



THE
REASON
WHY

by R.A. Laidlaw



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The Reason Why

Written by the Proprietor of a Business
to the Members of His Staff

R. A. LAIDLAW



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The Reason Why

SUPPOSE that a man should give a friend a diamond ring costing him five hundred dollars, and place it in a little velvet case which the jeweler threw in for nothing. Would he not think it strange if, on meeting his friend a few days later, she would say, "Oh, that was a lovely little velvet box you sent me. I am going to take every care of it. I promise to keep it wrapped up in a safe place so that no harm shall come to it."

Such a thing is too ridiculous to be thought possible, yet it is just as foolish for men and women to be spending all their time and thought on their bodies, which are but caskets containing the real self, the soul, the jewel of such great value that Jesus Christ, who has all knowledge of relative values, prized so

highly that He thought it worth His while to give His own life that He might redeem it, while, perchance, it never receives a moment's thought from you.

I ask, will you give me your earnest and, above all, your honest attention? Will you be true to yourself and to your future existence as you read through these pages?

Don't lay this book down till you have finished the last page, for there is no time like now. If in business "procrastination is the thief of time," in spiritual things it has been, and is, and will yet be, the thief of the eternal welfare of countless millions. How strange that girls, boys, men and women, otherwise intelligent and thoughtful, will run the awful risk of putting off this most important of all considerations with the almost suicidal excuse, "There's plenty of time." Here is how it works.

Speak to a young man about the eternity to which we are all hastening, and he replies, "There's plenty of time"; to the middle-aged man, still "plenty of time"; to the old gray-haired man with one foot in the grave, and

in a trembling whisper he too replies, "There's plenty of time."

If we could only get a really comprehensive grasp of the power and relentlessness of that dread monster, death, how our attitude would change toward him. Here are some figures I scribbled out the other night: The world's population is about 2,500,000,000. Suppose the average life of a man is about 45 years, then one-forty-fifth of the total is 55 millions who die every year, 150,685 every day, 6,278 every hour, 104 every minute—more than one every time the clock ticks a second.

Think: A city with a population of over 100,000 passes into eternity every day. Let the full force of it come home to you—that while you spend the time necessary to read these pages, some 3,000 souls will have gone to meet their God.

Time is earnest, passing by;
Death is earnest, drawing nigh;
Comrade, wilt thou trifling be?
Time and death appeal to thee.

At the age of twelve death made a strong

impression on me. It entered my home and took away my dear old grandmother, who had nursed me in babyhood and cared for me in boyhood. I remember looking at her dear old face as she lay there still and white and cold as marble. I knew that some day I should be just as cold and still, and I knew that I was not ready.

But I am ready today, not because of anything I have done, but because I believe the Lord Jesus Christ died for my sins and rose again for my justification. Just as simply as I can I want to tell you why I have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour.

1. Because there is a God.
2. Because "it is appointed unto men once to die; and after this the judgment."
3. Because I am a sinner.
4. Because God's plan of salvation appeals alike to my heart and to my reason.

Why do I know that there is a God?

Because I have an innate conviction that He exists. No matter how my intellect tried to produce reasons proving He was not, or how my desires longed to believe that there

was no God, that “still, small voice” came to me again and again, just as it has come to you, in the quiet, after the excitement of pleasure has passed—yes, I knew that at least for me there was a God. Then I looked at the lives of all kinds and conditions of men, and found that they were still, as in all history, seeking in religions of many kinds to still that same voice that spoke within me.

But there are some men who don't believe in God.

Then let us reason it out as far as we can. We stand together on the wharf as a big ocean liner draws alongside, and I say to you, “A lot of people think that ship is the result of someone's carefully-designed plans, but I know better. There was really no intelligence at work on it at all; the iron, by some mysterious process, gradually came out of the ground and fashioned itself into plates; slowly holes were formed in the edges of these plates, and rivets appeared, flattened themselves out on either side, and after a great time, by this same process, the engines were in place, and one day some men on the

seashore found her floating quietly in a sheltered cove.”

You would probably consider me a lunatic, and move further into the crowd to escape my senseless chatter. Why, you know that where there is a design there must be a designer, and, having seen other productions of the human mind just like the steamer in question, you would refuse to believe that it was not planned by human intelligence and built by human skill.

Yet there are men not considered fools who tell us that the solar system evolved from its nebulous state by chance, that in some mysterious way it came—that there was really no higher intelligence at work on it; they tell us they know no God but nature, although our most thoughtful students are convinced that God is transcendent; that is, He reveals Himself in all nature in that its laws and principles are expressions of His power, but He Himself is essentially more than the sum of them all. They offer us the anomaly of design without a designer, of creation without a Creator, of effect without

cause, and to escape from this dilemma ask: If God be considered the "first great cause," account for Him, who made God? Now, such a question contradicts itself, for it is evident no cause could make the first cause, or the first cause would become the second cause also, which is a mathematical impossibility.

Every thoughtful person believes in a series of causes and effects in nature, each effect becoming the cause of some other effect. Now, the acceptance of this as fact logically compels one to admit that there must be a beginning to any series—that is, there could never have been a first effect if there had not been a First Cause. This First Cause to me is Deity, and because I cannot tell where the First Cause came from is not a satisfactory reason for denying that He exists, else I might as well deny the existence of the millionth effect which, for the sake of argument, might happen to be this world. You see, if I admit one cause as ever having existed, I am bound eventually by induction to arrive at the First Cause.

We know how electricity manifests itself,

and have discovered many of the laws that govern it, but to really define electricity the greatest scientist cannot; then, why do we believe it exists? Because we see the manifestation of its existence in our streets every day. Though I do not know where God came from, I must believe in Him, because I see the manifestation of Him everywhere around me.

Professor Drummond said in *The Ascent of Man*: "Instead of abolishing a Creative Hand, evolution demands it. Instead of being opposed to Creation, all theories begin by assuming it."

"Behind the co-operating forces of Nature," says Weismann, "which aim at a purpose, we must admit a cause inconceivable in its nature, of which we can only say one thing with certainty, that it must be theological" (Divine).

Lewis Fiske, LL.D., says, "As to some things, we may be in doubt: as to God there can be no uncertainty. He is the Infinite, the Absolute, the Unconditioned, the Eternal, the First Cause. He is not unknowable yet

He is the incomprehensible. We find Him, but we cannot grasp Him. The infinite depth of His being we cannot fathom, but reason declares Him to be the creating life of all dependent reality. And we reach the highest range of thought in conceiving and knowing Him. We do and must hang everything on the will of the infinitely intelligent Creator.”

Being convinced there is a God, we take the next step forward. I cannot conceive of an intelligent man making anything without a purpose—if he makes shoes, they are to wear or sell; if he bakes bread, it is for himself or someone else to eat. Behind every action there must be a motive. When I thought of this, it seemed to me quite reasonable that God should have a purpose in view when He brought in Creation.

In all the many books this world contains there was only one that claimed to be a direct revelation from this God, telling us of Himself and His purposes in us. Being a claim of such moment, it was surely worthy of a little investigation. So with the advice of Francis Bacon neither to accept nor reject,

but to weigh and consider, we approach this Book with its strange claims.

But to be just to ourselves and the Bible, we must read it right through. As a judge must not pass his opinion when the case is half heard, neither must we, but, like the judge, we must compare the evidence of the witnesses, and weigh and consider every word, seeking deeply for its hidden significance rather than accepting its surface meaning. Surely the importance of its claim justifies spending the necessary time on its study—66 books written by at least 40 different men, some educated, some illiterate, some kings, some peasants, over a period of 1,600 years, in places separated as far as Babylon in Asia and Rome in Europe. Expecting with such authorship to find a heterogeneous collection of contradictory statements, it strikes one as the more strange that such a book should have a oneness about it that makes each contribution the complement of the others. Slowly the truth of II Peter 1:21 came home to me. There was no other reasonable explanation. "Holy men of God spake as they

were moved by the Holy Ghost." This belief was confirmed as I read prophecy after prophecy in the Old Testament, that found its fulfillment, even to the letter, hundreds of years after, as in Isaiah 53, which foretold the death of Christ with such minute accuracy more than 700 years before His crucifixion. Yes; the difficulties in the way of doubting the Book seemed to me greater than those in the way of believing it. I had to be honest with myself, and admit that the hazard was all on the side of unbelief. I even went further, and said: "I believe this Book to be the Word of the living God. I can account for it in no other way."

But such an admission brought me face to face with a grave difficulty, for this Bible set a standard of righteousness that I had not attained, and judged all short of its standard to be sin. Remembering that God knows every secret thought you have ever entertained, just measure yourself alongside the standard: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with **all** thy heart, and with **all** thy soul, and with **all** thy mind. This is the first and great

commandment" (Matt. 22:37, 38).

Confronted with such a standard, can you claim to have lived up to it throughout your life? Just read it again: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with **all** thy heart, and with **all** thy soul, and with **all** thy mind." If you can, there is no need for you to read the rest of these pages, for, however vital the interest they hold for the man or woman, boy or girl, who has fallen short of God's standard, they can be of no moment to you.

But think hard—reconsider, for God says in Romans 3:23: "**All** have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Be honest with yourself—it means so much to you.

Dr. Torrey said: "One night I was preaching in Chicago for another pastor. At the close of the service the minister came to me and said, 'I have a young man in my congregation who wishes to be a minister. I would like you to have a talk with him.'

"I replied, 'Bring him to me after the after-meeting,' and he did. He had one of the cleanest, finest, most open faces I ever saw in my life. I looked into the face of this young

man and said, 'Your pastor says you wish to enter the ministry.'

" 'Yes, I do.'

" 'Well,' I said, **'let me ask you a question: Are you a Christian?'**

" 'Of course, I am a Christian,' he answered; 'I was brought up a Christian, and I am not going back on the training of my parents.'

"I said, 'Have you been born again?'

"He said, 'What!'

"I said, 'Have you been born again?'

God says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Have you ever been born again?'

"He said, 'I don't know what you are talking about. I have never heard of that before in all my life.'

"I said, 'My friend, see here; do you know that you have committed the greatest sin a man can commit?'

" 'No,' he said, 'I never did in my life. You don't understand me. I have been very carefully reared. My life has been a most exem-

plary one. I never committed the greatest sin that a man can commit—never!

“I asked, ‘What do you think is the greatest sin a man can commit?’

“ ‘Why,’ he replied, ‘murder, of course.’

“ ‘You are greatly mistaken. Will you please read what Jesus said about it?’ and I opened my Bible to Matthew 22:37, 38 and asked him to read.

“He read: ‘Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.’

“ ‘Which commandment is that?’ I asked.

“He replied, ‘The first and great commandment.’

“ ‘If this is the first and great commandment, **what is the first and great sin?**’

“ ‘Not to keep this commandment.’

“ ‘Have you kept it? Have you loved God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your mind? Have **you** put God first in everything—God first in business, God first in politics, God first in pleasure, God first in study, God first in everything?’

“ ‘No sir,’ he said, ‘I have not.’ ”

“ ‘What have you done then?’ ”

“ ‘I have broken this commandment.’ ”

“ ‘Which commandment is it?’ ”

“ ‘The first and great commandment.’ ”

“ ‘What have you done, then?’ ”

“He replied, **‘I have broken the first and greatest of God’s commandments. I have committed the greatest sin a man can commit, but I never saw it before in all my life.’**”

So have you, reader, like this young man, committed the greatest sin it is possible to commit, although you too may not have seen it before in all your life.

As is often the case, my honest admission that I had fallen short led me into grave difficulties. But, however dark the cloud through which honesty’s path leads, we always have the assurance that it is the shortest way to the light on the other side.

Quick on my admission of having sinned came God’s condemnation in Ezekiel 18:4: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”

It appealed to me like this: The law in New Zealand says all drivers must keep to

the lefthand side of the street, while in New York the rule of the road demands that a driver keep to the right side. Now, supposing I go driving in New York and keep to the lefthand side, and, on being brought before the judge, I say, "This is ridiculous. In New Zealand we are allowed to drive on the left side."

"You are not being judged by the laws of New Zealand," he would reply. "It matters not what the laws of other lands may demand, you should have concerned yourself only about the laws by which you were to be judged."

Then, as far as God's standards were concerned, I was lost, and as God's standard was the only one by which I was to be judged in eternity, I was hopelessly lost. I began to see that it did not matter at all what I thought, or what my friends told me; the judgment would be on what God has said, not what my friends say. Moreover, because in His judgment we had all sinned, there was no use in looking to my fellows for help, for they

were under the same condemnation as myself.

But this same Bible told me of One, Jesus Christ, who claimed to be the Son of God. He too saw that men were lost, that they had forfeited their lives to sin; so He said to His Father, "Father, I have not forfeited my life; I am pure, sinless, spotless; My life is My own; let Me give My pure life in place of man's sinful life, that he may go free."

And God said, "Go." Christ tells us in John 3:16 that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." If Jesus Christ is the Son of God, then we have indeed the assurance of salvation; but the difficulty faces us: Is Jesus Christ really the Son of God? He could only be one of three—the Son of God, or a deceiver, or an honest man Himself under a hallucination. But when we find Him meeting some of the cleverest men of His day who were purposely sent to catch Him in His words, and so silencing them that they durst not ask Him any more ques-

tions (Matt. 22:46), and ourselves considering even from an intellectual standpoint the wisdom of His statements, we may dismiss the last of these suppositions absolutely. Then was His wisdom so great that He was using it to deceive the people? Have you ever heard of a young man associating with swindlers and rogues on the street corners and because of that association becoming ennobled, pure, and honest? No! You admit you have not heard of such a case; but I know a young man who, by the reception of Christ into his life, has been lifted from the basest desires to the noblest manhood, and I simply can't believe that the reception of a deceiver into one's life could transform it for good.

The other day I heard a man say, "I owe it to Jesus Christ that I can walk down the street with my head held erect and my shoulders squared to the world. I owe it to Him that I can look a pure woman in the face and grip an honest man by the hand."

I call to witness the opinion of the whole civilized world that Jesus Christ was at least a good Man. If so, then an honest Man, and

if honest He must have been what He claimed to be, the Son of God, sent to lay down His sinless life in place of your sinful life and mine.

Here let me add the testimony of three men you know of, taken from Sidney Collett's *Scripture of Truth*:

Renan (A.D. 1823), who, owing to his combined learning and literary powers, was acknowledged to be the first man of letters in Europe in his day, though a professed atheist, was a great Bible reader, and wrote of Christ thus: "Complete Vanquisher of death, Thy work is complete; Thy Divinity is established; between Thee and God men will no longer distinguish."

Yes, and even Napoleon Bonaparte, who would scarcely be looked upon as a theologian, must have spent much time—especially in his later years—in reading the Bible; for it is recorded that on one occasion, when confined to the rock of St. Helena, he turned to Count Montholon with the inquiry: "Can you tell me who Jesus Christ was?" The question being declined, Napoleon said:

“Well, then, I will tell you. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and I myself founded great empires. . . upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon Love. . . . I tell you all these were men; none else is like Him. Jesus Christ was more than man. . . . He asks for the human heart; He demands it unconditionally, and forthwith His demand is granted. Wonderful! All who sincerely believe in Him experience that remarkable supernatural love toward Him. Time, the great destroyer, is powerless to extinguish this sacred flame. . . . This it is which proves to me quite convincingly the Divinity of Jesus Christ!”

Lastly: Professor Simpson, M.D., D.Sc., who, in 1891, was elected president of the Royal College of Physicians, was a devout Bible student. In delivering his farewell address on July 28, 1905, he said: “I do not know in what mood of pessimism I might have stood before you today had it not been that ere the dew of youth had dried from off me I made friends with the Sinless Son of Man, who is the well-head of the stream that

vitalizes all advancing civilization, and who claims to be the First and the Last and the Living One who was dead and is alive evermore, and has the keys of Death and the Unseen. My experience compels me to own that claim.”

But it is sometimes asked, are not learned men usually atheists or infidels? In reply, I quote from Samuel Kinns, Ph.D., F.R.A.S.: “Though there are some few men of high talent and of deep research who ignore the authenticity of the Scriptures, all philosophers are not of the same school; and I contend that not only are skeptical physicists in the minority, but also that men of the highest eminence in every branch of science have been, and still are, sincere believers.”

In astronomy and mathematics, who will ever excel Newton? Will not the power of his intellect be acknowledged and felt as long as the world stands? And yet a more simple-minded and true-hearted Christian could scarcely be found.

Such was thy wisdom, Newton, childlike sage!
Sagacious reader of the works of God,
And in His Word sagacious.

—COWPER

It is delightful also to see by their works that many of our modern astronomical writers are equally devout.

In geology, that science which above all others was supposed to be antagonistic to the Word of God, we find among its eminent students and expounders: Dean Buckland, Hugh Miller, Dr. Pye Smith, Sir Doderick Murchison, Sir John W. Dawson, and many such sincere believers.

In chemistry and electricity, who could be a greater man than Faraday? And with propriety sometimes called the father of these sciences, was he not also a man of God and of prayer? Sir Humphrey Davy too whose practical and useful application of scientific principles have so greatly benefited mankind, has left behind him many choice sayings and essays confirmatory of his faith.

In mechanics we might point to George Stephenson, the brave and noble-minded lad,

the hardy, persevering miner, and the immortal engineer, who was as devout as he was liberal, and who, when he settled at Tapton, built for his work-people a church and a chapel, that they might all have the opportunity of worshipping.

We will close this list by referring to Dr. Samuel Johnson, whose profound classical scholarship was accompanied, as is clearly seen in his folio *Dictionary*, by a most extensive knowledge of science as then known; and yet I do not think that history records a more truly pious man; most thoroughly did he take the Bible for his guide through life, and leaned entirely upon its promises for comfort in the hour of death.

I have a still more interesting fact to notice—that at the time of the meeting of the British Association in 1865 a manifesto was drawn up and signed by 617 scientific men, many of whom are of the highest eminence, in which they declare their belief not only in the truth and authenticity of the Holy Scriptures, but also in their harmony with natural science. This manifesto was printed

for the signatories, and the original document deposited in the Bodleian Library at Oxford.

Other names might easily have been given and much more might be written upon this interesting point: "But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).

Convinced that the Scripture was true, that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, believing that He willingly came, and God so loved you and me that He has willingly sent Him to suffer the full penalty of my sins that I might go free, if I would retain my self-respect as an intelligent being, I must accept the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, and if I would retain any ideal or love of nobleness in my life, I dare not reject a love that led Christ to such a death as He died on Calvary's cross for me. No, I have no option; my whole being goes out to receive such a Saviour. Does not yours?

But I do not ask you to accept Him as yours. The Bible is true—you are convinced of that—but have I interpreted it aright? Are

not the views of our friends worthy of consideration? Why should I not be reasonable, and submit them to a fair test as well? Yes, I'll gladly do that.

On telling my conclusion to a friend, he replies: "You are all right, but so am I, although I don't see it like that. It seems to me that it doesn't so much matter what a man believes; so long as he is sincere in his belief, he will be all right in the end." Let us test it! The captain of that great ocean liner retires to his cabin absolutely sincere in his belief that his ship is on a safe course, but he has made an error in his reckoning. Does the sincerity of his belief save his ship from the rocky coast or his passengers from a watery grave? Hundreds of broken hearts and thousands of mourning relatives give the lie to such a statement that sincerity in any belief will bring us to a right end eventually. I want sincerity, surely, but it must be in the right direction, or it can but lead me astray. The chart for life's journey from time to eternity leaves no room for doubt. In John 14:6, Christ says: "I am the way, the truth, and the

life; **no man cometh unto the Father but by me.**" Acts 4:12 says: "There is **none other name** under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." If you can get to Heaven any other way you will be a standing witness throughout all eternity to the ignorance of God's Son, or to the fact that He spoke falsely when He said there was **no other way**. I ask in the deepest earnestness, are you willing to take such a risk?

"Turn over a new leaf," says Mr. Reformer, "and live an absolutely holy life, and you will be all right for eternity." That sounds reasonable, doesn't it? However, before we accept it, let's put it to a simple test. If a man could become absolutely holy, would he be better than he ought to be? No, of course he wouldn't. If a man were perfect he would be only what he ought to be. Then, in a strictly logical sense he couldn't retrieve any of his past short-comings. For instance, the manager of a business goes to his head clerk and finds that his firm owes \$50,000 to manufacturers and other merchants. He says: "Write letters to all those people and tell them that

we are not going to trouble about the past, that we have turned over new pages in our ledger, but we promise to pay 100 cents on the dollar on all future business, and from now on live up to the highest standard of business integrity." That clerk would think his employer had gone mad, and would refuse to put such a proposition to their creditors; yet thousands of otherwise sensible people are trying to get to Heaven by just such a proposal, offering to meet their obligations toward God for the future, but they are not going to trouble about the past at all. Yet in Ecclesiastes 3:15, we read: "God requireth that which is past." No, God's righteousness demands that no past account shall be considered settled till it has been paid to the uttermost farthing and every claim of justice met. The murderer may cover his sin and live the life of a model citizen for ten years after his crime, but man's law, when he is discovered, condemns him to death, though he has murdered no one for ten long years—it judges him still a murderer. To hide past sin, either **thoughts, words, or deeds**, by what

seems to be an absolutely perfect life, still leaves me a sinner in the sight of Him to whom the past and future are as open as the present. According to God's standards of holiness, we all have sinned—then bring that sin out into the open and have it dealt with righteously.

To meet that past myself would have meant to me eternal loss, but the Lord Jesus Christ gave up His life in place of mine that I might go free. My past sin is expiated, and God, against whom I had sinned, has given me His receipt, showing His satisfaction with the completed work of Christ on the cross in that He raised Him from the dead. Christ once crucified is now my **living** Saviour. Notice that Christ is now a living Saviour.

But why did Christ need to die? Could not He have saved us without that? You and I had broken God's law, and the penalty was death. How could Christ righteously deliver us without meeting its full penalty? Do you not see, if He paid anything less than the full price, there would still be judgment for us to meet? But it is evident that because He

died, the law we had broken can judge us no more.

On one occasion a Supreme Court case extended into the next day, and, as is the usual practice, so that no outside influence could be brought to bear on the jurymen, they were kept in custody over night. On entering the court the next morning, the judge, addressing the jury, said: "Gentlemen, the case is dismissed; the prisoner has been called to a higher bar." The culprit had died in his cell during the night, and there was no use going on with the case, as the law cannot judge a dead man.

Again, if a man should murder one person he is put to death, but if he should murder six people he is still just put to death, because this is the **utmost penalty** of the law, and, no matter what a man's sins may be, the law knows no greater penalty than to take his life. Or look at it this way: if a man is hanged for murder, and a month later evidence is produced to prove that he murdered two other people as well, is his body dug up and tried? Of course not, because he has already

suffered the **supreme penalty** of the law, and is therefore beyond its reach. It matters not though there are sins in my life that I have long since forgotten; I fear none of them, for I have this confidence that the Lord Jesus Christ, my Substitute, suffered the **utmost penalty** of the law on my account, freeing me absolutely from all its claims against me, both great and small.

“But,” said Mr. Largerhope, **“if Christ died for all, we must all be saved.”** But God does not say so. He says there is salvation for all, but not that all are saved. For instance, in the dead of winter, when many of the poor of London are starving, supposing several rich men provided free food for all in a big public hall in the East End. You meet a poor fellow on the street, who says he is starving, and, naturally, you ask if he does not believe the notices that are up all over the city, that there is enough and to spare provided free?

“Yes,” he replies, “I believe that is true in a general sort of way, but I am still hungry.”

And, you say, you are likely to remain

hungry in spite of the provision made unless you partake personally of what is provided for all. Just so, although the death of Christ provides salvation for whosoever will, only those are saved who personally accept Christ and believe that He died in their room and stead. I must appreciate and appropriate Christ as *my* Saviour, or His death will avail *me* nothing—just as a man could die of thirst alongside a spring of water if he refused to make its life-giving stream his own by partaking of it for himself.

“That is all very true, but,” said Mr. Thoughtful, **“how could the Lord Jesus Christ’s one life be considered the Substitute for the lives of so many,** so that God offers salvation to whosoever repents and believes in Christ? That seems a fair question—a problem in arithmetic that can be demonstrated on paper. Christ was God manifest in the flesh—divinity in humanity—so that the life He gave was an infinite life, which can meet the needs of any number of **finite** lives. Get a sheet of paper and write down all the big figures you can think of—millions

or more—add them up. Now you have a big number; then multiply it by 10—100—by a million if you like—cover sheets of paper, and after all you still have a finite number—a number that has bounds set about it—it has a beginning and an end, however far it may extend. No, by adding finite things together no man has ever been able to make that which is infinite. The **infinite life** of Christ given for sinners is more than sufficient to save all who accept Him as the One who died in their room and stead.

But how could Christ suffer for my sins when they were not committed till 1,900 years after He died? At first this seems a problem to a thoughtful person, but the more thoughtful you are, the more readily you will see the solution. God is omniscient (that is, He knows all things), and God is eternal. In Exodus 3:14, God calls Himself “I AM” (present tense), and Christ says in John 8:58, “Before Abraham was, I AM” (present tense). In other words, to one who knows all things and is eternal, there is, as it were, neither past nor future, but one eternal present.

Events yet to take place 2,000 years ahead must be as clear to Him as events which happened 2,000 years ago, and both must of necessity be just as clear to God as events happening now.

But why did not God make men incapable of disobeying His will and therefore incapable of sinning? Such a question is like asking why does not God draw a crooked straight line or a round square, or make an object pitch black all over and pure white all over at one and the same time. Man is a creature with the power of intelligent choice, so that the question really is: Why didn't God make a creature with the power of intelligent choice and yet without the power of intelligent choice at one and the same time?

If I had the power of hypnotism, it would be possible to put my two boys into a semi-somnambulistic hypnotic state, thus robbing them of the power of intelligent choice, and then say, "Sit on those chairs till I return"—"Rise and eat"—"Stop eating"—"Kiss me good night," and unfeeling arms would go around my neck, and unresponsive lips would

be pressed to mine. I would have prompt and perfect obedience to my every behest, but would I find satisfaction in it? None.

I want boys with free wills and therefore capable of disobeying me, but who, of their own volition, choose to carry out my instructions which are the outcome of my love for them and are given for their own good, and I cannot conceive of God, who put these desires in my heart and yours, being satisfied with anything less Himself.

God does not want marionettes who jump in a given direction according to the wire that is pulled, nor does He want automatons in the form of "men" who mechanically and absolutely obey His will as do the planets that whirl through space. God can find satisfaction in nothing less than the spontaneous love of our hearts and our free-will decisions to walk in paths that please and honor Him, although it is obvious that this same power of free action enables us to defy and dishonor Him if we so choose.

But what does God care about this little world of ours compared with the vastness of

the mighty universe? Think of even our own solar system, with the planet Neptune thirty times as far away from the sun as our earth, so that it takes 164 of our years to make one of theirs, and beyond this suns with planets revolving around them as our solar system revolves around the sun! Of what importance can our earth be to God, and of how much less importance can man be?

So said the astronomer as the faith of his youth fled—this is what the telescope had done for him. The vastness of the heavens had robbed him of faith in his mother's God, for how could God trouble Himself about man, who is less than a grain of sand in comparison?

But his thirst for knowledge would not let him rest. The heavens were available for study only at night; how should the free hours of the day be spent? Why not a microscope? And lo! worlds were opened at his feet—worlds as wonderful as those above, and slowly his faith came back. Yes, the God who could attend to such minute details as to make a drop of ditch water throb with miniature

life was sure to be interested in man, the highest form of His creation—he got balance back instead of bias, and balance brought him back to God. Are you balanced or biased? Can you see the present in its true relation to the future?

Benjamin Franklin said we were all biased, so when he had an important decision to make, he took a sheet of paper and headed two columns, respectively, "Pro" and "Con," then thought the matter out carefully. When he conceived of a reason "for," he put it under "Pro"; when he discovered one "against," it went under "Con." After his lists were as complete as he could make them, he went through, saying this "Pro" is as strong as those two "Cons," and this "Con" is of as much value as those three "Pros," until he had "balanced" off all that he could; then he gave his decision for or against, according to the reasons still left.

Are you willing to give this question of your future destiny unbiased consideration like that? Remember, the hazard is always on the side of unbelief—you can lose nothing

by accepting Christ—you may lose everything by refusing Him.

But is Faith logical? Yes, it is logical. It is a mistake to think that faith is opposed to reason. Faith and reason go hand in hand, but faith goes on when reason can go no farther. Reason to a great extent is dependent on faith, for without knowledge it is impossible to reason, and knowledge is very largely a matter of faith in human testimony. For instance, I believe strychnine administered in a large enough dose will poison a human being, but I have never seen the experiment performed, yet I have such faith in the written testimony of men that I would not take a dose of strychnine for a million dollars.

If you check up carefully, you will find that nine-tenths of the things you know (?) are a matter of faith in human testimony, written or spoken, for you have not verified them for yourself; then, having accepted the testimony of other men so freely, will you not accept the testimony of thousands of Christians when they affirm that they have

verified the things written in God's Word and proved them to be true?

But why should God judge my sin as worthy of death? I cannot answer that, but I would suggest that because of His infinite holiness no sin could exist in His presence. In Central Africa a native chief may club his wife to death on slight provocation without falling in the slightest degree in the estimation of his people, while the same act in our land would have to be paid for by the life of the murderer. The act is the same in both lands, but in one instance no judgment; in the other, quick retribution; and the difference is simply the result of our enlightenment. If a sin which in Central Africa is considered as nothing would lose a man his life in our land, think, if you can, what a sin which appears to us as nothing must look to an infinitely holy God—"For God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5).

It may be just, **but is it merciful of God not to take us all to Heaven even if we reject Christ as our Sin-bearer?** Yes, both just and merciful. Tell me: would it be any kindness

to transfer a poor, ragged beggar into the glare of a beautiful ballroom? Would he not be the more conscious of his rags and dirt? Would he not do his best to escape again to the dark street whence he came? He would be infinitely happier there. Would it be kindness and mercy on God's part to bring a man in his sins into the holy light of Heaven, that man having rejected God's offer of the only cleansing power there is? If you and I would not be very happy if our friends could see right inside our minds now, and read all the thoughts that have ever been there (and our friends' standards are perhaps not any higher than our own), what would it be like to stand before God, whose absolute holiness would make sin appear in all its awfulness?

In Revelation 6:16, God tells us how those will feel who refuse now to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and persist in going into eternity in their sins—they call on the mountains and the rocks to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and yet it is the presence of this same Christ that will make Heaven for those

who have accepted Him as Saviour and Lord.

You see the absurdity of talking about God taking us all to Heaven—Heaven is a condition as well as a place. The presence of the Lord Jesus Christ will constitute Heaven to those who are cleansed from their sins, while that same Presence would make a Hell of remorse in the hearts of any who, still in their sins, should stand in the infinite light of His holiness. Be quite reasonable—could you really be happy in the presence of One whose love you had rejected, and whose great sacrifice you had not counted worthy of your acceptance?

SALVATION BY SUBSTITUTION,
or
THE INNOCENT BEARING THE
PENALTY FOR THE GUILTY

God's love would have forgiven the sinner, but God's righteousness forbade Him. God's righteousness would have judged the sinner, but God's love restrained Him. How to reconcile His inherent righteousness with His character of essential love was a problem that no moral philosopher could have solved, for divine wisdom and mercy find their highest expression in the solution—the vicarious suffering and death of God the Son.

But, says Mr. Critic, does not Christianity fail at its very foundation by basing everything on substitution, for substitution will not stand thoughtful investigation. It makes Christ the innocent bear the penalty for the guilty, and lets the guilty go free. It is dia-

metrically opposed to our very idea of justice, for we believe that justice should protect the innocent and bring the full penalty upon the guilty.

But see God's perfect justice and perfect mercy revealed at the cross. He does not there take the innocent and compel him to bear the penalty of the guilty. God acts like the judge in this anecdote: It is on record that of two young men who studied law together, one rose to a seat on the bench, while the other took to drink and wasted his life. On one occasion this poor fellow was brought before his old companion, charged with crime, and the lawyers present wondered what kind of justice would be administered by the judge under such trying circumstances. To their surprise, he sentenced his one-time companion to the heaviest penalty the law would allow, and then paid the fine himself and set his old friend free.

God, against whom we had sinned, in justice sat upon His judgment throne, and passed the heaviest penalty He could—the sentence of death upon the sinner—then, in mercy,

He stepped down from His throne and took the sinner's place, bearing the full penalty Himself, for II Cor. 5:19 tells us that God was *in* Christ, not *through* Christ, but in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are one God. The same God, against whom we had sinned, passed the judgment, paid the penalty, and now offers you full and free pardon, based upon absolute righteousness. That is why the Apostle Paul, in Romans 1:16, 17, says: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. . . . For therein is the righteousness of God revealed." I, too, can say I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for no man on earth can find a flaw in the righteous forgiveness offered by God to man.

A Finished Work. But is the acceptance of Christ as my Saviour *all* that is necessary to save me for all eternity? Yes. I admit the very simplicity of it seems to make it hard to grasp. But if I owe \$500.00 and have nothing with which to pay, and a friend pays the debt for me and gives me the receipt, I

don't worry about it any more. I can look my creditor straight in the face, for I hold his signed receipt. As Jesus Christ gave His life in place of mine, He said: "It is finished," meaning that the work of atonement was completed, and God gave me His receipt; in other words, the assurance that He was satisfied with Christ's finished work in that He (God) raised Christ from the dead on the third day.

"But I can't see it," said a certain cabinet-maker, as a friend tried to explain this to him. At last an inspiration came to his friend, who, lifting a plane, made as though he would plane the top of a beautifully French-polished table that stood near. "Stop!" cried the cabinetmaker; "don't you see that's finished? You'll simply ruin it if you use that plane on it."

"Why," replied his friend "that's just what I have been trying to show you about Christ's work of redemption. It was finished when He gave His life for you, and if you try to add to that finished work you can only spoil it. Just accept it as it stands—His life for

yours, and you go free." Like a flash he saw it, and received Jesus Christ into his life as his Saviour.

But there is one great difficulty yet. I know a noble, true, kind, generous manly man who has not accepted Christ as his Saviour. Do you mean to tell me that in eternity he will be lost while this other man, who has received Jesus Christ into his life as his personal Saviour, although not nearly such a fine fellow, has eternal life? Yes, I admit this for years was a grave difficulty to me until I read about the Law of Biogenesis, then all my difficulties disappeared. The Law of Biogenesis says: "There can be no life without antecedent life." That means there is no such thing as spontaneous life. Dead matter cannot live of itself. If it ever is to have life, it must get life by coming into contact with something that is **already** living. Christ made no arbitrary statement, but was simply giving expression to a scientific fact when He said: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, **Ye must be born**

again" (John 3:6). And so with the apostle in I John 5:12, when he said: "He that hath the Son hath life: he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." The greatest error of our day is an endeavor to evade the Law of Biogenesis. The difference between a highly developed moral man and a Christian is not in *degree*, but in *kind*—the one has a high grade of human life; the other has spiritual life; and the difference is so radical that the one can never grow out of the other, for Christ said even to such an upright man as Nicodemus, in John 3:7: "Ye must be born again." "A further development of your old life will not suffice. What you need is a **new divine life by receiving Me.**"

It does not matter how much more beautiful the diamond is to look at than the humblest plant; one has life and the other has not, and polish the diamond as we will, it is still dead. There is really no basis of comparison, for the one has what the other has not, even in the slightest degree. As vast a difference as this exists between the man with

the spiritual life and the man who is dead toward God. Moral polish, though it ought to be found in the spiritual man, does not give him his spiritual life; only by contact with the Source of spiritual life can any man pass that otherwise insurmountable barrier between the natural and the spiritual, for the law of the Spirit of Life is in Christ Jesus (Rom: 8:2).

The door between the mineral and vegetable kingdoms is shut so that no mineral can open it. That is, a lump of clay cannot of itself develop into a plant, and unless the roots of the plant go down and absorb the mineral elements they must remain without life forever. "So is the door from the natural to the spiritual shut, and no man can open it. This world of natural men is staked off from the spiritual world by barriers which have never yet been crossed from the manward side. No mental energy, no moral effort, no evolution of character can endow any single human soul with the attribute of spiritual life." But, thank God, the Lord Jesus Christ has come down from that spiritual

world above us to give us life. Life, that is to say, depends on contact with life. It cannot spring up of itself. Spiritual life cannot develop out of anything that is not spiritual life. Christ is the Source of Life in the spiritual life, and "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God [whatever else he may have] hath not life" (I John 5:12) for "the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ" (Rom. 8:2).

The line between the living and the dead is a sharp line. In the natural world, when the dead items of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen are seized upon by life, the organism at first is very lowly. Growth is the work of time. But *life* is not. That comes in a moment. At one moment it was dead; the next it lived. This is conversion, the "passing," as the Bible calls it, "from death to life."

To draw an analogy from these extracts, the natural man receives something spiritual implanted into his being the moment he is born again. (See John 3:1-11.) Then he receives Jesus Christ as his Saviour, but he

is not yet a mature Christian. Growth will be the result of time. But the "new birth" spoken of in the third chapter of John is accomplished in a moment when by faith Christ is received as Saviour. From that instant you have eternal life—are saved—are born again—have salvation—are regenerated—use any of the Bible terms for this change you like; they are all scientifically accurate. They mean that you are now brought into divine relationship with God, which will result in continual spiritual growth through all time and all eternity.

But how may I receive the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour? If I know that, according to Ephesians 2:1, I am "dead in trespasses and sins," as regards my relationship with God; if I believe Jesus Christ gave His life in place of mine, and that now by the receiving of Him as my Saviour I may have eternal salvation, will perceiving these facts in a cold, calculating way give me everlasting life? Most certainly not!

A man once wealthy loses all his money, and rather than sacrifice his social position,

he agrees to give the hand of his daughter to a rich man whom she despises. At first she refuses point-blank, but when her father shows her the expediency of the marriage, that it is his only hope of being saved from utter want, she consents, and goes through the marriage ceremony, and becomes, according to the law of the land, his wife. But is she really his? Surely not!

You catch the idea, don't you? When a man and woman would be truly one, they must love with such a love as to receive each other into those innermost recesses of their hearts in such a deep, true way that they cannot fully express in words all that they feel.

We all have that innermost recess of our beings, which is sacred to us, where emotions stir that no one else could possibly understand, and Jesus Christ, God's Son, because of His love for me, claims the right to enter there, He will take no other place in my life. The love He has shown for me entitles Him to that place. Will I withhold it?

When I think that Christ's love for me was so great that He left His Father's glory and came to earth, taking on the form of humanity that He might suffer and die in my room and stead to save me for time and eternity, my heart softens toward Him.

If, when lying sick and helpless, a human friend had rushed into a burning building to save me, and, wrapping the blankets about me that I might receive no harm, had himself been scarred and burnt about the face and arms so that he lay dying, would not my heart go out to him? God knows it would.

And now I am face to face with my Saviour. I see Him suffering in the garden of Gethsemane in anticipation of His death on the cross for me; I see Him in Pilate's judgment hall; the soldiers have been striking Him in the face, saying, "Prophecy, who smote thee?" But now they are crowning His holy brow with a crown of thorns; soon they will be smiting Him on the head with that reed. Bleeding and bruised, they have taken Him from judgment to Calvary; they are driving great spikes through His hands

and His feet, and, not yet satisfied, having lifted Him up to die between two thieves, they gather around to mock Him as He pours out His life to redeem them, and then I begin to understand what self-sacrificing love really means as I hear Him cry: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

But could we enter sympathetically into those physical sufferings of Christ until tears streamed down our cheeks, and that was all, we should have failed miserably to comprehend the true significance of the cross.

II Corinthians 5:21 tells us that "He [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin." Come with me, I pray you, with bowed head and humble heart, and let us, if we may, enter into the soul sufferings of Christ the Son, and of God the Father, as that Holy One, who loathed sin as we would loathe leprosy, is "made sin for us."

If the higher the development of the physical organism the greater the capacity for pain, then the higher the development of the moral

character, the greater the capacity for soul-suffering.

Have you ever heard of a venerable old gentleman, justly proud of his honored name—a man who would sooner lose his right hand than use it to do a dishonorable deed? His son and heir goes astray from the paths of virtue, and in a drunken brawl murders someone—and the old man walks no more erect, his head is bowed in shame, and soon his soul-suffering brings his gray hairs in sorrow to the grave.

If that be possible, and it is possible even for us to feel the disgrace of a greater sin than we are used to—think what must *sin* be like in all its awfulness to an absolutely holy God? Now I understand why, in the garden of Gethsemane, Christ turns in loathing from sin and cries out in the agony of His soul: “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.” Yet in spite of that agonized cry from Gethsemane, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son” to be “made sin” for us, “that

whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Now do you understand why I said that if I would retain any ideal of manhood, or any nobleness of character, I dare not reject One who had endured so much for me? My intellect has reasoned it all out; my emotions have been deeply stirred; and now they both appeal to my will for a decision. To be true to my God and myself and my eternal future I had only one course open, and I took it. Today Jesus Christ is my personal Saviour and my Lord.

Because of His love to me, because of the way He has blessed me here, and because of my assurance of a glorious hereafter, my heart's desire is that you might share in the blessings I enjoy. **Christ has done all; I say it reverently; He can do no more.** He has borne the penalty of your sin, He has been raised by the power of God; now He presents Himself to you. Will you accept Him as Saviour and Lord?

You are saying: “It seems so mysterious, the mystery of it baffles me.” I do not

ask you to understand the mystery of it. I cannot understand its mystery myself, nor can any Christian in this life. But I am not asking you to worry about its mystery. I am asking you to rejoice in its fact. Electricity remains a mystery. We have discovered many of the laws which govern it, but to tell what it really is, we cannot. You and I do not worry about the mystery of electricity; we believe in the fact of it. We see men board an electric train and be whisked along the road in the direction of the city, and, in spite of not understanding its mysteries, we use the benefit of its power ourselves.

You must have known men and women who accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and were so changed as to be new creatures in Christ. Will you not let these facts that you have seen with the natural eye influence you? Yes, it is just as simple as stepping on an electric train. Just come, saying: "O God, I cannot understand the mystery of it all; I cannot understand why Thou didst care for me so as to send Jesus Christ to bear the full penalty of my sins; but, with

all my lack of understanding, I am willing, and I do yield to Thee, absolutely; and trust in the fact of His death for me, and the promise that Thou hast made in John 3:16, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

As you leave the mystery of the current with the engineer, and take the benefits of the car to yourself, leave the mystery of salvation with God, and take the infinite benefits of a personal Saviour to yourself. Yield to Him now—He wants to come into your life. Say and mean it: "**I am Thine, Lord Jesus; yielded to Thee, body and spirit.**"

THE OLD STORY

"Tomorrow," he promised his conscience; "tomorrow I mean to believe;

Tomorrow I'll think as I ought to; tomorrow my Saviour receive;

Tomorrow I'll conquer the habits that hold one from heaven away."

But ever his conscience repeated one word, and one only: "Today."

Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow—thus day after day it went on;

Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow—till youth
like a vision was gone:
Till age and his passions had written the mes-
sage of fate on his brow;
And forth from the shadows came Death, with
the pitiless syllable, "Now!"

What will you do with Jesus?
The call comes low and clear,
The solemn words are sounding
Now in your listening ear;
Immortal life's in the question
And joy through eternity.
Then what will you do with Jesus?
What will your answer be?

DECLARATION FORM

Before God, who knows the innermost secrets of my heart, I **ACCEPT** Jesus Christ into my life as my Lord and Saviour, I yield absolutely to Him, and I know, on the authority of His own written Word, in John 5:24, that I have everlasting life, for He there says: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not

come into condemnation [judgment]; but is passed from death unto life.”

Signed _____

Address _____

Date _____ Age _____

But, says someone, I belong to the class which most emphatically resents being brought to a straight-out decision on any important subject. It is not that I have no will-power. In fact, I am so strong-willed that I am determined neither to pull up against the current nor pull down with it; I am determined to do nothing, and just drift, slowly drift, down the stream of time to——.

But I hate to think about it. True believers in Jesus Christ look forward to eternity with joy, but I—oh! why am I not honest enough to admit to myself that my resentment at the question is only because I do not want to decide in the way I know I ought to; but I must

face it some day; then why not now? Yes, I will sign my name. Now you have done it, just read this little book again; it will seem ever so much clearer; then read John's Gospel right through, one chapter each day.

Now for the last, but a most important point. If you open your Bible at Romans 10:9 to 11, you will read: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." You say you have accepted Christ—go and tell someone—do not be ashamed to confess Him. Why should you be? Suppose I had fallen over the wharf, injuring myself so that I could not swim, and a laborer working on a coal pile had plunged in and saved me. If a month later you saw me walking down our principal city street and the same laborer, all begrimed with coal dust, coming up, if you saw that I noticed

him first and deliberately turned to look into a shop window so that I would not have to stop and shake him by the hand because I was ashamed to be seen talking to him, what would you think of me?

You have signed your name declaring you believe the Lord Jesus Christ has given His life to save you. Occasions will arise when you will meet Him face to face in the presence of those who despise Him. Will you be ashamed and look the other way, or will you honor Him in both word and deed as your Lord and Saviour? If you have really accepted Him, you must, and you will acknowledge Him.

My choice of words may sometimes have been at fault, but for the truth underlying these pages I have no apology to make. I have sought to write what I believe God would have me write in the discharge of my duty to Him and to you, and I follow this booklet with the earnest prayer that God will speak to you through it for your eternal welfare.

Yours sincerely,

R.A.L.

THE SOLDIER'S CHOICE

I was seeking to lead a young soldier to accept the Lord Jesus Christ, but like most men, he tried to evade the straight issue with the promise, "I'll think it over."

"Harry," said I, "let me illustrate. You are out with the boys some night raiding the enemy's trenches, and on the way back you get hard hit. Bill Smith stops long enough to pick you up and carry you back to the trenches, and for his trouble gets two bullets in the back. You are both taken to a hospital, and by tender care are won back from the very verge of death. Two months later the doctor comes along, helping a poor fellow who limps badly and moves with evident difficulty.

"They stop at your bedside, and the doctor says: 'Harry, I want to introduce you to Mr. Smith, the man who risked his life to save you,' and you fold your arms and say, 'I don't know whether I want to make his acquaintance today or not. I'll think it over.'

"You wouldn't say that, Harry, would you?"

You would grasp him by the hand and try to tell him something of the gratitude you felt. I want to introduce you now to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Man from the glory, who not only risked His life, but sacrificed it, to save you, and you propose to turn your back on Him and say you'll think it over."

"No," he said, "I'll accept Him"; and together we knelt while he told the Lord that he there and then accepted Him as his personal Saviour.

Are you "thinking it over," or have you faced the issue squarely and decided right, like my soldier friend?

—R.A.L

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