, in times of personal strain or stress; second, to meet the arguments of his foes; third, to illucidate or to enforce his teachings. He seems to have possessed marvelous skill in quickly drawing forth from memory that which was most pertinent to the situation at hand. He evidently knew and remembered large portions of Scriptures. This is only what might be expected of a young Jew, trained in the synagogue and in a pious home where the ideal of learning was that the mind is like a cistern holding everything which enters into it. In Jesus' case this is borne out by the wide range of his quotations, which are taken from ^{the} books of Law, History, The Prophets, and The Psalms.

The Temptation of Jesus, mentioned by Mark and more fully treated by Matthew and Luke, is usually regarded as a struggle in the mind of Jesus as to whether He would be the kind of Messiah desired by his people or the kind which they needed; whether He would take the easy, popular way or the hard road which only would lead to success in terms of human salvation.

However taken, the Temptation was indisputably a time of deep travail of spirit. As each temptation presented itself, the memory of Jesus brought forth an appropriate, "It is written." The answers which Jesus brings to the temptations are as follows:

Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.¹

¹Matt. 4:4 cf Deut. 8:3

Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.¹

Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.²

At the close of his life, when in the agony of crucifixion, we find Psalms coming to expression on his lips.

My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me.³

Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.⁴

The memory of Jesus likewise served him well in meeting the arguments of his foes. The Scriptures which he had learned in synagogue and at home came to him in the hour of need through his religiously directed memory and served him well. When the Pharisees found fault with the disciples of Jesus for plucking grain on the Sabbath day, he said:

Did ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was hungry, he and they that were with him? How he entered into the house of God when Abiathar was highpriest, and ate the shewbread, which it is not lawful to eat, save for the priests, and gave also to them that were with him.⁵

According to the Midrash this took place on the Sabbath, which indicates that Jesus had knowledge of the traditions of his people. In defending himself at Nazareth, he makes references to situations in the days of Elijah and Elisha.⁶ When the Sadducees objected to the doctrine of the resurrection and proposed a hypothetical case based on Levirate marriage, Jesus accused them of not knowing the scriptures and said:

¹Matt. 4:7 cf Deut. 6:16

²Matt. 4:10 cf Deut. 6:13

³Matt. 27:46 cf Psalm 22:1

⁴Luke 23:46 cf Psalm 31:5

⁵Mark 2:25,26 cf I Sam. 21:6

⁶Luke 4:27

Have ye not read in the book of Moses, in the place concerning the Bush, how God spake unto him saying: I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living: ye do greatly err.¹

Later on in the same twelfth chapter of Mark, where a controversy with the Scribes is recorded, we find Jesus quoting Psalm 110, verse 1. Again in the same chapter when asked which is the first commandment, he answers by quoting Deuteronomy 6:4 ff. This was the famous Shema which was worn by the pious Jew in his phylacteries.

In his public teaching Jesus had recourse to the Old Testament and made quotations from it. The so-called Sermon on the Mount affords a good illustration. In the fifth chapter of Matthew, there are as many quotations from the Old Testament, introduced by the phrase, "ye have heard that it was said."

These are as follows:

Matt. 5: 21 cf Ex. 20: 13; Deut. 5:17
 Matt. 5: 27 cf Ex. 20: 14; Deut. 5:18
 Matt. 5: 33 cf Lev. 19: 12; Num. 30:2; Deut. 23: 21
 Matt. 5: 38 cf Ex. 21: 24; Lev. 24: 20; Deut. 19: 21
 Matt. 5: 43 cf Lev. 19: 18

At the close of his famous parable of the Wicked Husbandmen in which he speaks accusingly of the cupidity of the Jewish religious leaders he appends a quotation from one of the Psalms.

Have ye not read even this scripture:
 The stone which the builders rejected,
 The same was made the head of the corner.²

¹Mark 12: 26, 27 cf Exodus 3: 15

²Mark 12: 10 cf Ps. 118: 22 ff

Again we find him saying: "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written" ¹ Jesus also makes reference to the ancient city of Sodom (Matt. 11: 23), to Jonah (Matt. 12: 40), to Solomon (Matt. 12: 42), and to Daniel the prophet (Matt. 24: 15).

There is obviously a reference to Hosea 6: 6 in the following:

But go ye and learn what this meaneth, I desire mercy and not sacrifice: for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners ²

So many and so marked are the quotations and allusions of Jesus to the Old Testament that Mr. Bundy says:

Jesus' Old Testament allusions and quotations, his words that have an Old Testament atmosphere about them, have a surprisingly wide range; they strike three-fourths of the Old Testament writings. ³

Some feel that his words reveal a familiarity with Ecclesiasticus and other non-canonical Jewish writings.

This should suffice to indicate that Jesus possessed a good memory and that he had it under his control, that it was integrated with his life purpose, and that he used it to accomplish his ends. The brief study also reveals something about the quality of Jesus' person, or his character. The books to which Jesus refers most frequently are the Psalms, Deuteronomy, and some of the prophets, notably Isaiah. Jesus was definitely in the line of the prophets rather than the priests. His

¹Mark 7: 6 cf Isaiah 29: 13

²Matt. 9: 13

³Bundy, The Religion of Jesus, (Bobbs-Merrill Co.) pp. 14, 15

viewpoint was ethical, vital, and prophetic rather than legalistic, formal, and priestly. Bundy catches this characteristic and says:

Certain of the Old Testament writings seem to have made very little impression on Jesus, particularly those writings that were products of official and organized religion. A book like Leviticus he neglects almost entirely; from its heart he extracts its one great passage.¹

The passage to which Dr. Bundy refers is the famous one found at Leviticus 19: 18, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Our brief study of the memory of Jesus reveals to us that the Old Testament constituted one of the roots of his religious knowledge and devotion, and that his memory functioned well in matters pertaining to religion as it is truly related to real issues of life. The consecration of Jesus' intellect to his great purpose of establishing a kingdom of morally perfect individuals in relationships that are ideal, both as regards other and as regards God, is here revealed in the functioning of his memory in reproducing commonly accepted Scripture to solve the problems which confronted him. Sometimes these problems had to do with his own temptations, sometimes his own sorrows, sometimes to defend the religious position which he took against that taken by those who opposed him. It is our contention that the memory of Jesus was functioning in a perfectly god-like manner; in the way in which God would like to see it function in every human being.

¹ibid p. 29

CHAPTER IV

THE IMAGINATION OF CHRIST

Imagination is closely akin to memory. It is a reproductive process of the mind. Professor William James introduces his discussion of the subject in the following manner:

Sensations, once experienced, modify the nervous organism, so that copies of them arise again in the mind after the original stimulus is gone.¹

It is therefore a process of imaging; and the ability to do so varies from mind to mind, and from time to time in the same mind. The after image may be distinct or blurred, vivid or dim. This power to form images is integral in our thinking, so much so that, as James points out, the individual with strong powers of visual imagination may wonder how those without this faculty can think at all, for some people, he says, "undoubtedly have no visual images worthy of the name."² While visual images are the most common, some individuals have strong auditory images and others touch images. Imagination is, therefore, of the utmost importance in thought. Wrongly employed it may lead to error, but rightly directed it is not only respectable but is indispensable to correct thinking.

This power of the mind makes it possible to put images together in new combinations. In this chapter the term

¹William James, The Principles of Psychology,
(Henry Holt Co., 1890) Vol. II p. 44

²ibid Chap. XVIII

imagination is used in the usual psychological sense, by which we mean man's ability to put together old material in new ways; to analyze and synthesize ideas--a process called conception. Or we may state it differently: the imagination working on such data as it has at its disposal fashions it into ideas, then into systems, and so we form our science, philosophy, and theology. This is constructive imagination.

By means of our imagination, we organize our society, build our dwellings, put together our machines, and develop our civilization. A machine or a building exists first in the mind, then we incarnate the idea in steel or stone. Imagination is the great constructive, creative force or function of the mind. It works by taking the stuff of sensation and ordering it into objects by combining colors, sounds, touches, et cetera. It ranges over the whole experience and helps to form our consciousness. It may be dissipated in wild dreams and fancies, but when under the control of reason and integrated with a true purpose, it becomes the great creative force of the mind.

The imagination functions in different ways. It may magnify objects and experiences or it may make them smaller. It may bring forth a story of giants or dwarfs. It may form a conception of an atom or of a spiral nebulae. It may construct a view of a micro-cosmos or of a macro-cosmos. The imagination may select out parts of an experience or an object and subject them to examination. It may bring together old objects in new

relations. It also functions in memory in re-imaging past experiences.

It is clearly seen that the working of the imagination in its selections and in its combinations is of prime importance in the production of different forms of consciousness and hence different types of mind. Clearly the activity of the imagination will be guided by the dominant sentiment and the guiding purpose of the individual.

In our study of the imagination of Jesus we shall use the term in its usual psychological sense. We are interested in the images which Jesus presents for us, in his selection of material and the vividness with which he presents it, also in the charm and beauty with which he clothes his pictures. The unusualness of some of his pictures will be noted.

The first thing which strikes us about the imagination of Jesus is that there is an absence of day dreaming, idle thinking, fancies and wild speculations, which is unlike so many human religious founders. Jesus was not tempted into building legends, fabricating myths, nor in presenting amazingly impossible eschatological visions. Nor was he emotionally extravagant as sometimes appears among individuals under the influence of strong religious emotion.¹ With a remarkable common sense, Jesus avoided myths, fairy tales, and wonder stories. He did not follow the Apocalyptic seers, like Ezekiel or Daniel. He

¹As the story told concerning one such who desired upon reaching heaven to "bathe his soul in the sea of glass."

refused to set a date for the end of the world. He drew no lurid or fantastic picture of the hereafter as so many religious teachers of his day had done in the apocryphas of the imaginative Jews. The imagination of Jesus did not run wild, but functioned sanely and constructively.

The imagination of Christ, like his memory, was religiously directed. It was fired by and under the control of his dominant emotion which was love. It was led by his guiding purpose which was the establishment of the kingdom of Heaven. This concept of the Kingdom of Heaven represents the crowning achievement of his superb imagination. By this is surely meant the ideal relationships which obtain between morally perfect individuals. There are no limits of time or space to this kingdom. It is designed for all, forever. Men are to be brought into complete harmony with the law of their own being and with the universe as a whole. Or to state it more simply, men are to be integrated within themselves, brought into harmonious relationships with each other and into companionship with the Heavenly Father, whose will, which is for their good, they know and do. Men must think, feel, and will as God does, or at least in harmony with God. The mind of man will then act truly, even as it ought to act. The Kingdom of Heaven is builded upon the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. To love God and our neighbor as ourself is to fulfill the law.

Jesus is interested in presenting the features of the Kingdom of Heaven and the qualifications of those who may enter

it. The thirty or more parables are obviously told with this in view. In addition there are many brief but exceeding picturesque sayings which set forth some necessary characteristics in vivid images. Metaphors and other figures of speech are used with telling effect. Jesus' word pictures shimmer in beauty and glow with meaning. Some of them are caricatures, almost verbal cartoons, for humor is by no means absent from Jesus. The picture of the man swallowing a camel and gagging at a gnat is one in point. But whether humorous or sad, somber or radiant, the word pictures of Jesus make their meaning obvious and irresistible. They are sheer works of art, their beauty is undeniable. The imagination of Jesus, working constructively and under the guidance of reason with a purpose, presents to us unmatched images of the good, the beautiful and the true.

That collection of sayings in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of the Gospel according to Matthew contains many illustrations of the quality of Jesus' imagination and the use he made of it for human betterment. The Beatitudes, themselves, are revelational of the creativity of Jesus in putting together ideas which do not seem to belong together, and doing it in such a way that once they are joined, it is easily seen that they should not be separated. In these beatitudes Jesus mentions some of the qualities of character which bring the individual into the blessedness of the Kingdom. Familiar qualities they are of which he speaks but he puts them together

in new combinations, which at first thought appear to be exceedingly strange combinations. They are so different from the combinations which the "wisdom of the world" would dictate that they appear amazingly different; yet who can reasonably deny their validity. Blessedness is combined with "the poor in spirit," "they that mourn," "the meek," "they that hunger and thirst after righteousness," "the merciful," "the pure in heart," "the peacemakers," "they that have been persecuted for righteousness sake." Moreover in these verses mourning is associated with comfort, meekness with possession, hunger and thirst with satiety.¹

In this "Sermon on the Mount," such common objects as salt, candles, bushel measures are imaged in such a way as to become telling examples of human folly and wisdom. Jesus looks at the salt, thinks of its preservative and seasoning value, and sees there an image of the important place which the children of righteousness, the true sons of the Kingdom, occupy in the world. Even worthless salt which has lost its purity and its strength and is strewn over roads and pathways, becomes for him a vivid picture of individuals who have lost their virtue and their usefulness. Men frequently neglect or refuse to use their talents and hide them away without considering that they have done anything unreasonable. Jesus shows how futile and how foolish is such a course of action by comparing such an one with the individual who lights a candle and then puts it out

¹Matt. 5: 1-12

of sight under a bushel. This rather ludicrous picture conveys a sober thought. It is almost a cartoon but it displays the beautiful artistry of Jesus. The Master's creative imagination is at work constructively and redemptively. If Jesus were in the flesh today and desirous of correcting this common fault, who knows what vivid illustrations he might draw of electric lights installed above the ceiling or beneath the floor, of street lights with opaque covers, of auto head lamps with shutters. Men light lamps for light. They have talents for use.

Even so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.¹

Psychologists declare that there is no more benighted mind than a divided personality. Jesus saw this too and illustrates the moral failure of a double minded man in the following vivid manner.

The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.²

The value of singleness of purpose which is so essential to success and to mental peace and is of the very essence of sanity, is here vividly portrayed, and with it the suggestion that that purpose had better be a righteous one. The tragedy of the man whose one consuming purpose in life is that of dark

¹Matt. 5: 16

²Matt. 6: 22. 23

evil is presented in the saying: "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness."¹ Lust, greed, hatred, selfish ambition are all dark lights and when these are followed as lights--how great is the darkness!

Jesus sees the birds flying in the heavens, he sees them nesting in the trees, building their nests, rearing their young; he observes them eating, he hears them singing--these are familiar sights and sounds to all. They mean more to some than to others. For Jesus they are unmistakable evidences of the providence of God even for small creatures. They become evidence incontrovertible that the God of all the stellar worlds is vitally interested in this one, and in the creatures which inhabit it. The God of the Pleiades and Orion is the God of birds and men. He bears such helpful relations that in spite of His majesty and glory we may still call Him the Heavenly Father. Here is imagination superb, operating constructively in reason.

One of the most striking pictures drawn by Jesus, in which the elements of humor and exaggeration appear, is the one about two men, each of whom has something in his eye.² One of these has a large object in his eye, a δοκός a beam, a log, a huge timber; and he is trying to extract a tiny speck, a κάρφος a mote, a dry fragment of straw from the eye of his companion! Getting bits of straw and chaff in the eye is a common practice

¹Matt. 6: 23

²Matt. 7: 1-5

among harvesters. Jesus no doubt had witnessed many times the threshing of grain, perhaps had handled the flail; but finding in this a picture of big sinners trying to save little ones--well, that is Jesus' contribution. Humor? Yes. We open our mouth to laugh and the sober truth comes in. Is this sarcasm? No. Is this unkind? No. Is it searching? Yes. The imagination of Jesus was love-lit, salvation-bent. That is why it proves to be constructive and redemptive.

Jesus, as some others, was impressed with the futility of telling some things to some people. To persist in attempting to do so may cease to be a virtue and take on the proportions of a vice. But just look at the image which his mind forms, the inescapable force of the picture which he draws.

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before the swine, lest hapily they trample them under their feet, and turn and rend you.¹

There are other vivid images in the Sermon on the Mount, all pregnant with meaning: images of men knocking at doors; images of loaves, fishes, stones, serpents; images of narrow gates and broad roads; images of false men as wolves in sheep's clothing; images of grapes growing on thorns and figs on thistles; images which present unmistakable lessons of incalculable merit. Light is thrown on essential characteristics of the Kingdom and on the men who are to comprise it, as well as those who are not fit subjects for it.

¹Matt. 7: 6

At the close of the Sermon on the Mount appears a picture of surpassing beauty. It is the story of two men and two houses.¹ It is a model for short story writing. It is drama par excellence. It is preaching plus. It contains images both awful and sublime. It is a story of defeat and victory. Its force is inescapable, its meaning unmistakable, its challenge abiding. It reveals to us the imagination of Jesus at work--sorting, sifting, arranging, combining data of sense experiences with a definite redemptive end in view. Here is constructive imagination under the control of reason and guided by soteriological purpose.

Every one therefore which heareth these words of mine and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man which built his house upon the rock: and the rain descended and the floods came, and the wind blew and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock.²

The parables also constitute a rich source for illustration of the quality of Jesus' imagination. These parables, or "earthly stories with heavenly meanings" as they are sometimes popularly called, are scattered through all the Synoptics. There is a concentration of them in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew. The number of these vividly illustrative stories, as found in the four Gospels, is usually estimated at from thirty to thirty-five; the number depending upon whether certain brief illustrations are considered parables or merely figures of speech. These parables are sheer works of art. There is a beauty and vividness about them which impresses itself upon the

¹Matt. 7: 24-27

²Matt. 7: 24.25

mind, and the stories remain with one in indelible clearness.

These parables are told with a definite purpose in view. They are told to help mankind. They reveal aspects of the Kingdom of Heaven, they speak of desirable character traits. The commonest things are employed as vehicles for the ideas which Jesus wishes to convey. Seeds, soils, wheat, tares, meal, leaven, fishing-nets and other such commonplace articles are used. Under the magic touch of Jesus, they no longer remain commonplace or uninteresting but become suffused with light and glow in radiance. They become the messengers of a story which recommends itself to our calmest judgment as possessing supreme importance. They may inculcate a principle which appears new or untrue but, nevertheless, they carry with them a haunting conviction of their validity. Try as we will, we cannot escape them. We have in them a scientific justification of Jesus' claim to be "the way the truth and the life." We do not accept them because we have previously accepted some dogma concerning the person of Christ; they, themselves, become valuable contributing testimony to the person of Christ and assist us in the formulation of our view of that Person. We accept them because we cannot escape their logic. Moreover, in them we discover the divine quality of the person of Christ. The character of the word convinces us of its truth. Jesus believed in the ability of the unbiased mind to ascertain truth and to render good judgments.

Ye hypocrites, ye know how to interpret the face of the earth and the heaven; but how is it that ye know not how to interpret this time? And why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?¹

Many of the parables are drawn directly from nature.

Jesus does not take liberties with nature. He presents it as it is, in relation to man. He sees meanings in it which escape others but which, when he is through pointing them out, become so plain that others can hardly miss them. Fables are not employed by him. Brutes and inanimate objects do not talk in his parables, thus violating the order of nature. The imagination of Jesus is vivid and powerful but free from vagaries and wild flights of fancy.

Fable differs from parable in both these elements. It distorts earthly things in using them as a vehicle of instruction, making brutes and trees talk. This a parable never does; for nature, as God's wisdom made it, is far better adapted for teaching divine truths than nature as man's fancy can imagine it.²

In nature Jesus finds an index to the character of God, a clue to His will for man. He is true to his insight, he takes no liberties with nature.

The word itself which is used to designate these lessons from nature is very descriptive.³ It is a fair assumption that in the mind of Christ there was no radical difference between the way God works in nature (external world) and the way He works in human nature. God's work is of one piece, like

¹Luke 12: 56. 57

²H. D. B. Art. Parables Vol. III A. Plummer P.663

³Gr. παραβολή From παρα βάλω, meaning to place one thing beside another.

a seamless robe. There is no contradiction, no unbridgable chasm. An understanding of any part of reality throws light on all the rest. This is a universe, not a chaos. Order and harmony obtain throughout. Natural laws, moral laws, spiritual laws, are all god's laws. They are supplementary rather than contradictory. They are all reliable. We can count on them. If we gear in with them, they will help us. If we try to break them, they will break us. Professor Kirtley Mather speaks of our respect for "natural law" and says that we shall either come to have the same respect for moral and spiritual law, or we shall perish.¹ That one harmonious law embraces both the material and the spiritual world is a common concept. The idea is well stated by Dr. Drummond.²

Jesus finds many opportunities of illustrating spiritual truths from the world of things. By reference to the perfectly obvious ways of God in this realm, he draws what appear to be inescapable lessons for the guidance of human conduct; lessons throwing light on the nature and destiny of man.³ In these imaginative pictures drawn by Jesus, vegetative and psychological processes are frequently brought together in new combinations, and that with the one end in view of making plain the features of the Kingdom of Heaven.

¹Kirtley Mather, Science in Search of God,
(New York: Red Label Reprints) p. 153

²Henry Drummond, Natural Law in the Spiritual World

³The spiritual laws may have seemed just as obvious to Jesus as the natural laws, but by placing them alongside, they appear more convincing to the average mind.

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto" is a common introduction to the parables of Jesus. Then he places alongside of each other material objects and spiritual ideals. Old objects are put together in new combinations. In four kinds of dirt, or rather seed bed preparation, Jesus sees four kinds of mind.¹ Wheat and tares growing together in the same field remind him of how inextricably evil and good are connected, not only in society but also in one human life.² A mustard seed growing into a large herb becomes a picture of the growth of the Kingdom.³ Leaven working in meal becomes a striking revelation of the inner working of truth as it transforms human life.⁴

Jesus was familiar with the market place, with the caravans, and with other places and forms of business. Even here in this none too attractive flux of bargaining and exchange, his imagination finds material for one of his most beautiful parables: that of the merchant seeking goodly pearls.⁵ Here is a merchant with his bag full of small and mediocre gems. One day he finds a large pearl of surpassing beauty and of great cost. He desires this pearl beyond all else. Those which he has in his bag seem but as little in comparison with this thing of beauty. He sells all the pearls he has and buys this one pearl of great price. He feels he has made a good deal. The unimaginative see nothing here but another business

¹Matt. 13: 3-9

³Matt. 13: 31. 32

²Matt. 13: 24 - 30; 36-43

⁴Matt. 13: 33

⁵Matt. 13: 45, 46

transaction; those whose imaginations are restricted to the world of things because of carnal desires might proceed to visualize the beginning of a rare collection of superior pearls. But Jesus saw in this an opportunity to illustrate the surpassing preciousness of the Kingdom of Heaven. With him, this ideal relationship of ideal persons holds the center of the scene. This wise business transaction speaks to Him of the wisdom of placing first the Kingdom and its righteousness and of sacrificing all other goods before it.

When Jesus walks by the sea shore where fishermen sort their catch, retaining the good but throwing the worthless away, he finds a picture of the necessity and inevitability of judgment. Here among the smelly nets, he finds material which his imagination puts together into a picture illustrative of religious truth. Here is an illustration of the advisability, yes necessity, for the separation of good and evil men.¹

The evolutionary method of creation is visualized by Jesus in the parable of the growing grain and applied to the realm of character formation, as well as to the processes of vegetation. "The earth beareth fruit of herself," he says, "first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear."²

In the parable of The Wicked Husbandmen we find a graphic description of a vineyard with a hedge set about it, a winepress and a tower within it.³ We also see selfishness,

¹Matt. 13: 47-50

²Mark 4: 26-29

³Matt. 21:33-45

greed, cruelty, murder incarnated in husbandmen who should be exhibiting the traits of gratitude, usefulness, and love, for great privilege has been bestowed upon them. Jesus, with few words in this imaginative picture, depicts what Israel has done during the long years to her prophets, and what they are about to do to him. The point was unmistakable and the chief priests and the Pharisees "perceived that he spake of them."

The story of the Prodigal Son shows how Jesus could use his imagination to touch the deeps of human nature in a description of waywardness, selfrighteousness and forgiving, redeeming love.¹ Its literary excellence, its character analysis, its religious message is without parallel. In the parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Boy, ~~Jesus~~, Jesus discovers for us the inherent worth of the human being, the sacredness of the human personality.

When asked the question, Who is my neighbor?, Jesus counters with the story of the Good Samaritan. In this short sketch the imagery is vivid, the drama intense. There is a traveler, there are robbers, there are religiously barren religionists, there is a kind hearted Samaritan, but with this simple framework Jesus lays bare the basis for world wide peace and human wide brotherhood. Such is the character and quality of Jesus' imagination, which was constructive, creative, redemptive, unique, superhuman, divine. "His parables," says

¹Luke 15: 11-32

Plummer, "are miracles, both of literary beauty and instructive power."¹

The love lit imagination of Jesus, purpose bent on the salvation of mankind from the evils which beset it also finds expression in such figures as: "I am the light of the world,"² "I am the door of the sheep,"³ "I am the good shepherd,"⁴ "I am the vine, ye are the branches."⁵

Jesus also in imagination saw his approaching death.⁶ He visualized the destruction of Jerusalem.⁷ He formed a concept of the spaciousness and grandeur of God's universe.⁸

In the words of Jesus, we find images of surpassing beauty, both awful and sublime; images of the greatest didactic value. Stupendous indeed is his vision of a redeemed humanity, of an ideal society, of a kingdom of Heaven which is present and future, mundane and supermundane, life perfected now and forever.

¹H. D. B., Parables Plummer Vol. III P.663

²John 8: 12

³John 10: 7

⁴John 10: 11

⁵John 15: 5

⁶Matt. 16: 21-28 cf Mk. 8: 31 to 9: 1; also Luke 9: 22-27

⁷Matt. 24

⁸John 14: 2

CHAPTER V

THE LOGICAL REASON OF JESUS

In turning from the imagination of Jesus to his reason we are turning to a very vital part of our study. We shall consider the reason of Jesus under two heads: first, his formal or logical reason; second, his practical reason. The practical reason will be considered under the heads of understanding and judgment.

In considering the reason in general, we may define it functionally by saying that reason is that power of the mind which discovers resemblance and identity and which seeks for unity. This is done by a process of analysis and synthesis. Under the control of the dominant sentiment and purpose, values are assigned.

William James, in his *Principles of Psychology*, distinguishes between a man's thinking which is called reason and his other thought sequences which may lead to similar results through what might be called "immediate" or "unconscious" inference.¹ This latter process appears to be present also in the lower animals, the former only in man. By means of contiguity conclusions are reached without reason proper. This sort of thinking is merely reproductive or ruminative. Reason proper is productive of conclusions when we reason by similarity or logically. By process, first of analysis and then by abstraction,

¹William James, op cit Vol. II, Chap. XXII

we break up the whole and observe its separate attributes. The difficulty in the process consists in selecting the attribute which is the essential one for our purpose. The value in this process lies in the fact that we may discover properties possessed by the attribute which we did not see when looking at the whole, but which we now realize belongs to the whole. When this is done, the conclusions reached are attained through a process of "mediate" inference--thus the syllogism is formulated. The syllogism is of great aid to logical thought in that it facilitates the discovery of correct conclusions and assists in ruling out error. The mind is the better enabled to escape such fallacies as distributing a term in the conclusion which was not distributed in the premises; and by reaching non sequiter conclusions.

In this chapter we shall be interested in showing that many of Jesus' arguments are easily reducible to valid forms of the syllogism. With a very brief reference to the data and extent of Jesus' knowledge, we shall proceed to the giving of such examples of his logical thought processes as will substantiate the position which we have just taken.

Of the data which were at Jesus' disposal, we have already taken some note. He was familiar with the Scriptures of his people and makes numerous quotations and references to them, as has already been indicated. He was also familiar with the traditions, the customs, the hopes, and the dreams of his people. He took cognizance of the current scene with its social

its political, its economic, its religious strains and stains as well as virtues. He was a keen observer of men. He knew considerable about nature. Rural life and scenes he knew and loved. Similarities and contrasts were sharply defined in his consciousness. Members of the Rabbinical School wondered how this man could speak with such wisdom, never having learned. His evaluation of situations was penetrating, and his judgment of conduct reveals an understanding of superlative merit. His intuitive faculties were keen. He possessed a sense of immediacy in relationships with the life of creation, or better with the one true and living God, as conceived by his people who had reached a high stage of ethical monotheism. The prophets whose contribution had been great at this point, he knew and appreciated as is indicated by his use of them. The question is often raised as to the extent or limitation of Jesus' knowledge. There were clearly some things which he did not know. No claims of omniscience are made. On the other hand, the contrary is stated. "But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."¹ The prayer in the garden, and the cry on the cross seem to indicate the same. The reason is apparent, for, had it been otherwise, these experiences would have been largely empty forms. "To omniscience the experiences of Gethsemane and Calvary, as of the Temptation, would have been impossible."²

¹Mark 13: 32

²A. E. Garvie op cit p. 272

But we are not interested in speculating upon the theological problem of "limitations of Jesus' knowledge"; rather, we are concerned with the manner in which he handled the data of his knowledge. It is quite clear, as the author mentioned above points out, that "His perfect wisdom was not in any way affected by His imperfect knowledge."¹ Nor dare we say that his knowledge was imperfect in any way which vitally affected his mission. The extent of his knowledge and the nature of his wisdom are quite beyond us.

The excellence of Jesus' mastery of formal reason and his use of logical processes of thought are not always appreciated. Frequently a kind of arbitrariness is assigned to his statements; this, as if these were so merely because he made them. It is better to say that he made these statements because he was sure that they were so. If he was aware of these truths through revelation, the fact still remains that reason was functioning in the process; it was in fact, we think, a part of the revelation. Repeatedly he states logically the reasons for his conclusions. However the conclusion was arrived at, for himself, he employs logical processes of thought to bring others to the same position. In reading his discourses, it is remarkable how many times we find the words "for," "so," "therefore," "because." Jesus, it seems, gave reasons for his positions, and not only so, he encouraged others to use their own reason in the

¹A. E. Garvie, The Inner Life of Jesus, p. 282

in the evaluation of life and conduct. "And why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right," he said.¹ The freedom which he so ardently advocated included the freedom to think. There are limitations to reason and prerequisites for sound reason. Jesus honored this human power, he used it, appealed to it, and unquestionably recognized it as of divine origin. Jesus was not a dogmatist. He did not try to cram his words down others' throats but sought to make his statements clear, reasonable, and persuasive.

It is not difficult to throw many of the statements of Jesus into the form of the syllogism, so familiar to formal logic. His arguments may well be thus treated, and we give a few examples.

The conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well near Sychar affords us a convenient starting place. The conversation turned to a much mooted question of long standing between Jews and Samaritans: where is the proper place to worship God? The former said Jerusalem; the latter, Mount Gerizim. Had the average Jew (or most likely any of Jesus' disciples) been discussing this problem with the woman, it is reasonably certain that a furious and futile argument would have developed--one which would have engendered more heat than light, an argument which would have made its appeal to pride, prejudice, and passion rather than to reason. The woman thus raises the problem: "Our fathers worshiped in this

¹Luke 12: 57

mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."¹ Jesus answers as follows:

Believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father. . . . but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshipers. God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth."²

Two problems are raised here: the nature of God and the nature of worship. The woman raises the problem of worship and Jesus answers that problem by referring it to the nature of God. The woman would have no difficulty in accepting the statement of Jesus that God is a spirit, but hitherto she had not seen the implications of this position in the matter of worship. Three syllogisms are implicit in the argument of Jesus and they suffice to close the discussion. We state these as follows:

A Spirit has no geographical limitations
 God is a Spirit
 God has no geographical limitations

A God who has no geographical limitations may be worshiped in one place as well as another
 Jehovah is a God who has no geographical limitations
 Jehovah may be worshiped in one place as well as another

A spirit requires spiritual worship
 God is a Spirit
 God requires spiritual worship

Both major and minor premise in each syllogism is a universal affirmative. The mood in each case is AAA, which is a valid mood. There is no undistributed middle term. No rule of correct reasoning is violated. The case was made so plain that

¹John 4: 20

²John 4: 21-24

even this woman who might be expected to be slow of apprehension, as well as biased, was much impressed. She had already decided that Jesus was a prophet, now, without identifying Jesus as such, she thinks of the Messiah whom she connects with the one who shall "declare unto us all things." This means of course that the remarks of Jesus were so clearly and logically made that the woman immediately realized their reasonableness and their profundity, and she had no answer for them.

There is an interesting saying of Jesus recorded in the fifth chapter of John. Jesus has been challenged by the Jews for breaking the Sabbath by performing a cure; and no doubt there were other complaints in the minds of the accusers. He reasons that healing and health are more important than the formal observance of the Sabbath, which according to their traditions forbade the treatment of sickness on that day. His judgment seems particularly to be brought into question. In defending himself, Jesus, according to John, makes the following statement: "My judgment is righteous; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."¹ The argument is that, if an individual's judgment is motivated by his own will, it will likely be biased, selfish, and incorrect. He will be seeking his own interests rather than complete fairness. He will be guided by emotion rather than by reason, by self interest rather than by truth and justice. However if he is not seeking his own will, but the performance of a righteous will,

¹John 5: 30

yes more, if he is willing to sacrifice his own desires to accomplish the right will, then his judgment will be righteous. The righteousness of his judgment will depend upon whether he is seeking his own will or a righteous will. Jesus does not say he is seeking a righteous will but that he is seeking "the will of Him that sent me." From the context this is God. No Jew would deny that God's will was righteous. Therefore, they would agree with his major premise, namely, that he is seeking the will of God which is a righteous will. Jesus' argument put into syllogistic form becomes:

Those who seek a righteous will instead of their own
will, use righteous judgment
I seek a righteous will instead of my own will
I use righteous judgment

This syllogism is again of the form, AAA.

Once again, Jesus was opposed by the Pharisees who attempted to cast aspersion upon him by suggesting that his cures were performed by means of power derived from Beelzebub, the prince of the demons. The obviously evil attempt to nullify the effects of a good work by attributing it to an evil source brought forth the most scathing reply from Jesus. With that fairness which always characterized him, he said, you may be in doubt respecting myself; and, if so, that may be forgiven, overlooked, but it is utterly impossible to overlook or forgive that insincere spirit which deliberately attempts to confuse good with evil, or which calls good, evil. That is being untrue to the spirit of goodness and truth as you do understand it--is in fact irreverence and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and

such an attitude is unforgivable, now or any time. There is careful discrimination, sound reason, and good judgment in this argument. We find also syllogistic forms stated in the first remarks of Jesus following this accusation. To the Pharasaic accusation that Jesus cast out demons by the prince of demons, Jesus replied:

Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation. And every city or house divided against itself shall not stand; and if Satan casteth out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand?¹

The argument is simply this:

No divided kingdom can stand
Satan has a divided kingdom
Satan cannot stand (No Satan can stand)

This syllogism is of the EAE variety, which is valid. The argument could also be put into the AAA form without violence to the text. Closely following this is another one.

And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore shall they be your judges. But if I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the Kingdom of God come upon you.¹

This argument which must have been disturbing to his foes, amounts to this: According to your position,

Those who cast out demons, do so by the power of
Beelzebub
Your sons cast out demons
Your sons cast out demons by the power of Beelzebub

The conditional proposition of Jesus may also take the form of a constructive hypothetical syllogism.

¹Matt. 12: 27, 28

If I by the spirit of God cast out demons, then the
 Kingdom of God is come upon you,
 I by the Spirit of God cast out demons
 The Kingdom of God is come upon you

If they cared to deny his minor premise, he could give a dis-
 junctive syllogism which is really implicit in his words, namely

Either I cast out demons by the Spirit of God or by
 the Spirit of the Devil

The same would be true of their sons. This provides a neat
 little dilemma and its foes are caught between its horns. They
 are gored either by the fact that they are resisting the Kingdom
 of God or that their sons are in league with the devil, neither
 prospect being particularly delightful.

Attention already has been called to the parable of the
 Dragnet as constituting an example of the vivid imagery employed
 by Jesus in the illustration of religious truth. We also may
 find a syllogism within it. The illustration not only teaches
 the separation of the beneficial from the injurious, but the
 justification for such separation is made clearer by the picture
 drawn.

Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that
 was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind: which,
 when it was filled, they drew up on the beach; and they
 sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but the bad
 they cast away. So shall it be in the end of the world:
 the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from
 among the righteous."¹

The message may be cast into the following logical form:

That which is useless or injurious should be separated
 from that which is beneficial
 Evil men are useless and injurious
 Evil men should be separated from that which is beneficial

¹Matt. 13: 47-50

The parable might quite properly be called a pictorial syllogism. A similar treatment might also be made of the parable of the tares in the field, which is told and explained earlier in the chapter.

There has always been something fascinating about the story of Zacchaeus, the short man who climbed into a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, and Christendom has warmly commended the action of Jesus in inviting closer relations with the man. However he was criticized sharply by some who stood by, on the grounds that he had gone in to lodge with a man who was a sinner. For Jesus the clean cut stand which the man made for righteousness was sufficient to elicit his own approval. He announces that salvation is come to this house and gives a reason: "Forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham."¹ Then he adds another reason: "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost."² The first reason advanced was intended evidently for the Jews, who were alienated by the fact that Zacchaeus being a publican was regarded as having, in some sense, sold out to the Romans. The second reason is more thoroughly Jesus' reason; this is the real reason. There was advantage in the ad hominem argument which may clearly be put into the form of a syllogism, the major premise of which every Jew would accept most strongly. Yes, indeed, he would say that is just right.

¹Luke 19: 9

²Luke 19: 10

The sons of Abraham have salvation
 This man is a son of Abraham
 This man may have salvation

The major premise, which to Jesus' mind was axiomatic, was that lost men who are found are to be saved.

The so-called Beatitudes of Jesus, found in the first ten verses of the fifth chapter of Matthew, are among the best known and loved of all Jesus' sayings. Few recorded utterances receive so much attention as these. They are taught to children, preached to adults, memorized by many. The help which has been derived from them is incalculable. They are all incomplete syllogisms. In each beatitude the minor premise and the conclusion are given and the major premise is omitted. In each case the major premise is quite axiomatic and would usually receive general acceptance. The novel idea, which men would be most apt to question, is contained in the minor premise. The conclusion which seems at first to be quite startling, and perhaps not true, appears much more acceptable when seen as the logical conclusion of premises which can more readily be accepted. It is not necessary to state each of them fully. We do give the following:

Those who possess the Kingdom of Heaven are blessed
 The poor in spirit possess the Kingdom of Heaven
 The poor in spirit are blessed

Those that are comforted are blessed
 They that mourn are comforted
 They that mourn are blessed

Those that inherit the earth are blessed
 The meek shall inherit the earth
 The meek are blessed

Those that obtain mercy are blessed
The merciful shall obtain mercy
The merciful are blessed

In each case the major premise is quite obvious and would be generally accepted. It requires some considerable degree of knowledge and wisdom with penetration and discrimination, and the ability to extract a certain quality from the whole in order to assert the minor premises in each case. Once stated, however, it becomes easier to apprehend the truthfulness of each statement. The way is thus prepared for the acceptance of the logical conclusion which, without the premise, might appear to be somewhat fantastic.

We thus see that Jesus gave reasons for his judgments and that his reasoning was logical. The conclusions follow, if we accept his premises. Even though one should feel that the assumptions are a bit daring, he must still recognize the soundness of Jesus' reasoning.

It would be possible to go through the recorded sayings of Jesus, as contained in the four gospels, and to select other sayings which could be placed in syllogistic form. In fact it seems quite likely that many such could be so treated. This is quite enough to indicate that Jesus could think and that he could think straight; that he did not violate the recognized rules of thinking and reasoning as they are set forth in logic. The soundness of his reason receives abundant confirmation. While the ability to think straight is only too rare among men,

and it is assuring to feel that Jesus could and did think straight; nevertheless it is perhaps justifiable to say that he appears more remarkable in the exercise of his understanding and his judgment to which we now turn. There is unmistakable evidence of uniqueness here.

We may note a certain sensitiveness to conclusions reached by mathematics in the following argument:

For which of you, desiring to build a tower,
doth not first sit down and count the cost,
Whether he have wherewith to complete it?¹

The argument is emphasized by reference to the king who contemplates going to war.²

¹Luke 14: 28

²Luke 14: 31, 32

CHAPTER VI

THE UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS

It is in their understanding that men chiefly differ. By understanding, we mean that power of the mind to analyze a complex situation in order to determine its cause or end. This involves the taking cognizance of its constituent factors with the meaning and value of the same. It is closely allied with insight. If a man can walk, say into the plant of a city telephone system operating on the dial system and form a mental picture of the apparatus by means of which any phone may be made to dial any other phone; he has, as regards mechanical complexities, an understanding of a high order. Another mind may exhibit no such outstanding proficiency in the matter of analyzing such complex mechanisms and yet possess a clear and comprehensive understanding of the complex issues of life in the personal realm.

The understanding of Jesus, as is made plain by our records, was especially keen in the realm of social, moral, and religious situations. The complexities of personality, of social relations, of man's relation to his world and to his God, Jesus appears to have been able to analyze with amazing accuracy in order to attain the desired results. Though we should be unable to make the analysis for ourselves, we can, when he has done it for us, see and understand. Such understanding in these realms is basically necessary for the exercise of good judgment in the evaluation of life situations, both as relates to the most

desirable end, and, also to the best means of attaining that end. Understanding and judgment operating in this fashion may be said to constitute the practical reason, and the proper functioning of the practical reason in this realm is for mankind of supreme importance.

It is here and in this way that Jesus blazes the trail for mankind. That he is "the way, the truth, and the life" may be put to the test in human experience and, if necessary, through a process of experimentation, receive scientific confirmation. May it not even be said that the scientific method is in large measure an adaptation to the physical world of Jesus' method of dealing with spiritual realities? "By their fruits ye shall know them,"¹ is Christ's own dictum, and he is perfectly willing, we believe, that that criterion be applied to himself, even to that which he said and accomplished.

In this chapter it is our purpose to give selected examples of the understanding of Jesus in the matter of such questions as God, sin, righteousness, freedom, and the means of achieving success. Before doing this, however, it may be well to briefly consider the theological question of the relation between reason and revelation.

1. Reason and Revelation

How far is revelation present in human reason? This question is important both in regard to the mind of Christ and to the mind of any man. Reason itself is a gift. In its simplest processes, there seems to be an intuitive element present.

¹Matt. 7: 16

How do we get our ideas? They appear to have "come to us." There is the flavor of "the given" about them. In all mediate thinking, as when one passes from the major and minor premises of a syllogism to the conclusion, there must of necessity be the flash of an immediate awareness that this is surely so. How can one think by himself alone? The subjective and objective must both be present in all reason. May it not therefore be said that reason and revelation in some way constitute obverse sides of the same shield; revelation being the divine side, or "given," and reason being the human side or how we work over that which is given.

In our treatment of the understanding of Jesus, it is assumed that reason and revelation are both present. God is giving, Jesus is receiving. This of course is true in the case of every man. There is a vast difference however in the matter of degree. Much may be given or little. It may be perfectly or imperfectly received and handled. In the case of Jesus what we are interested in insisting upon is, that he was given all that is necessary for human salvation, that he received this perfectly, and transmitted it faithfully to mankind.

Theologians have observed that all the ways of God are meaningful or purposive and that the whole creation is a revelation or word of God. A man with good understanding sees more than lies on the surface. He perceives miracles of power in ordinary occurrences and discovers indwelling beauty in the most commonplace spectacles, and sometimes in the most repulsive. He

can see a snowy white loaf of bread--warm, fragrant, and nourishing--in a mudhole in a wheat field. He finds incipient beauty in the ugly duckling and understands that a white swan is in the making. A man, deficient in understanding, may look at a tree and see only a tree, but ^{another} he beholds divine activity in which truth, beauty, and goodness are expressed.

Even Greek mythology, in spite of its vagaries and its wild wandering fancies, vividly reveals to us a sensitiveness to the inner meaning of things.

The Greek could not look anywhere without feeling that there was more than he saw. He did not say, "only a tree, only a cloud, only a flower." He saw a tree and thought of Ceres and Daphne; a cloud, and it was as though Juno were approaching; a flower bending over a pool and he said, "Narcissus."¹

An appreciation of this sort of thing does not commit us to an uncritical belief in mythology, but mythology was definitely committed to the belief that there is more than that which is contained on the surface, or that which reaches the eye or ear. The mind of Jesus was free of mythological vagaries. But his mind was keenly conscious of a deep meaning in all things. Trees, clouds, flowers meant something to him too. They meant manifestations of the power and glory of God, more than that, they meant revelations of the love and care of the Heavenly Father who is concerned with his creatures and may consequently be trusted. He was not a tribal or national God, but the Father of all mankind. In the expressions of his practical

¹Edwin Lewis, A Philosophy of the Christian Revelation,

reason, as well as his theoretical; Jesus sought for, and attained unity. His ability to analyze and scrutinize the parts did not blind him to the consciousness of the whole.

In the Christian view, God gives to all, but all do not receive. The failure to receive or to understand may be due to inattention, to lack of interest, to the presence of undesirable emotions, or to a weak or perverse will.

The capacity for understanding may vary from individual to individual, and in the same individual from time to time. The presence of holy desires, greatly illuminates the understanding. To apprehend the good, the beautiful, and the true, the man must love these things. I came to do my Father's will, says Jesus. That is the only way one can determine what that will is. Jesus says:

My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself. He that speaketh from himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.¹

How clearly does the mind of Jesus apprehend the cause of error and the prerequisites for ascertaining the truth!

We find an echo of this in the following statement by

Rudolph Otto:

But the mere word, even when it comes as a living voice is powerless without the "Spirit in the heart" of the hearer to move him to apprehension. And the Spirit, this inborn capacity to receive and understand, is the essential thing.²

¹ John 7: 16-18

² Rudolph Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, Trans. John W. Harvey (Oxford University Press, 1928) p. 63

If this be true, then it is clear that only the mind completely consecrated to the good, the beautiful, and the true can completely understand the good, the beautiful, and the true. Only the mind which lies fully open to God can receive the full revelation of God. The presence of any imperfection may limit or distort our understanding. Conscious of our own moral imperfection, we feel the need of depending upon one who, while sharing our experiences, did not share our faults. It is the common conviction of Christians, gained by centuries of the keenest study, that we have such a one in Jesus Christ and that his understanding of social, moral, and religious questions was without parallel. It is quite enough to let his words speak for themselves.

2. The Nature of God

We now come to Jesus' understanding of God. Directly concerning the existence and nature of God, Jesus says very little, thus following the spirit of the Jews and the Bible. There is much, however, by implication. In every word and deed his attitude of implicit trust and his perfect obedience to his Father in Heaven is clearly discernible. He was always aware of being in direct communication and communion with God.¹ In explaining this sense of connection with God and of communion with Him, which is present to some extent generally in mankind, theologians have frequently used the term, "God-consciousness." Schliermacher uses it many times for it is basic in his theology.

¹John 17: 26, 21 Also 12: 30

In the Christology of this German thinker, Christ's God-consciousness is rounded out and complete, while ours is fragmentary. The use of the same term to explain this feeling of direct communication with God which Jesus experienced, is found in the following quotation from a more recent writer.

The unique God-consciousness of Jesus, his sense of the unique, filial relationship to God, is the dominant feature of his personality.¹

There was no need for Jesus to prove the being of God. No doubts concerning His reality were present, either in Jesus' mind or in the minds of the people to whom he preached. Jahweh had been present in all their history. The problem of what God was and of how he was to be worshiped had been settled long before Jesus appeared on the human scene. Ethical monotheism was firmly established and Jahweh was God alone. Though animal sacrifice still constituted a part of the ritual of worship, the prophets had long since pointed out the need for a deeper cleansing from sin and had definitely argued that the only way to get rid of sin is to quit sinning and that "nothing can atone for sin which does not at the same time impart righteousness." This vital view of worship and of the condition of the worshiper was clearly presented by several of Israel's prophets.² It is in the Proverbs.³ It found its way into the song life of the people.⁴ It was clearly understood and appreciated by Jesus.

¹R. H. Strachan, The Authority of Christian Experience, (Cokesbury Press, 1931) p. 220 cf H.D.B. Wm. A. Sanday, Jesus Christ - God his Father

²Amos 5:21-24; Hosea 6:4-10; Micah 6:6-8; Is. 1:11,12; Jer. 7:18-23

³Proverbs 15:8; 21:3 ⁴Ps. 24:3-5; 40:6-8; 51:15-19

They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what this meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice: for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.¹

Jesus conceived of God as Spirit. To the woman at the well he said, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth."² Now, a spirit thinks, feels, and wills. Only this may we know about a spirit. Only this may we know about God. Only this may we know about anything. If it be objected that this is anthropomorphism, it is a phase of anthropomorphism from which we cannot escape, for thinking, feeling, and willing constitute the whole of our consciousness.

Jesus did not proclaim a new God. His was still the God of the ethical monotheism of Israel.

Jesus' faith in God came to him by way of social inheritance and, in its main outlines, it is fundamentally that of his people. Nowhere in the Gospels do we read that Jesus leaves the impression with his contemporaries that he is preaching a new God such as the early Christians left with certain circles of their hearers. Biblical theology would describe Jesus' belief in God as the ethical monotheism of Israel--the belief that there is only one true God and he is good.³

Jesus had a new conception or idea of God. He apprehended more clearly and comprehensively than any previous prophet, the will of God for man. He had a new appreciation of the Love of God for men. It was a father's Love.⁴ This is the strongest form of love known to mankind--stronger than a

¹Matt. 9: 12, 13 (An obvious quotation of Hosea 6: 6)

²John 4: 24

³Walter E. Bundy, The Religion of Jesus,
(Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1928) p. 68

⁴Luke 15: Parables of Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, Lost Boy

brother's love, as Professor Ernest Ligon points out.¹ God was quite generally known as Father in that ancient world, genetically speaking; but with Jesus a new meaning is poured into the term. God thinks and feels and wills for us like a good father does for his children--and much more. The a fortiori argument is used by Jesus repeatedly.

Jesus not only possessed unbounded trust in God and encouraged the same attitude in others, but knew that He is Good. Others had called God, "Father"; Jesus knew and trusted him as such. God's providential care for the birds of the heaven is understood and cited.² God's unparalleled success in clothing the lilies of the field in beauty far superior to anything man can do, is noted.³ The grass of the field too, receives its clothing from God.⁴ And, if God provides for birds and flowers and grass, how much more will he take an interest in and care for his human children. "Are not ye of much more value than they."⁵ The appeal to fatherly love is also found in the challenge: Will an earthly father give stones for loaves, or serpents for fish.⁶ How much more then will the heavenly Father give good gifts. A similar argument is presented in the parable of the Persistent Widow and the Judge.⁸ Jesus' prayer in the

¹Ernest Ligon, The Psychology of Christian Personality, (Macmillan Co., 1936) Chap. III "The Dynamic of Fatherly Love" pp. 63-91

²Matt. 6: 26

³Matt. 6: 28,29

⁴Matt. 6: 30

⁵Matt. 6:26

⁶Matt. 7: 7-11 cf Luke 11: 11 ff

⁷Luke 18: 1-8

Garden of Gethsemane reveals his own implicit trust in God, as well as his crucifixion, which it seems he could easily have escaped through flight.

As Jesus understood it, God was present throughout nature, in human nature and in all life situations. Jesus

Saw God in nature, in human history, in the fates and fortunes of the individual and the group. For Jesus, God bore a direct relationship to every detail of human existence. He saw God present and at work in the most prosaic and matter-of-fact items of human life and experience. And the God whom he saw everywhere is always the Father revealing his love and care for his children.¹

Such was Jesus' understanding of God.

3. The Source of Sin and Righteousness

It has already been pointed out that Jesus in the tradition of the Hebrew prophets recognized the serious nature of sin and the need of vital cleansing. The best minds in Israel had long realized that sin was not an extraneous thing which could be slipped on and off like an overcoat, or actually be gotten rid of by placing it on the head of a scapegoat and sending it into the wilderness. Prophetic minds appreciated the fact that a deeper cleansing was needed, even one of repentance and regeneration. The inwardness of sin and righteousness was also recognized by Jeremiah.

I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.²

¹Walter E. Bundy, op cit p. 80

²Jeremiah 31: 33 Hebrews 8: 8 ff

Still it is true that the emphasis which Jesus put upon "motives" rather than deeds, represented such novel teaching that many appear to have been amazed by it. The statements which Jesus makes in the Sermon on the Mount do represent a fresh and creative approach, and when set squarely over against the written word, they were astonished because he taught as one having authority. "You have heard it said, . . . but I say unto you"¹

This brings up Jesus' attitude toward the Jewish Law. He declares that he did not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it.² Yet he seems to set his words over against it, as indicated in the quotation just made, to suggest that it does not go far enough; and in at least one place to suggest an ideal utterly incompatible with it.³ The answer to this problem, if indeed there be any problem, lies no doubt in the fact that law has no significance apart from its purpose to minister to need and to promote wellbeing. Jesus certainly had no desire to interfere with the law in so far as it was serving this purpose. The law must fulfill its purpose. However the law was temporary, as St. Paul and Hebrews later taught. Moreover it was deficient. Jesus' thought obviously is that he did not come to destroy the law but to remedy its deficiencies. That Jesus went much farther is certainly quite plain.

Jesus reserved for himself the right of judgment and the principle upon which he proceeded was: does the law, or the

¹Matt. 5: 33. 34, (Five times it is used in the chapter)

²Matt. 5: 17

³Matt. 5: 38-44

accepted interpretation of it¹ contribute in this particular detail to the highest and best interests of man or militate against them. Jesus put man in the center. "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath," he said.² It was just at this point that Jesus came into sharpest conflict with the Jewish religious authorities. They were interested in looking after the interests of the Law, he was interested in looking after the interests of mankind.

It is always dangerous to argue from a particular to a universal, or from a smaller to a larger class. By so doing we violate one of the rules of logical thinking and run the risk of arriving at a wrong conclusion. Nevertheless from the tenor of Jesus' teaching and especially his assertion that the whole law and the prophets hang on love for God and love for neighbor, we seem justified in expanding the statement relating to the Sabbath and to say that it is quite consistent with Jesus to declare that, The Law was made for man, not man for the law.

The real weakness of the law lay in the fact that it proscribed penalty only for wrong deeds. Jesus understood most thoroughly that sin and righteousness too, originate not in the deed but in the motive which prompts the deed. He understood too that this motive is brought forth by the desire of the heart.

¹It was frequently the "traditions of the elders," the interpretations of the law, to which Jesus most strenuously objected. These frequently violated the very spirit of the law itself.

See: Mark 7:1-13

²Mark 2: 27

He traces sin back to the thinking, feeling, and willing of mind. Righteousness is also traced back to the same source. Jesus knows the real genesis of sin, and how it only can be eradicated. He knows the real source of righteousness and how that may be realized. Surely his understanding is perfect here.

Now Jesus brings his understanding to bear upon such practical problems as murder, adultery, and the making of oaths, and he also makes application in the matter of such things as almsgiving and prayer. For instance, murder does not originate in the deed, but is born when the desire is born. The deed is the child of the emotion, or more comprehensively the intellectual, emotional, and volitional processes of the mind. Usually the motivating factor is anger or hatred. If sin be boiled down to its bitterest dregs, the residue is surely hatred. Therefore Jesus calls our attention to the fact that when we begin to lay upon our fellows, expressions of contempt or hatred, we are treading on dangerous ground.¹

So also it is with adultery. This evil begins not in the act, but in the desire. "Everyone that looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."²

Again, in the prevalent custom of swearing, or buttressing one's word by making one's statement in connection with God's name, or possibly some object sacred to him; we find that according to the understanding of Jesus the same principle is operative.

¹Matt. 5: 21 ff

²Matt. 5: 28

Swearing by the Lord, does in no wise assist in telling the truth nor does it help one to be faithful to one's word. If a man has within his heart the desire to tell the truth or to be faithful to his word, then oaths are unnecessary, the desire and integrity of his heart are quite sufficient. If in his heart, he does not desire the truth, nor wishes to be faithful to his word, then no amount of swearing by Jehovah will help this situation. This is so for two reasons: first, he will find some technical loophole, some evasion, some legalistic subterfuge to get around the matter. Jewish practice was full of such duplicities. Second, if he is unable to find or to invent a way of doing this, and tells the truth or is faithful to his word, merely because of some fear of consequences because he has broken an oath; his truth telling or faithful keeping of his word is devoid of moral value. There is no virtue in his act. It is the desire to be truthful or faithful which really matters. Simple statements are therefore quite enough. Anything more is not only superfluous but positively evil because it is a confession of weakness and easily leads to the form of Godliness without the spirit thereof.

In similar fashion, the virtue of almsgiving consists not in the deed itself but resides rather in the mind of the doer, in his thought, wish, and purpose in the matter. Genuine prayer too, is determined not by the word spoken but by that which is in the mind of the one who prays.

Because of such words as these we must conclude that the

understanding of Jesus is perfect in the moral realm.

4. Freedom

Jesus' understanding of freedom likewise gives us an appreciation of his insight. His different point of view appears in his refusal to accede to the requests of those who would make of him a king.¹ Unquestionably there must have been considerable pressure exerted on Jesus to lend his aid to the task of freeing the country from Roman bondage. This was a grievous burden to the Jew. Jesus was doubtless just as aware as anyone else of the evils and inconveniences attending such a condition. On the other hand, he most likely saw certain advantages of national coherence, security, and prosperity which accrued to the Jewish people because of the Roman domination. The loss of such national autonomy as was consequent upon their status was, in Jesus' estimation, insignificant to the loss of freedom in the moral realm. Jesus doubly disappointed his countrymen. He not only refused to aid in freeing them from foreign rule, but he insisted in probing into their hearts to free them of personal evil. We must give credit to Jesus for his understanding and his judgment at this point. This was historically justified as is proved by the Bar-Cochba fiasco, by the civil war in Jerusalem between John, Simon, and others, and by its thoroughgoing destruction by Titus in 70 A. D. That Jesus understood most plainly the currents of his time, the inevitable end of the course to which so many of his countrymen

¹Luke 19: 41-43

were committed, is shown in his lament over Jerusalem.

And when he drew nigh he saw the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known in this day, even thou, the things which belong unto peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes. For the day shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast up a bank about thee, and compass thee round.¹

It was only a knowledge of and adherence to the truth which would make them or any people free. The enslaving power of ignorance and sin is more to be dreaded than the armed might of a foreign power. Sin is the worst bondage, in fact the only real bondage. As the familiar hymn put it: "Our fathers chained in prisons dark, were still in heart and conscience free." But that is a Christian hymn showing Christian understanding and Christian judgment; the wisdom of the world does not see it that way, neither did the Jews of Jesus' day. When He implied their bondage by suggesting that the truth would free them, they replied that they had never been in bondage. They actually lied at this point but evidently meant that as children of Abraham they had always been, ideally speaking, free. Of their real bondage they seemed impervious. And it is to just this real bondage that Jesus desires to attract attention: "Everyone that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin,"² George Buttrick in a stimulating discourse has a brief but excellent statement of freedom. He says: "No man breaks the law; he tries and the law breaks him."³ Moral laws are in-

¹Luke 19: 41

²John 8: 34

³Geo. Buttrick, Jesus Came Preaching,
(Chas. Scribners and Sons, 1931) p. 67

herent in man's constitution and in human society and are just as immutable and reliable and orderly as are the so called natural laws of the physical world. Mankind knows it can be free to move about in its world only as it respects and obeys these natural laws. Its freedom depends upon its allegiance. It is not freedom from law but freedom in law.

Mankind has not yet learned that it can be free in the matter of self-realization only as it subscribes allegiance to the moral laws implicit in its own constitution and in the structure of society. Man is free only as he obeys. He will not attempt to violate the law of gravity by jumping off a fifty foot cliff. He must also learn that it is equally dangerous and fatal to jump off a moral law.

Science makes the fundamental postulate of the approximate orderliness of nature.¹ Jesus believed in the dependability of nature, which is the same thing. It is just the difference between a universe and a chaos. It was confidence in the moral order, which for Jesus was the reign of God's will which enabled him to assert that knowledge of the truth would bring freedom. When hydrogen and oxygen are mixed in the right proportions, we always get water, Never milk or orange juice or strawberry pop. We must not suppose that greed, lust, and hatred can ever be mixed without producing strife, war, and desolation.

Jesus had his own Calvinism--but such Calvinism as our world has not known. He did not call the law a "law." He

¹H. D. B., Bernard, Nature, Vol. III, pp. 493-495.

called the law "God." It is living. It is personal enough to constrain our personalities. It is regal; and it is forgiving--for it endures all our failures and returns upon us in red colors when we sin. Jesus could have said with deeper meaning than the Psalmist: 'O how I love thy law': it was for him a Presence and a Friend. And in the law he was free. Only in a law can we be free.¹

The Jews had a belief that prosperity is a sure sign of righteousness and adversity is a sure sign of sin. With this problem the Book of Job deals. The same notion persisted in Jesus' day. Jesus pointed out that it is very precarious to reach conclusions from individual occurrences, but indicated that the moral order is inviolate and that all will perish unless they repent.

Think ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they have suffered these things? I tell you, nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish.²

While Jesus' understanding of freedom may not coincide with that of the unrepentant, who may have the temerity to question his position.

5. Wholeness of Life

The expansion of abilities by use and their shriveling through disuse, with the resultant blessed or baneful effects, was feelingly understood by Jesus. This he teaches in that imaginative story of the master who entrusted talents to his servants. Therefore he said:

¹Geo. Buttrick, Jesus Came Preaching,
(Chas. Scribners and Sons, 1931) p. 69

²Luke 13: 1-3

Unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away.¹

Again Jesus teaches that a man cannot be good only partially and part of the time. This does not mean that a man is either totally good or totally bad but it does mean that a man cannot say, well, today I shall be good and tomorrow I shall do evil. There is a wholeness about life, and when healthy it must be integrated. Unfaithfulness in small things, Jesus understood to involve unfaithfulness in that which is more significant; whereas if one is seen to look after small details with painstaking care, he may be depended upon to discharge faithfully the larger task. His attitude in a specific case will be his attitude in general.

He that is faithful in a very little, is faithful also in much, and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much.²

Psychology has a good deal to say about the value of an integrated personality for mental wholeness. Conflicting interests, warring purposes or emotions make for divided personalities and for the loss of peace, and promotes disintegration. Jesus knew full well and understood clearly the value of a united personality.

The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. . . . no man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.³

¹Matt. 25: 29

²Luke 16: 10

³Matt. 6: 22 ff

Perhaps one of the best attempts to show how congenial the teachings of Jesus are with the findings of modern psychology, is the work by Ernest M. Ligon who contends that the teachings of Jesus throughout, and in the Sermon on the Mount in particular, set forth just those things upon which modern psychology insists as necessary for the production of a healthy, happy, integrated personality. Says Dr. Ligon:

The most universally recognized source of integration, and therefore of mental health, is a dominant purpose in life.

An increasing number of the men who are conducting research on human personality insist that the dominant purpose must be in the service of mankind. . . . this too is interesting in the light of Jesus' emphasis on love.¹

When we ask what was wrong with the rich young man who came to Jesus asking what he might do to have eternal life, we find that ^{the trouble} ~~is~~ is just at this point. He had no purpose worthy of himself or his very splendid morality. He was not sufficiently extrovert.

Jesus said unto him, if thou wouldst be perfect, go, sell that which thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.²

It is quite clear that Jesus had the best interests of this young man in mind, as well as the interests of the poor. What "an increasing number of men who are conducting research in human personality" are discovering was proclaimed long ago by Jesus who seems to have understood full well the significance of the instructions which he gave.

¹Ernest Ligon, Psychology of Christian Personality
(Macmillan Co., 1936) pp 16, 17

²Matt. 19: 21

Jesus penetrated to the causes of man's sorrow, his slavery, his disintegration, and having analyzed and understood these correctly, he plainly pointed out what we must do to overcome them and to find blessedness, freedom, and wholeness of life. Man had not made the complete discovery before. With the whole mind partially blinded by moral imperfection, it is difficult to see how he could have made the discovery. But Jesus has made the way so plain that wayfaring men, though foolish, need not err therein.¹

That Jesus not only pointed out the factors which make for the integration of life, but that he also laid down those principles which make for the integration of society has been realized by many. We give a quotation from Bernard Shaw which expresses an appreciation of the practical value of the teachings of Jesus. This we think is particularly significant because of Shaw's character and general theological position. Certainly it cannot be said that he was burdened with piety, surely he is not an orthodox Christian. Assuredly some of his statements about Jesus are unkind--many would regard them as blasphemous. He is most free in his critical remarks about Christ and about Christianity, but with considerable enthusiasm he declares that Jesus has the only way for mankind to live; the only way to organize society; the only way to save the world. Barabbas is selected as the symbol of "the way of the world." The program of Jesus is contrasted with that of Barabbas.

¹Isa. 35: 8 "The wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein."

Barabbas is triumphant everywhere; and the final use he makes of his triumph is to lead us all to suicide with heroic gestures and resounding lies. Now those who, like myself, see the Barabbasque social organization as a failure, and are convinced that the Life Force cannot be finally beaten by any failure, have always known that Jesus had a real message, and have felt the fascination of his character and doctrine. Not that we should nowadays dream of claiming any supernatural authority for him but when, having entirely got rid of Salvationist Christianity, and even contracted a prejudice against Jesus on the score of his involuntary connection with it, we engage on a purely scientific study of economics, criminology, and biology, and find that our practical conclusions are virtually those of Jesus, we are distinctly pleased and encouraged to find that we were doing Him an injustice, and that the nimbus that surrounds his head in the pictures may be interpreted some day as a light of science rather than a declaration of sentiment or a label of idolatry.¹

¹Bernard Shaw, Androcles and the Lion, from Preface
(New York: Bretanos, 1918) par. The Alternative to Barabbas
chap. LXVII p. 1.

CHAPTER VII

THE JUDGMENT OF JESUS

In many ways the distinguishing mark of a man's mind is his judgment. If his judgment is good, he properly evaluates both ends, and means to ends. More comprehensively, he builds a system of values and distinguishes their varying worth in relation to each other and to their whole. If his judgment is good, he puts first things first, second things second and last things last.

Judgment may be defined as that mental process which distinguishes between the relative importance of two or more alternatives.

Judgment cannot be separated from understanding, from logical reasoning, nor from imagination. The cannibals who stewed and ate the missionary, the doctor, and the agricultural expert, as the story goes, showed poor judgment. They killed the goose that laid the golden egg. They secured one good meal, but the agriculturist could have shown them how to have many choice meals; the doctor could have alleviated pain and saved many from death; and the missionary could have transformed and blessed their life. They displayed poor judgment but this was due to their lack of understanding and their inability to image what these men might have brought them. Poor judgment is common, and the child who chooses a nickel instead of a dime because the nickel is larger, showed no worse judgment than many of his

elders in much more serious choices. It appears that many who should be expected to know better, kill and eat the goose that lays the golden eggs. Sir John Lubbock relates a tradition which illustrates the choice of a bad end and the selection of a poor means to accomplishment of that end, consequently a case of the exercising of poor judgment. According to this tradition Cineas, the philosopher, once asked Pyrrhus what he intended to do when he had conquered Italy. Pyrrhus replied that he would conquer Sicily. And after Sicily, what, came the philosopher's question. Then, said Pyrrhus, I shall take Africa. And after you have conquered the world, then what, asked Cineas. Then said Pyrrhus: "I will take my ease and be merry." "Then", asked Cineas, "why can you not take your ease and be merry now." In one form or another such selection of unworthy ends and violent means of achieving them, is so common as almost to be characteristic of much of the activity of the world. This is well expressed in the New Testament passage which, though not spoken by Jesus, is nevertheless distinctly Christian:

Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and covet, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war; ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures.¹

In considering the judgment of Jesus, one of the first things which strikes us, is his balance and poise; his ability to avoid extremes and, likewise, to avoid the inertia of balance. He had moderation without stagnation. Jesus was radiant without being giddy, he was serious without being sad. Certainly no one

¹James 4: 2, 3

would think of pitying Jesus. Some women tried it and received the following reply:

And there followed him a great multitude of the people and of women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.¹

Jesus was neither ascetic nor antinomian. He was gentle without being weak. He could be indignant without being vengeful. He could apply the lash and restrain the sword.² He could apply the knife of the surgeon, but he never slashed with the razor. He could speak words of woe which were cathartic, he could speak in accents soft and mild and give soothing words of reassurance. He was a man of high pretensions but of lowly mein. He walked the world with dignity, but he did not stand on his dignity. He could exercise patience and control in suffering and other crisis. He appears as the calmest man in the trial before Pilate. His actions and decisions, his words and his judgments seem always to be motivated by the great purpose which he always kept in view. This purpose of establishing the Kingdom of Heaven was unique. In the establishment of his kingdom, there were no soldiers, no guns, no swords, no poison gas, nothing but men actuated by love and good will. He directed all to his purpose of bringing all men to perfection and hence to communion with God. The wise discrimination of Jesus is revealed in his ability to distinguish the sinner and his sin. The saying: "be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as

¹Luke.23:27. 28

²Matt.21:12, 13 cf Matt.26:52

doves,"¹ reveals a mind of discrimination and balance.

We come now to a consideration of the paradoxical statements of Jesus. These paradoxes seem to be flat contradictions. What they really represent is a contrast between Jesus' standard of value and those commonly accepted. They really represent a reversal of commonly accepted judgments. His statement that "Many that are first shall be last; and the last first,"² says just this. In the judgment of Jesus, supreme value is to be placed on spiritual things.

Whose judgment is best, that of the world or that of Jesus? Each man must decide for himself. If it be objected that that makes each man's judgment the final court of appeal, it must be answered that as regards every man for himself individually, there seems to be no escape from this. Of course what this really means is that each man must decide for himself whether he believes that Jesus has the "words of eternal life." If it is affirmative, he will be a Christian. If it is negative, as was that of Nietzsche, he will not be a Christian. Jesus' own test, "by their fruits ye shall know them," should receive its due application. If the world was right side up, then, in some respects, Jesus turned it upside down; but if it was already upside down, then Jesus did a magnificent job of putting it right side up.

Let us bring together the outstanding paradoxes of Jesus

¹Matt. 10: 16

²Mark 10: 31

and then briefly consider them.

But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.¹

For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, shall save it.²

For everyone that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.³

Ye know that they who are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister (Gr. servant *δουλος*) and whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all. (Gr. "bondservant" *δοῦλος*)⁴

These are undoubtedly the most prominent paradoxes in the teaching of Jesus though many might regard the Beatitudes as paradoxes and such a saying as "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth,"⁵ would doubtless be considered by many to be paradoxical.

In the Beatitudes Jesus exalts the meek, the mourners, the merciful, the poor in spirit. The world usually associates blessedness with aggressiveness, pride, joy, gaiety, and such like things. Nietzsche in particular in "Thus Saith Zarushthra" exalts the "superman" who is essentially just the opposite of the virtues of the beatitudes. In fact, Nietzsche specifically condemns some of the very virtues, e. g., humility, as being weaknesses and vices. An appeal to personal experience and to

¹Mark 10: 31 cf. Mark 9: 35; Matt. 19:30; Matt. 20: 16

²Mark 8: 35 cf. Matt. 16: 25; Matt. 10: 39; Luke 9: 24; Luke 17: 33; John 12: 25

³Luke 14: 11 cf. Luke 18: 14

⁴Mark 10: 42-44 cf. Mark 9: 35 ⁵Luke 12: 15

the experience of the race is perhaps the best way of settling the matter. Whether we agree with Jesus or not, we know precisely where he stands and what in his judgment is necessary for the production of the perfect individual and the ideal society. If his way be true, then that is God's way for man. It should not be difficult for us to make our choice.

In the passage in Mark 10 on "who is greatest" we have an example of the practical reason of Jesus. Two of the disciples have asked for places of preferment, for special privilege, for honor and authority--just what men usually ask for. This request broke the peace and tranquility of the little band of disciples, as such requests always do. Jesus says that among the Gentiles the dream is for authority and special privilege, and these are regarded as being advantageous because they impart power over one's fellows. Such individuals are called great, and greatness is measured by such authority and power to lord it over others. Just the reverse, says Jesus, is to be true among them and in his Kingdom. Greatness is to be measured in terms of usefulness, its criterion is service. If a man would be great, let him be useful; if he would be greater, let him be more useful, if he would be greatest, let him become the bond-servant of all. No one can be jealous of a man for becoming great in this fashion. There is no danger in aspiring to such greatness. Such aspirations bless all parties concerned. Now this seems perfectly simple and plain to us after these centuries of Christian tradition but it was strange doctrine in that

ancient world; and even now many who believe it, find it not easy, but a little strange, to adhere to it. Yet such was the judgment of Jesus. The criterion of greatness is usefulness. My words are truth, says Jesus. I am the way, the truth, and the life. Here is an example. Who can find any fault with it. If it be true, then it represents God's will and purpose for man. Man to be like God must be like this.

The contrast between the exalted and the humble appears twice in Luke as above stated. Once in the parable of those who hunt out the chief seats and sometimes are asked to move back. The other concerning the Pharisee and Publican who prayed different prayers. In the kingdom of which Jesus is thinking; pride, arrogance, and such like, are signs of little men. The lofty spirit is one who is humble, sincere, and modest.

The saying about who shall save his life and who shall lose it, is, we think, the most frequently quoted of any of the sayings of Jesus. Mark has it once, Matthew has it twice and Luke twice. It must have deeply impressed the disciples and partly because of its very strangeness. It was so different from all their ideals. It comes up at Caesarea Philippi following Peter's statement that Jesus is the Christ. Then Jesus begins to talk about his rejection, about abusive treatment, about suffering and death. This certainly does not square with their ideas of success or Messiahship, and Peter openly rebukes his Master. It is then that Jesus says that he who saves his life shall lose it, but he who loses it for the Gospel's sake shall

find it. This was the judgment of Jesus. Success is bought with sacrifice. If one wants to wear a crown, he must first bear a cross. If he wants to win any genuine success, or accomplish anything worth while, he must pay the price. He must give his life to the task. Sacrifice in the nature of toil, suffering, sometimes even death, seems to be necessary for the accomplishment of the end sought.

Modern psychology affords confirmations of this teaching. The introvert who is always thinking about himself and seeking his own welfare, turns in upon himself, impoverishes his life, comes to despise himself, and in the end loses all those qualities which make life truly radiant, rich, and blessed. The introvert becomes gloomy, morose, mentally unbalanced. The extrovert who is always going outside himself, always giving forth, finds a multiplying of his own powers and happiness. The classic illustration of this is, of course, "Silas Marner" who almost lost his life trying to save it and his gold, but who finally found it again when he lost himself in the life of the foundling whom he learned to love. It seems clear that for the health of the individual and for the success of his venture, there is no recipe but the principle stated by Jesus in this supposed paradox. If we lose our life for the Gospel's sake, we shall find it again. Character is integrated, the various or even discordant elements in one's personality are fused into a harmonious and dynamic whole, when one gives oneself to such an ideal as

the Kingdom of Heaven.¹

Other examples of the peculiar quality of the judgment of Jesus may be studied. There is the one where Jesus says it is better to invite the poor and maimed than those that are well favored.

When thou makest a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; because they have not wherewith to recompense thee.²

It is a greater blessing to help someone who cannot return the favor than to help one who can.

Little children possessed great value in the estimation of Jesus. He encouraged "childlikeness" as a prerequisite for membership in the Kingdom. He used a child as an object lesson and said that

Whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea.³

In the judgment of Jesus it is better to get rid of that which causes us to sin, even though it maims us, for it is better to enter into life maimed than to be cast into hell.⁴ In his judgment great wealth constitutes a great danger and a handicap in life.⁵ Sinners are valuable, precious in God's sight, and repentant sinners the object of great rejoicing.⁶ Hypocrisy and

¹See, Ligon, The Psychology of Christian Personality, esp. chaps. on The Integration of Character and Sources of Power.

²Luke 14: 14

³Matt. 18: 6

⁴Matt. 18: 7 ff

⁵Mark 10: 24. 25

⁶Luke 15: 7-32 (Parables of Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, Lost Boy)

self righteousness constitute a worse sin than other more open forms. "The publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom before you."¹

Vivid imagination, penetrating understanding, and keen judgment are found in the "Woes" pronounced against the Pharisees.² In these attention is called to an improper rating of values, such as

Ye tithe mint anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith: but these ye ought to have done and not to have left the other undone. Blind guides, that strain out the gnat and swallow the camel.³

Outside conformity and respectability are considered worthless unless the inner life is pure.⁴ An example of this has already appeared earlier where Jesus places human welfare above the letter of the law,⁵ and thus comes into sharp conflict with the religious leaders of his day. Especially is this true in case of sickness or disease.⁶ He says: "Wherefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day."

Jesus urges love for enemies and the doing of more than is absolutely required.⁷ In his judgment almsgiving and prayer, fasting and such things should be done without ostentatiousness for there is a greater satisfaction in these than merely to be seen of men and to win public approval.⁸

¹Matt. 21: 31

²Matt. 23: 1-36

³Matt. 23: 23

⁴Matt. 23: 25-28 (dishes washed on outside, whited sepulchres with inward pollution)

⁵Mark 2: 23-28

⁶Matt. 12: 9-14

⁷Matt. 5: 38-47

⁸Matt. 6: 1-18

Finally in the accomplishment of his life work, in his efforts to establish the rule of God's righteous will, he chose to die. He could very easily have escaped from Jerusalem. He went up to the city with his eyes open. He seems to have been desperately tempted to side step his fate and seek friendlier quarters when certain Greeks came seeking him, but he said:

Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die,
it abideth by itself alone; but if it die it beareth
much fruit.¹

The way of the cross seems a curious means to the attainment of his desired end, yet it has always been and still remains, together with the resurrection, the very heart of the Christian Gospel and a chief incentive to Christians.

In the judgment of Jesus, there is no goal for the human race short of perfection. "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect."²

¹John.12: 24

²Matt. 5: 48

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

In the chapters which have preceded we have endeavored to define the person of Christ functionally by describing, largely through illustration, his intellectual processes. We have endeavored to show that his memory, his imagination, and his reason--both formal and practical--functioned in an ideal manner in setting forth the goals which make for the perfection of man, both individually and collectively; and that they also indicate the proper means to be taken for the achievement of these ideal ends.

If these intellectual processes do actually set forth the true goals for the regeneration and perfection of mankind, and the proper means of attaining them, then they reveal the true nature of what mankind ought to be, and, in thus fulfilling the law of his being, reveal the will of the Creator. They therefore set forth man as God wants him to be and hence constitute the will of God for man. They, therefore, are divine in quality; which means, according to a functional definition, that Jesus was divine, at least in the workings of his intellect. If there were space, we could demonstrate by similar means that the emotions of Jesus with their dominant sentiment of love--and that expressed in a most unparalleled fashion--also were divine in quality; and that likewise the will of Jesus, as it was expressed in the utter abandon with which he threw himself into

the task of making the Kingdom of Heaven, the rule of God's will, a universal reality also must be regarded as divine in quality. The whole mind of Christ, therefore, which constitutes his person, so far as we may understand it in terms of human consciousness, was divine in quality. As God thought, felt, and willed regarding man, so also did Jesus. We, therefore, know how we should think, feel, and will in order to be united with Christ and with God. That is why this manner of definition is of the utmost importance. We are definitely enjoined by St. Paul, and that with the greatest of reason: "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus."¹

Once Jesus was asked concerning himself, "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another."² This was the question which John the Baptist asked through the deputation which he sent to Christ. Over his earlier certitude which had been expressed with such conviction at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry was now written a question mark, obviously due to John's misapprehension of the true nature of the Messianic kingdom and its establishment, and aggravated by his own imprisonment and threatened execution. The reply of Jesus was most significant. It did not sound much like the Nicean-Constantinopolitan formula. Jesus did not say, "I am light of light, very God of very God, of the same substance with the Father, and anathema upon you if you do not believe." His reply was not in the language of philosophical speculation. It was a practical answer, a functional one.

¹Phil. 2: 5

²Matt. 11: 3

Go and tell John the things which ye hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them.¹

You wish to know if I am the Messiah. Well, make your decision on the basis of what I am saying and otherwise doing. Am I the Saviour? Well, am I saving? This should have been proof sufficient for John. It should be proof sufficient for us. It is precisely the kind of definition we need for any helpful understanding of the real person of Christ. Now in order to complete our discussion of what Jesus said and otherwise did, it would be necessary to consider his emotions and his will. Our present study is partial. All that may be claimed by it is that so far as his intellectual processes are concerned, Jesus is actually "the way, the truth, and the life." A similar study of his emotions and will should yield the same result in those areas and thus the mind of Christ might be said to be divine in quality and to constitute "the way, the truth, and the life" for all humanity. Christ does faithfully and accurately represent the mind of God, at least insofar as the mind of God pertains to man.

We may say therefore that there was complete harmony between the intellectual, emotional, and volitional life of Jesus and that of God. As Jesus thought, felt, and willed for man, so God thinks, feels, and wills for man. There is complete functional unity between Christ and God. Jesus prayed that the same kind of unity might obtain between man and man,

¹Matt. 11: 4. 5

and man and God. This is brought out in what we usually call the Intercessory Prayer.

Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me. And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one.¹

How else can mankind be one except in thought, desire and purpose. How else need they be one. Is it not this kind of unity which already obtains between Christ and God that he prays may obtain between mankind and God. And since Christ is united with God, our union with Him means also our union with God. Moreover since we should not know the will of God for man, except through Christ, his words to Thomas assume more meaning: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one cometh unto the Father but by me."² And also his words to Philip on the same occasion:

He that hath seen me hath seen the Father believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works sake.³

The degree to which we think, feel, and will like Christ, represents the measure of our perfection and of our union with Christ and God.

Whatever metaphysical basis for unity, philosophy may postulate, or theology may insist upon, here is a functional unity which is emphasized in the Scripture and which is both

¹John 17: 20-23

²John 14: 6

³John 14: 9-11

reasonable and redemptive.

One day officers went out to take Jesus but returned without him and gave as their reason: "Never man so spake."¹ May we not also say: Never man so loved! Never a man with such a purpose! Never a man like Christ! It is because of what he said and did and accomplished for man that Jesus must be regarded as superhuman and divine.

When Thomas reached out in response to invitation and placed his hand in the side of Jesus, he exclaimed: "My Lord and my God."² When we have laid hold of the mind of Christ, and have thus appreciated his person in this vital way, can we say anything else but "My Lord and my God"?

Through the haze of philosophical speculation, even during those years of controversy, the truth was still shining, for did not Irenaeus say: "Jesus Christ in his infinite love, has become what we are in order that he may make us entirely what he is."³

¹John 7: 46

²John 20: 28

³Quoted by Emil Brunner, The Mediator

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