

Box A29

CHRISTIAN
DISCIPLESHIP
AND DEMOCRACY



PRICE: ONE SHILLING

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP AND DEMOCRACY

A STUDY OF THE ESSENTIALS
OF CHRISTIANITY AND THEIR
APPLICATION TO DEMOCRACY

BY

DR. KURT SCHECHNER

WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF THE A.S.C.M. EXECUTIVE



MELBOURNE:

Australian Student Christian Movement Corporation
182 Collins Street, C.1

1941

	Page
Foreword	5
Preface	7
Study I. Conceptions of God in the Time of Christ— <i>Nomos, Eros</i> and <i>Gnosis</i> Conceptions ..	9
Study II. The Revelation of God in Jesus Christ— <i>Agape</i> Conception	15
Study III. The Meaning of Discipleship	19
Study IV. The Application of <i>Agape</i> to Democracy (I)—Liberty; Equality	25
Study V. The Application of <i>Agape</i> to Democracy (II)—Mobility; Universal Suffrage; Res- ponsible Government; Local Self-govern- ment; Legal Consciousness	34
Conclusion	42
Note on the Historical Evidences of the Resurrection ..	43

FOREWORD

1. Bibliography and Terminology

I RECOMMEND to those who are interested in the deeper understanding of all the questions raised in this studybook—first the Bible, second the Bible, third the Bible.

There is an undoubted propensity to-day for indulging in quotations, for parading with names and theories. I have avoided, as much as possible, references to secular literature and have concentrated on the Bible. Ultimately our conferences should contribute to a deeper understanding of the part the Bible has again to play in our life.

The terms "*Nomos*," "*Eros*," "*Agape*," "*Caritas*," "spontaneous," "overflowing," "lost," "continued," "unmotivated love," and so on, belong to the armoury of all who have thought and written on this subject. I did not strain the big Oxford to find synonyms; I appreciate the old terms very much—why alter them?

But a few explanatory words about the use of the Greek and Latin words seem necessary. The Jews were the first people in history to put God, and not the human ego, in the centre of religion. What God required from men, they held, He Himself had revealed to them. Thus the personal relationship between God and man was based on the law, embedded in the Old Testament, revealed by God; the Greek word for "law" is νόμος (*nomos*) and we understand under "the *Nomos* conception" this legal conception of man's duty to God as expressed in the Old Testament. (See Study I.)

Both ἀγάπη (*agāpē*) and ἔρως (*ērōs*) are classical Greek words for "love." The Apostles Paul and John found ἀγάπη used in some passages of the Septuagint; they took the word and gave it a unique Christian colour. (See Study II). Plato distinguished between ἔρως πάδημος (earthly love) and ἔρως οὐράνιος (heavenly love), ascribing to the latter the upward striving of man's soul to the divine. (See Study I.)

"*Caritas*" is a Latin word for "affection;" the special meaning given to it by Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine is discussed in Study III.

2. The Use of This Studybook

The use of this studybook demands a plan. It is absolutely necessary to read and to think over all the Bible references. Only then can the thread running throughout the studybook be understood. One important remark: the studybook does not convey a history of the motifs throughout Christianity but aims at showing (1) how Christ arrived at His teaching by weighing the religious trends of His time, accepting or refusing them as they rightly revealed God's nature or obscured it; and (2) how His revelation was recorded in the gospels and epistles. Familiarity with these passages will help everybody in his judgment on the events of the day and in his actions.

The plan suggested is as follows:

1. Read the whole book, without considering any Bible reference or question, at least twice, keeping the notions: *Nomos*, *Eros*, *Gnosis*, *Agape* and *Caritas* in your mind.
2. Then read one study every day with careful consideration of the Bible references but not of the questions, pondering on the connection between study and reference.
3. Now start to read the book again, taking into account the questions. It does not matter if you cannot find an answer to all the questions.
4. Finally read the book again, one study a day—but without Bible references and questions.

Use the Authorized Version for Old Testament references, and Moffatt's "New Translation" for the New Testament.

* * *

This book has been written for use in the first instance at the Annual Conference of the A.S.C.M. at Mittagong in January, 1942. The above plan will be found of value not only in preparation for a conference, but also when the book is being used for more extended study in University and other circles.

PREFACE

"Love Thy Neighbour As Thyself"

WHY was this simple new commandment of such revolutionary influence? Did not Moses reveal the same commandment in Leviticus (19: 18)?

It was revolutionary because it meant for the first time that love was to be given to the neighbour not from duty—a love restricted by arbitrary judgment on the neighbour—but given in response to an unrestricted love received from God. The receiver of God's love was only the thoroughfare of this love to his neighbour.

To make this love understandable to His disciples and to all mankind, Jesus went to the Cross, and the Cross became the sign in which the believer prevails and conquers. In this sign the faith of the Christians caused Attila to turn his back on Italy; in this sign a humble bishop could say to a mighty Emperor: "I warn you, Emperor, you have never before met a bishop"; in this sign barbarian hordes coming from north, west and east were converted and taught a culture which incited them to the highest expressions of music and poetry, of architecture and painting; in this sign churches, apparently worldly, have saved the weak and the oppressed—always in the sign of love.

This sign we need again, for this sign the world is longing. Caught in the entanglements of theological controversies we are pining for the simple message "love thy neighbour as thyself," not by elevating "thyself," but by killing "thyself." Jesus sacrificed Himself for thee, sacrifice "thyself" for man. In this sign the studybook has been written.

STUDY I

CONCEPTIONS OF GOD IN THE TIME OF CHRIST

"My teaching is not my own but His Who sent Me; anyone who chooses to do His will, shall understand whether My teaching comes from God or whether I am talking on My Own authority."¹

What was Jesus' teaching? Why did He again and again emphasize to His disciples the necessity of self-denial,² of taking up the cross,³ of giving up even family ties in order to understand the meaning of discipleship?⁴ Why did He call Himself the Light of the world,⁵ the Light of life,⁶ the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and ask for complete surrender to Himself and through Him⁷ to God, His Heavenly Father?⁸

To ask for surrender to God was not new to the Jews among whom He worked. They had been taught to meditate in the law of God "day and night"⁹—and yet Jesus' message meant to them an entire transvaluation of all the old jealously nursed valuations. He did not bring them a new God—God was, is and will ever be the same. The Jews also believed that "with God nothing is ever impossible."¹⁰ And yet He brought and taught a new conception of God, a new way of salvation, a new way of fellowship of God with man, a new kind of discipleship.

To understand His teaching summed up in His two commandments,¹¹—two which stand separated, support each other, and need no addition—requires a consideration of the religious trends which belonged to the burning questions of His day.

Jesus spent His life in a Jewish community in which reading and explaining the books of Moses and of the prophets, and discussing the oral tradition conveyed from generation to generation, constituted an organic part of worship. The teaching and debating¹² in Jewish schools enjoyed the highest reputation even among the pagans—the Greeks called the synagogues a school of philosophy.

(1) Jn. 7: 16-18 after 5: 47.

(2) Mt. 16: 24.

(3) Lk. 14: 27.

(4) Mt. 12: 49; Mk. 10: 28; Lk. 18: 29; 14: 26, 33.

(5) Jn. 8: 12.

(6) Jn. 5: 26; 11: 25; 14: 16.

(7) Jn. 14: 16.

(8) Jn. 14: 10; 16: 26, 28.

(9) Ps. 1.

(10) Lk. 1: 37; Mt. 19: 26.

(11) Mt. 22: 34-40.

(12) Acts 22: 3; 1 Cor. 2: 6.

That Jesus shared these discussions, that He astounded the audience by His explanations, many passages in the New Testament witness, especially Luke 2: 46: "Three days later they found Him in the temple, seated among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, till all His hearers were amazed at the intelligence of His Own answers."

It can be assumed that the three main conceptions of God and their bearing on the salvation of man, current at Jesus' time, were discussed and compared.

1. Why do we call the two sections of the Bible "testaments"? Why is Christianity based on the Old and New Testaments?

The Jewish (*Nomos*) Conception

The Jews shifted the religious problem from the question: How can man satisfy his needs in the universe? to the question, What is God? "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein,"¹³ this was their starting point. But how is God to be conceived? He is omnipotent,¹⁴ omnipresent,¹⁵ omniscient,¹⁶ of Divine Perfection.¹⁷ What does God require from man? "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul." (Dt. 10: 12). "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (Eccl. 12: 13).

The Jews believed they had been chosen by God to be "His people,"¹⁸ "His witnesses,"¹⁹ an holy people, a special people above all people that are upon the face of the earth,²⁰ an holy nation,²¹ a Kingdom of priests,²² "a beacon of light and truth to the nations of the earth." God gave specific commandments²³ to Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Jacob, but to Moses "the complete revelation once for all."²⁴ "Nothing was kept in heaven," the prophets added²⁵ nothing to the revelation, they only "repeated, explained, emphasized, applied." "There

was one God and one religion—against God, against this revealed religion men could sin, but the religion originating solely from revelation could never be impaired nor improved." The Pharisees stated, "Our religion was perfect from the beginning, and therefore unalterable" and the Psalmist expressed the heart of the matter thus: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night . . . the ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." (Ps. 1).

On those righteous God bestows His favour,²⁶ in fellowship with these righteous God will build on earth the divine Kingdom of truth and righteousness.²⁷

A blessing²⁸ and a curse²⁹ God set before His people; a blessing if they obey the commandments, a curse if they turn away to go after other gods. Fear God, obey His commandments³⁰ and win His favour by good works, for He rewards the obedient³¹ and punishes the disobedient,³² visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and upon the children's children to the third and to the fourth generation;³³ "whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book."³⁴

But was not God also conceived as merciful,³⁵ compassionate,³⁶ longsuffering,³⁷ full of lovingkindness,³⁸ and abundant in goodness and truth?³⁹ Had God Himself not stated the relations between man and man in the highest terms: thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself?⁴⁰ Did not God choose Israel because He loved Israel?⁴¹

But all the love of God for man met with restrictions! "God has mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments⁴² but repayeth them that hate Him";⁴³ while the love

(13) Ps. 24: 1; 1 Chr. 29: 14.
(14) Job 42: 2; Ps. 115: 3; Is. 43: 13.
(15) Deut. 4: 39; Ps. 139.
(16) Ps. 147: 5.
(17) Deut. 32: 4; Ps. 18: 30; Eccl. 3: 14.
(18) 1 Sam. 12: 22; Ps. 100: 3.
(19) Is. 43: 10.
(20) Deut. 7: 6; 14: 2; 26: 19; 28: 1, 13.
(21) Ex. 19: 6.
(22) Ex. 19: 6.
(23) Deut. 5: 3.
(24) Deut. 5: 3ff; Ps. 103: 7.
(25) Deut. 4: 2; 12: 32.

(26) Ex. 19: 5, 6; Dt. 5: 28, 29.
(27) Dan. 2: 44.
(28) Deut. 11: 26ff.
(29) Deut. 10: 12; Jos. 24: 14; Ex. 12: 13.
(30) Is. 8: 13.
(31) Ex. 20: 6; 33: 19; Deut. 5: 10; 7: 9ff; Ps. 103.
(32) Ex. 32: 34, 35; Deut. 7: 10; Ps. 104, 35; Jos. 24: 19.
(33) Ex. 20: 5; Deut. 5: 9; Jer. 32: 18.
(34) Ex. 32: 33.
(35) Ex. 34: 6; Deut. 4: 31.
(36) Deut. 30: 7.
(37) Ex. 34: 6; Num. 14: 18; Is. 48: 9.
(38) Ps. 26: 3; 63: 3; Is. 63: 7; Jer. 31: 3; 32: 18; Hos. 6: 6.
(39) Ex. 34: 6.
(40) Lev. 19: 18.
(41) Deut. 7: 7, 8.
(42) Deut. 7: 9.
(43) Deut. 7: 10.

to one's neighbour has in the same verses⁴⁴ the prelude: "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people," leaving open for controversy whether the neighbour has or has not to be a Jew, and further God chose Israel "because he would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers."⁴⁵ God's love for man is conceived as a reward, bound by the limits of the covenants.⁴⁶

So we can sum up the Jewish conception of God and salvation. God is a rewarding and punishing God, to be feared, to be reconciled by good works, by individual repentance.⁴⁷

Man can achieve fellowship with God by his own righteousness, a righteousness based on keeping the law; man's duty to God is legally circumscribed, law (*nomos*) regulates man's salvation.

2. What is the conception of God, man and salvation put forward in the Pentateuch—the five "books of Moses"? Discuss the statement, "the prophets added nothing—they only repeated, emphasized, explained and applied" this teaching.
3. How far does the New Testament support, and how far repudiate, the sharp line of distinction drawn in the Old Testament between the "righteous" and the "sinner"?

The Greek (*Eros*) Conception

Even before Jesus' time Greek philosophical currents influenced Jewish thought to a high degree. The Pentateuch—the five books of Moses—was already translated into Greek in the Third Century B.C., Greek was the common language of all students; Greek philosophical ideas were discussed in the synagogues as many Greeks had become converts—not in the strict sense of coming into the pale of Judaism but by renouncing idolatry; he who did so was called in the Scripture a Jew.⁴⁸ These converts, called "religious persons," shared with those who were Jews by birth the favour of the one God and brought with them those Greek philosophical ideas which led to a new conception of God and a salvation, ideas which the apostles later had to combat.

The old Greek myth of the immortal soul has its counterpart in the teaching of Genesis that God has created man in His own image,⁴⁹ in the likeness of God.⁵⁰ When myth and

philosophy were welded by Plato into religion, the doctrine was established that the soul once lived in the world of Forms, Ideas, of the Real, True, the Beautiful, and the Good. It fell to earth and now in its material prisonhouse is like an oyster in its shell. But the soul has a remembrance of the perfection above and strives to reach again its natural place. This upward attraction is *eros*, is love for the Beautiful and the Good. "By means of *eros* all converse and discourse between gods and men takes place." This heavenly *eros*, this love, this desire for the higher, the perfect, this longing for God is man's way to God. "Since the gods have all and need nothing, it is impossible to attribute *eros* to them; the only relation that they can have to love is to be the object of love. The beauty of the Divine itself is unmoved; it is absolute rest."

Such thought imported into the teaching of the Old Testament "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy might,"⁵¹ brought about a conception of a fellowship with God on the ground of the desire of man's soul for God, of the moving of man upward to God, an interpretation of a righteousness—the presupposition of salvation—which can be produced by man,⁵² and led to the conclusion that man can enter into fellowship with God by his own will. The splitting of man by the Greeks into sinful flesh and divine soul, striving upward to God, implied a fellowship with God on His own divine level and asks therefore that man should become holy before fellowship with God can be concluded. But this necessity of becoming holy, again put man in the centre instead of God, meant self-love even in the disguise of an elevated love, even under the cover of becoming spiritualized or sublimated. And what is the lot of those whose souls have not been attracted by *eros*? Are they to be held as excluded from fellowship with God?

So we can sum up the Greek (*eros*) conception of God and salvation: God is the object of love; man has an immortal soul and a sinful body; the soul strives to get rid of the sinful flesh; man tries to achieve holiness by ascending to God and to gain fellowship with God by his striving upward to reach God on His own divine level.

4. What is the difference between the love attributed to God in the Old Testament and that attributed to Him by the Greeks?

(44) Lev. 19: 18.

(45) Deut. 7: 8.

(46) Ex. 34: 7; Ps. 103: 17, 18; Jer. 32: 19; Hos. 8: 1, 13, 14.

(47) Is. 22: 12; Ezek. 18: 31; Hos. 14: 2; Joel 2: 12.

(48) Jn. 7: 35; 12: 20; Acts 14: 1; 17: 4; 17: 17; 18: 4; 19: 10; 20: 21; Rom. 1: 14; 1 Cor. 1: 22.

(49) Gen. 1: 27.

(50) Gen. 5: 1.

(51) Deut. 6: 5.

(52) Rom. 10: 3.

The Knowledge (*Gnosis*) Conception

The prophets, the psalmists and the writer of The Book of Proverbs emphasize again and again the necessity of understanding God.⁵³ Knowledge of God, to them, however, meant perceiving God's way, meditating in God's revelation. But from the East came another conception of knowledge. Even in Jesus' time Greek and Oriental ideas were being blended into various syncretistic cults such as Gnosticism, while the rapidly spreading doctrines of Buddhism placed the central emphasis on knowledge as the way of salvation.

Prince Gautama, the Buddha, had given mankind a new law: All life is sorrow. His religion contains the four holy truths—of sorrow, of the arising of sorrow, of the annihilation of sorrow and of the path that leads to the annihilation of sorrow. For Buddha the law of cause and effect, and not God, is the judge of the world; every deed incontestably finds its reward or punishment. Your "I," your personality, has arisen, like everything else, from a transient cause; it is therefore not a real "I" but an apparent "I," an illusion. There is no soul, no God.

To extricate himself from this sorrow, man does not need God's grace or God's love; it is ignorance alone that prevents him from recognizing the four holy truths. True knowledge, reached by keeping to the "holy eight-staged path of the true mean" will show him that his "I" is conditioned by the activity of his six senses. If he gets rid of the delight of the senses in objects, breaks off their contact with objects by dissolution of his desire, his will, then through knowledge man will attain to the certainty of freedom from sorrow, he will break the chain of rebirth, he will arrive at Nirvana.

So we can sum up the Buddhistic conceptions: there is no God, no soul; morality is based on fear, on reward and punishment; salvation is to be achieved on earth by a moral scheme "which is nothing but a sum in arithmetic set down by a clear, cold egoism."

5. Are attempts at finding similarities between Buddhism and Christianity justified? Are they profitable? Why?
6. Who is a "neighbour" in the Old Testament, in the New, and in Greek and Buddhistic teaching?

(53) Jer. 9: 24; Hos. 6: 3; Ps. 53: 2; Prov. 2: 5; 4: 5.

STUDY II

THE REVELATION OF GOD IN JESUS CHRIST (*AGAPE* CONCEPTION)

Agape in the Teaching of Jesus

"The words I speak to you all I do not speak of my own accord; it is the Father Who remains ever in Me, Who is performing His Own deeds. Believe Me, I am in the Father and the Father is in Me—or else believe because of the deeds themselves."¹

"You say, 'He is our God,' but you do not understand Him. I know Him." "... but I know Him, because I have come from Him. . . ."²

Equipped with such authority,³ knowing the nature of God because He came from God, realizing that all previous conceptions of God failed to reveal God's highest and most remarkable quality, by means of admonitions, advice, parables and finally of His two commandments, Jesus made the pronouncement: "God is Love (*agape*)."

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us."⁴ "He loved us first."⁵ God is not to be feared. God does not wait until man has gained a claim on Him, by his righteousness,⁶ by his holiness,⁷ by his upward striving,⁸ by his morality,⁹ by his deeds.¹⁰ God does not weigh the worth or worthlessness of man before He calls man to fellowship with Him. Even for sinners, blasphemers, persecutors and wanton aggressors against God's Son, the grace of God floods life.¹¹ It is God Who creates the value in man, His Spirit in man that gives man value.

Man cannot command God to enter into fellowship with him. God Himself decides to spend grace, to pour out love upon man. He does not ask a response in the sense that man has to love Him before He will establish fellowship. The keeping of the law is no longer security for salvation.¹² Moral perfec-

(1) Jn. 14: 10-12.

(2) Jn. 8: 55; 7: 29.

(3) Mt. 7: 29.

(4) 1 Jn. 4: 10.

(5) 1 Jn. 4: 19.

(6) Rom. 10: 3.

(7) Mk. 2: 17.

(8) 1 Jn. 4: 10.

(9) Mt. 5: 45.

(10) Luke 17: 10.

(11) 1 Tim. 1: 13, 14.

(12) Rom. 9: 19f.

tion according to the standard of legal righteousness without Christ is not gain, but loss.¹³ God's love does not require a sacrifice from the side of man; it is God Who, out of love for man, descended in Christ to man and sacrificed His only beloved Son on the Cross;¹⁴ it is not man who reconciles God but it is God Who reconciled the world unto Himself.¹⁵ God's love is not to be evoked, it is spontaneous, unmotivated.

1. What light does the fact of the appearance of Jesus on earth throw on the nature of God?
2. What are the characteristics of *agape*? (See particularly 1 Cor. 13.) Is patriotism a higher form of love than *agape*? What is the right relation between love to one's country and love to one's neighbour?
3. What light do the parables of the sower (Mt. 13, Mk. 4, Lk. 8), the prodigal son (Lk. 15), the vineyard labourers (Mt. 20), and the good Samaritan (Lk. 10) throw on the nature of Christian love?
4. In what ways does Jesus' treatment of Zaccheus (Lk. 19) display *agape*?
5. In what sense is "Love the fulfilment of the Law"? (Rom. 13: 8-10; Gal. 5: 14-15.)

***Agape* in the Incarnation, Crucifixion and Resurrection**

In the counsel of God, however, the teaching of Jesus was not enough. For though God's *agape* always existed because God has always been the same,¹⁶ yet man continually misunderstood and misinterpreted God's revelation of love, restricting it according to his human needs and human conceptions. No man—not even Moses—could interpret God's nature in terms which did justice to that nature. Always thinking of love in human terms, Moses gave a picture of a loving God Who Himself limited His love, restricting it for example to those who kept the Law. Only God Himself, descending to earth, by becoming incarnate in His Son Jesus, could explain how His nature was to be understood—as unrestricted love. This conception of God's nature stands and falls with the belief in the incarnation of God in man, with the conception of Christ's divinity. "God is love" could only be revealed in its fullest implications by God's Son;¹⁷ only through the incarnate Christ¹⁸ could it be established as the eternal truth, the eternal measuring rod, timeless, nationless, universal. It is by con-

templation of the fact of the incarnation that we begin to understand the nature of God's love, of *agape*; it is a love transcending feeble human love, higher in quality, deeper in intensity, utterly devoted to the well-being of the beloved, giving itself in the fullest measure to all men without restriction. As soon as we begin to think of Christ only as the highest perfection of man, but no more God's creation than we ourselves are, then we not only fail to see the meaning of "God is love" but we have shifted this eternal truth into the sphere of arbitrary and variable human standards; Christian love is no longer the reflection of God's *agape* but a high ethical virtue which may be elevated to such higher virtues as patriotism, nationalism or love for humanity. But who is to regulate these valuations? When do these notions, through being exaggerated, become scourges instead of blessings?¹⁹

But if we would see God's *agape* most clearly revealed, we must turn to the Crucifixion. Look at the Christ on the Cross, at the incarnate God, and understand, man, that the Saviour offers fellowship with God in and through Him, on your sinful human level; that God's *agape* has become Christ's *agape*, that Christ died for the ungodly, for sinners—neighbours, and enemies alike. Golgotha means that Christ has brought to man God's message of heavenly love, that Christ, and He only, has become the mediator between God and man, that God has descended by Christ and in Christ to man, has become incarnate in Him, that the new *nomos* is love, the new heavenly *eros* is love, the new *gnosis* is love—heavenly *agape*, given by God as spontaneous, unmotivated, creative love, shining upon all, upon sinners, Jews, Greeks, Gentiles alike.²⁰

But the Incarnation has been doubted, the Crucifixion was not understood, even by the apostles. The Resurrection* finally sealed the truth of the Incarnation, made the Crucifixion understandable, showed that Jesus was not only sent† with authority;²¹ that He did not only speak²² with authority, but that He was also called back with authority to sit, after His Ascension, at the right hand of His Heavenly Father.²³ The resurrection of Jesus was not a mere resuscitation, it was not simply a continuation of His earthly life with all its limitations. The Risen Lord did not know material restrictions; He went through closed doors; He was not recognised, He revealed Himself. The resurrection was a unique, creative act of love,²⁴

(19) 1 Jn. 4: 1-4.

(20) Rom. 10: 12.

(21) Rom. 8: 3; Gal. 4: 4.

(22) Mt. 7: 29; Mk. 1: 27; Jn. 5: 27.

(23) Luke 24: 51; Jn. 20: 17; Acts. 1: 9; Eph. 4: 8; Heb. 12: 2; 1 Pet. 3: 22.

(24) Mt. 16: 21; Acts 2: 24; 3: 15; Rom. 1: 4; 10: 9; 2 Cor. 4: 14.

*See appended note on The Historical Evidences of the Resurrection.

†In St. John's Gospel Jesus says thirty-one times that He was sent by God.

(13) Ph. 3: 6f;

(14) Jn. 3: 16.

(15) 2 Cor. 5: 19.

(16) Rom. 10: 12; Heb. 1: 12.

(17) Luke 1: 31; Jn. 1: 14; Rom. 8: 3; cf. Is. 7: 14; 9: 6.

(18) Phil. 2: 7; 1 Tim. 3: 16.

the prototype of that act by which God, if He so chooses, will raise other men from the dead.²⁵ "Christ was the first to be reaped of those who sleep in death."²⁶ God not only revealed His love by breaking the power of death which held Jesus in the tomb,²⁷ bringing victory out of apparent defeat,²⁸ but also by delegating to Jesus Himself authority over death, placing in His hands the power to raise those whom He wills to life.²⁹

Not only in the teaching then, but in the historic facts of the Incarnation, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection is God revealed as *agape*, as creative, unrestricted, conquering, powerful love, taking the initiative in concluding fellowship with man whom He has chosen. "The Law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."³⁰

6. Why was Jesus crucified? What does His death indicate about the nature of God, the meaning of life and about suffering?
7. Having examined the historical evidence for the resurrection of the body of Our Lord, at what conclusions can we arrive? In what sense is the resurrection a revelation of the love of God? What light does it throw on the probability and nature of a life for man beyond this life?

STUDY III

THE MEANING OF DISCIPLESHIP

It was on the ground of the conception of God as *agape*, as love, that Jesus defined discipleship: "He who does not love, does not know God, for God is love."¹ "I give you a new command, to love one another; by this every one will recognize that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another."² "Well, if I have washed your feet, I who am your Lord and Teacher, you are bound to wash one another's feet; for I have been setting you an example, that you should do what I have done to you."³ "As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you; remain within My Love, just as I have kept My Father's commands and remain within His love."⁴ "This is my command: you are to love one another as I have loved you."⁵ "This is what I command you: to love one another."⁶ "You will understand on that day that I am in the Father and you are in Me and I am in you. He who possesses My commands and obeys them is he who loves Me, and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father and I will love him and appear to him."⁷

God chooses men, not men God. God pours out His love upon men—"God loved us first."⁸ So Jesus chose the disciples, loved them first, not the disciples chose Jesus.⁹ But Jesus Who lived among human beings, Who knew their virtues and weaknesses, perceived very clearly that He was asking for a complete surrender of man to God, for a faith without any self-love, for a love without any selfish motivation, a self-denial beyond human strength. "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me'."¹⁰ "So with every one of you who will not part with all his goods—he cannot be a disciple of mine."¹¹ "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, aye and his own life, he cannot be a disciple of mine; whoever does not carry his own cross and come

(25) Jn. 5: 28; Acts 24: 15; 1 Cor. 15.

(26) 1 Cor. 15: 20-22.

(27) Acts 2: 24.

(28) Col. 2: 14-15.

(29) Jn. 10: 18; 11: 25; Jn. 5: 26-29; Rev. 1: 18.

(30) Jn. 1: 17-18.

(1) 1 Jn. 4: 8.

(2) Jn. 16: 34f. (Moffatt) = Jn. 13: 34f (Authorized).

(3) Jn. 13: 14-16.

(4) Jn. 15: 9-10.

(5) Jn. 15: 12.

(6) Jn. 15: 17.

(7) Jn. 14: 20-21.

(8) 1 Jn. 4: 19.

(9) Jn. 15: 16.

(10) Mt. 16: 24.

(11) Luke 14: 33.

after Me, he cannot be a disciple of mine."¹² His whole life was a complete fulfilment of His own demands. When His mother and His brothers wanted to speak to Him He replied to the man who told Him this, "Who is My mother? and who are My brothers?" Stretching out His hand towards His disciples, He said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! Whosoever does the will of My Father in heaven, that is My brother and sister and mother."¹³

Here His teaching reached its climax. Beyond the limits of family ties, of state, of nation, He extended the heavenly *agape* to all mankind.

This then is the meaning of discipleship—to be the conscious, grateful, and joyous, recipient of God's love revealed in Christ and to display that same quality of love to other people in all circumstances of life. Discipleship means the realization that there is only one way to God—through Christ as the Redeemer. "I am the Gate; whoever enters by Me will be saved, he will go in and out and find pasture."¹⁴ "There is no salvation by anyone else, nor even a second Name under heaven appointed for us men and our salvation."¹⁵

This then is the call: Man, act as a disciple of Jesus by passing on God's *agape*, His love, which comes upon you by the Holy Spirit; pass it on to your neighbour, to your enemy—a spontaneous love, a love which seeketh not its own, a love for nothing, a love not to please the lover, without any selfish motivation, a love not regulated by law but free, a love not set in motion from without but overflowing from within, a love for all, for the sinner first because he needs you, a love which does not examine the neighbour's worth or worthlessness, a continuing love, often a lost love, a creative love.¹⁶ Man, act as the disciple of Jesus, aware that He taught that God is not interested in your words but in your deeds, that faith without works is dead.¹⁷

1. Discuss the meaning of discipleship in the light of 1 John 4: 19-20 and John 15: 16.

Let us now draw out the implications of the *agape* conception for the various aspects of the Christian faith.

God

If God is love, the active subject of love, and love can only be given and received by personalities, we must then conceive of God in personal—though not anthropomorphic—terms. We must reject explanations of God's nature which fail to per-

(12) Luke 14: 26.

(13) Mt. 12: 46-50.

(14) Jn. 10: 9.

(15) Acts 4: 12.

(16) 1 Cor. 13; 1 Jn. 4: 7-21.

(17) James 2: 16ff.

ceive this central fact, such as that of pantheism in which God is "the Absolute who is an immanent principle, pervading the Universe"; or the Hegelian conception of God as "the Idea which realizes itself in two successive forms, of nature (object) and man (subject, spirit), coming into consciousness only in the latter"; or the conception of Hartmann—"The unconscious which as immanent providence leads all issues to their predetermined end and gives birth to the conscious, which, consummated, relapses again into the unconscious."

2. What is the value of—and what the objections to—thinking of God as "a person"?—or as "three persons"? Why do we use the personal (masculine) pronoun in speaking of God?

Man

For the Christian, man is viewed as the creature chosen by God to be the vehicle of His love. The fact that "God is love" means that He consciously creates the value in man by His love, "shed abroad in his heart through the Holy Spirit which is given unto him,"¹⁸ and directs His activities toward man in love, revealing to man that his activities have to be directed by *agape* as a reflection of God's love to him. In making the one assumption of a powerful God, Who is love, to explain the way and the goal of life, we replace the necessity for a host of other assumptions which are often put forward by scientists to explain phenomena. It is a further assumption that this powerful God Who is love has created man and uses him as His vehicle. Much effort has been put, and is still being put, into the attempt to establish the theory of organic evolution, according to which, "millions of years ago, by the action of natural forces, lifeless matter gave origin to one or more living organisms of minute size, from which are descended all plants and animals, including man, which are now living or have ever lived on the earth." But science has not yet produced one single fact from which can be concluded with any certainty either (a) that living organisms have developed from lifeless matter or (b) that man has developed from an animal. The Christian estimate of man as the chosen vehicle of God marks with peculiar emphasis this line between man and the animals.¹⁹

3. What implications has the conception "God is love" for our understanding of the nature of man?
4. Does the theory that man has evolved from an animal best fit the facts? How far does it do justice—or injustice—to the nature of man? What is its relation to the Christian conception of man and his origin?

(18) Rom. 5: 5, cf. 2 Cor. 3: 18 and 4: 6.

(19) Cf. Ps. 8.

Salvation

God gave man free will—to understand Him and His will and to act according to His revelation. Sin is the abuse and rejection of God's love, resulting in self-indulgence, in acts that trespass against the rights of others, in lack of love to our neighbour.²⁰ Repentance is the process whereby, having realized that we have sinned against the love of God and against our neighbour, we purpose to amend our ways. But even if we fail again God's attitude toward us is ever the unchanging relationship of love.²¹ Indeed, it is our realization of this love that provides the motive for our repentance, for if we had not known His love we could not have come to know that we had sinned against it. Because this is the nature of God's forgiveness, we are to forgive not once, but until "seventy times seven."²²

The conception of God as *agape* undoubtedly has as one of its corollaries that justification is by faith alone. It is God's grace, His love to you, which is the ground of salvation, which justifies you. Man's response lies only in an unrestricted faith in God; justification—being accepted by God as upright—is by faith alone; it is to be "received by faith."²³ "Because no one is justified on the score of the Law before God (plainly by faith shall the just live—and the Law is not based on faith), so that by faith we might receive the promised Spirit."²⁴

Mediaeval Christianity, under the influence of Greek philosophy, considered faith to be powerless unless love as form stamped the powerless matter faith. This conception was summed up in the use of the word *caritas* for love. *Caritas* was a synthesis of *eros* and *agape*. Through an infusion of love from God, man could ascend to God—could become holy—then God descended upon him. This placed a restriction, a condition on God's love to man—the condition that he had first to become holy, then God would enter into fellowship with him. The consequence was a restriction in the exercise of love to the neighbour.

But we can never become holy; we always remain sinners.²⁵ Unrestricted faith in Christ alone is the call to Christ's disciples "and be found at death in Him, possessing no legal righteousness of my own but the righteousness of faith in Christ, the divine righteousness that rests on faith."²⁶ No holiness of ours, no keeping of the law can lead us to God. "You are

for justification by the Law? Then you are done with Christ; you have deserted grace, for it is by faith that we wait in the Spirit for the righteousness we hope for."²⁷ Man is "saved by grace"—that free, unmerited love of God, received by faith—faith, which is an attitude of receptivity, an opening of the heart and mind and life to receive.

This means in plain words that good works, done spontaneously, "without letting your left hand know what your right hand doeth,"²⁸ without hope of reward or glimpse at praise, are the necessary consequences of faith.²⁹ If any other thought in doing them enters the mind then they are not good but "entirely damnable."³⁰ "For our righteousness looks forth from heaven and descends to us. But those ungodly men have presumed to ascend unto heaven by their own righteousness and to bring from thence a truth which has originated among us from earth." Only when this tendency to self-righteousness is rooted out and the good is done freely and straight-forwardly "to the glory of God and the benefit of one's neighbour, is it really good at all."³¹

The Kingdom of God will be brought to man by Christ if we as His disciples have opened our hearts to receive God's love and pass it on to our neighbour—for the same reason and in the same way as God loves us.

5. What do we understand by "justification by faith alone"? (Discuss in connection with Rom. 3: 19-31.) Why is this conception inconsistent with the *caritas* conception of man's relation to God, but in full accord with the *agape* conception? How far was the emphasis laid by the Reformers on this point necessary and valuable?

Miracles

Christ's life was full of miracles. Many attempts have been made to explain these miracles as natural happenings or in terms of psychological influences working on the minds of observers. It is not our task to argue on this ground. Whether or not this or that miracle done by Christ can or cannot be explained in terms of natural happenings is beside the point; if we have made—once for all—the assumption of a powerful God, then the consequence "for with God nothing is impossible" (Luke 1: 37; Mt. 19: 26) is only logical. On this matter as on other theological tenets such as the Fall, Original Sin, etc., we should avoid straining the conscience of the individual Christian—he must make up his own mind

(20) Prov. 14: 21; James 4: 17; 1 Jn. 5: 17; Tit. 3: 3.

(21) Luke 15: 7; 11: 32; Mt. 26: 69-75.

(22) Ps. 103: 3; Luke 17: 4; Eph. 4: 32; Col. 3: 13.

(23) Rom. 3: 21-31.

(24) Gal. 3: 11, 14.

(25) Luke 17: 10; Rom. 3: 23; 1 Jn. 1: 8f.

(26) Phil. 3: 9; Rom. 5: 1; 1 Cor. 6: 11; Gal. 3: 23-25; Heb. 10: 38; Heb. 11: 4.

(27) Gal. 5: 4.

(28) Mt. 6: 3.

(29) James 2: 14.

(30) James 2: 8, 9.

(31) Rom. 3: 28.

on these questions. It is, however, important to note that in His miracles Christ did not create new laws; "the Divine Personality operates, then as now, by combining, arranging, and directing, rather than in adding to or subtracting from, the system of forces which make up the normal working of God in nature."

Prayer, Worship and the Sacraments

Prayer (the patient, persistent seeking to understand God and His love, rather than any attempt to bend the will of God to our human purposes), and meditation in the revelation of God (meditation which has the study and reading of the Bible at its heart)—these are the ways of opening the heart to receive God's love. The use and value of the sacraments is recognised by practically all branches of the Christian Church, though there is variety both in the emphasis and interpretation given them. Whatever this emphasis and interpretation the way to God through Christ remains open to all who believe in Christ as the only mediator between God and man.

6. What forms of prayer and worship harmonize with the fact that God is *agape*? What is the value and place of the Sacraments in life?

The Cross

Acceptance of discipleship means acceptance of the Cross. The Cross meant for Christ, and should mean for us, complete surrender to God; it means unconditional imitation of the deeds of God shown in Christ's life; it means self-denial, the laying on one's own shoulders of the responsibility for carrying the load of work and suffering in the world; it means renunciation, voluntary acceptance of duty, humility; it means the exercise of true heroism in the continuous taming of one's own will and passions, in subordinating one's own ambitions, in renouncing the desire for reward; it means loving one's neighbour, without restricting that love by arbitrary human judgments concerning the worth or worthlessness of the neighbour. The Cross elevated love to one's neighbour from the sphere of ethics to the sphere of faith³² and established as judge One only—"He Whom God has appointed to be judge of the living and the dead." It remains for us then neither to judge nor criticise but to love.³³

7. What did Jesus mean when He appealed to men "to deny themselves and to take up the cross"? What does it mean for a disciple to-day?

(32) Mt. 22: 39; Mk. 12: 31; Rom. 13: 10; Gal. 5: 14; James 2: 8.

(33) Acts 10: 42; Rom. 14: 10; 1 Cor. 4: 4-5; James 2: 12.

STUDY IV

THE APPLICATION OF *AGAPE* TO DEMOCRACY—I

The application of *agape* means that all our morality, all righteousness, all justice are to be derived from love which "seeketh not its own,"¹ which is primarily a giving and never a judging love, which has the benefit of one's neighbour—in the widest sense—in sight and not the happiness of the lover. Jesus says to us, His disciples: Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect²—meaning that we have to imitate God's love to us by passing it on to our neighbour. *Agape* is a religious teaching; it came from God and is therefore an unchangeable, unalterable, measuring rod for all actions of a Christian, needs nothing to make it complete, no complements, is applicable to every corner of life and is always in full accord with accuracy of observation and scientific truth. Thus Christian ethics have ceased to be a collection of rules for moral conduct, a system to secure man's happiness on the ground of a defined—man-defined—morality, a moral order with human excellence as its goal, a high standard of virtues leading to harmony in society. Even in the unity of all virtues, moralities, justice and righteousness, ethics remain a matter of contention, of human arbitrary standards; and if Christian philosophers discovered that they could hardly believe in the "nursery tales" of incarnation and resurrection, but, however, were prepared to accept Christian ethics, then in establishing such a "Christian" philosophy they have overlooked the fact that Christian ethics are primarily and foremost religious ethics. The adjective Christian loses all meaning if Christian ethics are detached from Christian faith, which teaches: God is love; God gave the message of love to man through His incarnation in Christ; discipleship of Christ means to live always with *agape*—Christ's *agape*—in mind.

If God is love, then because love is only thinkable between living personalities, we believe in a personal loving God and in the personality of man whose value³ is created by God when He concludes fellowship with Him by His own will. Christian ethics based on the Christian faith of love will, therefore, respect in all spheres—the personality of man. "Whosoever wants to be the great man among you must be your servant, and whoever of you wants to be first must be the slave of

(1) 1 Cor. 13: 5 (authorized version).

(2) Mt. 5: 48.

(3) Jn. 3: 7.

all."⁴ That is discipleship! Serve your neighbour—he is in fellowship with God. God confers Knighthood upon man by giving him as a personality free will. In terms of *agape* again man as a personality has always to lay all responsibility⁵ upon his own shoulders and never to shift it. That is the meaning of Jesus' call to his disciples to bear the Cross. In every sphere of life without any exception to make oneself the centre of responsibility⁶ and one's neighbour⁷ the centre of love is the purport of discipleship; in acting so we have set Jesus, and through Him God, in the centre of all our actions. That is love to God! Never imitate Pilate and wash your hands by saying "It is your affair."⁸ Do not decline to be a guest when *agape* invites you—and *agape* invites you always.⁹

1. Why should Christian ethics never be divorced from Christian faith? What happens when they are?

Now let us examine how *agape* is applicable to our society—to that form of state which we call democracy. An analysis of a real democracy will show that seven distinctive features are necessary to institute a democracy that will endure; the lack of one makes a democracy not only imperfect but open to attack, attacks which shake it in an increasing ratio to the importance of the features threatened. The deficiency of the sixth feature and the entire lack of the seventh, for example, explain why continental democracies, in contrast to English democracy, could not withstand opposition and were so easily swept away by any kind of movement that was dictatorial.

Neither here nor later is it my task to write a history of these various features, to depict how each came about as a struggle between many clashing interests; I can only state what they mean to-day, and how they can be preserved and developed by the application of *agape* to them. That leads to the general statement that none of these features need new "acquisitions"* to preserve it, they only ask to be made conscious by the conscious application of *agape* to them.

1. Liberty

Liberty in a democracy is expressed in the religious, intellectual, political and economical spheres by (a) freedom of religious conscience, (b) freedom of the spoken and written

(4) Mk. 10: 43, 44.

(5) Rom. 2: 21.

(6) Gal. 6: 5.

(7) Gal. 6: 2.

(8) Mt. 27: 24-26.

(9) Luke 14: 15ff.

* "Acquisition" in political science implies a "useful addition;" the word is used in this sense throughout the study.

word, (c) freedom of association, and (d) freedom of economic development.

(a) Freedom of religious conscience. Men have always failed when they claimed that their church organizations represent "genuine" Christianity and attributed the name "heretics" to confessors of another denomination. The real Church is there where two are gathered in the spirit of Christ, Who alone is the mediator between God and man.¹⁰ That excludes the claim of any church system to be considered as the definite or only Church. The reformation brought us a revival of *agape*—of freedom of the Christian who has in religious matters to respect only one authority—and that is Christ—as revealed to us through the Bible. Having conceived the spirit of *agape*, the fundamental principle underlying *agape*, we have always to act according to our responsibility. It was the greatest blessing for the English-speaking world that its various denominations worked towards deepening the Christian spirit and that the individual could avoid undue religious pressure from dogmatically organized Churches by joining the denomination which best expressed his religious feeling. The spirit of God and Christ manifested in *agape* is the uniting tie of all Churches—dogmas and sacraments, rituals and rites vary according to human conceptions. It is no chance that in all the larger countries in which religious freedom could develop because of numerous denominations, democracy was anchored in the free and fair play of two or three political parties, whereas in all other countries with rigidly and dogmatically organized churches man's drive for free religious and political expression found its valves in a host of political parties.

Thus let it be the primary task of the Church as a body, and of its ministers, to preach the word of God, to make it understandable to the people, to explain it, to emphasize it, to become the educators of the people in the conception of *agape*.

(b) Freedom of the word. I shall treat the question of "rights" in connection with "voluntary duty" under the seventh feature: legal consciousness. Anticipating this view of "right" as right and duty, it should be said that any attempt at restricting the right of the individual to express himself freely by means of publications, press, meetings and wireless tends towards a violation of *agape* which strives for the best of the community. But the interests of the community demand self-restraint on the part of the individual so that he does not indulge in an empty show of freedom, in a misuse of his rights which may be detrimental to his neighbour. If individuals are conscious of *agape*, of self-sacrificing consideration for their neighbours, no institution should have the right to curb man's liberty of free expression.

(10) Jn. 14: 7; 1 Tim. 2: 5; Heb. 8: 6; 9: 15, 24; 1 Jn. 2: 1.

This reflection is valid for theatre, films, and entertainments. Certainly, we need—until *agape* has become conscious—restrictive regulations in all actions to check misunderstood freedom in this respect; but the regulations should never be an aim in themselves, an assurance to the legislators that everything has been done, but should be considered as a necessary transgression of rights to be counterbalanced by an untiring education of all in *agape* until these regulations are superfluous, have lost their meaning.

In 390 A.D. Bishop Ambrosius rebuked the Emperor Theodosius with the words: "It is not really imperial to deny freedom of speech, and it is not really priestly to conceal one's own opinion." Again and again we have, in considering rights in a democracy, to remind ourselves of the wise words of Plato.¹¹ "Because democracy does not set limits to liberty and neglects everything in favour of liberty sudden change occurs. Tyranny becomes necessary. Huge liberty suddenly changes into nothing else than huge slavery. That is as valid for the individual as for the whole state. Thus tyranny is supposed to originate from no other form of the state than from democracy, the gravest and hardest slavery from the greatest liberty indeed." Only *agape* can set the limits so necessary even to liberty!

(c) Freedom of association. *Agape*, teaching the esteem of the personality of man, does not interfere in the right of the individual to choose his associations, but at the same time teaches him that his associations have no better or higher rights than others or than the single individual who prefers to live outside associations. Christian love to the neighbour will, in the majority of cases, tell the individual that Christianity is not a religion of "single goers," but there are cases in which even the believer cannot reconcile his religious views with the political aims of some associations. Any attempt by associations to exert pressure on individuals to join them is the most distinct violation of *agape* by a majority.

Democracy, imbued with this spirit, means the loving rule of a majority, but not the terror, the dictatorship of a majority; it means the observation of the law of love by giving every minority a chance to become a majority in a fair struggle for political power—power, not to be understood in the sense of any "acquisition" to love but power exercised in love. Society in a democracy based on *agape* knows no privileges but one—to excel in love. The same consideration applies beyond the sphere of the individual, of his state, his nation. Love to one's nation, cultivation of its customs, traditions, language, civilization, one's highest contribution to

the rise of its culture, are matters of course, but *agape* means more—means to see one's neighbour beyond the nation to which one belongs. There is no liberty if only enjoyed by the single individual, or by a single nation or by a single state. Christ showed us—and that was the greatest transvaluation of all valuations—that God as love did not choose one people but mankind as His vehicle; he who sets out to alter Christ's call to His disciples to give equal love to all again makes distinctions and denies his discipleship.

(d) Freedom of economic development. Modern industrialization has created relations within society more complicated than ever before, the roots of evils that do undoubtedly exist are controversially explained. We are told by one school of thinkers and politicians that all evils within society are due to a monopoly of the ownership of the means of production by a few and that a transfer of this ownership from the few to society would solve all problems. Another school scorns these ideas, shows that they are entirely unscientific, that the evils within society are not due to production at all but to a wrong distribution. Socialization of the means of production—is the battlecry of those who support a materialistic conception of history. Leave production—so-called capitalistic production—alone, because it has proved to be most effective but socialize distribution, communication, and transportation—is the battlecry of those who support a social interpretation of history. Still other schools reject all theories of socialization or nationalization and point out that even the state or society tends towards the suppression of freedom, that state and society have practically abolished freedom of competition which is a presupposition of every capitalistic system, that social evolution in a free capitalistic society has always led to the highest form of economic evolution (see the eight-hour day and the forty-hour week) and that the distortion of the capitalistic system brought about by the socialistic tendencies of even so-called capitalistic governments has deprived capitalistic laws, which work for the benefit of all, of their force. Economists of all schools are pouring out upon us notions such as "capital," "capitalism," "profit," but we search in vain for an established definition of these notions. Again science has proved that it is not able to give a clear lead in solving economic questions. As many scientists so many schools, and the various schools—to use an old analogy—have their dogmas, their scripture, their councils, their heretics, their anathemas; it seems that all see pathological symptoms and base their remedies on laws of pathology. Even the philosophers did not unravel the entanglements when they replaced the Roman idea of property as "the right in the thing" by "the right of one person in regard to another." Only *agape* sees the rights of one person toward another in

(11) Plato, Republic Book 8.

insoluble combination with voluntary duty and indicates the attitude of a Christian in this struggle of ideas.

First of all it is obvious that all endeavour for economic improvement belongs to the essentials of a true conception of love to one's neighbour—but it is obvious as well that exertions aiming only at security of life in a pure economic sense again split the needs of man into parts, whereas Christianity sees man as a whole. Even if men could live in an economic paradise and would not believe, or were hindered from believing, that kind of paradise would have to be rejected. Living in society as it is with its present institutions, *agape* directs us to understand that man is not really free if in economic bondage; that all institutions and systems working to-day have to be imbued through our activity with the spirit of Christian love; that employers have no better rights than employees, employees no higher rights than the unemployed; that unemployment, slums and so on are violations of the principle of equality. We have to strive for improvements, for the abolition of obstacles, but we have to appeal for directions for our actions to men of science who have to lead us—inspired by *agape*. Christianity cannot recommend remedies by favouring certain systems. We have, as disciples of Christ, to bear in mind His answer to the disciples of the Pharisees, "Give Caesar what belongs to Caesar, give God what belongs to God,"¹² and His refusal to be a judge in economic strife.¹³ Christianity will, on the other hand, accept any system which gives man freedom in the abovementioned sense. We do not know in what direction economics will develop, what systems will provide that freedom desired by all; but we know that every attempt at the improvement of economic conditions undertaken along the lines of social evolution has to find our approval, and every attempt at the introduction of improvements by means of violence, of dictatorship of a group, even of a majority, is in contrast to Christianity and has to be refused. No dictatorship, not even a so-called Christian one can be tolerated, not even for a period of transition!

2. What is the value of trying to understand the traditions and practices of Christian denominations other than one's own? Does Christian love require this of us?
3. What difference should we expect between the attitude of a "democrat" and that of a "Christian democrat" towards censorship?
4. What are the implications of the principle of freedom of association in the realm of industrial organization?

(12) Mt. 22: 21.

(13) Luke 12: 13-14.

5. What is the teaching of Jesus about material goods? How far can Christianity be identified with any particular system for the organization of the production and distribution of goods?

2. Equality

In a world of masters and slaves, of rulers and ruled, with all the dreadful distinctions of antiquity, Moses received God's revelation on the equality of man—within the limits of his understanding of God's nature of love. God's impartiality does not know differences between rich and poor, and orders love to the stranger, care for the fatherless and widows.¹⁴ These ideas developed into the statement that God in His judgment has "no respect of persons."¹⁵ But in all these conceptions of equality there is the decisive restriction—it is equality only among the chosen people, a restriction entirely overthrown by Jesus: ". . . Master? for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."¹⁶ Clean and unclean, Jew or Greek, there is no distinction—"for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him;" "neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."¹⁷ Indeed these definitions of equality did not find "acquisitions" in the course of history but suffered tremendous retrogression; only the revival of *agape* can make them valid again. In the light of *agape*, then equality means:

1. Men and women are to be regarded as equals by the law.
2. All are to be treated as equals before the law.
3. All have the right to appeal to a Court if they feel that they have been wronged.
4. All have an adequate claim on sustenance.
5. All can claim consideration for their personality.

To 1. It needed the experience of this war to show us that any difference between men and women made in any sphere is obsolete. Women, better equipped by nature for the endurance of pain, have shown a heroism, a devotion to their task, not unparalleled in history but largely forgotten. Even participation in fighting does not change their nature if *agape* is the leading motive in all their actions. They will exchange weapons and the atmosphere of battles for peaceful occupations again without suffering any harm, but only when *agape* is the driving force of their activity. The same *agape* commands men to treat them equally—to consider them as comrades in all spheres—and even to pay them equally, judging only their capacity.

(14) Deut. 10: 17-19.

(15) 2 Chr. 19: 7.

(16) Mt. 23: 8 (authorized).

(17) Mt. 23: 8ff; Acts 10: 28; Rom. 10: 12 (authorized); Gal. 3: 28.

To 2. The same consideration is valid for their treatment before the law. Law does not know differences as to sex, birth, occupation, riches or poverty, and influence, and should not know differences artificially bred in wartime. Unjust treatment, even of a single person, violates respect for personality—the essence of *agape*. Laws very often generalize, and executive officials find in laws and regulations a pleasant prop for their daily routine. Here again it is no chance that the English democracy shows the highest standard among all democracies, the English official governs less by laws and regulations and more by treating every single case on its own merits—in full accord with the demand of *agape*.

To 3. For the maintenance of a real democracy, it is of decisive importance that the Law, in the process of enforcing its demands, should not be allowed to encroach too far into the life of the individual, and that he should always have the right of appeal to a court if he feels that he has been wronged. Even in the darkest times of the Middle Ages the English manor-court gave to the serf the right to appeal to a court when the demands made on him by his master transgressed limits set by custom and habits. In this right of appeal to a court one of the most sacred rights of equality is anchored, because here the limits are set to the caprice of a bureaucracy or of a government, and it is very significant that this right of appeal has been abolished in all dictatorships. This right raises the question of the judiciary power in a democracy. The Bench should be absolutely independent of the government—as it is in the English democracy, where it is privileged to control even the government. Judges should be well paid, unbribable, inviolable, irremovable and so be able to secure the rights of all—the whole system being instituted by godly law.

To 4. But it is not enough to give men and women political and juridical equality and to allow them to lack the necessities of life. In a democracy imbued with the spirit of *agape*, everybody has the right and the duty—both instituted by God—to work and to be paid for his work in order to live, to feed, clothe and shelter himself and his family and to have adequate leisure.¹⁸ I said “right and duty”—the apostle Paul refers unequivocally to the duty to work.¹⁹ How this demand is to be put into practice it is the task of experts and legislators to decide—all acting according to *agape*. Unemployment, in any form, is a crime against the personality of man and is bred, not by systems, but by the desertion of the principle—“love thy neighbour as thyself.”

To 5. But employment, high wages, and security of life

will not solve one of the most urgent problems—the lost relation between man and his tools—only *agape* can reinstitute that. Have you worked on a moving belt, in the noise of the ear-deafening rattling of looms, in the unbearable heat of a blast furnace, in the darkness of mines? If you have, you will know that high wages, ownership of the means of production, social provision, will never solve the most burning problem—that man is degraded to the level of a tool—that he has gained freedom from the process of production legally rather than actually. What created the masterpieces of art in times past? Not the absence of machinery—but the feeling of the individual that he himself is a creator even if in a restricted sense. We have to make man conscious again of his importance in the course, not only of production but of every activity, whether he is skilled or unskilled. Equality as well as liberty are not abstract notions, not advantages to be had for the asking—they have to be felt to be appreciated. Society's esteem of all work, consciousness of the meaning of his work on the side of the labourer, knowledge of his part in the process of production and in the wider sphere of the use of the product on which he has worked—all these factors, instituted by *agape*, will produce joy in work—will ban monotony and embitterment.

6. How far have we in Australia equality in the five-fold sense discussed in this chapter? What should we do to improve the situation?
7. When are liberty and equality complementary and when antithetical notions?

(18) Ps. 136: 25; Mt. 6: 26.

(19) 2 Thess. 3: 10.

STUDY V

THE APPLICATION OF *AGAPE* TO DEMOCRACY—II

3. Mobility

Under "mobility" we understand the right of men to move from one to another stratum of society according to their abilities and capacity. No one stratum of society has, according to *agape*, the right to any privilege other than that of the individual—to use his abilities and capacities in the sense of the parable of the talents.¹ But this right also remains empty if *agape* does not fill it with purport. In all democracies to-day the development of abilities and capacity is restricted by prejudice, money or influence. Our universities tend more and more to become factories for issuing degrees; research is neglected, practical aims—even the emphasis of the word "practical" betrays misconceptions—are put to the fore, the money invested in study must show quick returns, the standard is lowered, the necessary relation between man and his profession is overlooked, "vocations" have ceased to be "callings," the picture behind the word has been lost. *Agape* demands of schools the highest standard and accessibility to all who have the ability to advance through them, without regard to their financial means. An average education lasting from the sixth to the fourteenth year should be available for all, free of cost, and for the gifted a chance to specialize at this, or even an earlier stage. Universities and similar institutions should be open to all from the age of eighteen, with the most rigorous standard of study, knowledge and research—sifting and sifting of the best—but all educational institutions should be highly equipped and free from any payment. The aim of all schools, while not neglecting technical skill, should be to create love for one's vocation, responsibility in carrying out one's vocation, consideration for the neighbour in practising one's vocation. Think of the surgeon, of the physician. Who doubts that the highest technical skill is a necessary qualification in his calling? But everybody knows that a high percentage of cases of disease are of psychological root, that the sick need not only the surgeon's knife to be cured but also his love. The primary school teacher should receive the highest education for he is more than a transmitter of the art of learning to read and write; he influences the character of the child at the most malleable age. *Agape*

demands from public servants that they serve not by pleasing themselves, not by merely working their set hours, treating their neighbour unconcernedly and consoling themselves with the thought that they are serving "the state," but by giving their neighbours—and the neighbour is the man who stands in need—their advice, their help, the benefit of their ability. *Agape* asks the waiter, the waitress, the typist, the street-sweeper to consider the neighbour in everything they do and to work not only because work is duty but because it is joy.

Not some but all vocations are the vocations of artists when they are lived and practised in the spirit of *agape*. That spirit will make men "mobile," able to move freely and on an equal footing from one to another stratum of society because, brought up in such an atmosphere, educated in this spirit, men will understand their liberty and their equality, and the differences between strata will disappear. This kind of mobility will not lower one stratum but will elevate all strata to an equally high level, will lead to a "classless" society based on *agape*.

1. Discuss the parables of the talents (Mt. 25) and the labourers in the vineyard (Mt. 20) in their bearing on "mobility."
2. Does Christian love require the provision in Australia of greater facilities and opportunities in education than now exist? How can this be achieved?

4. Universal Suffrage

The extension of the franchise over the widest field so as to include all, men and women, from the age of twenty or twenty-one, belongs to the demands of all democratic parties. To this active right to vote, has to be added the passive electoral right of allowing men and women to stand for parliament or other public bodies at a higher age (27-30). The history of universal suffrage shows that the most vehement struggles have taken place for the extension of this right; step by step every bastion erected by the usufructuaries of parliamentary bodies had to be stormed; the franchise of women is relatively recent, and in many countries is still restricted. Everything points to the fact that this right gained by centuries of fighting should be cultivated, and jealously preserved by use. And yet! Even in many so-called democracies this right shrinks till it becomes a burden; it is not used unless compulsory voting is introduced, or dictatorial movements, not without reason and usually very effectively, point to the fact that the people, having achieved sovereignty, do not know how or do not wish to use this sovereignty.

This is not only true as regards the central parliament, it applies also to all local self-governmental bodies. If elections

(1) Mt. 25: 14ff.; Luke 19: 12ff.

are free and the people do not vote, then these bodies have ceased to be representative of the people. Elections for some local self-governmental bodies show a participation of only 40-50% of the electors. Compulsory voting, however, changes this important right to a forced duty. But such an enforced use of this right leads very soon to an abatement of people's interest in their sovereignty; they become accustomed not to act but to be acted upon. Every individual who misconceives the right of universal suffrage, seeing it as a right alone and not as a voluntary duty as well, has failed his neighbour, has endangered his neighbour's right, has shown lack to love of him. *Agape* commands the usufructuary of a democracy to realize this and to act accordingly, to see in his rights a reflection of God's love and to pass on this love to one's neighbour by voluntarily using his rights in accord with his Christian conscience. How he has to use it—that he himself has to decide, but the fact that he has to use it is beyond his free will—it is his religious duty! We see here in a most unequivocal way how Christian ethics are based on the religious faith in a loving God whose love we have to pass on to our neighbour for his sake. To a higher degree the same considerations apply to men who refuse to stand for parliamentary bodies because they wish to avoid political struggle. Are they not—supposing they are able—to be blamed for keeping aloof, while wishing that other able men should do their work for them? Or do they desire that incapable men should represent the sovereign people? Are they not acting in open contradiction to *agape*? Do they believe that God is interested in their excuses, their complacency, their enjoying of His love without fulfilling Jesus' new commandment?

3. To what extent are the people of Australia actually using the sovereignty they possess in theory? What is required to improve the position?

5. Responsible Government

The representatives of the sovereign people, gathered in Parliament, elect the government out of their number and maintain the right to recall that government by a vote of non-confidence.

Parliament's function is to legislate and to control the government; the government has the executive power and can initiate legislation with parliament; the judiciary power is independent of the government and has control even over legislation. That members of parliament and the government elected by them should act according to *agape* is a truism; it hardly needs to be emphasized. But it seems worth while—especially to-day when there are so many forms of govern-

ments which are in contrast to a democracy—to devote a few lines to the conception of the state, the nation and government in a democracy; the more so as an adequate conception of the state leads to an adequate conception of the nature of government. Spinoza² sees that "the final aim of the state is not to dominate, not to keep men in fear nor to subject them to alien force, but rather to liberate the individual from fear in order that he shall be able to live as securely as possible and to maintain his natural right to live and to act without harm to himself and others. It is not the aim of the state to change men from sensible beings to animals or automata, but rather to enable their spirit and their body to unfold their strength, that they themselves can freely use their reason, and that they do not fight each other with wrath, hatred, and falsehood, nor are hostile to each other. The aim of the state is liberty indeed." There have been, however, many tendencies, working for centuries, which ascribe to the state a mysterious and mystical importance; which elevate the state beyond the limits of a useful and efficient union of individuals to an entity of divine essence (cf. the teaching of the Romanticists); which make it the actual God in the world (Hegel), and which teach that the individual has no right but to sacrifice himself to the state; consequently and consistently with these notions the government which represented such a state should not be forced to an election by parliament, nor should it be recalled by parliament. It is only a consistent conclusion of these theories to maintain the view—first expressed by Herder—that the best organized states are those which are inhabited by one nation, but if by many nations, then a "state-nation" has to rule.³ All these theories are a denial of Christian love. No state is of divine essence, no nation of divine origin. Man is created by God—that means that God's love shines upon all, all are called, all can hear God's call—the chosen understand it and act accordingly. The slightest transgression of this principle—assuming special rights for a few even if the few are a nation—is a flagrant violation of *agape* and leads with iron inflexible consistency first to blunting, then to neutralization and last to entire neglect of *agape*. A responsible government in a democracy should not act according to "the spirit of the times," but according to one eternal spirit—and that is the Christian law of love! Is, then, the state a legal organization because it actualizes the universal law in which the free will of each may be reconciled with that of others? Can we, as regards a definition of the state, agree with a distinction between "legality," that is, the action of the indi-

(2) Spinoza, "Theological-political treatise."

(3) Prof. Burgess, "Political Science and Comparative Constitutional Law."

vidual in conforming to the law, irrespective of its motives, and "morality," that is, the idea of duty as law and as the true motive of action?⁴ No, we cannot, for legality, morality, the universal law have one and the same source, they are derived from and based on God's law of love. Human laws are to be the reflection of this law of love, they should express this consideration for one's neighbour; a conformity to human laws by the individual, irrespective of his and their motives is accordingly unthinkable. I am not moral because some moral law elevates "my worth as an intelligence, by my personality in which the moral law reveals to me a life independent of animality and even of the whole sensible world."⁵ I do not define this moral law if I call it the "Categorical Imperative which demands of all human behaviour that it should be at the same time the moral law of the whole world order."⁶ On the contrary, I have to understand that God's love—the eternal law—the eternal truth—created my worth as an intelligence, using me as vehicle, as personality, to pass on His love, poured out upon me through Christ, to my neighbour—without any glimpse at reward, at utility.

In this sense of *agape* responsible government has to be elected, to be recalled; in this sense legislation has to be carried out; in this sense responsible government has to execute its power. Here, also, in the sphere of state and government, *agape* is the determining factor, and neither state nor government need "auxiliary constructions," or new "acquisitions"—an aureole of divinity, to allow the inhabitants of that state to live as disciples of Christ.

4. Why is the most benevolent dictatorship—even a so-called Christian one—contrary to Christ's teaching?
5. What is the Christian conception of the state?

6. Local Self-Government

English democracy is a model for the development of local self-government. From the time when England was divided, for the purpose of the Domesday Book, into shires and manors, when the English King called two representatives of every shire to London—the first root of the English parliament—when out of the House of Lords the House of Commons originated without any special act of legislation; when the trinity of legislative, executive and judiciary power found expression in Parliament, King's Privy Council and King's Bench: through all this period the social and political activity of the individual never ceased in his own district. The individual learnt to govern and to be governed in all matters which concerned him directly, through and by bodies in his

immediate district, and to check the functionaries, who in their turn were not enslaved to central legislative assemblies.

Thus the idea that the sovereignty lay with the people was not set in action only once in four or five years at the time of the elections for the central parliament, but was permanently in action, for they ruled in the districts and their sovereignty thus became a reality. On the other hand, on the Continent the bureaucracy ruled in the districts, a bureaucracy subjected to the central parliament when in session but not supervised or advised by the people in their district. The people in continental countries were very often restricted to a critical function only, through their parliamentary representatives, while in England they took an active part in governing themselves in local self-governmental bodies, and so experienced, through close contact with one another, how thoughts and actions strike against each other, and became conscious that consideration for one's neighbour is not an abstract moral law but a godly institution. Here again no "acquisition" to love was needed, it was not necessary to think in abstract terms, to elevate the central power to a transcendental entity; the whole business of government in the main matters of the day was rolled out before the eyes of the people, the bureaucracy of the district was a bureaucracy installed by the people of the district and the state did not need to have a halo of divinity thrown round it. The people were called not only to form the laws in the central parliament but to execute them through their local self-governmental bodies; they could thus become aware of the deficiencies of the laws which they had helped to form. In France institutions of local self-government were swept away during the French Revolution; in Prussia they were sacrificed to ancient feudal orders by the landowners (Junkers), who, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, hindered reforms; in other parts of Germany they were destroyed to their roots during the Thirty Years war; while in the east and south of Europe they were never established or soon abolished. Their absence in these countries made democracy, instituted from above and not grown from below, an empty show of democratic institutions without any inward strength to withstand attacks.

In England, local self-government and self-ruling Christian denominations directly and indirectly kept alive the spirit of *agape*, and they proved to be a very solid anchor for a real democracy.

6. What part have the Churches to play in deepening the sense of responsible citizenship among the people?

(4) Kant, "Metaphysics of morals."

(5 and 6) Kant, "Critique of practical reason."

7. Legal Consciousness

But all democratic institutions receive their last and decisive brand as expressions of a real democracy when they are perceived as such by the people by virtue of their "legal consciousness." The term "legal consciousness" is used of the conscious recognition of the rights of others and of one's duty in relation to those rights.

Agape opens the minds and hearts of all believers, and shows them that salvation cannot be gained by worship and prayers alone if deeds do not follow words—that God's deed is His love to us and our deed has to be the passing on of His love to our neighbour. Thus "legality" and "morality" are waters of one stream—love; if they sometimes flow asunder—they converge again and have never ceased to be the same stream; they never differ in motive, because for all our actions there should be only one motive: unrestricted love to our neighbour. That means that the Christian has ceased to conceive any right as right alone, any of his actions as compulsory, but that all his actions are directed by a voluntary duty which he perceives according to *agape* as an integral part of any right, even of the right of possessing private property.

Such "legal consciousness" based on *agape* teaches him that he as Jesus' disciple has not to be compelled to vote—love to his neighbour leads him to fulfil his duty voluntarily, teaches him that he, as a part of the sovereign people, does not exhaust that sovereignty when he votes, but that he should take an active part in self-government; it tells him not to be continually crying out for governmental help, demanding to be ruled, but that he should make help for himself superfluous by helping his neighbour. Legal consciousness helps him to conceive liberty rightly by giving up outward appearances of it in favour of his neighbour, to see equality in the elevating of his neighbour to the highest standard, and to expect from his responsible government, that he should be treated not merely according to enlightened humanitarian principles but as a Christian, who can himself determine what is useful or detrimental to his neighbours.

This kind of legal consciousness will show him that even political power is not to be conceived as a right proportion between the legal capacity* and social activity of individuals,

* "Legal capacity" is the mental power of the individual to understand that his social activity has to be based on law. If his legal capacity is primitive then his social activity will transgress legal boundaries and so the individual (according to the school which taught the need for a right balance of legal capacity and social activity) has to be curbed in his social activity. This school therefore recommends a prior development of "legal capacity" before the individual can receive the right of full "social activity."

that legal capacity should limit social activity only when both are the consequences of *agape*—of the same *agape* which is the root of legal capacity and social activity. This new legal consciousness based on *agape* gives form and purport to a democracy as a whole. Not abstract rights determine the relations of individuals, nor rights imposed upon the individuals or enjoyed by them as consequences of social institutions, but *agape* which is right and at the same time voluntary duty, originated by God, Who is love.

This new sort of legal consciousness will guide us in settling international relationships. "Justice" has proved to be too arbitrary, tending too much to the mere satisfying of self; love, consideration for the neighbours' welfare, are necessary presuppositions of peace. It is not enough to indulge in the political freedom of one's own people, to use one's own natural riches for one's own sake and to console oneself that the neighbour has rights even if he is lacking in the means of using them. It seems difficult to bring Jesus' teachings into accord with the present international state of war—that is if we conceive this war as a holy war. But when a thorough examination shows us that no war can be a holy one—that war will always remain an affair between sinners, and that every nation, every state has contributed more or less to every war; when we determine that, having finished this war, we will do our utmost to settle the peace on the grounds of *agape*: then, only then have we the right to conceive this as a war of defence—a war waged by men who have denied *agape* against men who have sinned against *agape*, waged by aggressors who have deliberately made force their faith against men who try to reinstate *agape*; then we have the right and the duty to devote all our strength to winning this war.

7. What do you understand by "legal consciousness"? Why is it vulnerable if not based on *agape*? In the light of *agape*, should a man's social activity be limited according to his degree of legal capacity? Why or why not?
8. Why and how should Christ's disciples defend democracy?
9. What contributions can the Christian make to the reconstruction of the world during and after the war? What can the A.S.C.M. do?

CONCLUSION

The reconstruction of the world after this war is the burning question of the day. We are promised alteration of economic and monetary systems, nationalization, socialization. All these outward actions savour of the way in which in mediaeval times men tried to cure leprosy. They cut off the diseased organs and gave the leper a bell to indicate his approach. It was very late before leprosy was recognized as a disease of the blood.

Our blood is ill—the life stream of our earthly existence is in danger—*agape* is lost. Again and again Christ has to go to the Cross for us. To whom does not occur the story of the meeting between Jesus and Peter? Peter, imprisoned in Rome, was persuaded by friends to flee because the young, developing Church badly needed him. On the Via Appia he met the Lord! “Quo vadis, Domine—Where are you going, Lord?” Peter asked. “I go to Rome, to be crucified again—for you.” The next day the wardens found Peter in his cell—and on his way to his crucifixion he asked for one privilege—to be crucified with his head downwards!

Disciples of Jesus! Do you not understand the simple teaching of your Master? Love thy neighbour as thyself. Simple and yet so difficult! But how can you penetrate into the deepest understanding of it without meditating in God's revelation, in Christ's message reported by His disciples? Only by incessant reading of these reports, by pondering on them, will you see that Jesus does not always ask from you martyrdom on the cross but self-sacrifice in every second of your life—not a martyrdom which makes your life a valley of tears, not a life conceived as a burden, not a life with a sinful body and an immortal soul which has claims on God—but the gay, joyful life of a Christian as one upon whom God's love shines and who passes on this love to his neighbour, freely, giving more than receiving—so preparing the way for the Kingdom of Christ.

Note on the Historical Evidences of the Resurrection

The study has assumed that the body of our Lord was raised from the tomb on the third morning after the Crucifixion. An appeal to belief in the Resurrection necessitates an examination of the historical evidence for this belief.

I. What evidence is there of the bodily Resurrection of Jesus?

(a) Jesus frequently mentioned to His disciples that He would rise the third day after His death.¹

(b) All four Gospels record the fact of the empty tomb.²

(c) There are reports of many appearances after His resurrection: to Mary Magdala,³ the wanderers to Emmaus,⁴ the eleven disciples,⁵ the ten disciples⁶ (Thomas was absent), at the Sea of Galilee,⁷ to Peter, to five hundred brethren, to James, to Paul.⁸

(d) The Ascension of Jesus is reported in several passages.⁹

II. Are the reporters of these facts reliable historians?

The four Gospel writers and Paul were all either eye-witnesses or in immediate contact with eye-witnesses of the event.¹⁰ They were all hard-headed men, all Jews. As Jews they had been educated in the Scriptures up to the age of eighteen at least, in Paul's case much longer. They were by no means simple illiterates, as their literary style testifies. Their reliability as historians in reporting the other facts of Jesus' life, and in Luke's case of the Acts of the Apostles is generally accepted. The very variations in their narrative are evidence of authenticity and genuineness—much more than obvious collaboration would be.

III. But may they not have been victims of subjective imaginings and wishes?

Did not the disciples wish that Jesus would rise, then imagine that He had done so and so go on to convince themselves and others that as a matter of fact He had risen?

If this were so, how are we to account for the following facts:

(1) That although (a) Joseph of Arimathea put the body of Jesus, wrapped in linen, into his new tomb in the rock,

(1) Mt. 16: 21; 20: 19; 26: 32; Mk. 9: 9; 14: 28; Jn. 2: 19.

(2) Mt. 28; Mk. 16; Luke 24; Jn. 20; 21.

(3) Jn. 20: 14.

(4) Luke 24: 13ff.

(5) Luke 24: 36.

(6) Jn. 20: 19.

(7) Jn. 21: 1.

(8) 1 Cor. 15: 5-8; Acts 9.

(9) Mk. 16: 19; Luke 24: 50ff; Acts 1: 9; Heb. 4: 14; 1 Pet. 3: 22.

(10) Luke 1: 1-4.

(b) that he rolled "a large boulder across the opening of the tomb," (c) that on the next day a seal was put on the boulder which was not removed, and (d) that a "guard was set"—in spite of these facts, all accounts agree that on the third morning the stone was rolled away, the guard had disappeared and the tomb was empty. (It is significant that the last two precautions mentioned were taken by the Pharisees and Priests with the permission of Pilate in order to prevent the body being stolen by the disciples and so enable a rumour of Christ's resurrection to be spread.¹¹)

Theoretically the body could have been removed after Joseph had put it into the tomb and before the guard was set. But who would have removed it? The disciples? Then all their subsequent stories are conscious forgeries and the whole of the Christian faith is built on a conscious lie! Would Peter have been prepared to be crucified for what he knew to be a lie? This hypothesis makes it impossible to account for subsequent events. The Priests and Pharisees? That would have been entirely against their interests; when the disciples spread the report that He had risen they would have needed only to produce the body and so put an end to the ridiculous rumour. And why steal the body when they already had it in their control? And why was the linen in which the body was wrapped still in the tomb if the body had been stolen? Nothing speaks for the theory that the body had been stolen during the first night and everything speaks against it. From the next day the seal and guard excluded any possibility of removing the body.

(2) If the resurrection were wishful thinking on the part of the disciples, how do we account for the fact that none of the disciples or their immediate circle were expecting the resurrection, nor did they at first believe it when it happened:

(a) Mary on coming to the tomb assumed the body had been stolen or removed.¹²

(b) When Mary and the other women ran to the disciples with the message that Jesus had risen, the disciples—all Gospels are agreed on this—"would not believe it." Luke says the story "sounded to the disciples like nonsense."¹³

(c) The men on the road to Emmaus were only persuaded of the truth of the Resurrection after a conclusive visible sign was given—they had completely failed to recognize Jesus, and so could not have been expecting Him.¹⁴

(d) Even after the ten had been convinced by Jesus' own appearance to them, Thomas, who was absent, remained completely sceptical.¹⁵ He demanded, and later received,

(11) Mt. 27: 62-66.

(12) Jn. 20: 2.

(13) Luke 24: 11.

(14) Luke 24: 16.

(15) Jn. 20: 24-29.

adequate scientific evidence of such an unbelievable phenomenon.

(e) Paul's account of his conversion leaves no doubt that for him the Resurrection was an objective historical fact, central to the whole Christian position,¹⁶ but one which for years he had treated with scorn.

All these facts suggest the extreme unlikelihood that a great number of ordinary people, utterly unprepared for such a phenomenon, could have at different times and different places all been deluded by their own subjective phantasies. More "wishful thinking" seems to have been done by proponents of such a hypothesis than by the disciples.

There is no doubt, then (1) that the apostles and reporters of the Resurrection believed what they recorded and (2) that they were reliable, scrupulous and responsible men.

IV. But does not science and experience contradict the possibility of the Resurrection?

We have drawn a line of distinction between resuscitation and the Resurrection of the Lord. Similarly we must draw a line between science and scientists. "Science" does not exclude the rule of supernatural forces; if scientists do, they enter the field of speculation, and no longer speak as scientists. What of experience? In this age of specialization we have been too much occupied with small, limited districts of observation and have lost the capacity for seeing the tie which binds together the whole of working nature, that tie which incites man, and incited men at Jesus' time even more, to search after the origin and operation of phenomena beyond the limits of observation. Have we not learnt even in peace time, and more so in war, that the will and energy even of man—a will and energy which cannot be calculated, or measured—have actually performed miracles? We have made the one assumption of a powerful God at work in the world—why should He not have raised Jesus from the dead? Science does not really progress when it replaces this conception of God by a personification of Nature to explain phenomena.

Neither science, real science, nor experience has rendered one fact to exclude the possibility and probability of the resurrection of the body of our Lord. We do not know of any other example of a resurrection comparable with that of Jesus. It remains the unique miracle of God. We do know, however, that in the first centuries A.D. especially, the Resurrection occupied the attention of the best brains, but that neither those contemporary with the event nor later writers were able to combat the truth of the Resurrection by facts or witnesses. The belief in the Resurrection belonged

(16) Acts 9: 1 Cor. 15.

very early to the essential points of the Christian faith and it has survived all the great divisions within Christianity. Whether Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic or Protestant—in all three great communities of believers the belief in Christ's Incarnation, Crucifixion and the Resurrection of His body have remained essentials of the Christian faith.

Where the Resurrection of the body has been doubted, we can always trace the influence of the *eros* motif—the un-Biblical, Greek conception of an “immortal soul”; the *agape* conception of God sees in the Resurrection of the body of our Lord, one of His deeds, sees God's power and His love.



