

Abstract

JOHN MCLEOD CAMPBELL and THOMAS ERSKINE:

SCOTTISH EXPONENTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, FAITH AND THE ATONEMENT

by

David P. Duffie

This thesis focuses upon the reaffirmation and clarification by two independent 19th-century theologians of certain New Testament and Reformation emphases which had become largely obscured amid the rigidities of later Calvinism. These emphases, when employed by Campbell and Erskine in their largely lay ministries, resulted in grassroots revival on the one hand, and ecclesiastic opposition on the other.

The early chapters examine the elements in Campbell's preaching which were considered heretical and which resulted in his trial and deposition from the Church of Scotland. He was faulted for preaching "universal pardon" and "assurance of faith." What he really meant by these questionable terms is scrutinized. Highlights of his trial are vignettted in Chapter 2; and just how his ideas were applied to his parishioners to kindle revival are looked at in Chapter 3.

Chapter 5 reviews Campbell's Christ the Bread of Life, which addressed the trend in Britain toward Romanism. In it he criticizes certain substitutionary and imputational concepts of scholastic Protestantism as constituting as great a perversion of spiritual realities as does the Catholic doctrine of the transubstantiation of the Mass.

The central chapters introduce the reader to the complexities and profundities of Campbell's highly regarded but seldom understood Magnum Opus on the atonement. The retrospective and prospective aspects of the atonement, and the Godward and manward movements of the Mediator, are considered in turn. That the atonement be viewed in the light of the incarnation, rather than vice versa; that central place be given to Christ's "vicarious penitence;" and that believers' participation with Christ by the Spirit be seen as a keyword in understanding the atonement--these are some of Campbell's burdens which are highlighted in this section.

In Chapter 9, entitled "The Righteousness of Faith," Campbell virtually equates faith in Christ with righteousness. He sees the believer's having (through the Spirit) the faith of Jesus, i.e., the same trust in God that Christ had, as being even more important and central to the gospel than his having faith in the work of Jesus in His earthly sojourn, essential as that was.

A later chapter shows how the insights of Erskine reinforced, again and again, the central concepts of his dear friend. His "free translation" of Romans 3: 21-26, and his exegetical understanding of the two Greek nouns pertaining to justification are given prominence.

The last two chapters survey the influence these men have exerted upon Christendom generally, and the impact which their insights might yet have upon Adventism.

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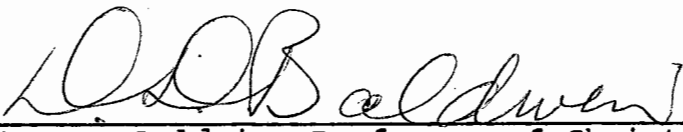
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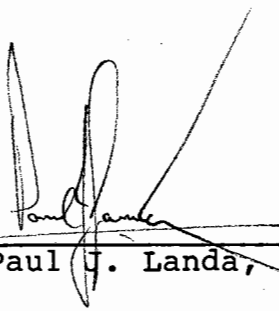
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Each person whose signature appears below certifies that this thesis in his opinion is adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree Master of Arts in Religion.


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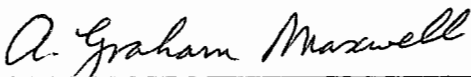

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INTRODUCTION

John McLeod Campbell (1800-1872) and Thomas Erskine (1788-1870) were two 19th century religious thinkers whose writings are attracting renewed interest in the twentieth. The two men were devoted friends. The one was a pastor-evangelist who was deposed from the Church of Scotland for "heresy" at the age of 31. The other was a lay theologian and one-time barrister. Their convictions, which were very similar, were to a large extent, arrived at independently, by close study of Scripture.¹ They each wrote several books. Campbell is best remembered as the author of The Nature of the Atonement, a work that was recently acclaimed by J. B. Torrance as "one of the classics of all time on this doctrine."² Erskine is perhaps best known for his friendships with prominent people of Britain and the Continent (e.g., Thomas Carlyle, F. D. Maurice, Thomas Chalmers, Benjamin Jowett, Merle D'Aubigne, Alexandre Vinet), and for his charming correspondence, which has been preserved by William Hanna (whose Life of Christ was treasured by Ellen White).

Importance Recognized

It is probable that no British writers of the 19th Century have exerted greater or more lasting influence upon

theological thinking than have these two men. Many who have been moved by that influence have been unconscious of its source. The great importance of their work, however, has been recognized by the discerning from their day to ours. And their influence is still growing. The German historian, Otto Pfleiderer, in his work entitled The Development of Theology in Germany since Kant and its Progress in Great Britain since 1825, affirms that "the ideas of Erskine of Linlathen and McLeod Campbell are the best contributions to Dogmatics which British Theology made in the 19th Century."³ R. S. Franks, in his History of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ, although he himself was critical of some points in it, nonetheless declared The Nature of the Atonement to be "the most systematic and masterly book on the work of Christ produced by a British theologian in the 19th century."⁴ Similarly, a Scottish reviewer in 1878 stated:

No modern theological work, upon the whole, has made a more remarkable impression upon many thoughtful minds. . . . Mr. Campbell's works will continue [to be] a living influence over the course of theological opinion.⁵

In 1897, Methodist theologian, John Scott Lidgett, in The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement, calls attention to "the conspicuous service rendered by McLeod Campbell in his great attempt to rescue the atonement from Calvinistic and governmental explanations, and to interpret it in terms of Fatherhood." He freely acknowledged that Campbell's book

"puts us on the highroad to a true conception of the matter."⁶

As we move on into the 20th century we find P. T. Forsyth ("the Barth before Barth"), during a series of talks at a ministers' study conference in 1919, remarking: "I hope you have read McLeod Campbell on the atonement. Every minister ought to know that book and know it well."⁷

In the Preface to his book, The Death of Jesus (the Cunningham Lectures for 1937) A. B. Macaulay stated: "Readers will easily perceive who my masters have been: Dr. J. McLeod Campbell and Principal James Denney." He added, "A nobler book on the death of Jesus than the former's Nature of the Atonement has, in my judgment, never been written in any age or language."⁸ James Denney was a most prolific writer on the subject of the atonement. His own appraisal of Campbell was likewise eulogistic. He wrote:

Of all the books that have ever been written on the atonement, as God's way of reconciling man to himself, McLeod Campbell's is probably that which is most completely inspired by the spirit of the truth with which it deals. There is a reconciling power of Christ in it to which no tormented conscience can be insensible. The originality of it is spiritual as well as intellectual, and no one who has ever felt its power will cease to put it in a class by itself. . . . He walks in the light all the time, and everything he touches lives.⁹

In 1937, Eugene Garrett Bewkes, Professor of Philosophy, Colgate University, New York, published a book entitled, Legacy of a Christian Mind: John M'Leod Campbell,

Eminent Contributor to Theological Thought. In it he stated:

John M'Leod Campbell is one of the greatest spiritual minds of the Nineteenth Century, who has not been sufficiently remembered in the Twentieth. . . . More and more in the last three decades, Campbell has emerged with increasing prestige.¹⁰

A PhD thesis from Toronto, Canada, appeared in 1961, written by George Milledge Tuttle, entitled The Place of John McLeod Campbell in British Thought Concerning the Atonement. This valuable work is unpublished, but it is available in several libraries on microfilm.

Writing in The Expository Times of June, 1972, John Macquarrie, of the University of Oxford, observed:

The centenary of the death of John McLeod Campbell affords an opportunity for reappraisal of his work. He was a man ahead of his times and his ideas are relevant to current theological discussion.¹¹

B. A. Gerrish, professor of historical theology at the University of Chicago, in one of his recent books (1977) included a chapter on McLeod Campbell.¹² The Torrance brothers, T. F. and J. B., have repeatedly praised Campbell's works in their books, articles and classroom lectures.¹³ A Paper on Campbell was read at the 1985 Western Regional Meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Los Angeles. It will be published in the Scottish Journal of Theology.

Erskine Also Remembered

A 300-page book was published in Britain in 1899 entitled Erskine of Linlathen, Selections and Biography, by Henry F. Henderson. More than a half century later there appeared an interesting article in the Expository Times of November, 1957. It traces the antecedents of Martin Buber's well-known Ich und Du. The author had discovered some correspondence between Thomas Erskine and Samuel Brown in which the former was encouraging Brown to allow his (Brown's) manuscript, entitled, "I - Thou", to be published, instead of keeping it locked in his drawer. Despite Erskine's efforts to rescue it from oblivion, the manuscript was never published; and subsequently it was lost. The author of the article characterized Erskine as "one of the great creative Christian thinkers of Scotland, so nearly forgotten that many have had an opportunity of claiming an originality they do not deserve."¹⁵

In the October, 1982, issue of the Journal of Religion there appeared a 24-page article comparing the views of Thomas Erskine with those of Charles Hartshorne.¹⁶

In his own day, Erskine's influence was appreciated and acknowledged by many who knew him personally. Among them was one of the outstanding theologians of the century, F. D. Maurice. Regarding his having dedicated one of his

books to Erskine (Prophets and Kings), Maurice wrote to him: "I have longed to do what I have done for many years . . . tell others how much they, as well as I, owe to your books."¹⁷ Maurice's biographer stated that Erskine made a deeper impression upon Maurice than any of his contemporaries.¹⁸ Maurice once referred to Erskine as "the best man I think I ever knew."¹⁹

Another of his contemporaries was Anglican Bishop Ewing. In a letter to his brother, Ewing wrote:

I quite feel the force of what you say about the writings of Erskine and Campbell. I can only say that I come away a wiser and a better man from their writings or presence, than from the writings or presence of any other men.²⁰

Elsewhere he acknowledged that the work of these two men "form a double star, which has lightened an otherwise dark and dreary night."²¹ The list of tributes could go on and on. Well has John Tullock stated, in Movements of Religious Thought in Great Britain during the 19th Century, that "The more his [Erskine's] writings are studied the more remarkable will be found to have been their influence."²²

Aim of Thesis

The aim of this thesis is to introduce the reader to the salient features of Campbell's theology, especially to his understanding of the nature of the atonement, the nature of assurance, and the relation of faith to righteousness and

the Christian life. These soteriological subjects will be the principal focus. Biographical information will be given to help clarify the issues involved by showing their relevance to parish concerns. Campbell was above all else a pastor. This gave a practical bent to all of his theologizing. He was a shepherd with a flock to feed. His preaching eventually sparked a religious revival; but it also engendered opposition from his fellow clergymen of the Church of Scotland. The opposition culminated in his trial and deposition as a heretic in 1831. He was charged with teaching (1) universal atonement (as opposed to the Calvinist doctrine of an atonement limited to the elect), (2) universal pardon, and (3) that "assurance is of the essence of faith and necessary to salvation." What Campbell meant by these terms, and how they reflect his understanding of the way of salvation will be a principal focus of this study.

Neither Campbell nor Erskine liked to conceptualize or to discuss soteriology by the use of such conventional terms as "justification" and "sanctification," or "imputed" and "imparted" righteousness. They felt that these terms are confusing, and tend to obscure the simplicity of the gospel. They had similar reservations regarding substitutionary theories of the atonement and of the Christian life. Because of their objections to those substitutionary and imputational concepts which were popularly held to pertain

to the heart of the gospel, these men were often suspected of being crypto-liberals who were covertly surrendering the citadel of Protestantism.

The aim of this thesis is to set forth clearly and amply just what were the positive soteriological views which Campbell and Erskine were advocating and which they felt would better and more truthfully convey the simplicity and power of the gospel than the popular substitutionary and imputational concepts to which they objected. Did their views of the nature of faith and assurance and the way of salvation constitute a departure from the purity of apostolic teaching and its partial restoration by the 16th century Reformers or did they accurately reflect New Testament emphases and thus constitute a carrying forward of the reformation begun in the 16th century? Was it the case that their views constituted a "falling away" from apostolic and Reformation teaching, or were the substitutionary and imputational theories of later Protestant scholasticism, against which these men were remonstrating, the real "falling away" from positions of truth attained by the Reformers? In short, were they doing the cause of truth a service by challenging certain aspects of these theories or were they not? This question will be addressed implicitly throughout the thesis.

Need for the Study

To the extent to which the views of these men may be judged to be valid, their relevance to certain doctrinal controversies within contemporary Adventism--as well as in evangelical Christendom generally--should be clearly evident. The question of Christian assurance, the matter of where the greater emphasis should be placed, whether upon justification or upon sanctification, upon imputed or imparted righteousness, the meaning of the metaphor about being covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness, the place and adequacy of forensic concepts of salvation and of substitutionary theories of the atonement--all these are live and yet-to-be-resolved topics in Adventism today. If the views of Campbell and Erskine can afford the church a fresh perspective upon these vital subjects, one that can largely circumvent the divisive effects of the polarizing terms and concepts which have previously been employed--yet do so without compromising the gospel, but rather, enhancing our perception of it--surely this possibility is worthy of earnest consideration!

Another potential benefit to be derived from acquaintance with Campbell's thought pertains to the Seventh-day Adventist doctrine of the sanctuary. Campbell's insights into the nature of the atonement could open up a whole new

chapter in our understanding of the deeper, experiential meaning of Christ's intercession in the heavenly sanctuary. Already in 1856, with the publication of the first edition of The Nature of the Atonement, Campbell, in the Old World, was shedding light upon the close relationship between Christ's sanctuary ministry and righteousness by faith about a third of a century before that relationship came to be emphasized and elucidated among Seventh-day Adventists following the 1888 revival. It would be well for us to become familiar with the broader extent of our historical roots.

Finally, there is yet another advantage that might be derived from a knowledge of the works of Campbell and Erskine. Although the subject is outside the scope of this particular study, both men have written extensively upon the nature of inspiration and revelation. Campbell's last major book written for the public was his Thoughts on Revelation (1862). It dealt creatively with the epistemological issues raised by the development of historical criticism in the 19th century. Erskine wrote more than two volumes on the subject. One of them dealt with true and false manifestations of spiritual gifts.²³ Both men had had close and critical contact with such charismatic figures as the MacDonald brothers and Mary Campbell (no relation to McLeod, and not a member of his parish), and thus were able to speak

from first-hand experience. Their reflections and conclusions are highly relevant to questions being agitated within Adventism today regarding the nature of inspiration and the prophetic gift, both as it pertains to the Bible and to Ellen White. This important subject, however, cannot be addressed within the confines of the present thesis.

Major Divisions of the Subject

The first and larger portion of the study will focus upon Campbell. This part divides naturally into the early and late periods of his life. These were separated by twenty years of relative silence following his trial and deposition in 1831, during which period he ministered in obscurity as an independent pastor-evangelist in the city of Glasgow. The early period will deal with the development of those teachings which sparked a revival in the rural district of Row (pronounced Rhu) and which eventually led to his trial, especially those doctrines pertaining to universal pardon and the assurance of faith. Invaluable primary sources for this period have been preserved for us, in addition to Campbell's own reflections upon this youthful period of his life, written forty years later, at the urging of his minister-son, Donald. In considering the late, or literary, period of his life, our principal concern will be to review those portions of his two books, Christ the Bread

of Life (1852) and The Nature of the Atonement (1856), which best reflect his mature thinking upon the nature of faith and its relation to righteousness and the Christian life. Some grasp of Campbell's distinctive understanding of certain aspects of Christ's vicarious atonement will be essential to this portion of the study. Understandings of the atonement and of the Christian life were very closely associated with each other in Campbell's mind.

Chapter X will focus upon the same subjects of faith and assurance and the work of Christ as these are viewed and written about by Campbell's dear friend, Thomas Erskine. Erskine descended from an earlier line of famous Scotch clergymen.²⁴ His own life was relatively uneventful: Soon after completing a classic education in Greek and Latin and training for the bar, he inherited wealth and the country estate of Linlathen, located near Dundee, Scotland. He whereupon retired from the practice of law and devoted the remainder of his long life to study and writing and to extensive travelling. He formed treasured friendships with many of the leading literary figures of the age, and also with many lay persons. Two volumes of his charming correspondence have been preserved and edited by William Hanna, the author of the series on the life of Christ, which was so highly valued by Ellen White. Three of Erskine's five principal works--all of which were written between 1820 and

1837--deal directly with our subject, The Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel, an Essay on Faith, and The Brazen Serpent. The former volume was described by Thomas Chalmers, a leading churchman of the period, as being "one of the most delightful books that has ever been written."²⁵

Complementary Methodologies

Although, with one important exception,²⁶ the theological views of Erskine were very similar to those of Campbell, the two men arrived at their positions in relative independence of each other. Each derived his views from close study of Scripture and from deep reflection. Their methodologies, however, were distinctive and complementary. Campbell was less philosophically and psychologically minded than was Erskine. Although he derived his concepts from Scripture--indeed, he prepared most of his sermons from the Bible alone without benefit of commentaries--He made little use of formal exegesis. Much less did he employ the "proof text" method. His reflective soul seemed to absorb directly the very essence and spirit of the passages which he was studying. The writings of John and the Epistle to the Hebrews were his favorites; although he also made extensive use of Paul. Erskine, on the other hand, perhaps from his greater acquaintance with Greek, was often exegeting in earnest--at times coming up with novel, intriguing, and

sometimes questionable, results. If one were to collate passages from various of his works--especially from his largest work, The Doctrine of Election--he would come up with a nearly complete paraphrase-translation of the entire Book of Romans. It would be designed, of course, to substantiate his understanding of Paul. And Campbell's, too; for their views were very similar. Both men, however, were conversant with what others had written in the field. Erskine would quote from recognized authorities, and compare his exegeses with theirs. Campbell, in preparing his magnum opus on the atonement, carefully reviewed the work of previous generations;. He felt himself to be in substantial agreement with Luther (although not necessarily with his mode of expression) but not with most post-Reformation Calvinists, several of whose works he reviewed extensively, yet always fairly and sympathetically.²⁷ It is because the approaches of these two close friends complement and reinforce each other to the extent that they do that it has been decided to include the work of both men in this study, instead of considering either one alone.

The penultimate chapter will survey something of the influence that these men have exerted upon later theologians and upon the church at large. The final chapter will briefly consider affinities with, and possible contributions to, Adventist thinking.

Chapter 1

THE "ROW HERESY"

This chapter covers the five or six years of Campbell's first pastorate, which was located in the rural district and village of Row in western Scotland. It deals with the nature of Campbell's early teachings--which later became known as "the Row heresy"--and with some of the events which led up to his trial by the Church of Scotland in the year 1831.

Thomas Erskine had finished writing his book entitled The Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel when he chanced to hear a sermon by a young visiting pastor in one of the churches of Edinburgh. Turning to his companion at the close of the service he remarked: "I have heard to-day from that pulpit what I believe to be the true gospel."¹ The speaker--until then unknown to Erskine--was a 28 year old youth whose home parish lay in the rural district of Row (pronounced, Rhu, and modernly so spelled), located about 25 miles northwest of Glasgow, on the shores of the beautiful Gareloch. His name was (John) McLeod Campbell. Within three years he was destined to be expelled from the Church of Scotland as a heretic. Erskine was so impressed with this young preacher, 12 years his junior, that he moved to Campbell's parish of Row and spent the summer there. The two men found themselves to be kindred spirits, and soon

formed a very close friendship, one which lasted throughout their long life-times.

Erskine discovered in his young friend that rare and felicitous combination of a keenly inquiring intellect and a heart of childlike faith and devotion to God. Notwithstanding all of the favorable recognition that his theological writings would one day bring him, Campbell never lost sight of, or slackened, his primary concern for the spiritual welfare of the common people of his congregations. He ever remembered the charge which an elderly couple of simple country people had given him upon the commencement of his first pastorate, in 1825, as the three of them stood together on a hill at sunset, overlooking the scenic waters of the Gareloch: "Give us plain doctrine, Mr. Campbell, for we be a sleeping people."² The ensuing revival which soon caught up that entire district, testifies to how faithfully and well he fulfilled that charge.

The folk of his parish were indeed earnest people, for whom religion meant much. But it was in many respects a dead religion, one in which there was much bustle with the forms of religion, but little enjoyment of any peace and power thereof. While some seemed wrapped in a vague false confidence, others acutely sensed their lack of joy and peace and security. For many of this class of dissatisfied and searching ones, the Scotch-Calvinist doctrine of a

limited atonement (i.e., that Christ died for the elect only) contributed to their insecurity and misdirected their efforts toward finding that peace and assurance which they so much desired. How could any individual believer be sure that he or she was one of the elect of God, and so entitled to the blessings which Christ died to obtain? The logical answer seemed to be, "By their fruits ye shall know them." So the focus of their anxious attention was thus directed inward. They knew better than to think that their good works could of themselves save them, or even meritoriously contribute to their salvation. They were far too Protestant for such a gross error as that! They knew that they were to be saved , not by works, but by faith. Yet how could they know that their faith was of the right kind--a genuine saving faith? Although they knew that their works could never save them, still a life of very good works would surely testify to, or give evidence of, the fact that their faith was genuine. This in turn could be taken as firm evidence that the particular person holding such faith was indeed one of the elect, and therefore entitled to the blessings of the gospel. These considerations had led to the build up of a "system of evidences" which young Campbell (and a few other discerning ministers) had begun to suspect

of being a fundamental misconception of the way of salvation, and perhaps of constituting one of the root causes of the spiritual torpor of his people.³

If looking inward for evidences was not the right direction to take, what was? Instead of worrying about the quality of one's faith--whether it was of the right kind, etc.--Campbell was led to consider the object of faith, or what was the truth that one was asked to believe. He came to see that the truth that was needed, and that which corresponded to reality, was that Christ died for all men: not just for the elect. Anyone who really believed that Christ died for all men, would of necessity believe that "He died for me" It was thus in the search for a firm foundation for personal assurance that Campbell came to believe in, and to press upon others, the importance of "universal atonement" and "universal pardon." These two, along with "assurance of faith," were the three points that were eventually brought against him at his trial. The "heresies" which he was then to be accused of were that he taught (1) universal atonement, (2) universal pardon, and (3) that "assurance is of the essence of faith, and necessary to salvation", as the third charge was more strictly worded.⁴

The definition of the first of these terms is relatively easy to conceptualize, although the reality toward which it points is beyond our highest and deepest thoughts.

The atonement was made for all mankind--for the whole world which God so loved. The meaning of the universality of the atonement is thus straightforward and clear. Because this teaching is fully accepted by all of us in the Arminian tradition very little time will be expended upon explaining or defending this first "heresy" of Campbell, even though it is closely related--and indeed, fundamental--to the other two "heresies." What Campbell really meant by the other two expressions ("universal pardon" and "the assurance of faith") was a source of continual and persistent misunderstanding upon the part of his theological opponents and in the popular mind of those who were resisting his message. A major focus of this entire section of our study will be upon just what Campbell understood by these terms, and upon why he felt strongly that the concepts which they denote were of great practical import for his perplexed and searching parishioners.

Hopefully, it will become apparent why he felt it necessary to employ a term that was so prone to produce misunderstanding as that of "universal pardon." To some people, this expression suggested the error of universalism (viz., that eventually all will be saved)--a doctrine which Campbell never entertained in any degree. At least, it was feared that this expression tended toward universalism. Then, too, many of his opponents seized upon the expression

as plainly showing antinomian tendencies. If God pardons everybody, one might conclude, then why not "live it up" and do as one pleases? In fact, however, as we shall see, the effect of Campbell's teaching was directly opposite to this. Instead of leading to belief in any laxity or "easiness" on the part of God in regard to sin, as supposed by some that it would, it led men to realize that the gift of free grace calls for a total commitment to the will of God--the very antithesis of antinomianism.

Campbell realized that he could have avoided much opposition had he been content to use a less provocative term than "universal pardon." Writing to his sister, under date of March 6, 1829, he acknowledged:

I know that, as you say, I might publish--yea, might preach--the truth without challenge if I avoided . . . innovations in language, such as saying that all are pardoned. . . . But I would pass without challenge only because I would not be understood; because, through false associations formed with right words, I might be saying the right thing and yet convey a false meaning.⁵

This passage reflects a young pastor who is eager to be understood, because he has something which he feels is vital to say. He is even willing to risk his future career, if necessary, in order that it be distinctly heard. Yet he chooses to employ a term which is bound to arouse suspicion and opposition. Does he use it, then, simply as an attention getting device to startle people into listening to him? Far from it. The term is necessary, he felt, to convey the

truth of the matter, in spite of the semantic confusion which it was liable initially to evoke. On this very subject he wrote his father (who was also a minister) more than a year before his trial:

Again and again it has been suggested to me that surely the difference is more verbal than real; and if there were any truth in this, it would be a painful consideration indeed, that upon a verbal difference, even although right in my choice of words, I should so embroil the church. But oh! it is not verbal, but real and most fundamental, and most extensive, not as to one, but as to all points. For although my opponents agree in stating the necessity of holiness and love to God and good works, yet they show a total ignorance of these things by expecting that they can exist in men who do not know that their sins are forgiven, and can proceed from the selfish motive of a wish to be pardoned. I say it is a comfort to find the difference so great, because it makes the path of duty more clear, and the call of duty more imperative; and that must be a clear path, and that must be an imperative call, which can justify putting oneself in opposition to a whole church; and not the Church of Scotland merely, but I may say all the sectaries likewise.⁶

Glimpses into the Content of Campbell's Preaching
and its Effects

In a previous letter to his father he had outlined what he had been preaching to his congregation upon the subject in question. This letter, under date of Sept. 27, 1829, affords the reader a clear insight into young Campbell's thinking at this time and into why he felt that the subject of universal pardon was so important.

My much loved Father,--May the Lord bless you and cause the light of His countenance to

shine upon you. I am pretty fresh to-night after my day's work, in which, through grace and strength perfected in weakness, I have had much comfort; and I believe God has spoken through me to some hearts present. I am also alone, and would say something of the delightful subject of which I have been speaking, Hebrews x. 19-21.

You have heard me bringing out of the preceding context the doctrine of universal pardon, as that thing in the cross of Christ which fits his blood for perfecting the conscience, and purging it from the sense of condemnation. What I was made to see in the text of this day was the inference of the Apostle from the proof of pardon, as so entirely the opposite of the inference which men allege to be deducible from it. Men say it will cause indifference; the Apostle values it entirely as an access to the enjoyment of communion with God. They say, If we are all pardoned we need not heed what we do. He says, Seeing we are pardoned we have access into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and let us avail ourselves of it and draw near. And from the very fact of having been pardoned he argues the awful fate of those who will not come to God, who has had mercy upon them, and rejoice in His love. The succession of topics in my discourses was, (1) the proof that all are forgiven; (2) the Apostle's estimate of the blessing of forgiveness, viz., an access into the holiest; (3) the meaning of the language used, viz., that Christ is the way to the Father, because in Him the Father is revealed so that we can enjoy His character; and that He is a living way, as one in whose strength we approach; and a High Priest, as standing in the presence of God for us, and giving us the Spirit in us in the return of the Spirit to God--being thus literally a Mediator through whom God comes to us, and we go to God.

This is a subject of deep interest. It is the life of Christianity experimentally to know it. And it is the most remote thing possible from what is commonly called religion, standing not in duties to the external world,--although it produces these,--but being a thing that would proceed equally in the solitude of a desert as in a crowded population, although in the one case without opportunity of outward beneficial

expression to others, and in the other blessing all around; just as the sun would shine as it shines, and be the same sun, although there had been no planets to benefit by its light. . . Mr. Erskine has just been in, and desires his love to you.⁷

It is little wonder that a mighty spiritual revival was attending this young man's preaching. Let us notice one other, and earlier, letter written to his minister-father about the sermon material which this then-28-year-old shepherd had been feeding his flock on that particular day (Dec. 21, 1828). He was speaking of

my comments on the first part of the xiv. of John: "Let not your hearts be troubled," etc. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," etc. verses 1, 7, 9. This is with me a very favourite passage; the truth it contains being the anchor of my soul, viz., that in knowing the mind and feelings of Christ I know the mind and feelings of God. Any soul knowing the amount of this statement, and believing its truth, must be found trusting in God with a trust inspired simply by the knowledge of what He is, and stable as His character. It is thus I attain to assurance; not by considering the fruits of my faith, or anything that is personal to myself, but by finding in God what warrants my trusting simply (and irrelatively of my own character) to Him: which is a holy doctrine, because this trusting is a holy state of being; the state of unfallen creatures, because they never sinned; the state of creatures who have fallen, and for whom redemption is provided, when they come to know that redemption, and to see their sins pardoned in the blood of Jesus.⁸

He then went on to outline the sermon which he had given that day.

Such was the character of the preaching which was beginning to stir up all of Scotland. It stirred up two

things: great revival, and great opposition. The latter arose, not primarily from his own parishioners, many of whom received his message with great joy, but from most of the clergy, who at first took a dim view, and then an alarmed view, of the whole proceedings. As early as 1827, Campbell had been asked to preach in the nearby city of Glasgow, and it was from this time that Campbell dated the beginning of a crescendo of opposition from the clergy.

The state of mind in Glasgow just now on the subject of religion is such as calls for much prayer. The light that is breaking is certainly making the darkness manifest. The Lord reigneth; that is enough for all who know the Lord.⁹

But he also found cause for rejoicing:

I have of late had more than usual encouragement in my own parish. Several of the elder people have come to me under much anxiety, to have the way of life more clearly pointed out; and many are beginning to suspect that they have been trusting all along to a name to live without having ever passed from death to life. They are now in fact coming to see what I would be at; and, as I might have expected, while some are made to feel grateful for having their false peace disturbed, others are so reluctant to admit that their peace has been false, that they resist the doctrines which imply it. They all, however, come to hear, and much inquiry and reading of the word are the result. My preaching at Glasgow, as I told you before, has been too decided for many; . . . It has become the epidemic disease of the present age that men should find peace in the combination of an orthodox creed with much religious bustle; but heart religion has been long at a low ebb.¹⁰

The Part Played by Robert Story

One of Campbell's dearest friends, and one of the few who later were to support him in his trial, was a fellow minister, older than he, whose parish lay on the opposite bank of the long narrow arm of the sea known as the Gareloch. His name was Robert Story. His son, Robert Herbert Story, eventually became a church historian in the University of Glasgow. In addition to a 5-volume history of the church of Scotland, the son has left for us a Memoir of the Life of Rev. Robert Story, his father. This valuable work affords us an in-depth view of the times, and of the genesis of this revival which came to be known as the "Row Heresy," from the perspective of a sympathetic participant, who himself had had to pass through a period of deep soul searching. In 1827, Story was obliged to leave his parish for an extended period on account of ill health (probably tuberculosis). During his illness and convalescence he resided in southern England, while his pastorate back in Scotland was covered by his friend Campbell. An insight into Story's thinking at that time should help the reader to understand more clearly the nature of the issues involved in both of the closely related areas of assurance and universal pardon. The following was written concerning Story by his historian son:

The theological subject which had for some time previous to his leaving home chiefly occupied Mr. Story's mind, was that of "Assurance." His attention seems to have been directed to this by the preaching of Dr. Malan (of Geneva), whom he had met during the latter's visit to Scotland. The subject had presented many difficulties to him. The popular teaching regarding it was of such a nature, as to lead the inquirer to look for the ground of his assurance in himself rather than in God--to examine into his own heart, and, from the feelings and convictions he found there, to decide whether or not he had a right to this assurance. It made, in short, the ground of it subjective--not objective. . . . he was unable to rest in the popular teaching; nor does he seem to have got a firm foothold elsewhere till after much searching. . . .[eventually] he was brought to the distinct understanding of the nature of Assurance--as being man's conviction of the truth of God's testimony concerning God, which brings with it the certainty of his salvation (if he believe), not because of what he is, but because of what God is.¹¹

It should be noted that this was the very time when Edward Irving (who was a friend of both Campbell and Story) was rousing England with his eloquent preaching on the nearness of the Second Advent. Story himself attended the Albury Park Prophetic Conference, sponsored by Mr. Henry Drummond.¹² Even greater than was his interest in the Second Advent, however, was his interest in those topics which were then absorbing his mind and which he felt could alone prepare men to meet the Lord in joy at His advent. Story writes, in a letter to a friend:

You are aware that Irving and Maclean are regularly preaching of the Advent as at hand, and preparing the minds of their people for the coming judgment. I myself as yet consider of still greater importance the settlement of the previous

question, whether their people have admitted in reality the fact of Christ's first coming to save them from their sins. O! yes, my friend, unless they bear about with them his dying, they cannot love his glorious appearing; can feel no interest whatever in the anticipation of these wonderful things that are, according to the Adventites, shortly to come to pass.¹³

That which Story was coming to see as being of "still greater importance" than the nearness of the advent was the truth of the love of God to all people, not just the elect, as had been taught by the official church of Scotland. He was breaking away, not only from this restricted teaching, but also from the related error of looking within one's own life for "evidences" that one was in a saved state, i.e., one of God's elect, instead of looking away from self to Christ in order to find in Him and his grace one's only and sufficient ground of assurance. This was a truth which, his historian-son reports, "he valued far above anything that the Albury Congress could teach him."¹⁴ Story's enthusiasm for this freshly apprehended truth tended to carry him away to a point where, at least for a time, he seemed ready to cast aside as relatively worthless all that he had learned and thought before.

I am more and more persuaded that there is only one way of preaching that is effectual unto life and salvation, and that for a great period of my own ministry I have but little wielded it; indeed I feel that one of my first labours when I return, must be to commit to the flames every line of what I have written upon most fundamental points of the Christian faith.

. . . What a responsibility there is upon poor ministers! and what a woe there is upon them if they preach not the Gospel. Alas, for the poor people in the hands of many of us! Instead of a message of heart-stirring joy and gladness, a principle of life and peace, of holy and blessed activity in all heavenly pursuits, it is made an embassy of perplexity, of negotiation, of disputation; it either alarms falsely; or it stupifies and relaxes the whole soul, blunts its sensibilities into perfect apathy, or whets them into feverish acuteness that converts even declarations of love into sounds of wrath and terror.¹⁵

In view of the revolution in his basic theological convictions which this physically sick minister was experiencing it was no wonder that he was in danger of giving undue emphasis to the new at the expense of that which was still valid in the old. It is during the breaking out from past rigidities that one is most liable to become unbalanced in one's thinking and is most vulnerable to adopting extreme positions. It was during this critical period through which Story was passing that his young friend Campbell, who was looking after his pastorate in his absence, was able to render him invaluable service in protecting him from going to extremes.

In his enthusiasm over his new found convictions, Story felt duty bound to share them with his congregation back in Scotland. Being not yet recovered enough to make the journey in person, he hit upon the plan of writing a Pastoral Letter to his people, instead. This he did. He then sent it to his colleague, Campbell, with the request

that he read it to them in his absence.

Upon receiving and reading over the letter, Campbell felt that it would be most unwise to read it publicly in its then-present form. After prayerful consideration, he resolved to write the following reply to his older brother-minister. This letter affords what is perhaps the clearest insight that we have into just what Campbell did, and did not, mean when he spoke of everyone's having been pardoned by the death of Christ--in just what sense he conceived this to be the truth, of which he had become so jealous. In my judgment, this letter gives Campbell's best answer to the most common objection which arises in the minds of those earnest Christians who initially recoil from the expression "universal pardon" as surely tending toward an "only believe" type of incipient antinomianism. The letter deserves to be read in its entirety, for its words and sentences have been carefully weighed and measured. However, its long length precludes quoting more than selected portions (less than 50%):

An Important Letter about the Meaning of "Universal Pardon"

My dearest Brother,--I have indeed rejoiced before God in seeing the firmness of your tone and the simplicity of your perceptions, and your clear views of the nature of the long established delusion as to Evidences. I have also rejoiced at your guarding of the system from practical abuse by the inseparable connection established between

grace and holiness, they being both made to arise out of the same perception of God, and growing and waning together. . . .

After this introductory commendation, he asks him to "reconsider the form of expression" which he (Story) has been wont to employ when he urges his parishioners to "Believe that your sins are forgiven." Campbell acknowledges that what he is about to say will seem to contradict statements which he himself had previously made.

Yet it is not that my views are in the least changed, nor so far as I can see different from yours; but that this expression, besides being I think without apostolic sanction, is calculated to convey something else than the truth.

He next draws a distinction between certain facts that are true whether they be believed or not, and certain other facts that will arise in their being believed. He continues:

Now, dearest, do you believe that the sins of men are forgiven before they believe--although he should never believe? If so, so far as I yet see, I could not go along with you. I believe that Christ has suffered for all, and that therefore each has forgiveness in Christ in the same sense that he has eternal life in Christ, and this whether he believes or not. But out of Christ there is neither life nor forgiveness. God has given us eternal life, and pardon as the first consciousness of that life, but this eternal life is in his Son, and so in Him as to be inseparable from the knowledge or belief of Him. God is revealed in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto men their sins; which I thus understand:--Sin has interposed a curtain between us and God; while this curtain remains, God is misconceived of, thought of as our enemy, because we are his enemies, and so on. Revelation removes this curtain and discovers God in Christ

having accommodated Himself to our case as sinners, and in infinite love assumed a character or wrought a change on his own aspect which makes Him as accessible to us sinners as He would out of Christ have been had we never sinned. This change is, that through the finished work of Christ, we have revealed to us in God Himself that righteousness which we sought for in vain in ourselves, and the want of which kept us far from Him. It is discovered that in the Lord we have righteousness and strength. This is the fact, whether we know it or not. But by the knowledge of it is Salvation, because the knowledge of it draws us towards God in the way which He desires. Therefore men are not told simply that their sins are pardoned, but pardon is proclaimed through Christ; and they are not told that they are justified, but that in believing they are justified, see Acts xiii. 38, 39. Every man has righteousness, and every man has pardon in Christ, but it is only in knowing or believing that this is the case that righteousness is imputed to him, and he actually a justified person. . . .

. . . The facts that are prior to belief, true, and which are properly the objects of belief, are that Christ died for the sins of every man, and that therefore every man has access to God through Him; coming in which way a man comes sinless, and not only sinless but clothed with the righteousness of God. The facts that emerge or arise, or become existences in believing, are that the soul becomes alive in Christ, and is pardoned and justified. I therefore do not say "believe that you are pardoned or justified," any more than "believe that you are alive to God," because these are not yet facts. But I say, "believe that Christ died for your sins and rose again for your justification, and that in Him you have pardon and righteousness." And if the person who I address believes this, then he will have confidence towards God and rejoice in the Lord.¹⁶

In the Memoir, Story's son records the result which ensued upon the receipt of this letter:

Mr. Campbell's representations had the effect he desired; Mr. Story consented to certain alterations in the wording of the address, and to

the omission of a reference he had made to the character of his own former preaching. . .and the amended edition was read from the pulpit by his friend. It was listened to by a crowded congregation, and sank deep into many hearts. "O! a great hairst (harvest) day. I hope there have been mony sheaves the day." The hostile and indifferent were inclined to cavil, the more so as opposition was now beginning to be shown to Mr. Campbell's teaching, and it had been rumoured in the district that Mr. Story had been "converted" by the minister of Row, and had written a declaration of his conversion which the latter was to read to his people in his absence.¹⁷

Upon his recovery and return from England in June of 1828 Story was fully prepared to stand shoulder to shoulder with his brother minister as he faced the increasing hostility of the clergy at large, a hostility which culminated in Campbell's trial and deposition.

In summary, the foregoing material has provided insights into the character of Campbell's preaching. It has included his most careful and extensive definition of precisely what he means when he enjoins belief in "universal pardon." It has afforded some understanding of why Campbell continued to use this controversial expression, even when it became one of the focal points in the growing opposition to his teaching. In effect, what Campbell was saying is that, so far as He is concerned, God in Christ has removed every barrier between Himself and all men. Some of his opponents, confounding universal pardon with universal salvation, heard him as implying that all men eventually would be

saved. This they knew to be wrong. Some of them also objected to what they perceived to be antinomian strains in the concept: if God has already forgiven everyone, then why not "live it up"? This they also knew to be wrong. Thus the lines were being drawn, and the stage being set, for the heresy trial, which is the subject of the following chapter.

Chapter 2

HIGHLIGHTS of the HERESY TRIAL

In the year of Campbell's trial (1831), R. B. Lusk published a tome of over 500 pages bearing the lengthy title:

the
WHOLE PROCEEDINGS
before the
Presbytery of Dumbarton,
AND SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR
in the case of
REV. JOHN McLEOD CAMPBELL
minister of Row

Including the libel, answers to the libel,
evidences and speeches.

No attempt will be made in this study to cover all the features of this remarkable trial, the transcribed record of which has been preserved in such extraordinary detail. No attention will be given to the first and foremost accusation, viz., that Campbell taught that Christ died for all men, rather than only for the elect. The latter was the belief generally held by the Calvinists, who controlled the Church of Scotland at that time. They felt that the doctrine of a limited atonement was implicit in their revered Westminster Confession. This phase of the trial is not

dealt with because no one in the Arminian tradition--of which Adventists form a part--would question the rightness of Campbell's belief in an unlimited atonement. This chapter will focus chiefly upon three areas: (1) his response to the charge that he was teaching "universal pardon." This will amplify the material presented in the foregoing chapter. (2) It will introduce and explain the very simple meaning which Campbell attached to the the expression "assurance of faith", which meaning differs importantly from that commonly held. (3) It will exhibit excerpts from the testimonies of some of the witnesses for the defense. The excerpts are especially selected to illustrate and uncover a certain hidden agenda, or unwritten accusation, viz., that Campbell's teachings were antinomian in their tendency. Finally, it will vignette certain dramatic highlights of the trial's ending.

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We shall spend little time upon his argument for the extent of the atonement, for the truth that Christ died for all men. This he drew almost exclusively from Scripture in his opening presentation. He endeavored to show that nowhere was his view inconsistent with the Scriptures. He also argued that the view that he was advocating would help to vindicate the character of God's own government.¹

Coming next to the topic of universal pardon he stated: "And now I come to that part of the subject on which I am most liable of misapprehension and on which there has been most misrepresentation."² Campbell then outlined three distinct senses or meanings to which the expression "pardon of sin" had come to be attached in the minds of different people.

Three Meanings of the word Pardon

The "pardon of sin," he declared, "may be understood to mean either (1) an act of indemnity to the sinner, giving him security from all consequences of having sinned against God, irrespective of any condition as to moral character; or (2) as the act of God in receiving back to the bosom of his love the returning sinner; or thirdly, (3) as the removing of the judicial barrier which guilt interposes between the sinner and God; so making the fact of being a sinner no hindrance to his coming to God, now, as to a reconciled father."³

In regard to the first of the three meanings he declared:

But such a pardon is altogether a fiction of the mind's own--it is nowhere recognized in the scriptures as having any existence. Not only is it not the portion of all, but in fact it is not the portion of any: to neither unbeliever nor believer is any immunity from future wrath secured, apart from his being prepared for being found of God in peace at that day, in which he

shall judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ. To hold otherwise is distinct antinomianism, and makes the atonement something to take those for whom it has been made out of the judgement of God; and not, as it really is, something to prepare them for that judgement, by bringing them into the condition in which they can say, "We may have boldness in the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world." I need scarcely add, therefore, that in such a sense as this, I do not hold the doctrine of universal pardon. . . ."⁴

Having thus summarily disposed of the first meaning as having no application to himself, Campbell proceeded to consider the second common understanding of the term pardon.

Again, understanding pardon, as the act of God in receiving back to the bosom of his love the returning sinner--so understood, it is from the very nature of the thing, limited to the sinners who do return--the prodigal, still remaining in the far country, cannot possibly be received into the father's house. In this sense, pardon is very generally employed in the Scriptures, and is expressive, not of one act of God in reference to the sinner on his first believing in the love of God, but of the continual acting of God towards the sinner, living in a condition of intercourse and communion with God, and so is it the object of prayer to the believer continually and to the last hour of his life in the flesh, whatever may have been his attainments in holiness, or conformity to the mind of God."⁵

Campbell then proceeded to illustrate that this is the sense most often used throughout the Bible, especially in the Psalms, where the many prayers for forgiveness and cleansing imply

more than simply that God would receive us to near communion with himself, being better explained by the words that he would take us into communion with himself; the thing entreated for being, an outputting of his divine power in separating us

and our sin, as a real thing; and in raising us out of ourselves, to dwell in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, our living head.

Referring to the prayers in the Psalms, he declared, these are the prayers of one knowing God as his God, and having confidence in the present good will of God towards him, to give him good gifts, and so emboldened to ask of the Holy One that he would make him partaker in his holiness, and dwell in him by his Spirit.⁶

It was in this second sense, Campbell maintained, that even Christ himself was wont to pray, during the days of his earthly pilgrimage. "Having humbled himself to dwell in our nature, and to be made in the likeness of sinful flesh," Christ continually needed--like every believing child of God--to beseech God to "make him partaker in his holiness, and dwell in him by his Spirit." This necessity (a joyful one!) was part of His humanity.

"Of course," Campbell continued, "in this second sense I do not hold pardon to be universal, inasmuch as I do not hold that all have repented and returned to the Lord." It was only in the third sense, therefore, that Campbell maintained "pardon" to be universal. In his own words, he explained it thus:

The third sense of the expression pardon, enumerated above, viz., That it is an act of God, referring to a sinner, by which he declares his having sinned, to be no longer any barrier to his returning to the enjoyment of the light of God's love and favour; making the consciousness of guilt to be no longer a just cause of fear in seeking the face of God; yea, giving the assurance that it is not only a righteous thing in God to receive

back into favour, not taking into account the sin justly chargeable against him; but even, so to speak, to help him back, and by his own Spirit to lift him up into the light of his own love, and enjoyment of his own holiness. In this sense I do hold--and in this sense I teach, the doctrine of universal pardon, through the death of Christ. For such a pardon I believe the Scriptures to reveal as extended to all--as the result of the atoning sacrifice of Christ for all--as the fruit of his propitiation for the sins of the world--as the condition in which God's accepting the sacrifice of Christ for mankind, has placed the children of men. . . .⁷

The next paragraph of his defense is, in my opinion, very important in helping one to comprehend why Campbell insisted upon using this term at all, knowing full well its propensity for being seriously misunderstood. The question arises, Was not this whole controversy, after all, more semantic than substantive? The following passage illuminates how it appeared to Campbell:

The character of God as the fountain of life is so strange and ununderstood a matter to the natural heart, which has never so known him, but has ever had acquaintance only with the broken cisterns which hold no water, that a pardon, thus explained, seems to be a much less valuable boon than our enunciation of it as the pearl of great price--that, in the knowledge of which, the soul feels itself possessed of all it can desire, would intimate: and it is difficult to get people, even intellectually, to conceive that this is anything else than the Arminian doctrine of God's readiness to forgive and pardon all, on condition of their repenting and believing. In truth, however, no two doctrines can be more widely different. Arminianism is the sanctifying with the name of religion pure self-righteousness. After a man is supposed to have repented and believed, on that system, he is only then in that condition of right to come to God with confidence, in which, according to the true doctrine of the Scriptures,

he was placed by the sacrifice of Christ, as a propitiation for his sins; and as long as repenting and believing occupy in men's minds this place of preliminary requisites, in order to having title to approach God with boldness, of confidence in his fatherly love to us, and free acceptance of us, it makes little difference whether we professedly hold the system known by the name of Arminianism, or attempt to separate between ourselves and it by limiting the atonement, and by holding strictly that the faith and the repentance are the gifts of God.⁸

Despite the ponderous length of its sentences, this passage makes clear that Campbell was taking steady and deliberate aim, not only at certain Calvinist elements, but also at certain elements of Arminianism as well. In fact, the latter seems to have been his principal target, so far as the negative aspects of his polemic were concerned. By "negative aspects" I mean the "errors" he perceived himself as refuting, in contradistinction to the "truths" he was promoting. His primary concerns were characteristically with the latter, on the philosophy that a clear presentation of the light of truth is the most effective way of dispelling the darkness of error.

In order to emphasize "the free and unconditional character of the pardon which I believe and preach" Campbell then explained in what ways the situation of believers and unbelievers are the same, and in which ways they are different from each other. Believers and unbelievers are in the same situation in that they both equally have the right and title to approach God with confidence and to trust

him for all things according to his will. But

Having repented--one particular in which they differ--has not conferred the right, for it has been but taking advantage of the right--my title to return to God, is not in the fact that I do return, but my returning is my availing myself of a title to return antecedently conferred by God in the exercise of his free love. Again, believing--the other particular in which they differ--has not conferred the right in question. . . My believing creates nothing--by believing I only receive what God has already given, light into my understanding and love into my heart--God himself to dwell in me by his Spirit who is the Spirit of Christ, and who is truth.⁹

As to the different situations of believers and unbelievers in regard to pardon, Campbell stated that believers are drinking of the fountain of life, while unbelievers are not, for the fountain is to them "as if it were yet sealed." This, Campbell saw as a present difference; but there is an important future difference as well. This he described in the following comprehensive sentence:

Inasmuch as God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, and inasmuch as the pardon extended to men has been intended to prepare men for being found of God in peace on that day, by reconciling them to God, and so making them righteousness, there is this awful and solemn difference between believers and unbelievers, as to pardon, in respect of their prospects for the future, that, while to the former, the forgiveness that has been extended to them, has been the means of leading them back to God, and so saving them from the wrath to come, . . . --to the latter, the same pardon is the ground of condemnation, . . . they shall, if they abide in unbelief, have their place assigned them in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.¹⁰

A Broad Biblical Base

After this eschatological scene, depicting the final issues of the great controversy, Campbell launched into a comprehensive review of Biblical passages which he considered relevant to his position. He first referred to Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks, concerning which he stated:

If this be the annunciation of any less work, with reference to our sin, than that which I have been stating as universal pardon, I do not know what distinct conception can be attached to the expressions--"finishing transgression, making an end of sins, and making reconciliation for iniquity."¹¹

Likewise he interprets the opening verses of Isaiah 40 as applying to the pardon obtained at Christ's first coming:

Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.¹²

The fulfillment of this prophecy he sees in John the Baptist's exclamation, "Behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."¹³

Campbell next drew heavily upon the Epistle to the Hebrews. He maintained that the expressions

"purged our sins" and "put away sin" distinctly teach the doctrine which I am now advocating; and when the Apostle passes from the contemplation of the fact that it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment, to Christ's having offered himself to bear the sins of many, limiting the goodness of the news contained in his second coming to those "who look for him"--he is

obviously proceeding upon the same principle of present pardon to all through the death of Christ, and future judgment with reference to that pardon, which has been held above.¹⁴

(italics are in the original)

He concluded his appeal to the Book of Hebrews by quoting the familiar 18th and 19th verses of the tenth chapter. He then referred to the second chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians as presenting the very same message as in Hebrews.

The peace here represented as being made by Christ through his cross, is explained as our having access through him by one Spirit unto the Father--to preach this peace to men, therefore, is to declare to them that they have access through Christ, by the Holy Ghost, unto God the Father--this is the same with announcing to them that they have access into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way; and, in both forms of expression, that is declared which I have stated as the pardon which I preach. . . .¹⁵

His last specific Biblical reference on this theme was to 2 Cor. 19, that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," which passage he interprets to mean that

their sin [was] not imputed to them, nor their personal guilt accounted of, while the day of grace lasts; at the same time that it is God's purpose to bring them to account for their share in this grace, which he hath caused to pass upon them; condemning them, or acknowledging them, according as they have, or have not received the grace of God in vain.¹⁶

He then stated that "I might proceed to quote passages in which the gospel is announced as glad tidings, and the

effect of believing it set forth as being immediate peace and joy" but he concluded that this would be unnecessary because if the basic principle that he was driving at were once grasped, then he felt that "almost every word addressed to the primitive churches" would be seen to be founded upon it.¹⁷

This, then, was his answer to the charge that he taught "universal pardon." He said, in effect, that yes, as pertains to the third meaning of the expression, he did indeed believe in, and teach, universal pardon; for this was the clear teaching of Scripture. So there he would stand and could do no other.

Campbell's Understanding of Assurance of Faith

The third charge against Campbell was that he taught the doctrine that "assurance is of the Essence of Faith and necessary to salvation."¹⁸ Here he said that there had been much misconception arising from the "loose and inaccurate use of terms."¹⁹ Actually, Campbell's concept of assurance was exceedingly simple--so simple, perhaps, and obvious, as to be difficult to grasp--if this be not a contradiction in terms. For Campbell, "assurance of faith" meant no more than the conviction that the thing believed in was really true. Thus "assurance of faith" was inseparable from faith

itself, if not virtually identical to it. Campbell maintained that this was the Biblical meaning of assurance, in contradistinction to the sense usually employed in theological writings where it is rather "the feeling of personal interest in the thing believed, than the reality of the thing itself, that is intended to be expressed."²⁰ (This now archaic expression does not mean--as a modern person might suppose--that here is a subject which a particular person finds interesting to him. Rather, it means that here is a subject that the person realizes applies to himself personally. That is, he has a "personal interest" in it, just as an investor has a personal interest in his investment--not merely that he finds the financial proposition interesting.)

Campbell well knew how important it was for Christians to have a personal confidence in God's love and acceptance of them individually--that each believer could say, with full assurance, "He loved me and gave Himself for me" Yet this was not what Campbell meant by the expression "assurance of faith." His concern that "assurance of faith" should connote nothing more than confidence that what was "believed" theologically was actually true, i.e., that it corresponded to reality, was prompted by his conviction that if the expression were allowed to connote anything more than this limited concept--specifically anything pertaining to

the individual himself other than his conviction that the thing contemplated was indeed true--"there was a risk of a very serious error, and a door opened for a very insidious form of self-righteousness, under the name of what was called the appropriating act of faith--"²¹ Campbell felt that this error could be avoided only by sticking to the limited definition of "assurance" which he was advocating as corresponding to the Biblical use of the term. Faith thus understood and experienced would then of itself produce the desired personal confidence of standing in God's favour directly and immediately, without its being doubtfully suspended upon such considerations as whether one's faith was of the right kind, etc.²² This complementing thought Campbell expressed in the remainder of the sentence that was incompletely quoted immediately above: "--but when it is understood that faith needs not to change anything, but may, taking things as they are, say my Lord and my God--so long as it is understood, that the spirit of adoption is the spirit of faith in a revealed fatherly love, then there is no evil in associating the word faith with those feelings of personal delight in the Lord, and confidence toward God which are inseparable from it."²³ Campbell further explains:

And on this subject I hold and teach that in believing the gospel, there is necessarily present in the mind, the certainty that the person believing is the object of God's love manifested to him in the gift of Christ--the certainty that he has remission of his sins . . . and this I hold

to be so of the essence of faith, that is to say, so necessarily implied in the existence of true faith, that no person can be regarded as in the belief of God's testimony who is not conscious to it.²⁴

It should be noted that it is faith in a "revealed fatherly love" that Campbell is speaking of, not some love and pardon and acceptance that will come about if and when we believe. No. "Faith changes nothing." This is the crux of the entire matter. Its profoundly practical significance to the whole subject of "evangelical repentance" will be considered later in this study.

Campbell records that he had more difficulty supporting this position from the Bible than the others already discussed because the Biblical writers simply assumed that "to believe God's love, and to be assured of it, are the same thing." He also believed that Arminians, as well as Calvinists, are prone to hold the erroneous view of assurance of which he speaks. Logically, on the Arminian system "no one is entitled to rejoice directly in the revealed love of God, but is ever kept at a distance by the inquiry whether he has, indeed, savingly complied with the conditions required of him."²⁵ He sees such people as curiously excusing their lack of confidence on the grounds of modesty or a certain self-depreciation, which in reality stems from a failure to grasp the concept and the fact of free and unconditional grace.²⁶ Thus he described this class of believers

as "slumbering in the fancied security of their lowly estimate of themselves, and saying peace, peace to their own souls, on the strange ground that they are not so presumptuous as to think that they have a certain foundation for peace."²⁷[!] Campbell ever insisted that "The true confidence can alone preclude the false in all its measures and forms."²⁸ From the foregoing it should be evident that what Campbell is calling the true confidence is the confidence which the believer has that what God has done for us in Christ is indeed true, i.e., that it is an immutable fact. Only this, and nothing more, according to Campbell, is what the expression, "the assurance of faith" should connote.

A Vital Distinction

In his defense Campbell underscored a distinction the grasping of which is essential to understanding correctly his understanding of the subject of assurance. It is the distinction between the "assurance of faith," as he has defined it, and the "assurance of salvation." By the latter expression, Campbell meant the confidence of the individual that he himself is presently in a state of salvation. He saw the two as being importantly different.

It is no doubt, when abounding in the assurance of faith, that, if the eye turns inwardly, and the thoughts are directed to our own state, we shall also enjoy the assurance of being in a state of salvation; but still the two assurances are distinct in themselves, and I at present feel it

to be important to refer to the distinction, because, whilst I hold assurance to be of the essence of faith, I do not hold that the converted person is necessarily always in a condition of assurance as to his being in a state of salvation; inasmuch as I do not hold it to be impossible for a converted person to be, at times, so overcome of the temptations of Satan, causing darkness, through the flesh, as it may be to stand in doubt of the first principles of the oracles of God; and it is manifest that if brought into such darkness, and such unbelief, there must be the interruption to the blessed consciousness of being a child of God, and an heir of glory.²⁹

In similar vein he admits that "a regenerate person may, for a time, be so overcome by Satan, as to stand in doubt of that anchor of his soul, and in this way lose the consciousness of security."³⁰ But such a lapsing into "an occasional season of darkness and uncertainty" he nevertheless firmly refers to as "this awful sin."³¹ He does not seem to answer explicitly the question which might here be raised as to just how far he may have distanced himself from the common belief expressed by the phrase, "Once saved; always saved." One would infer that if a person remained in such a state of "awful sin," he would surely forfeit his eternal salvation. It would appear that Campbell means far more than that merely the sense or consciousness of security would thus be lost. Just how far he had come out from under the restrictions of deterministic thinking at this point in his theological maturation is not entirely clear--at least not to this writer.

The reader now has before him the essence of Campbell's defense as pertains to the second and third of the three charges that were brought against him. (The first has not been a focus of this study.) During the remainder of his part in the trial he entered upon an historical discussion of why he felt that his views need not be considered to be hopelessly incompatible with already established church creeds. This part of his defense will be bypassed. As already noted, it was soon after the trial that he realized that it was indeed impossible to harmonize his views on these subjects with those of the Westminster Confession, and like pronouncements. We shall also pass over the more than 50-page transcription of his advocate Thomas Carlyle's eloquent defense of his client, ending "If this be heresy . . . then, sir, in the name of my Rev. client, I unhesitatingly say, 'After the way that is called heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers.'"32

Antinomianism Suspected: the Witnesses Testify

Underlying all of the trial proceedings can be traced evidences of a hidden agenda, a fourth charge, viz, that Campbell was teaching antinomian doctrine. This suspicion surfaced again and again in the cross-examination of the witnesses for the defendant. The ringing testimonies of these men, most of whom as his parishioners, had for years

been directly exposed to Campbell's preaching and pastoral ministration, constitute one of the outstanding features of the trial. The completeness of such testimony--in large part due to the foresight of publisher Lusk, who himself was one of the witnesses--makes this feature one that is perhaps unique in the history of church trials, at least among those occurring more than 150 years ago. The transcripts of their testimony make fascinating reading in their entirety. In the small sampling which follows we shall focus principally upon that testimony answering the implied charge of antinomianism, while at the same time touching upon other areas as well.

The first witness was the American Consul, Mr. Hervey Strong, a 38-year-old married man from Glasgow. Being interrogated whether the view of the love of God given by Mr. Campbell on a particular occasion appeared to have a tendency to make men "easy about sin," he answered that never on that night nor on any other occasion did he hear him preach "any doctrine which had a tendency to licentiousness--unless the free grace--the free love, and the free forgiveness of God have that tendency."³³ Mr. Strong testified, according to the transcript of the trial, that

Mr. Campbell taught that the pardon of sins through the death of Christ was universal, and extended to the sins of all men, and the pardon was for all men--by which Mr. Campbell meant, as he understood, that the sins of every man were judicially removed, so that it was no reason why a

man should not, and might not, come to God, and that unless the sins of the world had been so put away, God could not, consistently with his holiness, invite or command any man to come to him--that every man, in consequence of the death of Christ, not only had a right to come, but his not coming was his highest condemnation: Mr. Campbell taught that the sins of every individual of the human race were, in point of fact, forgiven, in the sense above explained, and not merely that they would be forgiven if they came to Christ: and that Mr. Campbell never taught in that form that their sins would be forgiven, but that they were forgiven: Mr. Campbell taught that a man cannot believe savingly unless he sees that his own individual sins are forgiven.³⁴

He further said that "Mr. Campbell taught that it is a right thing for a man to examine himself, and to be watchful over himself, but not in order to ascertain his being in a state of salvation. . . ."35

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The next witness, Mr. James Hawkins, was a 35-year-old married man from Edinburgh. He stated that

This manifestation of the love of God to all men certainly did not appear from Mr. Campbell's teaching to indicate any toleration of iniquity in the mind of God;--meaning by toleration not forbearance, but countenance, indifference, or approbation. Mr. Campbell was in the habit of teaching, that men were to find the greatest manifestation of God's hatred against sin in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.³⁶

Being asked if Mr. Campbell taught that "this forgiveness or pardon of all men was a deliverance from judgement to come," Mr. Hawkins replied, "certainly not." Being interrogated what then Mr. Campbell taught that it was, he answered,

that Mr. Campbell taught that during the day of grace, it was a non-imputation of trespasses--the sacrifice of Christ putting the sinner in the condition, and giving him the privilege of coming to God as his reconciled Father in Jesus Christ.³⁷

Being interrogated to what power, work, or operation, Mr. Campbell referred a man's coming to God in Christ? Mr. Hawkins answered, "to the work of the Holy Spirit in bring home the testimony of God in the gospel to the heart of the sinner."

Concerning the ground on which the judgment to come would proceed, Mr. Hawkins answered that Campbell taught that men would be judged according to the gospel, and not according to the law; that all sins were forgiven men during the day of grace, including "every repeated act of unbelief,"

but that the condition of the sinner, at the expiry of the day of grace, if not found prepared for God's judgment in righteousness, would expose him to that wrath of God which is revealed against all unrighteousness of men--and this for the reason that the manifestation of God's forgiving love, during the day of grace, was never contemplated by God to place the sinner out of his judgment, but to prepare him for it.³⁸

He also stated that Mr. Campbell taught that "there was no holiness in anxiety--inasmuch as it proceeded, in most cases, from selfish feelings, and had no connection with the glory of God."³⁹ He also observed that "the reason why a man will not believe the love of God is, that he would keep his sin."⁴⁰

Mr. Hawkins was then asked by Mr. Story what the witness understood Mr. Campbell to teach regarding the way in which a believer's confidence is held fast day by day unto the end. He replied

that although the work itself be the work of the spirit of God in the believer, yet, as consciously his own act, it is by continuing to believe what God has spoken, and beholding the glory of God as it shines in the face of Christ. Being interrogated whether he had heard Mr. Campbell connect the holding fast of the believer's confidence with such texts of Scripture, as for example, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling--Follow after holiness--Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect?" [he answered] that he had never heard any preaching so forcibly and powerfully inculcating holiness--or stating so fully the provision for such holiness being in us.⁴¹

The witness declared furthermore that "Mr. Campbell never taught that God desired that men should be saved without their being made fit for the enjoyment of himself."⁴²

Altogether, this second witness (Mr. Hawkins) was grilled for six and one half hours. Campbell was totally pleased with all of his testimony. He wrote to his father that in no way could he have said it any better himself.⁴³ He felt much the same about the testimony of his other witnesses, a few bits of which testimony are reproduced below.

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Mr. Lusk, the publisher of the Whole Proceedings, testified in part as follows, in regard to a sermon which he

had heard Mr. Campbell preach on Revelation 14: 6 and 7:

Mr. Campbell taught in that sermon, that God had forgiven the sins of all men, the object of which, Mr. Campbell stated to be, that they might repent and give God glory--which if they did not do, they should be destroyed with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power. Being interrogated whether Mr. Campbell taught this forgiveness of sin as an historical fact, or as a moral truth, concerning God? [he answered] rather as the latter; and, that Mr. Campbell taught, that a man could not be saved by believing the fact, without understanding the moral truth. And that the moral truth contained in this forgiveness of sin, included no tolerance of sin.⁴⁴

Still commenting upon the sermon of Revelation 14:6&7 (which was subsequently published under the title, The Everlasting Gospel)⁴⁵ Mr. Lusk stated that Campbell taught

1st, that God could not admit man into his presence unless his sins had been put away--2nd, that man could not look to God with confidence while he felt that the condemnation was resting upon him; and that he could render to God no free service of the heart, while under the feeling of the necessity of doing something in order to get the forgiveness of his sins.⁴⁶

Still referring to Campbell's sermon on the hour of God's judgment, Mr. Lusk continued to outline his understanding of Campbell's thought, which was, in effect, that

God had given us, in Christ Jesus, all things pertaining to life and godliness--that he had done all things, needful, out of us, and was ready to do all things in us, by his Spirit. . . . He taught that the end for which Christ had bought men was that they might be redeemed from all iniquity, and that, through walking in the Spirit, they might not fulfill any of the lusts of flesh; and that Christ would judge them according as this purpose had or had not been fulfilled in them.⁴⁷

The final testimony which we shall sample is that of William Douglass, a 48-year-old married man, and regular attendant at the Row Church throughout the previous year.

Mr. Douglass testified

that Mr. Campbell taught that . . . by the sacrifice of Christ, there was access for every man to God, and in no other way. That he had heard Mr. Campbell state, sometimes that it was access--sometimes that it was pardon--sometimes reconciliation--and sometimes forgiveness--by all which, Mr. Campbell meant the same thing, as the witness understood him.⁴⁸

. . . Mr. Campbell taught believers that it was their duty daily and hourly, to pray for deliverance from sin. . . .

. . . Mr. Campbell uniformly taught that God loves men for no other reason, than that he loves them--at least I never heard him adduce another reason. . . . He taught that God had joy in contemplating believers--and that the reason why . . . was that they were most glorifying to him, and living in strictest conformity to his commands. . . .⁴⁹

This concludes our very small sampling of the voluminous testimony of the witnesses for the defendant, a testimony which occupies more than 100 pages of the Whole Proceedings, which have been preserved by Mr. Lusk. So far as it pertains to the hidden charge or suspicion of antinomianism, the general tenor of all of the testimony of the witnesses could be fairly summed up by Mr. Hawkins's statement, reported above, that he had "never heard any

preaching so powerfully inculcating holiness--or stating so fully the provision for such holiness being in us."⁵⁰

The Trial's End

There was no attempt on the part of the opposition to refute Campbell's views from Scripture. It seemed enough that they were contrary to the Confession of Faith which they had all sworn to uphold. The following condensed excerpt from a speech of one of the opposing clergy will afford a glimpse into the state of mind of at least some of those who were about to vote against him:

I have heard statements from the bar, yesterday and today, such as I never heard in my life. It strikes my heart with sorrow when I think that any man who has subscribed the Confession of Faith, should tell me that the compilers of it had not done their duty. I am shocked also, that in a complaint and dissent of this kind, we are bearded by the appellants, who say to us, "you know nothing at all about the matter; you must come to these two or three people (pointing to the bar), to learn what truth is:" and I understand that there were some attempts to pray that we should be enlightened on the subject. The thing is perfectly shocking--there is nonsense on the face of it.

I believe, Moderator, that this question has been brought before us to produce an effect--and if you have not the common sense and common honesty to show that you have principles, and believe them to be according to the word of God--if you have not this, you deserve to be turned out of your pulpits. I was astonished at this Synod, yesterday, listening to the nonsense and absurdity that was uttered by the complainer. You had no right to listen to what he dared to utter in regard to the compilers of our Standards, and his telling you about Geneva and Helvetian Confessions, with which we have nothing whatever to do. I must say,

Moderator, that I never heard worse pleading than by the appellants. They, no doubt, will be of the same mind in regard to me; and they have a right to this opinion; and I care not if they form it. All I wish, Moderator, is, that if there be any individuals who wish to join them in their heretical notions, I wish them all to go in the same boat.⁵¹

Surely, not nearly all of those opposing him were of such crass and shameful mentality.

Just before the vote was taken, Campbell's father was allowed the floor. He closed his brief speech as follows:

A great deal was said from the other side of the house about dealing leniently with Mr. Campbell. Now I would just ask where is the leniency if you go into the motion on the table and cut him off, brevi manu, from the Church? You have not done Mr. Campbell justice in attending to what has been this day laid before you. You have heard him this day in his own defense, and he has told you that he just teaches that "God so loved the world that He have His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" and with regard to universal pardon, he has told you that he just means by it that sinners may come to God through Jesus Christ as to a reconciled Father. Now I am sure there is none among us all who has anything to say against this. . . . I never heard any preacher more earnestly and powerfully recommending holiness of heart and life. . . . but I do not stand here to deprecate your wrath. I bow to any decision to which you may think it right to come. Moderator, I am not afraid for my son; though his brethren cast him out, the Master whom he serves will not forsake him; and while I live, I will never be ashamed to be the father of so holy and blameless a son.⁵²

These simple and affecting words of remonstrance having been uttered, the sentence of deposition was carried by a vote of 119 to 6.⁵³ The vote was taken at six o'clock in the morning, after an exhausting all night session. Many of

those authorized to vote had already left the hall. The principal clerk of the assembly, who announced the vote, was himself so weary that in his brief speech he managed to say the precise opposite of what he intended. He intoned that "these doctrines of Mr. Campbell will remain and flourish after the Church of Scotland has perished and been forgotten."⁵⁴ Upon hearing this strange statement, Erskine, who was attending his friend's trial, leaned back and whispered to those behind him, "This spoke he not of himself, but being High Priest,⁵⁵--he prophesied."

Post-mortem

There were several factors accounting for the nearly unanimous verdict against Campbell. His view of universal atonement was contrary to the limited atonement stance of the Westminster Confession. Regarding the question of "universal pardon," this was no new "heresy." Essentially the same issue had been raised more than a century earlier in what was called the Marrow Controversy. This conflict had arisen over whether a certain book called The Marrow of Modern Divinity, first published in England in 1646, was, or was not, dangerously antinomian in nature. The Church of Scotland finally condemned it in 1720, against the strong remonstrance of the Marrow Men, among whom were Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine (forebears of Thomas) who later seceded

from the Church of Scotland.⁵⁶ The churchmen condemning Campbell thus had strong precedent--of a sort.

Commenting on Campbell's trial, historian Story explains:

The same two points--universal redemption and assurance of faith--had been brought before the Assembly, but not declared so distinctly and fully; in the Marrow case, and had then been condemned. After the lapse of more than a century, confessional orthodoxy on these points still maintained its supremacy. The decision which condemned these tenets alleged to be in the "Marrow," was nearly unanimous. The same thing occurred in Campbell's case. Moderates and Evangelicals laid aside their differences for the time, and cordially joined in thrusting out of the Church one of her most earnest and saintly ministers for teaching the dangerous and deadly errors that God loved all His children of mankind; that this love was revealed in Christ, who had procured remission of sin for all; and that man's faith in this revelation must be firm and sure.⁵⁷

Story also brings out another important, although hidden, factor in the strong opposition that Campbell encountered.

The opposition to Campbell was remarkable for its intensity and unanimity. The Church had tolerated tenets much more inconsistent with the Confession, and when charges had been made against individuals of holding erroneous opinions, nothing like the spirit displayed in opposing what was called the "Row heresy" had been excited. But on the only two occasions in which universal pardon and assurance of faith ever came before the Church courts, all parties combined in condemning those two heresies with a burning zeal which all other heresies failed to rouse. The fact is singular; it surprised Campbell himself. He thought he had at last found the explanation. "The key to it all is, this is a personal demand upon every man for a personal religion, i.e. a personal faith, a personal hope, a personal love, a personal regenera-

tion, a personal new life. Few have those persons to meet the demand, and they can only keep their false peace by casting doubt and contempt upon the authority that makes the demand." There were doubtless other reasons, but whatever the explanation of the fact may be the fact itself is undoubted, and is peculiar to Scotland.⁵⁸

Epilogue

(written by his son, Donald)

On the 13th of April, 1871, the fortieth anniversary of the day on which he stood at the bar of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, a meeting was held in the house of Professor Edward Caird, Glasgow University, for the purpose of presenting an address and testimonial to Dr. Campbell (He had, a short time previously, been presented with an honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by the University of Glasgow).

The address was signed by a committee, which included representatives of the principal churches of Scotland, as well as several well known citizens of Glasgow. . . .

Dr. Macleod was appointed by the committee to present to Dr. Campbell a silver gilt vase, on the model of the Warwick vase, which bore the inscription: "Presented to the Rev. John McLeod Campbell, D.D., by a number of friends, in token of their affectionate respect for his character, and their high estimate of his labours as a theologian."

Before making the presentation and reading the address of the committee, Dr. Macleod said . . . he did it

the more gladly that, as one who had been a Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, he could express the regret of himself and many others that Dr. Campbell was no longer a minister of that Church. He felt sure that such an event as his deposition could not occur now. He then read the following address:--

"To John McLeod Campbell, D.D.

Rev. and Dear Sir,--In the name of a number of clergymen and laymen, we take the opportunity of your leaving Glasgow to request your acceptance of the accompanying testimonial, and at the same time to make known to you the respect and affection which we feel towards you personally, as well as our deep sense of the services you have rendered to the Christian Church.

In thus addressing you we are assured that we only give expression to feelings widely prevalent; for, although your name has been much associated with religious controversy, we believe that all would now recognize you as one who, in his fearless adherence to that which he held to be the truth of God, has never been tempted to forget the meekness and gentleness of Christ. And, without entering upon any disputed questions, we desire for ourselves to express the conviction that your labours and example have been the means of deepening religious thought and life in our country; that your influence has been a source of strength and light to the Churches, and that in your writings, as in your words, you have ever united independence of mind with humility and reverence for divine truth, and deep spiritual insight with the purity and tenderness of Christian love.

And our earnest prayer is, that He who has sustained you hitherto and enabled you to keep your heart in all meekness and sweetness of wisdom, amidst the sorest trials of patience, may

be with you still, and that this imperfect but sincere expression of our esteem may cheer you with the assurance that your labours have not been in vain.⁵⁹

Chapter 3

THE ANATOMY OF A REVIVAL: Campbell's Recollections of his Early Pastoral Ministry

From the foregoing, the reader should have acquired a fairly clear grasp of those elements in Campbell's early preaching and teaching that were judged to be heretical by the ecclesiastical authorities of his day. Before passing over a quarter of a century to take up Campbell's mature views on the atonement and the relation of faith to righteousness--the full flowering of his earlier views--let us pause to consider that which Campbell always believed to be of even greater importance than the intellectual apprehension of religious truth, viz. the practical and spiritual application of that truth to the life experiences of his parishioners. Just how did Campbell's ideas work out in practice? I do not here mean so much the visible fruit of revival and reformation, although this was abundantly evident. I mean just how did Campbell, the assigned pastor of a sleeping people, go about to awaken men and women from their spiritual lethargy, or to redirect those who were unsuccessfully striving for peace with God? What were the resistences he met with in men's minds, and how were they overcome?

Providentially, we have preserved for us his own detailed answers to these questions. At the close of his long lifetime of pastoral labor, and at the behest of his minister-son, Donald, he wrote out his Reminiscences and Reflections. In this remarkable work he focuses primarily upon the period of his early ministry at Row, from the time of his ordination in 1825 to his trial in 1831. This period he views from the perspective of 40 years later, with all of the accumulated wisdom of the intervening years. His careful analysis of the various influences playing upon men's minds and hearts at that time constitutes what might be thought of as a treatise on the spiritual anatomy of a revival. In other words, how does the human agent, under the Holy Spirit, go about to kindle and nurture a genuine reformation? Along with its spiritual penetration, the work reveals a keen understanding of human nature and a degree of psychological insight that was prescient of a later age.

I entered upon my work as a parish minister in the unquestioning faith that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. . . . Further, I entered on my work in the unquestioning faith of the Divine gift of Revelation, and its inestimable value in connection with the will of God that we should glorify and enjoy Him.¹

These, then, were the two premises which he brought with him to his pastoral work. Of the latter he stated that "my faith in Revelation had this root that I recognized the

God who spake to me in my own heart as speaking to me in the Bible."² He remarked further that

this manner of confidence in the Divine authority of Revelation was in me early, being greatly developed by the exclusive study of the Scriptures to which I confined myself in my pulpit presentations,--not of set purpose, saying to myself that I would not take help from the thinking of other minds, but because I found the Scriptures speaking clearly enough for my need; and as to what remained dark I was contented so to leave it.³

He sums up the content of his teaching burden at that time in these words: "What God wills man to be, and what God has done, is doing, and will do if we yield ourselves to His will, in order that that will may be realized in us:-- this, in few words, was the sum and substance of my teaching."⁴

One of the chief problems of his parishioners in those early days, Campbell recalls, especially among those who were very serious about religion and who were striving earnestly to conform their lives to God's will, was the discrepancy between their high ideals and their actual attainments. It was the perennial conflict of Romans 7 between the perceived goodness of the law and the experienced weakness of the flesh. Campbell felt that for all those who honestly examined themselves the result could hardly be other than discouraging and "painfully humbling."

The natural reaction at this point, in order somewhat to assuage the guilt feeling, is to lower the standard.

"We may shrink from this unwelcome self-consciousness," Campbell observed, and try to avoid

the united judgment of Conscience and Revelation; and we may seek escape from its imperativeness by some unmeaning admission of the abstract excellence of the ideal which condemns us, combined with the self-excusing refusal to accept it as applicable to ourselves, on the ground that it is too high an ideal for us circumstanced as we are and frail as our nature is.⁵

But Campbell rejects this all too familiar apparent escape route, as leading to a still worse state.

We may, however, resist this temptation: as we consider more we may come to see the truth to be, that an ideal lowered to what we are would indeed be no gain to us but a fearful loss,--would be indeed the shutting out all high hope. And thus the condemnation so shrunk from may be more welcome than the assumption that we are all that God wills us to be.⁶

What happens next in the Christian life Campbell sees as depending entirely upon whether the will of God is perceived as law or as gospel. As law, that will of God only reveals what is wrong, but brings no deliverance; while as gospel, "the same will has in itself the power, being welcomed in faith, to realize itself in us."⁷

So what did Campbell then attempt to do for his parishioners? He continues:

Seeing this (dimly but with gradually increasing clearness), I labored to combine the pressing of a high standard as to what God calls us to be, with an equally earnest pressing of the power of the Gospel to accomplish the will of God in us.⁸

And what was the result of this carefully balanced approach? Wonderful results? No! It did not work. Why not? Because his teaching came across to the people more as law than as gospel.

I came to see that, in reality, whatever I preached, they were only hearing a demand on them to be --not hearing the Divine secret of the Gospel as to how to be--that which they were called to be.

The people could honestly say, Campbell observed, that they had no question of the freeness of the Gospel, or of Christ's power to save, or of his willingness to save them. All their doubts were about themselves. They vaguely conceived of a something which they were supposed to do in order to "make Christ their own." This "something" they tried to speak of as repentance, or faith, or love, or simply "being good enough." This last expression ("being good enough"), Campbell felt, "gave really the secret of their difficulty."

Christ was to be the reward of some goodness--not perfect goodness, but some goodness that would sustain a personal hope of acceptance in drawing near to Him. In this mind the Gospel was practically a law, and the call to trust in Christ only an addition to the demand which the law makes,--an additional duty added to the obligation to love God and to love man, not the secret of the power to love God and to love man.⁹

So in what direction did Campbell than move in order to remedy this situation?

Seeing this clearly, my labour was to fix their attention on the love of God revealed in Christ, and to get them into the mental attitude

of looking at God to learn His feelings towards them, not at themselves to consider their feelings towards Him. As to these, I taught them to be consistent in their admission of their not being what they should be, and also to know that they could not by any blind effort make themselves what they should be--however a sense of the importance of salvation might move them to the effort,--and so to come under the natural power of the love, the forgiving, redeeming love which was set before them.¹⁰

The remedial steps here outlined are:

- (1) Fix the attention on the love of God revealed in Christ.
- (2) Focus on God's feelings about us, not on ours about Him.
- (3) Admit that the latter are not what they should be.
- (4) Know that we cannot make ourselves what we should be by "any blind effort."
- (5) Thus come under the natural power of forgiving, redeeming love.

Contrary to what might easily be supposed, Campbell felt that the primary problem in the minds of the people he was dealing with was not to be traced to Calvinistic presuppositions, such as pertain to predestination and theological fatalism. No, it was rather

a difficulty in rising to the conception of free grace,--that is, to the apprehension of a love in God to us which is irrespective of what we are, and is sustained by the contemplation of what He both wills us to be and is able to make us. This apprehension attained, Christ is no longer thought of as intended to be the reward of anything in us individually, . . . He is known as ours by the grace of God, according to the love which, while we were yet sinners, gave Christ to die for us. The subtlest form of self-righteousness is that which it presents when self-condemnation is made a

reason for not venturing to trust in Christ with a rejoicing confidence.¹¹

At first Campbell's hearers did not realize that he was saying anything beyond what they had been taught all their lives. They had always been taught to be good and to "believe in Christ." Consequently, his preaching did not initially bring them much fresh light or help in their struggles. On the contrary, "they were assuming that they knew all that they were asked to believe as to Christ, and that they believed it all."¹² (which they did not)

When Campbell himself realized what was happening--or, more strictly speaking, what was not happening--he was much relieved, for he could then see to address the problem directly and more intelligently.

It was an exceedingly great relief and comfort to perceive, as I saw clearly, that they were deceiving themselves; that, . . . all their supposed faith in Christ consisted in empty words--the form of an unrealized dogma--their holding of which availed them nothing, or only increased their painful self-condemnation, . . .¹³

Campbell saw that in this way the gospel was nullified as a gospel, and became a burdensome addition to the law. The simplest and most direct way of dealing with this form of self-deception, Campbell found, was to fix attention on what the Gospel revealed to faith--its claims to be a gospel, and to insist on the response of feeling which accorded with its nature, refusing to acknowledge as faith in it anything that did not fulfil this condition.

This was the teaching which, under the name "Assurance of Faith," came subsequently to be called in question [at his trial]; . . .¹⁴

I accordingly made the immediate and direct effects of believing the test of the presence of real faith.¹⁵

Campbell is here speaking of joy and peace as being the immediate effects of a true faith. When people would confess to him that they had not experienced these effects, and wondered if perhaps they did not exercise the right kind of faith, Campbell would tell them that their problem was not that they were not believing in the right way. Instead, he would say to them: "You are not really believing what you are called to believe; you are not understanding the free grace of God; you are not seeing what is given to you in Christ."¹⁶ It was his conviction that

to bring the human spirit under the power of the personal sense of redeeming love at once imparts true peace, and protects effectually and alone can protect, from false peace. Thus [he concludes] my teaching came to be characterized as preaching Assurance of Faith-- . . .¹⁷

These, his mature reflections upon his earlier teaching of "Assurance of Faith" give us a larger understanding of what he meant by this expression than did his defence at his trial. There, he seemed to be saying no more than that the assurance of faith was the conviction that what was supposedly believed was actually true. Here, however, he expands this to mean that the immediate results

of joy and peace are to be seen as the test or the proof that the Gospel has been really believed, i.e., that the person is sure that God really loves and accepts him personally and individually.

Campbell was not asking or expecting that such feelings of joy and peace--such assurance--be present at all times. This was made clear by the testimony of the witnesses at the trial, as well as by his own explanations elsewhere. But while not necessarily present continuously (i.e., there might be periods of lapsing from such a state of confidence) these feelings of joy and peace would be present early on, almost immediately upon the exercise of true faith; and if this kind of evidence (in contrast to a different kind of evidences, to be discussed below, which also will not be absent) be continually absent, then this fact would, in Campbell's understanding, constitute clear proof that the person was not really believing the gospel. For really to believe is really to have joy and peace. Conversely, wherever these fruits are absent, the person is in a state of unbelief. At least temporarily, he is an unbeliever.

It is important to understand that Campbell is not saying that feelings are a safe guide, nor that the presence of peace and joy prove that the believer has true faith. No, he is saying that if peace and joy are habitually absent

the person does not have true faith, at least not at that time. The lack of joy and peace is an indicator of a lack of true faith; but the presence of these fruits--although it usually accompanies the exercise of true faith--does not of itself insure that one's faith is valid and well-founded. This state of affairs has an analogy in medical science. A particular laboratory test that is negative may effectively rule out the presence of some disease in question; whereas a positive result would not prove that the disease was present. Such a test cannot establish a diagnosis by being positive, but it can eliminate it by being negative.

As an indicator of whether a person was exercising true faith, in the Biblical sense, Campbell placed much emphasis upon the immediate (or at least very early on) appearance of feelings of peace and joy, which he virtually equates with "assurance of faith."

This call for immediate assurance was precisely what was most objected to by those who were questioning the validity of his approach. It was all right, they felt, even laudable, to have such confidence and assurance on one's death-bed, or perhaps after years of faithfully following the Lord in the process of sanctification. But to call for it as an immediate consequence of believing the gospel--this, his objectors were most reluctant to allow. Why? "It

was the danger of self-deception that was feared," explained Campbell. He continued:

As to this, I saw [1] that the light of life is its own protection. He that so knows himself and Christ as the light of Christ has the witness in himself. [2] I further saw that the natural and direct test of such a faith was its natural and immediate fruit, namely, being reconciled to God, conscious harmony with God, rest in God; . . . [3] I saw the evil consequences of distrust in the witness which he that believes has in himself. . . . This distrust had led to a regular system of testing faith by its fruits.¹⁸

In order to grasp the real import of what Campbell is here saying it is essential to perceive that in this passage he is speaking about two different kinds of fruits of faith for testing the validity of that faith. In (2) above, he is speaking of the immediate fruits of joy and peace, which, he says, do have a certain validity (especially as a negative test, as explained above). But in (3), where he is speaking of the "regular system of testing faith by its fruit" he is referring to that system of "evidences" of being in a saved state (i.e., being one of the elect) which he opposes and criticizes as involving an impossible circularity, not only of reasoning, but also, more importantly, of experiencing. It is this latter kind of fruits of faith which he discusses as he continues the passage we are considering, resuming from the point last quoted. He concedes that

Fruits of faith are, indeed, given as a test to be applied to the professions of others, or--it

may be--to the doctrine they teach. But how can our own faith be thus tested? We may, and we should, so test what we are called to believe; and we must have evidence of its tendency before submitting to it, or accepting it as of God. But to ask me to stand in suspense as to my trust in Christ--whether it is a right and saving trust--making this depend on the consciousness of fruits of holiness in myself,--this is really to suspend trust--that is, to suspend faith--until I am conscious of the effects of faith: a process which, if intelligently followed, obviously makes fruits of faith impossible.¹⁸

The first part of the above-quoted (and divided) paragraph introduces or rather touches upon, the "inner witness of the Spirit," a subject which Campbell treats extensively elsewhere, and which is not the focus of the present study.¹⁹ In the last part, he points out the circular fallacy in the "regular system of testing faith by its fruit" which he opposes. It is not easy to grasp his argument in this passage. Furthermore, to an impatient reader he might easily appear to be contradicting himself. Here he seems to be against the testing of faith by its fruit, whereas his principal burden has been that true faith is recognized by its fruits of joy and peace. The apparent contradiction is at least partially resolved by apprehending a distinction which Campbell seems to make between two kinds of fruit: one, is what he has here called the "natural and immediate fruits" of really believing the good news of the gospel, viz., peace and joy; whereas the other kind of fruit is what, in the latter part of the same passage, he calls

"fruits of holiness" (or holiness-fruits, for the expression does not mean "the fruits which holiness produces," but rather, the fruits which constitute holiness or sanctification, which do not immediately spring forth full-flower, but which may take a lifetime to develop). The former might be called feelings-fruit, and the latter, works-fruit, meaning works of righteousness. The former are indeed "subjective"--for nothing is more subjective than feelings. As such, they are subject to change, and therefore are not always reliable indices of the presence of true faith. (Remember the medical analogy mentioned above.) Nevertheless, feelings of peace and joy are objectively valid wherein they spring from and reflect the external reality of God's love, and of what has been done on Calvary.

In the above passage Campbell has not altogether answered the fear of self-deception which he addresses. He is well aware of the danger of a false peace in this connection, however. Much of his labor was against that false assurance, which lulled people to sleep. He felt that the best way to protect against false peace was to lead his people to experience true peace. "The true confidence can alone preclude the false in all its measures and forms," he ever insisted.²⁰

How Campbell Dealt with Self-condemnation

In Campbell's early ministry, there was a prolonged and anxious period of time between when he himself began to perceive these truths with some degree of clarity and when his parishioners finally began to catch on to what he was driving at, and to experience the revival for which he was striving. He recalls that "in many cases, the intense self-condemnation awakened so long preceded any glimpse of the light of what God is in His relation to us as revealed in the Gospel, that it made my part as a teacher a very anxious one."²¹

Unlike many counselors today, Campbell was careful not to discount or undercut his clients' guilt and self-condemnation in any way. He writes of

not questioning the justness of their self-blame, nor by word or look of indulgent sympathy seconding the delusive self-comforting suggestion that they were not worse than others--that the Divine ideal for them was less than, in the light of Conscience and Revelation, it was beginning to be seen; but, accepting all their hard sayings against themselves, and admitting that they might be much harder and yet true, I comforted them by reminding them that these discoveries of their own sinful state, though discoveries to them, were not discoveries to God--or anything not contemplated in the Gospel--or anything the consciousness of which could rightly hinder their joyful welcome of the Gospel, which assumed that they were sinners needing mercy, and revealed the very mercy which, in the judgment of God, met their need.²²

The greatest obstacle which Campbell encountered in his untiring labor for souls continued to be that already

mentioned "difficulty in rising to the conception of free grace." Concerning this obstacle he further wrote:

But, in experience, I found it the most difficult thing to make such language even intelligible when I was most anxious to impart the comfort of this great truth [the free grace of God]. Habitual ease of mind on the subject of Religion, in which faith in the Divine forgiveness is no element--the need of it not being felt--does not, in passing away, easily give place to a peace of so opposite a nature as that which, in the deepest realisation of a need of Divine forgiveness, the faith of that forgiveness brings. Indeed, faith in a true forgiveness becomes difficult in proportion as a real need of it is felt.

We easily believe that God will forgive while we do not feel that there is much to forgive. But we are far indeed from having any conception of the pure forgiving love which we really need, and which the Gospel reveals. This the teacher soon has forced on his conviction, in finding any form of conditional mercy more readily believed than free grace.

But it is only in the full light of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, that any true apprehension of our own sin can co-exist with perfect peace with God.²³

Here is a striking psychological fact about fallen human nature--yet doubtless one that many people have never before thought of, viz., that the greater the need for true forgiveness, the harder it is for the person to believe that such forgiveness and free grace can even exist--that even God could be that good! But really to believe it, Campbell would say, necessarily brings joy and peace. And Christ's parable of the two debtors reminds us that to be forgiven much is also the secret of the impulse to love much. In the

light of these considerations it is no wonder that Campbell placed such great stress upon the freeness of the gospel.

"The conviction of the freeness of the Grace of God possessed me early, as well as of the safety and importance of keeping its character of freeness always in the foreground.²⁴

Repentance and Forgiveness

Campbell stated that he was "thankful to put a seal to all that was taught as to an evangelical repentance, as distinct from repentance produced by the fear of wrath;"²⁵

In a later chapter of his Reminiscences and Reflections, entitled, "Salvation by Faith," Campbell expands upon how - evangelical repentance, with its right order of pardon first and then repentance (rather than vice versa) bears upon the question of Christian motivation. He grants that the believer's need for security has to be fulfilled early on, at the outset of his Christian pathway; otherwise, his repentance will be motivated by the desire to obtain pardon, rather than springing from the love which provided the pardon. He speaks of "the unsoundness of that effort at repentance we made while repentance was sought as a condition for forgiveness,--the root motive being the wish to be forgiven."²⁶ The fear of hell and the desire to be saved in heaven are not

motives of a very high order, but they are prominent initially. Yet they are not wrong in themselves. Campbell observes that there is nothing holy or spiritual about becoming religious as a means of escaping misery or obtaining future bliss. This merely reflects the elevation of the instincts of self-interest and self-preservation to a higher sphere. This type of self-interest is not to be equated with that self-seeking which is sinful. But neither is it holy or spiritual. Nonetheless, anxiety over one's personal safety has to be met and resolved first, before one is able to respond to higher influences and nobler motives.

Safety in God's universe is felt, but it is now scarcely thought of, because the Father's heart in which we are trusting is so full a fountain of other and richer blessing that this, our cry before, is scarcely thought of. And while safety sinks down to its proper level, new desires and hopes take possession of our hearts, set free for them by the remission of sins,--the desires and hopes which pertain to eternal life, now known in the truth of what it is--the knowledge of God the Father and of His Son Jesus Christ. But that which fills the consciousness and is the joy of the Lord in us, is that we have passed from death unto life: . . .²⁷

He closes the entire section of his Reminiscences that we have been reviewing (Part II - Progress of Thoughts and Teaching, pp. 124-194) as follows:

We do not in this light of life indulge in hard thoughts of those who yet know no higher religion than the fear of hell and the hope of heaven. Nor do we attempt to set them free by telling them that their religion is a form of selfishness. We know that we ourselves have been

raised to the higher level on which we now find ourselves, not by the becoming indifferent to our own well-being, but by coming to know our true well-being as given to us, not won by us,--given in Christ. To be blessed in the life of love quickened in us by the faith of God's love--this and this alone is our true deliverance from the life of self. If we seem to attain this deliverance otherwise--by simply endeavouring to get above our interest in self by a resolution and an effort--we either deceive ourselves and mistake the effort for success, or we escape self-deception at the price of a despairing consciousness of failure.²⁸

Thus does Campbell place the whole matter of assurance and security in its larger perspective with relation to the advancing Christian life, a place of priority, yet at the same time, of subordination to greater things beyond.

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This concludes our survey of Campbell's recollections of his early pastoral ministry, as he looked backward some forty years from the sunset of his life to that youthful period when the fires of spiritual revival lightened much of northwestern Scotland. We now return to take up the narrative of what subsequently happened to the young man who, at the age of thirty-one, found himself thrown out of his church, convicted of heresy by the highest ecclesiastical court of the land.

Chapter 4

THE MIDDLE YEARS, 1831-1851

We now move on to consider the forty years of Campbell's life which followed his trial and deposition in 1831. The first half of this period might be called the silent years. These are the focus of the present chapter. The final period began with the publication, in 1851, of the first of the three books which he wrote especially for the thought leaders of his day, and which contain his mature views on the themes that had been his lifelong concern. These three books were Christ the Bread of Life (1851), The Nature of the Atonement (1856), and Thoughts on Revelation (1862). It is upon these three, and especially upon his great work, The Nature of the Atonement, that his still-growing reputation as a theologian of rare stature rests. It is upon this literary material of the final period of his life that in the next four chapters we shall draw for our understanding of Campbell's fully matured views of the nature of faith itself and of its relation to righteousness. Meanwhile the reader is due some glimpses into Campbell's life during the twenty years of silence, before the publication of his first book. How did he occupy his time? In a word it can be stated: by tirelessly preaching

the gospel, in the countryside at first, and later by ministering to the poor and the sick and the afflicted in the slums of the city of Glasgow, where he pastored an independent congregation for more than a quarter of a century.

For the first two years following his deposition, and before settling down in Glasgow, he traveled extensively through the Highlands and the Lowlands of Scotland, preaching to large crowds in open fields or in barns, or occasionally where the local people would defy the ecclesiastical authorities and allow him to use one of their church buildings. He often spoke in Gaelic. One writer describes Campbell's experience immediately after being turned out of his church:

The bearing of the deposed heretic after his expulsion was one of extreme dignity, worthy alike of his ancestry and of the home in which he was bred. The Sunday after his sentence he went to his parish of Row, and there in a field beside his church addressed a great congregation of parishioners and neighbors estimated at 6,000. . . .

Of his sermon that day the same writer said:

Not a word did it contain of recrimination, complaint or rebellion, not even a single reference to what had passed. Rather was it a simple evangelic address, concerned with things generally believed by Christian men, central things that cannot be shaken.¹

His correspondence during this period affords insights of his itinerant preaching which are reminiscent of Wesley's labors of a century earlier. For example:

The day I parted with him I rode forty miles, and preached to a considerable congregation at the Ford. I was, however, a good deal jaded by the time I got here at night, and rested till yesterday, when I had a very large congregation here, and was tempted to speak for a longer time than usual, and with a very great expenditure of voice. So to-day I am again fatigued. But I have intimated preaching for the four next days at four different places [three islands, and one on the mainland], not far from this; and Sunday I preach at Oban.²

About a year later he was still going strong:

Before setting out we ascertained that I could have the Methodist Chapel at Dumfries (which is small, about the size of Kilninver Church) to preach in on Sunday evening. . . . In that chapel I preached also Monday morning at seven, and Monday evening at seven, and Tuesday morning at seven; and am to preach there again Friday afternoon and evening, and Sunday afternoon and evening.

My evening congregation was on Sunday very crowded, more being disappointed of getting in than got in. Monday night, being a week-day night, was not so crowded, though quite full.³

Campbell's habitual modesty of speaking--even in his letters--of experiences which might lead others to praise himself makes references to any successes he was having, or any trials he was enduring, very sparsely scattered in his correspondence of this period. Excerpts from a letter to his sister dated Oct. 30, 1832, however, afford glimpses of his inner, personal life, and also of the varying receptions his teaching elicited.

On the whole my visit to Skye is to me matter of much thankfulness. In all the families there was an appearance of respectful consideration of the truth. In several individual cases there was an appearance of decided and deep impression. My reception by those who are called

"professors" was trying to the last. Holding that Christ had died for all seemed to them so fundamental an error as to poison necessarily all my teaching. . . .

Although I have given you such an account of my reception by the "professors" in general, I must add that in some more remote corners where there was no previous prejudice, as Glendale, the Word seemed to come with power to them as well as to the rest, and there was apparently a deep response. . . .

I feel that with many the simplicity of the truth gives an impression of superficiality while I feel that, in point of fact, that searching of heart is superficial which admits of a rest in anything else than a simple faith in God.⁴

On Christmas Day, 1832, he writes to his sister:

I yesterday preached to a large congregation at Oban, the third day and fifth sermon since my return. It was the saddest day, in that kind of sadness, since my farewell sermon at Helensburgh to the people of Row. They gathered about me, and seemed so unwilling to part with me.⁵

Persecution by the ecclesiastical authorities was at this time tangible. The clergy of Glasgow, where Campbell eventually settled, prepared a pastoral letter of admonition to be read in all the pulpits within their bounds. It set forth "the danger to which they exposed their souls by going to hear me," he wrote his sister, "and warned them that if they persisted they would be denied the ordinances of Baptism and the Holy Communion."⁶ Even Campbell's father was sent one of the warning letters to be read in his church, which he very properly refused to do, saying that he would "never submit to reading such a libel on his own son to his

people, neither would he act upon the warning to them contained in it."⁷ So an agent of the clergy read it to them.⁸

It was about this time that Campbell settled in Glasgow, where an independent congregation gathered around him and provided him with a chapel building. He was able to report some heartening events:

Many were blessed by his ministry. One such was a man who grasped him by the hand exclaiming, "Dear sir, I am most thankful to meet you. The first ray of spiritual light that ever entered my mind was through you at Paisley three years ago, and up to that time I was a Socinian." Another man, a printer, chanced to take home a damaged sheet of one of Campbell's sermons with the result that all his family were soon rejoicing in God. A certain mother who had been very reluctantly allowing her daughter to go to the chapel at last stopped objecting, and remarked, "Whatever people said, the teaching could not be bad that produced such fruits."⁹

From his home base in Glasgow, Campbell made excursions into the Highlands, preaching to congregations varying in size from 50 to 4,000. While in the city itself, ministry

to the poor and the sick occupied much of his time. References to this aspect of his work are scanty. One such reads:

I go down to the river tonight, and am still spared in the midst of their influenza. It is calculated that two out of five have it of all the inhabitants of Edinburgh. I don't go to a house but I meet it."¹⁰

On another occasion he incidentally mentioned a severe epidemic of cholera that was decimating the city's ranks. There was much poverty, unemployment and even instances of starvation among the slum dwellers of Glasgow at that time.

For more than a quarter of a century Campbell ministered faithfully to his company of believers except for periods when his own illnesses enforced brief periods of absence. He continued his pastoral work in Glasgow until ill health forced him to resign in 1859, at which time he turned over his congregation to his well-known cousin, Rev. Norman McLeod.

We shall touch briefly on certain other events in Campbell's life during those long years of selfless service as a relatively unknown local pastor. One of his dearest friends was Edward Irving, the advent preacher. Like Campbell, Irving had been deposed at a church trial. Although they held many theological views in common, there were important matters on which they disagreed. Campbell expended much time and energy trying to dissuade his friend from his sponsoring of the Holy Apostolic Church, which Campbell felt was a grave mistake. He also felt that Irving's belief in tongues and "utterances" was a delusion. Nevertheless, the

two men remained the warmest of personal friends, and Campbell lovingly attended him in his final illness and death in 1834.¹¹

Campbell was married in 1838 to one who proved to be a most loyal and beloved solace and support to him all the remaining days of his life. Their first-born son was named Thomas Erskine Campbell, in honor of his beloved friend. Tragically, the little one died in infancy.

Looking back on this period of Campbell's life from the perspective of nearly a hundred years, a perceptive modern writer has remarked:

How little those who passed him in the city streets understood that this unassuming man was the greatest theological genius of his day, and that his influence would be spreading and growing long after the hurrying crowds around him had disappeared from the ways and memories of men. But all this time he was nursing and brooding over the problem of the atonement, and was finding guidance to the heart of its mystery in all the common experiences of common life. He tells us himself that it was by observation of the needs and thoughts of his people, and the knowledge that he thus gained of the human heart, that he was inspired and directed in the work of thought he had set himself to accomplish.¹²

With this chapter we conclude our brief foray into certain biographical details of the silent years following his deposition. Subsequent chapters exclusively concern theology. But Campbell's theology can best be understood when it is appreciated from whence it comes--not from the ivory towers of learning, but from the slums of Glasgow and

from the surrounding rugged countryside of Scotland. In a recent article commemorating the one-hundredth anniversary of Campbell's death, theologian James B. Torrance has well stated:

We cannot read Campbell's writings without being aware that here is a godly man with the heart of a pastor and an evangelical concern to instruct his flock in the Gospel of grace. His theology is one hammered out on the anvil of the parish ministry.¹³

Chapter 5

CHRIST THE BREAD OF LIFE

The fourth and fifth decades of Campbell's life, which we have now briefly reviewed in the preceding chapter, were largely occupied with his pastoral and city mission work. During this long period, from 1831 to 1851, he wrote no books addressed to the leaders of theological thought in his day. Nor did he write any formal theological treatises in defense of the positions for which he had been deposed. His ministry was directed primarily to the common people of the great city of Glasgow. To pour himself out selflessly for its impoverished and spiritually starving inhabitants was the mission of this humble and then relatively unknown man. During all of this time, however, his spiritual views had been enlarging, his perceptions clarifying, and his understandings of the great themes that had been his lifelong concern had been deepening. His private study and meditations had been stimulated by the profound changes that were occurring in Britain and the religious world generally in the first half of the 19th century, of which ferment he was an increasingly keen observer. By the beginning of the second half of the century his convictions had so far matured and ripened that he finally felt ready and called upon to present publicly some

of his own well-considered views upon the burning issues of his day.

To anyone even cursorily acquainted with church history it is common knowledge that one of the movements agitating Britain at this time was the trend toward Roman Catholicism among a few prominent Church of England scholars. By no means all of those influenced by the Oxford Movement followed Newman all the way back to the mother church, but some did. Many more who stopped short of going that far were nevertheless strongly influenced by this trend. For many, the attraction felt was for security. The influence of English deists and agnostic thinkers, and the liberal tendencies emanating from Germany, especially those pertaining to Biblical criticism, were producing a climate which was perceived by many to be threatening the very foundations of the Christian faith. One manner of reacting to this changed religious atmosphere was to turn toward the Church of Rome with deep yearning for that strength and stability which it seemed to offer as being firmly founded upon Peter, the Rock.

It was into this historical situation that Campbell projected the first of his three books. It was entitled, Christ the Bread of Life, An Attempt to Give a Profitable

Direction to the Present Occupation of Thought with Romanism. It deals with the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation as it is embodied in the Mass and the eucharistic sacrifice, and yet more centrally, with the reality of Christian faith and life which that doctrine had come so largely to supplant. Thus the book treats not only of what is wrong with the Mass, but also of what is right and vitally important with that truth which it had perverted, which truth concerns the nature of the Christian's life of faith. The term Campbell used for the Christian life of faith is simply "Christianity," the essence of which, in Campbell's understanding, is participation in the mind of Christ, or union with Christ. The thrust of the work is eminently practical or experiential, in that it deals with those central aspects of the Christian life that are traditionally subsumed under the terms justification and sanctification. These terms Campbell considered to be highly unsatisfactory, perplexing and unnecessary. In the book, he explains why this is so, and how he believes the reality underlying these terms can be more simply, yet biblically, conceived of and spoken about.

The work now being considered, Christ the Bread of Life, affords abundant examples of the irenic spirit, the broad Christian charity, and the fairness that always considers opposing views in the very best light possible, which

elements combine to make Campbell's works so refreshing to the spirit in these times that are so often marred by strident and bigoted polemics in the realm of religion. Yet for all of the gentle tolerance, and all of the generous acknowledgment of genuine faith on the part of those whose theological systems he may consider to be seriously faulty, Campbell never compromises nor wavers in his adherence to what he believes is right. Calmly and persistently he presents to the conscience of his hearers that which he is confident will be perceived to be the truth by its own inherent light. Campbell's thought dwells in light rather than darkness, clarity rather than mystery. "He walks in the light all of the time and everything he touches lives," is the way that James Denney, a prolific author of books on the atonement, described this particular characteristic of his acknowledged mentor.¹

A further characteristic of Campbell's thought is the movement toward simplicity and unity rather than toward complexity and diversity. It is not the false simplicity of superficiality, but the deeper wisdom of profundity. At first the serious student in almost any field of inquiry encounters more complexity and spreading ramifications the deeper he delves. There comes a time, however, when this trend toward greater complexity reverses and begins to converge upon the fundamental reality of the subject. As

the heart of the matter is thus approached, there is perceived a simplicity, and even unity, which is most gratifying to the diligent student, and which contrasts clearly with that over-simplification that accompanies superficiality and which is the hallmark of the dilettante. Theology is no exception to this generalization. The 18th century poet, John Gambold, in his Martyrdom of St. Ignatius, well states:

I'm apt to think the man
 That could surround the sum of things, and spy
 The heart of God and secrets of His empire,
 Would speak but love: with him the bright result
 Would change the hue of intermediate scenes,
 And make one thing of all theology. 2

To what extent Campbell has succeeded in his endeavor to simplify the prolix scholasticism of his day (and ours) the reader may judge. But that it was one of his enduring passions to do just this, and thus lay bare the essential simplicity of the Gospel, there can be no question.

Somewhat curious in the light of his passion for simplicity is the fact that his style of writing is not simple. Of his last book, written more than a decade later, his cousin commented, "What a marvelous advance you have made in diction. This book is clear as sunshine!"³ Christ the Bread of Life will likely not be found to be this clear--at least not on the first reading. Because it can be richly rewarding to a careful reader, however, some explanatory

notes upon his style may be in order. (1) His frequent use of inordinately long sentences makes for labored reading, especially for readers who are accustomed to the shorter sentences characteristic of the 20th century style in contrast to that of the 19th, in which long and involved sentences were commonplace. (2) He had a comprehensive mind which grasped the multifaceted nature of the truths which he was endeavoring to delineate. This apparently led him to try to prevent partial and unbalanced apprehensions of a complex subject from lodging in the mind prematurely, thus hindering the formation of a well-rounded view of it. So he would sometimes try to load too many interrelating parts of a complicated whole into a single sentence, with less than satisfactory results. Then, too, (3) in his scrupulous effort to be fair to views he opposed as faulty or inadequate, he often was so hearty in his praise of the good points which he nonetheless felt them to have, and which he wished duly to acknowledge, that a less than careful reader can easily become confused as to which view he was promoting and which he was opposing as superficial, or inadequate, or simply wrong. It is important to avoid this confusion at all times and to know where Campbell himself stood vis-a-vis the variety of competing views which he may have been appraising in any given setting. (4) Notwithstanding the above observations, it should be remembered that although

Campbell did not always express himself as clearly as might be desired, he always had clear and precise ideas of what he wished to express. He chose his words with care, and structured his thought with precision. His thinking was clear, even when his expression may have seemed muddy. Therefore, if a particular passage is not immediately clear, the reader can feel confident that a closer scrutiny will in all probability uncover its meaning. The diligent searcher will be richly rewarded. Through a sometimes obscuring veil of words, and beyond any idiosyncracies of style, there will begin to emerge the outlines of an edifice of thought which in its grandeur and simplicity is like a Doric temple.

We turn next from matters of form to those of content. Christ the Bread of Life is both a development of his earlier concern with the life of faith, and also an anticipation of those subjective aspects of the atonement which are more fully elaborated in his magnum opus, The Nature of the Atonement. To grasp the main themes of the former volume-- which is the concern of this chapter--is to open the way to understanding those portions of the latter which relate to our subject. The light of the one illumines the other. Fundamental to Campbell's thought is his conception of the sequential relation of incarnation, atonement and the life of faith (or "Christianity," as he called it). The latter is the goal of the whole movement, which consists of the

receiving and living of the life of sonship given us in Christ. It is a participation in the faith of Jesus. The incarnation springs directly from God's love and mercy. Even more than as mysterious and infinite condescension it is to be seen as the desire of Love for nearness. The atonement is then seen as the natural development of the incarnation and life of Jesus, rather than as that which made it (the incarnation) necessary. In other words the atonement is seen primarily in the light of the incarnation, rather than vice versa. This thought is elaborated in the Introduction to the Second Edition of The Nature of the Atonement.⁴ Its movement is designed to fulfill in man, through union with Christ by his Spirit, that desire for nearness which prompted the incarnation in the first place. In this, its barest outline, this sequence may appear to contain nothing other than what all Christians have always believed; yet it is basic to Campbell's thinking in ways which strongly challenge traditional understandings, as will be seen.

The daily dependence upon Christ to sustain the life of faith is represented in Scripture by two analogies, one drawn from the vegetable kingdom, and the other, from the animal kingdom. The first is expressed by the words, "I am the vine, ye are the branches,"⁵ and the second by, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man

eat of this bread he shall live forever."⁶ The question which Campbell first addresses is whether the later expression refers to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and thus is to be taken literally, as in the doctrine of transubstantiation, or whether it is to be interpreted symbolically and spiritually. Campbell chooses the latter alternative. To hold the other view, i.e., to believe that the bread and wine are literally transformed into the actual body and blood of Christ, is to exercise faith in a mystery--a faith which "receives in the dark, in simple reliance upon authority, and which, in the same reliance, continues holding in the dark what it understands not, neither expects to understand or apprehend."⁷ This kind of faith, Campbell maintained, is not the kind of faith that God is looking for; nor is the worship associated with it that worship "in spirit and in truth" which He so greatly desires of His children. Campbell perceived an important qualitative distinction between this faith which receives a physical mystery and that faith which apprehends a spiritual truth. The one is a faith in mystery, in darkness. The other is faith in that which is intelligently known and experienced--a faith in light. He maintained that it was impossible for the former faith, the faith in mystery, to "feed that life into the fellowship of which the direct faith of Christ had introduced you, and which all exercise of the same faith had

nourished and strengthened. . ."⁸--a state in which one is "consciously feeding upon Christ." But in that former faith, the faith in mystery, Campbell continues,

this consciousness can no longer accompany you. Though you submit your mind to the mystery presented to you--though you believe, however inconceivable the assumption seems, that Christ is in the bread and the wine--still there is no consciousness of feeding upon Christ. Your acceptance of this mystery in no degree adds to what the meditation of the work of Christ has wrought in your spirit; nor does this gazing in darkness--however solemn and awful the darkness--forward that progress in the Divine Life to which you were conscious while "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord."⁹

He speaks of the "impossibility of feeding through the faith of this mystery that conscious Eternal Life which has been quickened and nourished by the direct faith of Christ."¹⁰

Campbell's conclusion, then, is that participation in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper is not what Christ was talking about in the 6th chapter of John when he spoke about eating His flesh and drinking His blood. Not at all. What Christ was talking about was the spiritual reality of which the ordinance is a symbol, the experience to which it is a witness--a witness that is by no means to be neglected, however.

But Campbell does not simply leave the matter there, having shown that the Lord's Supper is not what Christ was speaking of in John 6. He goes on to show that faith in the

mystery of transubstantiation is a rival to that true spiritual experience of which Christ spoke, and all too often proves to be a de facto substitute for it. The solemnity, the awe and the sense of mystery and blind submission which surrounds the Mass can easily be mistaken for the essence of true religious experience. It is then felt, consciously or unconsciously, to take the place of that true feeding upon Christ, the living Bread. Campbell states that in this way the ordinance is made into "the antagonist of Christ."¹¹

Campbell proceeds to show how this faith in transubstantiation tends to produce in its adherents a false confidence, a false assurance of future salvation. For if it is believed that Christ's words, "Whoso eateth of my flesh, and drinketh my blood hath Eternal Life; and I will raise him up at the last day" refer to partaking of the Lord's Supper, then the participant is naturally "emboldened to cherish peace and confident hope as to the invisible and eternal."¹² Campbell speaks of "all this combination of awe, and thankfulness and triumphant hope" as that which is so appealing to the believer in the Mass, and which so convinces him that he has at last grasped the essence of true religious experience.

Campbell next addresses those objectors to his thinking who would protest that they do not consider faith in the Mass as something instead of, but as something besides the

faith of the gospel. His reply is that the attempt thus to combine both elements is an attempt to serve two masters. He anticipates that some would counter this reply by an appeal to the historical fact that surely some devout people have successfully combined the two faiths. Campbell freely acknowledges this fact; but he rejects it as not being a valid basis for inferring that the two faiths are not inherently antithetical. This stance is related to Campbell's characteristic and important distinction between what a man thinks and what he is, between his theological system and his actual spiritual life. The two may not be logically consistent. Although the former is very important, the latter is even more so. A faulty system of faith can yet be combined with genuine spiritual life. This distinction will meet us again and again as we pursue Campbell's thought. Notwithstanding the above, however, Campbell was keenly aware of the dismal fruit that has resulted through the centuries from this root error concerning the Lord's Supper.

Some will object, Campbell anticipates, that the awe and veneration and sense of mystery connected with the Mass should commend the institution, rather than constitute any argument against it; for "is not prostration of our reason in the presence of divine mysteries an element in all worship?"¹³

In his reply to this objection Campbell shows due

regard for mystery; but it is the mystery of light, not the mystery of darkness. He beautifully expounds his understanding of the harmonious relation existing between reason and faith (or worship), and of the limits of the former and the surpassing excellence of the latter:

I have heard it said, that "worship begins where knowledge ends." I cannot receive this proposition; yet it is not without some relation to truth; inasmuch as, though worship does not begin where knowledge ends, it still does not end where knowledge ends, but always goes consciously beyond knowledge. . . . Not by darkness but by light is the deepest and most intimate awe awakened in us. . . . The spiritual objects visible to us in that light awe us because of what they are spiritually seen to be. Nor is their infinity and our felt inability to comprehend them absolutely, and our feeling that on all hands they go beyond us, an experience which, properly speaking, demands prostration of reason. On the contrary, this experience is the highest exercise of reason--spiritually enlightened reason sustaining and justifying worship; justifying worship because of what is known; justifying it beyond what is known because of the believed expansion of what is known beyond knowledge. God is light. In His light He gives us to see light, and to the spiritual eye light is sweet; and is felt to be light, though in its infinite intensity it be light inaccessible. God is love: and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and knoweth God; while yet it is said of the love of God that it passeth knowledge. . . .4

It is thus evident that Campbell believed it to be man's duty and privilege to prostrate his reason before that mysterious Light which no man can altogether approach unto, but not before that mysterious darkness that envelopes belief in transubstantiation. He concludes this first third of Christ the Bread of Life with a practical exhortation:

Let us seek to abide in Him that men may see in us what manner of awe and veneration dwelling in the light of life awakens. . . . Let us walk in the light, and let men learn in us that so to do is not to lean to our own understanding, or to exalt our own intelligence; that, on the contrary, this is the true prostration of the human spirit before the Father of spirits, who also is the Father of lights. . . . Let the illustration we offer of the humility that receives the kingdom of heaven as a little child be, not rest in ignorance, but teachableness--"the opening of the ear as the learner," as is prophetically spoken of our Lord.¹⁵

The middle third of the book is sub-titled, "Feeding upon Christ considered as expressing the part of Man's Will in Faith."

Importance of the Human Will

Having established that the expression, "eating the flesh and drinking His blood" does not refer to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, Campbell next considers what the expression does signify spiritually. Just what does it mean to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man? Campbell finds a ready key to the answer to this question that arises out of the sixth chapter of John in the fourth chapter of the same gospel. When Christ was resting beside Jacob's well and his disciples urged Him to eat He replied, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." His disciples were speaking of literal food, while Christ was referring to spiritual food. He then explained to them just what he meant spiritually by the word "meat." He declared to them

plainly, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."¹⁶ This definition belongs beside the statement in John 6:57, "as the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me even he shall live by me." The very same parallelism, Campbell points out, is found in the statement: "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love."¹⁷ We are to feed on Christ by doing his will just as Christ fed on God by doing His will. "The obedience of the will, the calling Jesus Lord in the Spirit," Campbell maintains, is "the essence of the act of feeding upon Christ."¹⁸ Campbell makes much of the concept that the life resulting from the eating and drinking in each case--Christ's and ours--is one and the same Eternal Life.

The act of eating and drinking is a more appropriate figure of the human will than is the abiding of the branch in the vine, although both refer to the same thing, the receiving of Eternal Life from Christ. The branch receives the sap passively and automatically so long as it is joined to the vine. But a more active, voluntary movement is represented in the taking in of food and drink, a movement that is more closely analogous to the exercise of the will in the spiritual feeding upon Christ.

The importance of the exercise of the human will in all of the life of faith is the principal theme of this central portion of the book, as its sub-title expressly states.¹⁹ It is a theme which Campbell sees as pervading all Scripture. He refers especially to the Book of Hebrews as paralleling, in general outline, Christ's discourse with the woman at the well, which speaks of a change of dispensation to one in which neither in the earthly Jerusalem nor in Samaria's mountain would God's true believers worship Him, in Spirit and in truth.²⁰

Campbell presses home his central concern in the following passage:

It appears to me a statement that has its light in itself, that, as spiritual beings, it is by movements of the will that we appropriate spiritual food. Such movements are acts of spiritual eating and drinking, issuing in the consubstantiating of our spirits with that which being received into the will is received into us, into what is, in the most intimate sense, our proper selves, so affecting what we are. For as is our will such are we.²¹

Campbell here means more than mere meditation on Christ, more than only "occupation of heart and mind with His love"--although such important exercises could well be thought of, in a looser sense, as feeding upon Christ. "But this they are not in themselves," he maintains. "This they imply only in so far as they are issuing in that calling Jesus Lord in the Spirit which is. . . an event in the

will."²² Meditation is fine; but it is not enough, if it reaches not the will.

This emphasis upon the prime importance of the human will is seldom found in theological literature, either ancient or modern. Campbell felt that this paucity of references to a subject so important was most remarkable, and called for some explanation. It was especially strange, it seemed to him, that if this right exercise of the will was indeed the secret of the life of faith--as he was convinced that it was--then why was so little attention given it in the spiritual autobiographies of devout men of God that have come down to us from previous generations? It was rarely even mentioned.

Campbell offers two considerations to account for this puzzling omission. One is that as believers become more occupied with "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord" they are less observant of the changes that are thereby taking place in themselves. They tend to focus less upon the act of willing than upon the glory that they are beholding.²³

Popular Conceptions of Justification Critiqued

The second, and more important, part of the explanation, especially for those in modern times, Campbell felt, lay in "a departure from the simplicity that is in Christ in

their conception of justification by faith and of the way in which faith excludes boasting."²⁴ Here, in criticizing popular notions of justification by faith, he touches upon a very sensitive nerve. The subject is also intimately connected with his theological struggles of twenty years before concerning the "assurance of faith." It may be necessary for the reader to review Campbell's early pastoral experience and conclusions as outlined in Chapter 3 in order to understand how the holding of allegedly erroneous views of justification by faith would naturally lead to avoiding any emphasis upon--or even any mentioning of--such a subjective thing as the exercise of man's will as having any essential place in the operation of faith. It would detract from the objective work of Christ, external to man. Faith--it was held--must ever be thought of as the "mere thread that connects us with Christ's work."²⁵ Such was the popular conception of justification by faith which Campbell was endeavoring to replace with a more Biblical one, one that would be much more congenial to placing emphasis upon the place of man's will in the plan of salvation. His conception of the true nature of justification by faith is that which is elaborated in the remainder of this section of Christ the Bread of Life, and which is further developed in relation to the atonement in The Nature of the Atonement, which will be considered in chapters following this one.

Because of the great sensitiveness of the subject he is approaching at this point, viz., justification by faith, with its direct bearings upon such topics as the substitutionary view of the atonement and theories about imputation of sin and of righteousness, Campbell treads warily, as one knowing that, for many he will be touching the apple of their eye. It is for this reason, I believe, that he again takes occasion to underscore the distinction, which he cherishes, between a man's head and his heart--between his theological system and his actual life of faith--his "Christianity" (to use Campbell's term, the meaning of which is different from that in modern usage).

That in so many instances the form of thought and language alone should bear the impress of such error, while the condition of the heart and spirit is manifestly in harmony with the counsel of God in Christ, is a seeming contradiction, for which we must be thankful.²⁶

The "seeming contradiction" that Campbell is here speaking of is contradiction between the heart and the head, between right feelings about God--a right attitude toward Him--and the faulty thinking and the erroneous verbal expressions which often accompany, and may even give rise to, right motions of the heart. We can be thankful that God looks upon the heart, and that rightness **there** can transcend theological inaccuracies and conceptual errors, which are always present in some measure so long as at best we see through a glass darkly.

At the same time that he charitably seeks to lessen the gravity of the intellectual error against which he is contending (viz., the error of placing too exclusive emphasis upon Christ's saving work outside of the believer) he feels impelled to underscore the disastrous results which, for many people, may accompany such error:

In truth, although we believe that many have really found life in feeding upon the will of Christ [the importance of which experience he has been emphasizing], while expressing their hope toward God in language that would, strictly interpreted, imply that to them feeding upon Christ consisted in the acknowledgement of Christ's work for them, and not in thus receiving His life to be their life, it is impossible not to fear that many more, not protected by an awakened conscience and quickened spiritual apprehension, have come short of the salvation that is in Christ through placing such mental reference to the work of Christ in place of that obedience of the will in accomplishing which the knowledge of Him and of His work saves. The day of the Lord will make manifest to what extent the true feeding upon Christ has thus been hindered.²⁷ (*italics mine*)

Campbell's thought here is complex. Not only is he speaking of the superiority of heart over head, of commitment over mere intellectual assent and correct verbal expression, but also he is at the same time underscoring the inadequacy of concepts of righteousness by faith which stress the external work of Christ, that which is done outside of the believer, at the expense of the regenerating and purifying work that is done within the believer, through the agency of the Holy Spirit.

Dualism Deplored in "Justification/Sanctification"

Having thus done what he could to break down prejudice, and hopefully, at least to gain a hearing, Campbell pointed out that Christians, as recorded in the New Testament, showed no reticence about speaking of their own subjective experiences in the life of faith--of their immediate joy and confident assurance that they indeed had the "witness of the spirit" within them and could come to the throne of grace with boldness. Using this thought as a springboard, he plunged into what is perhaps the deepest part of his subject:

What I recognize in the record of primitive Christianity--what I desire to see, but do not see, even in some of the most unequivocal records of living Christianity with us, is the acknowledgement of the directness of the demand which the gospel makes on the will.

I say, the acknowledgement of the directness of the demand which the gospel makes on the will. For an indirect effect upon the will is admitted, is indeed contended for. "The faith," it is said, "which saves, also sanctifies. It produces not only peace and confidence towards God but also holiness. Not merely is the work of Christ trusted in: His example is also followed. Not only is forgiveness of sin received through His blood, but deliverance from the power of sin by the Spirit is also God's gift to us in Him; and we have no right to regard our faith as a saving faith unless its soundness be proved by the fruit which it bears."²⁸ (italics mine)

This is such a fine-sounding statement about faith that it is easy to overlook the fact that Campbell is here describing the common view which he is criticizing. With characteristic fairness he presents it in the best possible light, without even a wisp of the straw-man. He does not imply that this common view is antinomian in tendency. I dare say that it is one with which almost any good evangelical Christian today would heartily agree. For essentially it is true. And Campbell hastens to acknowledge its truth, and also its helpfulness. He continues:

Nor am I insensible to much good that has resulted from this manner of teaching, much gain to the cause of righteousness; gain, I mean, in comparison with what would have been the result if the first half in all this had been insisted upon without the second; if what has been called Justification had been insisted on without what has been called Sanctification. The addition has been a concession to the demand of conscience; and has of course been valuable in proportion as it has been interpreted by an enlightened and quickened conscience.²⁹

"But," Campbell continues, in answer to the unspoken question which naturally arises, "Then why all the fuss?"

"But still the evil has been great." Why? because

Two things have been spoken of where there is but one thing, laborious efforts at harmony made where identity should be recognized; and a complexity embarrassing to the spirit has been introduced instead of the simplicity that is in Christ.³⁰

In the foregoing sentence we find expressed, in its briefest form, the heart of Campbell's burden in this entire

section. The reader will have no difficulty in recognizing that the two things that Campbell is here speaking of are what customarily are referred to as justification and sanctification. Campbell seldom used these terms. He felt that the distinction between them that modern theologians have insisted upon, even when they recognized that the two must always go together, was false and misleading and too often hindered, rather than helped, an understanding of the Christian life. The following condensed paragraph portrays Campbell's concept of what is traditionally designated "justification by faith," or "righteousness by faith"--that one great reality which theologians have attempted for centuries to describe by using the words "justification" and "sanctification."

This is the testimony of God concerning His Son, "that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." . . . We accept the free gift of God, and yield up our will to the will of Christ, our spirit to His spirit; and the end of our God is accomplished. We live: we live the Eternal Life. . . . It is now recorded in our being that God has given to man Eternal Life in His Son. It is recorded in our very being, inasmuch as we are alive with the Eternal Life given in the Son of God. Here I say is one thing, not two but one, simple and uncompounded viz. a life given, that life received--lived. The elements of this life we may conceive of as many, but as a life it is one thing--the one thing needful; and as it is one thing, so to receive it is one movement of our being, implies one direction of our attention, one thought, one care. With a single eye we may look at it; with a simple and entire purpose of heart cleave to it.

Campbell further clarifies what he means by this "one thing"--this one life given and received--by use of a series of appositional phrases, as he seeks to relate the "one thing" to the two conventionally-understood terms, justification and sanctification:

What is this receiving of Eternal Life,
 this feeding upon Christ,
 this accepting his will to be our will,
 this esteeming the elements of His
 life in humanity, the mind that was in Him, His
 flesh and His blood, to be our meat indeed and
 drink indeed--[The phrases that are aligned
 vertically above, being in apposition, are all
 equal to each other.] --what is it in reference to
 the two great objects of attention, so carefully
 distinguished, so laboriously and anxiously
 harmonized? Is it Justification? Is it
 sanctification? . . . It is not in fact either,
 Yet it is beyond all question the one great
 reality, and as such must it include whatever
 element of spiritual truth is in either.

Campbell's objection to the terms "justification" and "sanctification" is that their use unfortunately promotes a "dividing between participation in the favour that rests on Christ, and participation in the mind of Christ: [whereas]

on the contrary, participation in the mind of Christ . . . [is] that condition of the human spirit to which alone the divine favour can extend.³¹

In the above paragraph (the quoting of which starts on page 21, above) Campbell is differentating his understanding from "justification," rather than from "sanctification" (which he considers later). He says that in the common understanding of justification there is a "dividing between

participation in the favour that rests on Christ and participation in the mind of Christ." It is to this dividing or separation that Campbell objects. He insists that participation in the mind of Christ is "that condition of the human spirit to which alone the divine favour can extend." (italics mine) What Campbell is really objecting to here is the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to man's account, i.e., the notion that God for Christ's sake can look on a man and call him righteous when in fact he is not so. The "dividing" which Campbell here deprecates is that between "standing" and "state." The idea that by simply believing in the finished work of Christ one can bask in the divine favour which is always beaming upon our Lord, or be "covered" from divine judgment against sin while one's heart is not right with God is the basis of that false assurance which Campbell opposed all of his long life. To believe that this was a right way for the Judge of all the earth to operate--that He should participate in what would be contrary to the moral sensibilities of any man or woman--what would be a fiction and a pretension--Campbell felt would be to bow in reverence before a mystery of darkness quite as objectionable as the dark mystery of the Mass. He sensed that there was a real similarity between the darkness of the Mass and the darkneses of the two commonly held theories of imputation, the theory of the imputation of man's guilt to

Christ and that of Christ's righteousness to man. He felt that none of these three, as popularly conceived, could be inherently pleasing to the Father of lights. He sensed that beyond these mists of darkness is a glorious reality, a shining light that renders these confusing theories quite unnecessary. That reality is what he was to explore in greater depth in his later work, The Nature of the Atonement.

Turning next to the sanctification side of the traditional dyad, he states that "a culture of all the graces of the Spirit" (i.e., sanctification) is just as much a part of the life of faith as is trust in Christ (justification). But here he perceives what he feels to be an important distinction between his understanding of the matter and the traditional way of thinking about sanctification. He says that these "graces of the Spirit" (i.e., "works") are to be desired and cultivated

not as fruits of faith needful to prove that we are justified and so are saved; . . . nor even, as some have said, feeling that they were taking higher ground, as imparting the necessary meetness for heaven; but these graces are desired--the culture of them is engaged in--directly for their own sake and not as evidence of a saved state but as themselves portions of the salvation received--elements of the Eternal Life given to us in Christ and not the mere meetness to receive that life hereafter.³² (italics mine)

This emphasis upon the here and now is characteristic of Campbell, and in no way implies disbelief in the reality

of the future life, nor any feeling that there need not be a meetness for that life. The emphasis is fully in accord with the statement of our Lord, "He that hath the Son hath life."

"Therefore," Campbell concludes, "I say that the great reality of eating the flesh of the Son of man and drinking His blood is not to be defined either in the language . . . of justification, or . . . of sanctification. . . ."33

Still sensible of the fact that he is challenging cherished intellectual conceptions, he hastens, in the next sentence after the one quoted above, to try to reassure his hearers by reiterating his distinction between head and heart. Of this distinction, or belief, he writes:

And to this belief I anxiously cling, feeling thankful for all I meet with in the records of Christian experience which justifies me in clinging to it; for it is manifest that, if obliged to give it up--if obliged to see the peace of many professing trust in Christ through their own definitions of justifying faith or their own views of the place of the graces of the spirit in the Christian scheme,--I could no longer think of them as heirs of the righteousness which is by faith, or as partakers in that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.³⁴

In an effort to avoid being misunderstood Campbell discusses certain views of righteousness by faith which he considers to be "superficial and inadequate" (superficial and inadequate, not damnable heresies!). One such view is that which, in regard to Christ's merits,

calculates on God's rejoicing over a condition of humanity which is not in itself a fit thing for

God to rejoice over because of His delight in these merits.³⁵

In discussing another view which he considers to be inadequate, Campbell calls attention to an intriguing fact which I have not seen stressed or even mentioned by any other writer of my acquaintance, as an argument against imputational theories. The argument is that IF it be true that Christ's righteousness is imputed to us, and our faith in that imputation is the essence of the saving process (which is not what Campbell believed to be the case), then our Saviour's earthly life of faith, in its inner aspect, was totally different from our life of faith. In all of this important area He could not have been our example. He did not live by the belief in the imputed righteousness of another. He could not have experienced "righteousness by faith" in the same manner that all of His brethren and sisters are supposed to experience it. The superficiality and inadequacy of this substitutionary view of Christ as our great non-Example distressed Campbell. Therefore he wrote

Finally, I regard as superficial and inadequate that conception of our relation to Christ as having left us an example that we should walk in His steps which, while recognizing the outward form of His life on earth and in some lower sense also the inward regulation of His life according to the law of righteousness as practical light for our guidance, still leaves a broad gulf between His confidence towards God, and our confidence towards God. Such a gulf between Him and us is interposed by the erroneous view of Justification by faith, against which I have been contending; for that view introduces a whole system of thought

and feeling into the region of our intercourse with God, and that at the very heart of that intercourse, to which there is--there could be nothing parallel in the example of Christ.³⁶

With characteristic gentleness Campbell deals with the multitude of sincere believers who have cherished the views with which he has taken issue.

I have chosen the expressions "superficial and inadequate," rather than erroneous, because practically, if not logically, they more truly state the fact. And I am not a little anxious that where there is a true trust in Christ in connection with the forms of thought to which I object it should be felt that I am only urging progress in a path already entered upon. It is not any form of self-trust as opposed to trust in Christ for which I call, but a more perfect negation of self-trust, and a more absolute, and deeper, and all-embracing trust in Christ than can be known otherwise; . . .³⁷

It was the simplicity (in its conception) of his view of the life of faith which was most satisfying to Campbell. For him all lines seemed to converge toward the center. He could write:

So, whether we think of life as the reality in Christ, the law of the spirit of the life that is in Him, or as the favour and acceptance and personal acknowledgment of God, one direction is given to our attention--on one thing is our hope fixed, viz., that obedience to the will of Christ--that receiving Him as the Lord of our spirits: that eating His flesh and drinking His blood of which I have been speaking.³⁸

The essence of what Campbell is saying in this entire central section of Christ the Bread of Life is that substitutionary and imputational concepts of the meaning of the experience of righteousness by faith contain the serious

flaw, or opening to error, of separating between faith in the atoning work of Christ outside of the believer and participation in the mind, or attitude, of Christ as constituting sufficient grounds for God to look in favour upon the individual, and therefore as grounds for the believer's assurance. It is not merely that the one cannot be present without the other (although this also is true) but that, in Campbell's understanding, the two are one thing--"a life given, that life received--lived."³⁹ God will not look with favour upon a heart that is not right with Him--one not participating in the mind of Christ--simply because of some great work performed by Christ, such as suffering a certain amount of punishment at God's hands, or accruing a certain amount of merit by his life of perfect obedience. No righteousness can be imputed nor any merit be transferred where there is not participation in the mind of Christ. Only where Christ's life is lived can God's favour rest. It is only in Christ that there is righteousness, peace and joy for the believer. "In Him was life, and that life was the light of men."⁴⁰ This is that unity, that simplicity, which Campbell strove to express.

Implication for Worship: Praying in Christ's Name

Campbell next proceeds to show how a "wrong conception of justification by faith" could not have failed to introduce a

wrong conception of praying in Christ's name--of expecting an answer to prayer for Christ's sake. He then details what he means by this, in the following passage, which recently was quoted approvingly by one of Britain's most prominent living theologians, Professor T. F. Torrance.⁴¹

The conception of Christian worship which has been expressed above, and to which a response in other minds has been hoped for, is, that it is the Eternal Life in the form of worship--that living acknowledgment of what God is, and hope towards Him in oneness of mind with what He is, which accord with the language--"worship in spirit and in truth." It is the Eternal Life which comes to us through the Son--the Son in us honouring the Father--the worship of Sonship--as such grateful to the Father, who seeketh such worship. Freedom and confidence of acknowledgment are of the very nature of such worship; arising necessarily from the oneness of the Spirit, causing oneness of mind and will in the worshippers and in Him who is worshipped. . . [and now the part quoted by Torrance] The praises rendered--the desires cherished--the prayers offered--are all within the circle of the life of Christ, and ascend with the assurance of partaking in the favour which pertains to that life--which rests upon Him who is that life.⁴²

He is saying that praying in Christ's name is praying in that spirit which is in harmony with His character, when the human will is thus at one with Christ's will. It is only in participation in His life of faith that one can properly be said to be praying in Christ's name and for His sake. The same expressions, when connected with the "wrong conception of justification by faith" which Campbell is objecting to, can mean something subtly yet importantly different. To pray for such and such "for Jesus' sake" can

then imply that God will do something for us that He could not otherwise do, not because our requests and our spirits are in harmony with Christ's and ascend to the Father together with His, but because of God's great love for Jesus and because of the great fund of merit that has been secured for us by the atonement and upon which we may freely draw (i.e., have imputed to us by faith) irrespective of our conformity to His will and our participation in Christ's life of faith. Participation is thus a key word with Campbell.

Similarity of Catholic and Protestant Errors: the One Pertaining to the Mass; the Other, to Imputation.

At this point in the book Campbell has essentially finished his exposition of righteousness by faith, in contrast to the popular imputational theories. He next relates the whole subject to the earlier portion of the book, that pertaining to the Roman Mass. He sees similarity between the popular imputational notions of scholastic Protestantism and Catholic ideas about the Mass. In each of them he sees two movements, a manward movement and a Godward one. In the Roman scheme, the eating and drinking of the bread and the wine is the manward movement, while offering the Eucharistic sacrifice is the Godward one. In the Protestant scheme, the corresponding manward movement is the receiving of the imputed righteousness of Christ, while the Godward movement is reflected in worshipping and praying in Christ's name and

"for Jesus' sake," in the faulty sense described above. He says in effect that the Protestant error is as bad as the Roman one. They both present mysteries that are contrary to reason--the physical mystery, that the communion bread turns into the actual body of Christ, and the moral mystery, that God can for Christ's sake consider a man to be righteous when in fact he is not so--an idea that surely is alien to any man's natural sense of justice. The one, as well as the other, can serve as a substitute for the spiritual feeding upon Christ and being conformed to His likeness that alone is the reception of Eternal Life. "An intellectual substitute for the life of Christ is not less fatal than a material substitute," concludes Campbell.

The mental operation of reference to Christ's work assumed to be imputed to us is no more able to supply the place of receiving Christ as our life than the physical operation of feeding upon the material substance assumed to be transubstantiated into the body and blood of the Lord: and the mental pleading of Christ's merits in prayer is no more able to supply the place of praying in the spirit of Christ than the physical act of offering up the eucharistic offering. The physical substitute for the life of faith assumes a physical mystery. Does not the intellectual substitute assume a moral mystery? The former is without witness in the conscience and is taken upon trust in the way of implicit faith. Is not this true of the latter also? The Romanist receives Transubstantiation, accepting the Scriptures as interpreted by the Church, and feels no need of any corresponding light in the conscience. The Protestant who receives imputation of righteousness is accepting the same Scriptures as interpreted by himself, and he also feels no need of a corresponding light in conscience.⁴³

Summary

The global design of Christ the Bread of Life should by now have become apparent. It was written to counter the then current trend toward Romanism. More specifically, it was written to oppose the doctrine of transubstantiation, as enacted in the ritual of the Mass. Campbell first established that the real spiritual meaning of the Lord's Supper is found only as the believer actually feasts upon Christ and His word, participates in the mind of Christ, and thus merges his own will with Christ's will. This is the true Lord's Supper, for which the physical elements in the ceremony must not become a substitute.

Campbell then went on to develop the thesis that theories about justification and imputation which divide between our participation in the favour of God which rests on Christ and our participation in the mind of Christ can be just as disastrous for Protestants as the doctrine of the Mass can be (and often is) for Catholics. The notion that through imputation one can enjoy God's favor which rests on Christ without at the same time taking part in the mind and will of Christ is the error which Campbell opposed in Protestantism and which he considered to be as potentially damaging as the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation. Both can be substitutes for true faith. The one is a

physical substitute; the other, an intellectual one. The division or separation here spoken of is that which makes two things ("justification" and "sanctification") out of what Campbell preferred to think of as only one thing. In its simplest expression, he called that one thing, "A life given; a life received."

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Turning from the book itself, we shall briefly note some reactions to its publication. Campbell himself felt that it was too concise.

I am very busy getting my little book through the press. It will have the opposite fault to the notes of my sermons printed long ago, being too condensed rather than too fully expanded. But condensation in what is to be read is the safer side.

Mr. Erskine's approbation is a comfort and encouragement; but I know well how wide the distance is between the mind in which he heard it, and that in which the religious world will receive it. They have, however, enough, and more than enough, of the mere echo of their own minds from others.⁴⁴

Campbell's minister-son, Donald, commenting upon its reception, some twenty years later, stated:

It is hardly to be expected that a book which developed this line of thought in a train of close argument, should obtain a wide popularity. It did not furnish a readily available weapon for warfare with Rome, but demanded a higher standard of religion than the disputants commonly attained. But the book was read and pondered by many thoughtful men in England and Scotland, especially

by many clergymen; and those who studied it found in it the fruitful germs of many thoughts.⁴⁵

Donald's mention of its demand for a high standard as being a partial explanation of its lack of popularity recalls his father's explanation of the opposition which he had encountered in his own early ministry:

The key to it all is, this is a personal demand upon every man for a personal religion; i.e., a personal faith, a personal hope, a personal life, a personal regeneration, a personal new life. Few have these personals to meet the demand, and they can only keep their false peace by casting doubt and contempt upon the authority that makes the demand.⁴⁶

This factor is doubtless one reason why the book received no more attention than it did in Campbell's day; and also why it has been almost completely forgotten today, in contrast to his later work, The Nature of the Atonement, which has become an enduring classic. The slim little volume, Christ the Bread of Life, was simply too direct and devastating an attack upon that which had become too dear to the heart of scholastic, post-Reformation Protestantism for it to be readily accepted. On the other hand, it is possible that very few people read it carefully enough to perceive how really devastating to the traditional view it was. Another cause for its lack of popularity may have been its heavy style, which places high demands upon the reader. Campbell himself said that some "have felt the first reading to be disappointing; but it has grown upon them as they

read it a second and a third time.⁴⁷ The criticism that its lack of wider acceptance was due in part to its style was discouraging to Campbell. He had tried so hard to make it clear!

It is noteworthy that a century and a quarter after its first publication, this little volume, Christ the Bread of Life, should be repeatedly and approvingly quoted by a prominent present-day theologian, T. F. Torrance.⁴⁸ Campbell wrote not only for the people of his own day, but also for future generations. The next book which he published, entitled The Nature of the Atonement, was destined to have a far greater impact upon leaders of religious thought than had the little volume which we have now considered. To this enduring Christian classic we next turn our attention.

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Chapter 6

THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT

Campbell knew that in the minds of many of those who perceived its thrust the little book Christ the Bread of Life would raise more problems than it answered. To those entrenched in scholastic theology, by whom it was felt that substitutionary and imputational concepts lay at the heart of the gospel, the book could hardly be seen as other than a threat to that which to them was most dear. Would not the established doctrine of substitutionary atonement be virtually emasculated were Mr. Campbell's ideas to be accepted? Were they not contrary to the whole tenor of the New Testament, and especially to Paul's Epistle to the Romans?

Campbell knew that if his ideas were ever to be generally accepted as being in accord with the truth of things he would have to enter in depth into the whole subject of the atonement. How was it accomplished? Why did Christ have to die? In what sense did He bear the iniquities of mankind? In what sense did He "taste death for every man?" In short, just what was accomplished by the objective, once-for-all work of Christ, and why was that work absolutely necessary for man's salvation? And how was it to be effective to that end? To attempt to answer these questions and to set forth that positive understanding of the atonement which he

felt should stand in the place of those inadequate and erroneous conceptions of it which he opposed was the monumental task which Campbell next felt himself called upon to address. The result of this endeavor was his magnum opus, The Nature of the Atonement, which was first published in 1856, four years after Christ the Bread of Life.

It would be impossible to come to an adequate understanding of Campbell's well-rounded and wholistic conception of the nature of faith and of its relation to righteousness and assurance--which is the main object of this study--without first understanding in some measure his concept of the nature of the atonement. The subjects are so closely related that each sheds light upon the other. Indeed, to make possible and effectual the life of faith in man to the glory of God is the grand object of the atonement, its reason for being. It is what Campbell has called the prospective aspect of the atonement, by which he means that which it looks forward to accomplish, the bestowal of eternal life and sonship upon believers, here and now, or, in other words, union with Christ through the Spirit, that uniting of our will with His will which spiritually constitutes feeding upon Christ the Bread of life.

In contradistinction to these prospective aspects of the atonement are its retrospective aspects, that is, how does it deal with the past facts of human existence, viz.,

sin, guilt, alienation, and the demands of justice for punishment. Campbell divides his whole study of the atonement into these two parts: what the atonement delivers man from (retrospective), and what it brings man to, an eternal life of holiness to the glory of God (prospective). He naturally is obliged to deal with the retrospective aspects first, inasmuch as it is there that substitutionary and imputational ideas are mainly located, in orthodox theological understandings. He must first displace what he believes to be error before he can hope to find lodgement for truth. He must first clear the ground. Even before presenting his own views of the retrospective and the prospective aspects of the atonement, in Chapters VI and VII respectively, he devotes the first chapters of The Nature of the Atonement--like any serious researcher--to a review of the literature. He begins with Luther (in Chapter II), whom he feels had grasped more than any other writer since Bible times, the real essence of the New Testament teaching on righteousness by faith, especially that of Paul. He quotes rather extensively from Luther, especially from his commentary upon the Epistle to the Galatians, finding himself largely in agreement with the substance, but not always with the form of his expressions. Campbell evidently saw himself as carrying forward and developing with more clarity and consistency the line of New Testament thought that had been incompletely

recovered by Luther. In the next two chapters, he takes up two major forms of 17th and 18th century scholastic Calvinism--the strict and the modified--and shows wherein they reveal a certain falling away from the light as seen by Luther. In them he sees the principal development of those substitutionary and imputational theories which he desired to replace with better and more luminous understandings. Characteristically, he treats these theological systems which he exposes sympathetically and fairly, always viewing them in the most favorable light that he can. These earlier historical chapters will not be considered in detail. Our focus, instead, will be upon Campbell's presentation of his own views of both the retrospective and the prospective aspects of the atonement, especially upon those that are most closely related to righteousness by faith.

It will be evident from this brief overview of the format of the volume, that in having first studied Christ the Bread of Life we have in a sense approached The Nature of the Atonement in reverse order, having first become conversant with Campbell's concept of the end for which the atonement is the means. The reader will recall our earlier reference to the grand sequence of God's love, incarnation, atonement, and the sanctified life to the glory of God--each flowing out of the other as steps toward the goal. I believe that this reverse approach will prove to have been

helpful to the reader in several ways. For one thing, he will have become somewhat familiar with Campbell's style, which becomes yet more ponderous as this most profound and mysterious subject of the atonement is approached. The matter of Campbell's style deserves some specific attention at this point, if only that its designed advantages might be seen to compensate, to a large extent, for its arduousness. A contemporary critic, writing in the North British Review of June, 1867, remarked:

There is, indeed, a certain cumbrousness and complexity in the style of his book, which makes it often difficult to read, but does not diminish the impression made upon the attentive reader, for it seems to proceed, not from carelessness or want of power of expression, but from the habit of following out trains of close thought, and wrapping the process in single sentences in order to preserve its connexion, rather than breaking these up into short clauses. The mind of the writer seems to labour with its thought; but it is with real thought, not the pretense of it. Every original thinker has indeed his peculiar style, nor would we readily consent to exchange Mr. Campbell's involved periods for one less expressive of his mind. . . .

In similar vein, another reader observed:

But criticism of Campbell's style may easily be overdone, for it possesses a peculiar power of its own, and sometime attains to real majesty. Much allowance must also be made for the inherent difficulty of his thought. . . . Campbell's obscurity is partly due to a conscientious endeavour to express in words thoughts that are elusive and many-sided, to make the meaning of all statements absolutely clear and beyond the danger of misunderstanding, to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. . . . Still, it must be

admitted that there was much ground for the complaint of Campbell's father, "Man, you have a queer way of putting things."²

Two other preliminary observations on the work as a whole will be ventured. First, those approaching the work with a suspicion that its essence can be comprehended as being nothing more than a disguised "moral influence" theory of the atonement will discover themselves to have been greatly mistaken, to the extent that they really understand the work. They will learn that Campbell is no crypto-liberal, standing in the Socinian, or any other liberal tradition. He rings true to the New Testament witness of the absolutely unique and supernatural Emmanuel event, and of the fact that no man cometh unto the Father but by Christ.

The second general observation pertains to methodology. Leckie has well stated:

It cannot be said that this theory has always received fair treatment at the hands of theologians, as, for instance, when it has been said that it is without New Testament foundation. This strange objection is largely due to the fact that Campbell did not follow the habit of his day of building his argument upon a series of proof texts. His reason for avoiding that method was his prevision that the development of Biblical criticism would render every theory unsound which should be based on a few particular citations from Scripture, that every enduring doctrinal structure must rest on a broad and persistent strain in Apostolic teaching. No sympathetic reader of The Nature of the Atonement can fail to perceive that it is permeated by evidence of a prolonged and loving familiarity with the thought of St. John and the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Book of

Revelation, as well as with the general trend of early Christian doctrine.³

Not only did Campbell eschew "building his argument on a series of proof texts," but he also paid little attention, in his writings, to exegesis as such. In this characteristic his methodology contrasts with that of his friend Erskine, who freely incorporated exegetical support into his expositions (In this respect the work of Erskine complemented that of Campbell).

Campbell's Introduction to the Second Edition

Campbell's own Introduction to the second edition of The Nature of the Atonement affords a general overview of the entire work, and provides ready access to its unifying principle, which concerns the intimate and natural relation of the atonement to the incarnation, as well as to the Christian life. For Campbell, the incarnation is primary, not because it came first in time, but because it best reveals the character of God. The atonement is best understood in the light of the incarnation. The primacy of the incarnation as a means to understanding the atonement is fundamental to Campbell's thought. It distinguishes his approach from that of earlier students of the atonement, such as Anselm. Let Campbell expound in his own words the importance which he places upon this unifying principle:

my attempt to understand and illustrate the nature of the atonement has been made in the way of taking the subject to the light of the incarnation. Assuming the incarnation, I have sought to realise the divine mind in Christ as perfect Sonship towards God and perfect Brotherhood towards men, and, doing so, the incarnation has appeared developing itself naturally and necessarily as the atonement.

This attempt to see the atonement by the light of the incarnation is so far an attempt to answer Anselm's question, "Cur Deus homo" by the light of the divine fact itself . . . instead of seeking an answer, as he has done, in considerations exterior to that fact. . . .⁴

If the atonement is rightly conceived of as a development of the incarnation, the relation of the atonement to the incarnation is indissoluble; . . . Further, if the eternal life given to us in Christ is that divine life in humanity in which Christ made atonement for our sins, then the connection between the atonement and our participation in the life of Christ is not artificial, but natural: and thus the incarnation, the atonement, and man's participation in the divine nature offer to our faith one purpose of divine love, reaching its fulfillment by a path which is determined by what God is and what He wills that man should be. This unity and simplicity in the grace of God to man, and natural relation subsisting among the elements of our faith, is "the simplicity that is in Christ,"--a harmony in the gracious whole,⁵ the apprehension of which must strengthen faith.

Toward the close of his book, Campbell has a chapter which summarizes the salient advantages which he sees his view of the atonement to have over other views. The chapter is ponderously entitled: "COMPARATIVE COMMENDATION OF THE VIEW NOW TAKEN OF THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT AS TO (1) LIGHT, (2) UNITY AND SIMPLICITY, (3) A NATURAL RELATION TO

CHRISTIANITY [by which he means, the Christian life], and
 (4) HARMONY WITH THE DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS.⁶

We shall not dwell upon this summary chapter. Its title has afforded a glimpse into what Campbell hoped that his book might accomplish--provide a unifying view of the atonement, the life of Christ in humanity, and the believer's life in Him. We shall next survey the central chapters of The Nature of the Atonement.

The Atoning Element in Christ's Sacrifice

Just what was the atoning element in Christ's sacrifice, in Campbell's understanding? In the earlier chapters in which he had reviewed the extant Calvinist theories--both the strict and the modified ones--he had found stressed the pain and suffering which Christ endured as constituting the principal atoning elements. Campbell expressed

surprise that the atoning element in the sufferings pictured, has been to their mind sufferings as sufferings, the pain and agony as pain and agony. . . . My surprise is, that these sufferings being contemplated as an atonement for sin, the holiness and love seen taking the form of suffering should not be recognized as the atoning element--the very essence and adequacy of the sacrifice for sin presented to our faith.⁷

Campbell reasoned that sin and misery necessarily "would press upon Him with a weight and affect Him with an intensity of suffering, proportioned to His hatred of sin and love to sinners." Yet he could not conceive how this

"agony of holiness and love in the realization of the evil of sin and of the misery of sinners" could be thought of as being penal in nature. Here he challenges the reader:

Let my reader endeavour to realise the thought:--The sufferer suffers what he suffers just through seeing sin and sinners with God's eyes, and feeling in reference to them with God's heart. Is such a suffering a punishment? Is God in causing such a divine experience in humanity, inflicting a punishment? There can be but one answer.⁸

The italics in this passage are his; and the answer which he assumes his reader will give is, No!

Reflecting on that answer, and seeing it to be impossible to regard suffering, of which such is the nature, as penal, I find myself forced to distinguish . . . between an atonement for sin and substituted punishment.⁹

Here Campbell has articulated what can well be considered to be the key distinction of his entire thesis.

The distinction on which this question turns appears to be all-important in our inquiry into the nature of the atonement, and we shall be greatly helped by keeping it steadily in view; for my conviction is, that the larger and the more comprehensive of all its bearings our thoughts of the atonement become, the more clear will it appear to us, that it was the spiritual essence and nature of the sufferings of Christ, and not that these sufferings were penal, which constituted their virtue as entering into the atonement made by the Son of God when He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself--making His soul a sacrifice for sin--through the eternal Spirit offering Himself without spot to God.¹⁰

Campbell believed that a ray of light is shed upon the nature of the atonement by the Biblical account of the staying of the plague by Phinehas, as recorded in the 25th

chapter of Numbers. The Lord commended the spontaneous act of Phinehas in killing Zimri and Cozbi, declaring that Phinehas "hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy." God furthermore gave Phinehas "the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel."¹¹ Concerning this incident, Campbell states:

Phinehas had no command to authorise what he did, or promise to proceed upon. That which he did was a spontaneous expression of feeling. But that feeling was so in accordance with the mind of God, that God acknowledged it by receiving what he did as an atonement. . . . Here we see a man turning away the wrath of God, and staying the plague which was the manifestation of that wrath, by an act of which the essence was, condemnation of sin and zeal for the glory of God. . . . There can be no uncertainty as to the atoning element here. It was not the mere death of the subjects of the act of Phinehas. Had they died by the plague, their death would have been no atonement,--the death of the twenty-four thousand who so died was none. But the moral element in the transaction--the mind of Phinehas--his zeal for God--his sympathy in God's judgment on sin, this was the atonement, this its essence. Surely we have here a ray of light shed on the distinction between making an atonement for sin and bearing the punishment of sin; . . .¹²

Campbell looked upon this incident as a definite help toward understanding that it was the moral and spiritual elements in the sufferings of Christ which gave them their atoning power, and not the sufferings per se, nor even the

death itself. It was the "condemnation of sin in His spirit" which effected the atonement for the sin of the whole world.

Key-word on the Atonement Found in Hebrews

Campbell found the great key-word on the atonement in the book of Hebrews. He perceived that "the light of the atonement itself, in which the Apostle wrote, pervades the whole argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews."¹³ But with special clarity, Campbell felt, "the first principle and essence of his reasoning" could be seen in verses 4 to 10 of Chapter 10. He quotes the entire passage, beginning "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin," and ending, "then said He, Lo I come to do Thy will, O God . . . by which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." He then comments:

The will of God which the Son of God came to do and did, this was the essence and substance of the atonement, being that in the offering of the body of Christ once for all which both made it acceptable to Him who in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin had no pleasure, and made it fit to "sanctify" those whose sin the blood of bulls and goats could not take away.

Let us then receive these words, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God," as the great key-word on the subject of the atonement.¹⁴

Campbell next quotes the entire source passage, Psalms 40: 7-11, from which the writer of Hebrews had quoted:

I delight to do Thy will, O my God,
 yea, Thy law is within my heart.
 I have preached righteousness in the great
 congregation.
 Lo, I have not refrained my lips,
 O Lord, thou knowest.
 I have not hid thy righteousness
 within my heart;
 I have declared Thy faithfulness
 and Thy salvation:
 I have not concealed Thy loving kindness
 and Thy truth from the great congregation.

Campbell then explains:

I quote the context of the psalm because it brings out so clearly, that the will of God contemplated is that WILL which immediately connects itself in our thoughts with what God is, that will, the nature and character of which we express when we say, "God is good,"--or, explaining what we mean by good, say, "God is holy, God is true, God is just, God is love." This expression of the purpose of the Son of God in coming into this world, is therefore coincident with His own statement of His work when in the world, viz., "I have declared Thy name, and will declare it." John xvii.26.¹⁵ (The italics are Campbell's.)

Campbell says that some have understood the will of God here to mean the plan of redemption, and that the purpose expressed would thus be to execute the plan. But understood in this way, Campbell felt, it would throw no light on the nature of the atonement. "But the mind of the Apostle is manifestly occupied with that in the work of Christ which caused the shedding of His blood to have a virtue which was not in that of bulls and goats," namely, the "will of God done, the mind of God manifested, the name of the Father declared by the Son."¹⁶ Without break Campbell continues:

We have therefore to trace out the fulfillment of this purpose, Lo, I come to do Thy will. . . . How did it imply His having all men's sins laid upon Him,--His bearing them as an atoning sacrifice,--His being an accepted sacrifice,--His obtaining everlasting redemption?

It will simplify our task in considering Christ's doing of the will of God, if we remember the relation of the second commandment to the first, as being "like it;" that is to say, that the spirit of sonship in which consisted the perfect fulfillment of the first commandment is one with the spirit of brotherhood which is the fulfillment of the second. Loving the Father with all His heart and mind and soul and strength, the Saviour loved His brethren as Himself. . . ."17

His recourse here to the sameness of the first and second great commandments is extraordinarily insightful. It also has important ramifications that are not germane to our present concern.

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Campbell tenderly pondered how it could have been that the great Jonathan Edwards, for whose piety and intellect he had great respect and high praise, could have missed the intrinsic light of the atonement itself.

And seeing love to all men as that law of love under which Christ was, must we not both wonder and regret, that his deeply interesting thoughts in this region did not lead Edwards to see, that by the very law of the spirit of the life that was in Christ Jesus He must needs come under the burden of the sins of all men--become the Saviour of all men, and, loving them as He loved Himself, seek for them that they should partake in His own life in the Father's favour,--that eternal life which He had with the Father before the world was?19

Here the manifestation of God's love in the incarnation is seen as foundational to the atonement.

When God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to accomplish our redemption, the Apostle says He sent Him as "a sacrifice for sin." (Romans viii.3, margin.) To send Him in the likeness of sinful flesh was to make Him a sacrifice for sin, for it was to lay the burden of our sins upon Him. Thus related to us, while by love identified with us, the Son of God necessarily came under all our burdens, and especially our great burden--sin. . . .²⁰

The love of God had manifested its own self-sacrificing nature in coming into sinful humanity in the incarnation. Once there, in humanity,

it acts according to its own nature, and must needs bear our burden and work and suffer for our salvation, and this in ways which we who are human may understand, and shall understand in the measure in which the life of love becomes our life.²¹

Here, again, can be seen that unity toward which Campbell was ever striving, that unity of the incarnation, the atonement and the Christian life.

In this chapter which we have now reviewed (Chapter V, "The Atonement to be Seen by its Own Light"), Campbell has introduced the reader to his own understanding of what it was in the atonement which constitutes its atoning efficacy. He sees that efficacy inhering not in the pain of a substituted punishment, but in the "agony of holiness and love in the realization of the evil of sin and the misery of sinners."²² He sees Jesus suffering "just through seeing sin

and sinners with God's eyes, and feeling in reference to them with God's heart."²³ To thus reveal the Father's loving heart was his purpose in coming. It was the law of love in the Father's heart that was Christ's joy to reveal-- God's gracious will that was his delight to do. "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) I delight to do Thy will." Here, Campbell felt, was the great keyword for understanding the nature of the atonement.

Chapter 7

THE RETROSPECTIVE ASPECTS OF THE ATONEMENT

The next two chapters in The Nature of the Atonement (following the chapter that we have just now reviewed) deal first with the "Retrospective Aspects of the Atonement" (Chapter 6) and then with the "Prospective Aspects of the Atonement (Chapter 7). The former--the looking-backward aspects--concern the facts of sin and guilt, and how these are dealt with in the life and death and intercession of Christ. The latter--the prospective aspects--look forward to what the atonement was designed to accomplish--the establishment of the Christian life, and the bringing of many sons and daughters to glory.

Each of these two aspects of the mediatorial work of Christ--the retrospective and the prospective--in turn have two parts: (1) Christ's dealings with men on the part of God, and (2) Christ's dealings with God on behalf of men. Thus the whole is organized in this way:

- A. The Retrospective Aspects of the Atonement (Chapter 6).
 - 1. Christ's dealings with men on the part of God.
 - 2. Christ's dealings with God on behalf of men.
- B. The Prospective Aspects of the Atonement (Chapter 7).
 - 1. Christ's dealings with men on the part of God.
 - 2. Christ's dealings with God on behalf of men.

All four of the above elements are Christ-mediated.

Together they comprise the whole of Christ's mediatorial work. Christ is the Mediator, the One standing in the middle, looking upward and downward, backward and forward. It should prove helpful to bear in mind this overall organization as we now turn, in the present chapter, to Campbell's detailed analysis of the retrospective aspects of the atonement.¹

Christ's Dealings with Men on the Part of God

Christ came to reveal the character of the Father. "I have given Him for a witness to the people."² This He revealed by the perfection of His own following of the Father, as a dear child [1], and [2] the perfection of His brotherly love in His walk with men. His love and His trust towards His Father [1] and His long-suffering towards His brethren [2]--the latter being presented to our faith in the oneness with the former--were together what He contemplated when He said, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."³

The two elements bracketed above represent not only the two parts of Christ's dealing with men on the part of God, but also His perfect fulfillment of the corresponding two great commandments--love to God and love to man. Campbell continues:

This witness-bearing for the Father was a part of the self-sacrifice of Christ. The severity of the pressure of our sins upon the Spirit of Christ was necessarily greatly increased

through that living contact with the enmity of the carnal mind to God into which Christ was brought, in being to men, a living epistle of the grace of God. His honoring of the Father caused men to dishonor Him--His manifestation of brotherly love was repaid with hatred--His perfect walk in the sight of men failed to commend either His Father or Himself,--His professed trust in the Father was cast up to Him, not being believed, and the bitter complaint was wrung from Him--"reproach hath broken my heart."⁴

In such circumstances Christ could not be other than "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." At the same time, however, His task, His witnessing, could not be "altogether cheerless; on the contrary, the Man of Sorrows could speak to the chosen companions of His path, those who knew Him most nearly, of a peace which they had witnessed in Him,--nay, of a joy, a peace. . . ."5--a joy and peace in which they were given to partake. Therefore, "My peace', 'My joy' were a most important element in His declaration of the Father's name."⁶

None the less, it was the sorrows of Christ which principally reveal to us the pain which our sins continually inflict upon the Father. It was chiefly this aspect of His witness-bearing which made Christ's coming a "sacrifice for sin." It was not so much the fact that His sufferings entered into the atonement made, as it was the way in which they entered in, that concerned Campbell. That way was not penal, he felt, but this that was so much more glorifying to

the name and character of God. Here he sees a vital distinction:

The distinction between penal sufferings endured in meeting a demand of divine justice, and sufferings which are themselves the expression of the divine mind regarding our sins, and a manifestation by the Son of what our sins are to the Father's heart, is indeed very broad. . . .⁷

He exclaims over this very great distinction :

But what a vindicating of the divine name and of the character of the lawgiver are the sufferings . . . considered as themselves the manifestation in humanity of what our sins are to God, compared to that to which they are reduced if conceived of as a punishment inflicted by God!⁸

Christ's Dealing with God on Behalf of Men

Campbell observes that it is here, in Christ's dealings with God on behalf of men, that the concept of penal sufferings would have a place--if it has any place at all--in understanding the nature of the atonement. Here would be seen a necessity for Christ to interpose Himself between sinners and the consequences of the righteous wrath of God. But the endurance of suffering simply as a punishment meted out by a righteously wrathful God was not Campbell's understanding of what constituted the atoning efficacy in Christ's sacrifice.

It is important to notice, however, that in his understanding, the wrath of God was indeed a reality. It was not conceived of as being some false human imagining about the

character of God, as is the case in much liberal theology today. No, the wrath is real, and abundantly justified:

But, the wrath of God against sin is a reality, however men have erred in their thoughts as to how that wrath was to be appeased. Nor is the idea that satisfaction was due to divine justice a delusion, however far men have wandered from the true conception of what would meet its righteous demand. And if so, then Christ, in dealing with God on behalf of men, must be conceived of as dealing with the righteous wrath of God against sin, and as according to it that which was due: and this would necessarily precede His intercession for us.⁹

Vicarious Confession

Campbell's theory of the atonement has at times been designated as the "Theory of Vicarious Confession" in order to distinguish it from other atonement theories. The two following passages (which are parts of a single, long paragraph) are taken from the locus classicus of this idea of vicarious confession, or vicarious penitence:

That oneness of mind with the Father, which towards man took the form of condemnation of sin, would in the Son's dealing with the Father in relation to our sins, take the form of a perfect confession of our sins. This conclusion, as to its own nature, must have been a perfect Amen in humanity to the judgment of God on the sin of man. Such an Amen was due in the truth of things. He who was the Truth could not be in humanity and not utter it,--and it was necessarily a first step in dealing with the Father on our behalf. He who would intercede for us must begin with confessing our sins. . . .¹⁰

Campbell asks, What is this Amen in relation to God's wrath against us? "What place has it in Christ's dealing

with that wrath?"

I answer: He who so responds to the divine wrath against sin, saying, "Thou art righteous, O Lord, who judgest so," is necessarily receiving the full apprehension and realisation of that wrath, as well as of that sin against which it comes forth into His soul and spirit, into the bosom of the divine humanity, and, so receiving it, He responds to it with a perfect response,--a response from the depths of that divine humanity,--and in that perfect response He absorbs it. For that response has all the elements of a perfect repentance in humanity for all the sin of man,--a perfect sorrow--a perfect contrition--all the elements of such a repentance, and that in absolute perfection, all--excepting the personal consciousness of sin;--and by that perfect response in Amen to the mind of God in relation to sin is the wrath of God rightly met, and that is accorded to divine justice which is its due, and could alone satisfy it.¹¹

This paragraph (the two passages quoted above) contains the heart of Campbell's understanding of this aspect of the nature of the atonement. The italics are his. Underscored is the fact that by Christ's perfect response of confession and contrition for our sins He absorbs and neutralizes the divine wrath. It was not for His own sins that He confessed and was perfectly contrite, for he had none of his own. As our Elder Brother and Representative, in our humanity which He had assumed, He rendered the perfect response which we--apart from union and participation with Him--could never of ourselves achieve. The essence of this central concept Campbell has wrapped up in another of his long sentences:

Without the assumption of an imputation of our guilt [which in Campbell's view is not necessary

at all], and in perfect harmony with the unbroken consciousness of personal separation from our sins, the Son of God, bearing us and our sins on His heart before the Father, must needs respond to the Father's judgment on our sins, with that confession of their evil and of the righteousness of the wrath of God against them, and the holy sorrow because of them, which were due, due in the truth of things, due on our behalf though we could not render it, due from Him as in our nature and our true brother;--what He must needs feel in Himself because of the holiness and love which were in Him--what He must needs utter to the Father in expiation of our sins when He would make intercession for us.¹²

Campbell, ever the pastor, ever the nurturer of struggling souls, naturally finds himself pointing out the practical character of this view of the atonement in the following eloquent passage:

But the fact is, that the truth that God grieves over our sins, is not so soon received into the heart as that God punishes sin,--and yet, the faith that He so grieves is infinitely more important, as having power to work holiness in us, than the faith that He so punishes, however important. But there is much less spiritual apprehension necessary to the faith that God punishes sin, than to the faith that our sins do truly grieve God. Therefore, men more easily believe that Christ's sufferings shew how God can punish sin, than that these sufferings are the divine feelings in relation to sin, made visible to us by being present in suffering flesh. Yet, however the former may terrify, the latter alone can purify, because the latter alone perfectly reveals, and in revealing vindicates the name and character of God, condemning us in our own eyes, and laying us prostrate in the dust because we have sinned against such a God.¹³

It is clear that Campbell believed in a "vicarious" and "expiatory" atonement, even though what he meant

by these terms often was different from what many theologians, scholastic and modern, have meant by them. "He was without sin; therefore was [the nature of His suffering] vicarious, expiatory, an atonement,--an atonement for sin as distinguished from the punishment of sin."¹⁴

And with this distinction, how much light enters the mind! We are now able to realise that the suffering we contemplate is divine, while it is human; and what God is revealed in it and not merely in connexion with it; God's righteousness and condemnation of sin, being in the suffering, and not merely what demands it,--God's love also being in the suffering, and not merely what submits to it.

To view the atonement in this way, Campbell states, is to find that certain words of Scripture "grow full of light"--such words as: "He made His soul an offering for sin." "He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." "By Himself He purged our sins." In this light Campbell sees the connection between the person of Christ and the work of Christ to be very close indeed.

By the word of His power all else was accomplished, by himself He purged our sins,--by the virtue that is in what He is; and thus is the atonement not only what was rendered possible by the incarnation, but itself a development of the incarnation.¹⁵ (italics are his)

In a brief historical digression, Campbell suggests that Luther's understanding of this matter is essentially in agreement with his own, although the language he employed was different. With perhaps less than his characteristic modesty, he wryly comments: "It might be too bold to accept

that this was Luther's meaning. But at all events,--and this alone is important,--I believe this [his view of the nature of the atonement] to be a conception according to the truth of things;"¹⁶

In addition to its accordance with Scripture, Campbell finds confirmation of the "truth of things" in the human conscience, which informs the heart that a true and full repentance--were it attainable by sinful man--would indeed constitute an adequate expiation for sin.¹⁷ With penetrating psychological insight, he describes how man's innate selfishness thwarts even the most earnest efforts to attain to such a perfect repentance on his own, and leads ultimately to despair.

That due repentance for sin, could such repentance indeed be, would expiate guilt, there is a strong testimony in the human heart, and so the first attempt at peace with God, is an attempt at repentance,--which attempt, indeed, becomes less and less hopeful, the longer, and the more earnestly and honestly it is persevered in,--but this not because it comes to be felt that a true repentance would be rejected even if attained, but because its attainment is despaired of,--all attempts at it being found, when taken to the divine light, and honestly judged in the sight of God, to be mere selfish attempts at something that promises safety,--not evil indeed, in so far as they are instinctive efforts at self-preservation, but having nothing in them of the nature of a true repentance, or a godly sorrow for sin or pure condemnation of it because of its own evil; nothing, in short, that is a judging sin and a confessing it in true sympathy with the divine judgment upon it. So that the words of Whitfield come to be deeply sympathised in, "our repentance needeth to be repented of, and our very tears to be washed in the blood of Christ."¹⁸

Christ, our mediator, is the only being who can render such perfect confession and repentance, which is the due response to our sin. This perfect confession and repentance of our sins by Christ constitutes the necessary first part of that "dealing with God on behalf of men" which occupies the major and concluding portion of the chapter we have been here reviewing, on the retrospective aspects of the atonement. It is the needful preparation for Christ's intercession for us, which is the other aspect of His mediatorial "dealing with God on our behalf."

Christ's Intercession

Christ's mediatorial dealing with God on behalf of man (viewed retrospectively) is comprised of two parts: (1) vicarious confession--the Amen to the divine condemnation of our sins (considered above)--and (2) intercession. The one prepares the way for the other. Campbell refers to confession as "a necessary step in His path as dealing with the Father on our behalf. His intercession presupposes this expiatory confession and cannot be conceived of apart from it."¹⁹

Because of the complexity of Campbell's sentences, I have ventured to assist the reader in following his focus as it alternates back and forth between (1) confession and (2) intercession by the insertion of brackets, [1] and [2]. In the following paragraph it can be seen that the two so

closely accompany each other that they become nearly identical:

"He bare the sins of many [1], and [2] made intercession for the transgressors." In the light of that true knowledge of the heart of the Father in which the Son responded to the Father's condemnation of our sins [1], the nature of that condemnation was so understood that [2] His love was at liberty, and was encouraged to accompany confession by intercession:--not an intercession which contemplated effecting a change in the heart of the Father, but a confession which combined with acknowledgement of the righteousness of the divine wrath against sin [1], [2] hope for man from that love in God which is deeper than that wrath,--in truth originating it--determining also its nature, and justifying the confidence that, its righteousness being responded to, and the mind which it expresses shared in, that wrath must be appeased.²⁰

Here he says "not an intercession . . . but a confession" which combines acknowledgement of the righteousness of God's wrath "with hope for man from that love in God that is deeper than that wrath." Here is pictured a united confession-intercession which in man's behalf lays hold of that love in God which is even greater and deeper than His wrath. This is how God's wrath is "appeased." Campbell rarely employs this word "appease," which he has here used, probably because it has been closely associated with the penal theories which he opposed. In parallel passages (which we have already considered) he more fitly expresses the same idea--Christ's dealing with God's wrath--without using the term "appease." Speaking of that wrath he says

"in that perfect response He absorbs it." And in the next sentence:

--and by that perfect response in Amen to the mind of God in relation to sin is the wrath of God rightly met, and that is accorded to divine justice which is its due, and could alone satisfy it.²¹

Here, in Campbell's understanding of the atonement, is the appropriate place for the concept of "satisfying divine justice." But God's love is deeper than His wrath--indeed, is that which originates it. And it is upon that love that Christ lays hold in his interceding.

. . . when we would understand how this sacrifice was to God a sweet-smelling savour, we must consider not only [1] the response which was in that Amen to the divine condemnation of sin, but also [2] the response which was in it to the divine love in its yearnings over us sinners. In itself the intercession of Christ was the perfected expression of that forgiveness which He cherished toward those who were returning hatred for His love. . . .²²

In the following summary paragraph Campbell lays bare the living heart of Christ's mediatorial work in our behalf in a moving and luminous passage:

We do not understand [1] the divine wrath against sin, unless such confession of its evil as we are now contemplating is felt to be the true and right meeting of that wrath on the part of humanity. We do not understand [2] the forgiveness that is in God, unless such intercession as we are now contemplating is felt to be that which will lay hold of that forgiveness, and draw it forth. It was not in us so to confess our own sins; neither was there in us such knowledge of the heart of the Father. But, if another could in this act for us,--if there might be a mediator, an

intercessor,--[now, 1] one at once sufficiently one with us, and yet sufficiently separated from our sin to feel in sinless humanity what our sinful humanity, could it in sinlessness look back on its sins, would feel of Godly condemnation of them and sorrow for them, so confessing them before God--[now, 2] one coming sufficiently near to our need of mercy to be able to plead for mercy for us according to that need, and at the same time, so abiding in the bosom of the Father, and in the light of His love and secret of His heart, as, in interceding for us to take full and perfect advantage of all that is there that is on our side, and wills our salvation,--if the Son of God has, in the power of love, come into the capacity of such mediation in taking our nature and becoming our brother, and in that same power of love has been contented to suffer all that such mediation, accomplished in suffering flesh, implied,--is not the suitability and the acceptableness of the sacrifice of Christ, when His soul was made an offering for sin, what we can understand? In truth, we cannot realise the life of Christ as He moved on this earth in the sight of men, and contemplate His witness bearing against sin, and His forgiveness towards sinners, and hear the Father say of Him, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," and yet doubt that that mind towards us and sinners which He thus manifested, and the Father thus acknowledged, would be altogether acceptable, and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savour, [1] in its atoning confession of sin and [2] intercession for sinners.²³

In summary, the retrospective aspects of the mediatorial work of Christ are seen to contain two parts, Christ's dealings with man on the part of God, and His dealings with God on behalf of man. Each of these, in turn, also contain two elements. Christ's witness to man concerning His Father's character was accomplished by (1) His life of perfect sonship--His following of the Father as a dear child, and (2) His life of perfect brotherly love, thus fulfilling

the second great commandment. Then we have seen that the two elements in Christ's dealings with God on behalf of men are (1) His perfect confession, in humanity, of our sin, and His acknowledgement of the justice of God's condemnation of it--which response effectively absorbs the wrath of God; and (2) His perfect intercession which lays hold upon that which is still deeper than God's wrath, His great love, that love which Christ knew so well, and which it was His mission and joy to reveal to fallen man.

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Chapter 8

THE PROSPECTIVE ASPECTS OF THE ATONEMENT

We now turn to the prospective aspects of the atonement (in his Chapter VII).

Christ's Dealing with Men on the Part of God

Campbell points out that the

confession of our sin, in response to the divine condemnation of it, must, when offered to God on our behalf by Christ, have contemplated prospectively our own participation in that confession as an element in our actual redemption from sin.¹

He recognizes that all views of the work of Christ of course imply that its ultimate reference was prospective. He sees the superiority of his view, however, in the directness and immediacy of the connection between Christ's work and its reproduction in us, or better stated, our participation in it. He refers to the two prevalent views which he considers inadequate, and which were dealt with in chapters 3 and 4 of The Nature of the Atonement, viz., the strict Calvinist view--salvation for the elect only--and a modified Calvinist view, where Christ's work is seen as a ground upon which God may extend mercy to anyone (provided that he repents, etc.). He acknowledges that both of these variant views have an ultimate reference to, and a bearing upon, what happens in man. But he objects to the remoteness of

that bearing, which contrasts with the directness and immediacy of the connection between the atonement and the remission of sins which he finds repeatedly emphasized in Scripture, as when it is said that "Christ gave Himself for us us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity;" and "Christ suffered for us, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." Not just in some future, heavenly state, but here and now.

In Campbell's understanding, the prospective aspects of the atonement include much more than our participation only in Christ's confession of our sins. It includes our acceptance of the life of Christ to be our life--our participation in His life of sonship, our participation in the mind of Christ, our becoming in reality the sons and daughters of God. In short, it means union with Christ, here and now. "He that hath the Son hath life."

Viewing the matter from this perspective, Campbell finds

that the perfect righteousness of the Son of God in humanity is itself the gift of God to us in Christ--to be our life as He is our life: instead of its being, as has been held, ours by imputation, --precious to us and our salvation, not in respect of what is inherent in it, but in respect of that to which it confers a legal title; or, according to the modification of this conception, (the transference of righteousness by imputation being rejected,) our salvation in respect of effects of righteousness transferred for Christ's sake to those who believe in Him.²

Campbell next points out that our possession of Christ Himself should be more highly prized than any gifts external to Himself that we might receive, as, for instance, eternal life. In traditional terminology, another such gift or result of Christ's work is sanctification, or "imparted righteousness." Because--still in the conventional understanding----"imputed" righteousness leads to "imparted" righteousness, which is the life of Christ received, it might easily be argued, Campbell notes, that his view contributes nothing really new or different from that generally believed by Christians. With his characteristically broad tolerance he states that

. . . although this {"imputed - imparted" view} is a complication altogether foreign to the simplicity that is in Christ, I thankfully recognise the degree to which the elements of righteousness,--all that God delights in,--holiness, trust, love, may be the objects of spiritual desire and be welcomed as a part of the unsearchable riches of Christ, even in connection with this system³

Notwithstanding the fact, which he freely concedes, that a great many Christians have found genuine spiritual nurturance within this framework which he considers to be faulty and inadequate, Campbell feels strongly that this theoretical system has introduced "confusion and perplexity . . . into the whole subject of righteousness and eternal life."⁴

But a righteousness imparted as that to which a right has been conferred by a righteousness im-

puted;--divine favour and acceptance first resting upon us, irrespective of our true spiritual state, and then a spiritual state in harmony with that favour, bestowed as an expression of that favour; --a right and title to heaven made sure irrespective of a meetness for heaven, and then that meetness,--the holiness necessary to the enjoyment of heaven--bestowed upon us as a part of what we have thus become entitled to:--this is a complication which . . . [introduces] confusion and perplexity . . . into the whole subject of righteousness and eternal life, . . .⁵

Campbell maintains that "the evil effect of the first separation between the favor of God and the actual condition of the human spirit in its aspect towards God, never can be altogether remedied."⁶ This separation he terms "this root error." It is this separation that is prevented by the direct and immediate connection between Christ's work and our participation in it. To stress this direct connection is his great burden in this chapter on the prospective aspects of the atonement, as it is also foundational to his entire understanding of the nature of the atonement. Referring to the imputational theories which occasioned this separation in the first place, he states that "we shall find the simplicity that is in Christ delivering us from all this perplexity and confusing complication."⁷

Man's Potential Worth in Christ

Campbell moves on to consider the potential worth of man that was revealed by the life of Christ in humanity: He speaks of the "great capacity of good" in humanity "as

that capacity is brought out by the Son of God."⁸ Also of the revelation of an "inestimable preciousness" that was hidden in humanity, hidden from the inheritors of humanity themselves, but not hid from God, and now brought forth into manifestation by the man, who was made in God's image.⁹

He hastens to add a very important qualification:

This high capacity of good pertaining to humanity is not indeed to be contemplated as be longing to us apart from our relation to the Son of God. . . . there must be a relation between the Son of God and the sons of men, not according to the flesh only, but also according to the spirit--the second Adam must be a quickening spirit, and the head of every man be Christ.¹⁰

Thus, Campbell insists, there must be a relation between the Son of God and the sons of men, not only "according to the flesh," but also, and more importantly, "according to the spirit."

But if we see this double relation as subsisting between Christ and men, if we see Him as the Lord of our spirits, as well as a partaker in their flesh, then that air of legal fiction, which, in contemplating the atonement, attaches to our identification with Christ and Christ's identification with us, so long as this is contemplated as matter of external arrangement, will pass away, and the depth and reality of the bonds which connect the Saviour and the saved will bear the weight of this identification, and fully justify to the enlightened conscience that constitution of things in which Christ's confession of our sins expiates them, and Christ's righteousness in humanity clothes us with its own interest in the sight of God: for thus, that divine righteousness of the Son of God is seen as necessarily shedding to the mind of the Father its own glory and its own preciousness over all humanity, . . .¹¹

He goes on to say that the divine righteousness does this, viz., "[sheds] to the mind of the Father its own glory and its own preciousness over all humanity," in a way that is different, even "remote," from the usual framework of imputational thinking, in which believers' sins are "imputed" to Christ, and His righteousness "imputed" to them. He then devotes a paragraph to explaining that a great many believers have enjoyed a true life of faith within such a framework in spite of "its moral repulsiveness and intellectual contradiction;" and what is more, that their spiritual condition is far better than those who, sensing the objectionableness of that system, attempt "a standing of independent self-righteousness before God."¹²

Christ's Dealing with Men on the Part of God (prospectively)

The next ten pages of Campbell's chapter on the prospective aspects of the atonement, which we are here reviewing, are taken up with the first of the two divisions of Christ's mediatorial work--His dealings with men on the part of God. We shall note only the concluding part of this section:

I have dwelt above on the difference between a filial standing and a legal standing. . . . My hope of helping any out of the perplexities and confusions which I feel to prevail on the subjects of justification and sanctification, is simply the hope of helping them to see the contradiction between coming to God in the spirit of sonship, with the confidence which the faith of the

Father's heart sustains [Campbell's view] and coming to God with a legal confidence as righteous in His sight, because clothed with a legal righteousness, or at least accepted on the ground of such a righteousness [the views which he considers both inadequate and confusing].

. . . Eternal life is to the Apostle a light in which the mind of the Father, and the mind of the sonship in the Son, are apprehended and rejoiced in. This teaching as to the nature of salvation is the same which we receive from the Lord Himself when He says, "This is eternal life, to know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent;" as also when He says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."¹³

In the above statements Campbell has given his definition of eternal life, and also his understanding of the Biblical meaning of salvation. He goes on to speak of "the communion of the Son with the Father in humanity" as the Father's great gift to us in the Son. This communion was most fully revealed in Christ's intercessory prayer, recorded in John 17. It was the working out of this communion with the Father in humanity that was a most important part of Christ's earthly ministry. Contrastingly, Campbell adds that there is "no trace" of any consciousness on Christ's part of "working out a righteousness to be imputed to men to give them a legal ground of confidence towards God."¹⁴

He concludes his entire discussion of the prospective aspects of Christ's dealing with men on the part of God with the following brief paragraph:

Let us in this light regard Christ's being delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. The offenses for which He made expiation were ours,--that expiation being the due atonement for the sin of man--accepted on behalf of all men. His righteousness, declared in His resurrection from the dead, is ours--the proper righteousness for man, and in Him given to all men: and that righteousness is NOT the past fact of legal obligation discharged, but the mind of sonship towards the Father; for in the beloved Son is the Father seen to be well pleased, and in our being through Him to the Father dear children will it come to pass that the Father will be well pleased in us.¹⁵ (the emphases are Campbell's)

Christ's Dealing with the Father on our Behalf

Turning now to the other division of Christ's mediatorial work--His dealing with the Father on our behalf--it is naturally Christ's intercession that is the principal focus of attention. Here Campbell goes on to consider that for which Christ intercedes--looking forward toward the blessing for which the atonement was designed. This anticipated blessing, Campbell perceived, is simply our fellowship in the mind of God and of Christ. This is that for which Christ pleads before the Father. The mental image of Christ standing before the Father and pleading "My blood, my blood!" is one that can evoke serious doubts about the meaning of Christ's intercession when the nature and purpose of that pleading is not understood. Here Campbell clarifies what Christ is pleading for:

What we have thought of Christ as necessarily desiring for us, was the fellowship of what He

Himself was in our humanity. This, therefore, was that which He would ask for us; and we can now understand that He would do so with a confidence connected with His own consciousness that in humanity [*italics his*] He abode in His Father's love and in the light of His countenance. Thus would His own righteousness be presented along with the confession of our sins when He asked for us remission of sins [looking backward] and eternal life [looking forward].

And this is the right conception of Christ's pleading His own merits on our behalf. . . .¹⁶

Campbell here reaches the climax of his presentation:

We see . . . that what is thus offered on our behalf is so offered by the Son and so accepted by the Father, entirely with the prospective purpose that it is to be reproduced in us. The expiatory confession of our sins which we have been contemplating is to be shared in by ourselves; . . . The righteous trust in the father, that following Him as a dear child walking in love which we have been contemplating is Christ's righteousness, is to be shared in by us: to accept it on our behalf as the righteousness of man, was to accept it as what pleases God in Man,--what alone can please God in man,--therefore that in the fellowship of which we are to draw near and live that life which is in God's favour. In the light of the atonement this is seen clearly; and the light, as our eyes become able to bear it, reconciles us to itself. . . .¹⁷

This is light adaptation, analogous to dark adaptation! One is reminded of theologian Denney's remark concerning Campbell, "He walks in the light all of the time; and everything that he touches lives!"¹⁸

The High-priestly Service of Christ: Opening a Consecrated Way into the Father's Heart

Campbell thought deeply about what the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament were designed to reveal regarding the high-priestly work of Christ and the nature of that worship which God desires from his creatures. It was clear to him that

Not to deliver from punishment, but to cleanse and purify for worship, was the blood of the victim shed. Not the receiving of any manner of reward for righteousness, but the being holy and accepted worshippers, was the benefit received through being sprinkled with the victim's blood. In the light of this centre idea of worship, therefore, are we to see the sprinkling of all things with blood, and the remissions of sins to which this related.

Accordingly, when we pass from the type to the antitype, we find worship the great good set forth to us,--that worship in spirit and in truth which the heart of the Father craves for,--that worship which is sonship,--the response of the heart of the Son to the heart of the Father."¹⁹

In commenting on Hebrews 9:14 he states that

. . . we see that that access to God which shall indeed be to us a way into the holiest, must accord with the spiritual constitution of our being, with the nature of holiness, and with the nature of the separation from God which sin causes; therefore, that no permission or authority to come to God can be of any avail to us, apart from the mind in which alone he who has sinned can in truth draw near to God; and this mind we see is just that into which the sinner enters in the Amen of faith to the voice that is in the Blood of Christ, viz., Christ's confession of our sins. In the faith of God's acceptance of that confession on our behalf, we receive strength to say Amen to it,--to join in it--and, joining in it, we find it a living way to God; . . .²⁰

There should be noted the repeated emphasis upon Christ's blood, and just how that blood cleanses. He speaks of the voice that is in Christ's blood. He says that "the virtue required in the blood of Christ is seen to be necessarily spiritual--a power to influence the spirits washed in it by faith. . . ." Campbell insists that the filial standing must take precedence over the legal standing. God must be seen primarily as our Father rather than as our Judge. In this entire chapter Campbell is expounding what he believes to be the true meaning of expiation, and what constitutes the perfection of expiation. He says that it was the filial spirit in Christ's confession which constituted the perfection of the expiation.

In winding down this central chapter of The Nature of the Atonement, Campbell writes as follows:

What I thus labour to impress on the mind of my reader is, that the necessity for the atonement which we are contemplating, was moral and spiritual, arising out of our relation to God as the Father of spirits; and not merely legal, arising out of our being under the law. . . . In other words, we have remission of our sins in the blood of Christ, only because that blood has consecrated for us a way into the holiest, and in this relation, and in this alone, can remission of sin be understood.²¹

This recurrent theme of Christ's having consecrated a way into the holiest is not one that pictures God in some sentimental fashion as being so indiscriminately loving that He could be "easy" on sinning, or that His justice could be

compromised by His mercy. No; God as Father is not set up in contrast to God as moral governor. Campbell is very clear on this. He states:

Therefore, it is altogether an error to associate weakness and easiness with the fatherliness of God, and severity and stern demand with His character as a moral governor. . . . I never expect to see the real righteous severity of God truly and healthfully realised and the unchangeable and essential conditions of salvation apprehended, and hope cherished only in being conformed to them, until the blood of Christ is thus seen in its direct relation to our participation in eternal life.²²

Here again we see emphasized that close and direct connection between the atonement and the Christian life, just as earlier we had noted the close connection existing between the incarnation and the atonement, thus comprising a threefold unity. The blood of Christ and our participation in eternal life are inseparably bound together.

The last page of this 35-page chapter contains the following concluding remarks:

But if we will come to the atonement, not venturing in our darkness to predetermine anything as to its nature, but expecting light to shine upon our spirits from it, even the light of eternal life; if we will suffer it to inform us by its own light why we needed it, and what its true value to us is, the punishment of sin will fall into its proper place as testifying to the existence of an evil greater than itself, even sin; from which greater evil it is the direct object of the atonement to deliver us,--deliverance from punishment being but a secondary result. And the reward of righteousness will be raised in our conceptions from the character of something that can be ours by the adjudication of the judge on arbitrary grounds which mercy may recommend, to its true

dignity as that blessedness which is essentially inherent in righteousness, and in that glorifying and enjoying of God of which righteousness alone is the capacity, and which no name, nor title, nor arbitrary arrangement can confer.

The atonement, thus seen by its own light, is not what in our darkness we desired; but it soon reconciles us to itself, for it sets us right as to the true secret of well being. . . .²³

We have now introduced the reader to the high points of Campbell's more formal analysis of the nature of the atonement as set forth in his two chapters dealing, one with the retrospective, and the other with the prospective, aspects of Christ's work. In both aspects there is seen a two-directional mediation on the part of our great High Priest, as He deals in turn with men on the part of God, and God on behalf of men. Campbell's next chapter may be considered to be the climax of his entire exposition, for in it his great burden is to expand upon the direct bearing which the atonement as he understands it has upon the practical Christian life of the believer--upon the purging of his conscience, upon the cleansing from his sins, and upon his enjoyment of that true peace and genuine assurance that can come about only through his participation in the faith of Jesus, his coming to have the mind of Christ.

Chapter 9

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH

Having completed his more formal analysis of the retrospective and prospective aspects of the atonement in the two preceding chapters, Campbell essays in his next chapter--the last which we shall review--to relate his understanding of the atonement to the subjects of righteousness, faith, peace and assurance. In this chapter he sets forth positively what he feels would better take the place of the cherished imputational theories of post-reformation scholasticism which in previous chapters he has criticized as having injected perplexity and confusion into the subject of justification by faith and thus obscured the simplicity of the gospel. He again stresses the directness of the connection between the atonement as he understands it and the Christian life. All conservative Christians have agreed that there is a connection--and a necessary one--between the atonement and the Christian life. All have seen that the prospective aspects of the atonement have looked forward to the end of having Christ's righteousness reproduced, in some measure according to his capacity, in man. All have recognized that by its ethical fruits the efficacy of the atonement must ultimately be judged. But Campbell saw his understanding of the atonement as revealing a more direct and

immediate connection between the atonement and its fruit than that envisioned in the popular imputational theories. According to the latter, the believer can only approach God as he conceives himself to be covered by the imputed righteousness of another, viz., Christ. The meaning of "justification by faith," in this case, is not that one has, or participates in, the faith of Jesus (in the Father's heart of love) nor that he has the mind of Christ (i.e., His attitude and feeling towards self and sin and God)--which is Campbell's view--but instead of this the expression "justification by faith" means that the believer has faith in the (finished) work of Christ on the cross as having thereby accrued a fund of transferable merit that can be imputed to the believer to cover his sins and thus enable him to bask in the favor which God bestows upon his Son for making the atoning sacrifice and making propitiation for man's sins. The latter intellectual system is what Campbell sees as interfering with the directness of the connection which he conceives that there should be, and is, between the atonement and the life of faith. He sees the idea of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to man (whether acquired by His so-called "active" or by His "passive" obedience) as a fictional, "as if," element which unnecessarily complicates the simplicity of the gospel and obscures the true meaning of righteousness by faith, which is simply participation in

the mind of Christ--God's gift to man of eternal life in Christ. The following passage, near the close of the chapter, depicts the directness of the child's cry to the Father, which he endorses. It also gives an illustration of how he sees imputational ideas as interfering with the simplicity and directness of that cry. He speaks of "the supposed necessity for God's imputing righteousness that He may see us as perfectly righteous." He then concludes that

. . . this demand for a legal perfection is altogether foreign to that with which we are occupied. The feeblest cry of the spirit of sonship is sure of a response in the Father's heart, . . . Confidence is of the essence of this cry,--hope in the fatherliness towards which it is outgoing. Reader, say, does it not jar with this cry, does it not mar its simplicity, its truth, to be required to pause and say, "I would cry to my Father, I see His heart is towards me,--the Son reveals it; but I must remember that to be justified in drawing near with confidence I must think of myself as clothed by imputation with a perfect righteousness, because the Father of my spirit must see me as so clothed in order that He may be justified in receiving me to His fatherly heart?" Would not this thought mar the simplicity of the child's cry--would it not indeed altogether change the essence of the confidence cherished?!

The whole of Campbell's Chapter VIII, which is here being reviewed, is occupied with showing the consistency of Campbell's views with Scripture, especially with Hebrews and parallel passages in the Johannine writings and in the the second chapter of Ephesians.

Speaking of the expression, "He is the propitiation for our sins,"² he states:

This is spoken in direct reference to Christ's righteousness, and the fitness of that righteousness to meet the need of the sinner as being a deliverance from sin. In other words, Christ is the propitiation for our sins as He is the way into the holiest--the living way to the Father.

And He is the propitiation: for propitiation is not a thing which He has accomplished and on which we are thrown back as on a past fact. . . . For it is in this view that the Apostle, writing to us "that we sin not," reminds us of the propitiation--not a work of Christ, but the living Christ Himself; and so he proceeds--"Hereby we do know that we know Him if we keep His commandments;" the direct effect of knowing Christ the propitiation for sin being keeping Christ's commandments.³

In the paragraph which follows the above, Campbell indicates his awareness that he is using the word "propitiation differently than do those who associate it with ideas of "substituted penal suffering;" but because he feels that the meaning he has derived from it so strongly permeates the entire epistle, he adds that, "I cannot but hope that, in spite of associations of old standing, I may not in vain have directed the reader's attention to it."⁴

Just as Campbell maintains that Christ is the propitiation so he understands that Christ is our peace.

Peace and Assurance

When Christ told His disciples "peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you," Campbell explains that He

thereby

made them to know that the life of sonship which they witnessed in Him was in Him the Father's gift to them. If they were to be sons of God in Spirit and in truth, the peace of the Son in following the Father as a dear child would be their portion also. Further, as they were to live the life of sonship, not as independent beings, following the example of the Son of God, but as abiding in the Son of God, as branches in the true vine, this peace which He bequeathed to them they were not to have apart from Himself. In abiding in Him were they to have it as a part of the fulness that was in Him for them--a part of the all things pertaining to life and to godliness. "In me ye shall have peace. . . ."5

Turning next to Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, Campbell continues to see emphasized that Christ is the believer's peace. He sees Ephesians 2 as being closely parallel to Hebrews 10. In the former, he understands that the expression about breaking down the middle wall of partition applies much more to the barrier between the believer and God than it does to that between Jew and Gentile. The peace thus accomplished between Christ and the believer Campbell sees to be so closely related to the reconciliation effected on the cross as to be virtually identical with it. There are not two peaces, but only one.

Only One Peace, not Two

Campbell articulates another advantage of his view:

But the gospel does not proclaim two manners of peace with God: one legal, and the result of Christ's bearing the penalty of our sins; the

other spiritual, to be known in our participation in Christ's spirit.⁶

Campbell sees the one peace "first, as in its own nature and essence spiritual, and then, because spiritual, also legal,--a perfect answer to all the demands of the law."⁷

It should be noted that Campbell is not here posing an antithesis between the spiritual and the legal. No; he is not rejecting the legal in order to make place for the spiritual. It is a matter of priority. The peace that is sought for is "first. . . in its own nature and essence spiritual, and then, because spiritual, also legal. . ." Campbell's objection, expressed above, to the notion that there are two manners of peace with God, one legal and the other spiritual, is yet another example of his basic concern to show the direct connection between the atonement and the life of faith.

Campbell knows that many will object to this order, viz., that the peace accomplished on the cross is first spiritual and then, as a consequence, legal. In accord with his habitual fairness he sets forth this common objection in as plausible a light as he is able. He has the objectors protesting that we are all sinners under condemnation--

our first need is pardon, as a discharge from the sentence upon us. Granting that our true well-being is to be ultimately found in peace and reconciliation in the spiritual sense of the words, have we not a first need of peace and

reconciliation in a legal sense? Our fears of wrath may not be holy feelings, or what pertain to the divine life in man; but are they not natural, allowable, nay, right feelings in us sinners?⁸

To this question Campbell answers, No.

If an atonement be adequate morally and spiritually, it will of necessity be legally adequate. If it be sufficient in relation to our receiving the adoption of sons, it must be sufficient for our redemption as under the law. To think otherwise would be to subordinate the gospel to the law, and the love of the Father of spirits to His offspring to that moral government which has its origin in that love. We are not under the law, but under grace. Let us receive this gracious constitution of things in the light of the love that has ordained it. Let us understand that He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Let us conform to this purpose of God,--let us receive the righteousness of God in Christ, and be the righteousness of God in Him. . . . Surely Philip was right when he said, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us."⁹

A prime characteristic of Campbell's theology is that it has to do with persons and personal relationships.¹⁰ This is emphasized by his use of capital letters in the following statement: "we have here to do with PERSONS,--the Father of spirits and His offspring."¹¹

The invitation to be reconciled to God is the invitation to return and enter into their Father's house, into their Father's heart. This is what is put before them, freely, unconditionally. Does the word "unconditionally" cause difficulty? It is said--"Is not to be reconciled to comply with a condition?" Yes, such as drinking of the water of life is in relation to living. Not in any other sense a condition,--not assuredly as giving the right to drink, for that is the grace revealed, the grace wherein we stand. But as to wrath and safety from wrath, if questions arise it is a proof that what is presented is not understood.

"He that believeth shall not come into condemnation, but hath passed from death unto life." [The italics are Campbell's.]

The peace-speaking power of the blood of Christ is to be conceived of as a direct power on the spirit in its personal relation to the Father of spirits, revealing at once the heart of the Father, and the way into the heart of the Father, even the Son. The blood that reveals this imparts peace, makes perfect as pertains to the conscience,--yes, purges it from dead works to serve the living God.¹²

Campbell next zeros in on the crucial question, How then does man obtain righteousness, if he does not get it through the imputed merits of Christ? What takes the place of the imputation idea that he is objecting to?

Faith: its Relation to Righteousness

Campbell's answer to this question is that faith itself is righteousness, being the only right attitude of man before God. Not any faith, but the faith of Jesus as that faith is shared in--participated in--by the believer through the Holy Spirit: it is this that is righteousness. The justifying element in faith, Campbell sees, is "not only not an imputation, but that which is the most absolute opposite of an imputation, viz., life from the dead."¹³

Apparently Campbell felt that of all the post-Biblical writers only Luther had a conception of the nature of faith that was essentially the same as his own. He writes:

Although the expression "justification by faith" be associated in our mind with all preaching of the atonement, the teaching of Luther is that alone of all the forms of thought on this subject considered above with which that expression really harmonises, for him alone have we found teaching that it is faith itself which God recognises as righteousness. . . . that condition of the human spirit in which most glory is given to God [Luther] regards as self-evidently the highest righteousness, and that condition is faith.¹⁴

In all of his discussion of the way of salvation up until his present mention of the conventional phrase, "justification by faith," (where, claiming support from Luther, he gives the expression a different from conventional interpretation) Campbell has avoided use of the usual terms, justification and sanctification, and the commonly emphasized distinction between the two. This has been a studied omission.

If I have appeared to forget, as I have not for a moment done, the distinction made between justification and sanctification, it is that I have hoped that the real spiritual truth that is in justification being once seen, the subject would take its right form in the mind of itself.¹⁵

Campbell goes on to deplore the fact that so often "artificial conceptions of justification by faith have been adopted."¹⁶ In pleading that there is no need for any artificial conception, nor for the introduction of any imputational fiction into this subject, he refers to the first verses of the 8th chapter of Romans where the consciousness

of real change is seen to provide solid ground for assurance.

He appeals to the subjective character of this Romans 8 passage as being "too broadly marked to permit its being quoted in favor of the doctrine of justification by an imputation of righteousness."¹⁷ Neither will Campbell concede that Romans 5:1 can rightly be used in support of an imputational interpretation of "justification by faith." He sees these two passages as both saying the same thing. The latter (Romans 5:1) is directly connected with Abraham's faith which was imputed (or reckoned) to him for righteousness.

This language, indeed, occurs in immediate connection with that reference to the glory given to God in the faith of Abraham which sheds such clear light on the righteousness of God in recognizing faith as righteousness. . . . This gracious mind of God in relation to us it is that our faith accepts and responds to; for our faith is, in truth, the Amen of our individual spirits to that deep, multiform, all-embracing, harmonious Amen of humanity, in the person of the Son of God, to the mind and heart of the Father in relation to man,-- the divine wrath and the divine mercy, which is the atonement. This Amen towards God, gives glory to God according to the glory which he has in Christ; therefore does faith justify. . . . The Amen of the individual spirit to the Amen of the Son to the mind of the Father in relation to man is saving faith--true righteousness; being the living action, and true and right movement of the spirit of the individual man in the light of eternal life. . . . this Amen in man is the due response to that word, "Be ye reconciled to God," for the gracious and gospel character of which word, as the tenderest pleading that can be addressed to the most sin-burdened spirit, I have contended above.¹⁸

Analysis of the passage shows that Campbell is saying
 (1) that Christ's Amen to the mind and heart of the Father

"IS the atonement.

(2) that our little participating amen (in Christ's spirit)

IS faith, and

(3) that it also IS righteousness.

Therefore,--things equal to the same thing being equal
 to each other--faith is righteousness (in this context).

Campbell has by now made abundantly clear what he sees
 to be the nature of true faith and the nature of righteous-
 ness, and that ultimately the two are one and the same
 thing. "The Amen of the individual human spirit to the Amen
 of the Son to the mind of the Father in relation to us is
 saving faith--true righteousness." So being, it is that
 which gives most glory to God. So being, it is that which
 alone brings genuine assurance of faith, which, in turn, is
 the most effective safeguard against all forms of false
 religious confidence. This, Campbell's understanding of
 "justification by faith"--of righteousness by faith--is thus
 seen to be intimately and ineluctably connected with the
 doing and dying of Christ--with the atonement--and with His
 continuing mediatorial work in our behalf. There is no way
 that Campbell's view could rightly be understood to imply
 that faith itself could be our saviour apart from Christ.
 It is only faith in Christ, that faith in Christ which is at

the same time a participation in the mind of Christ. Here the expression, "faith in Christ," can be seen to convey a deeper and richer (and even an importantly different) meaning than it commonly does in the traditional understanding of the term, where it is thought to refer more to our faith in the work of Christ, apart from us, wherein He is understood to have satisfied divine justice and accrued for us a fund of transferable merit or righteousness which will "cover" the believer, both now and in the coming judgment, and thereby bring the coveted "assurance of salvation." Campbell's understanding of the expression "faith in Christ" of course also includes this faith in the (external) work of Christ, as well as faith in the person of Christ. Unquestionably so. But the full dimension of his understanding is better conveyed by the expression "the faith of Jesus." Believers are privileged to participate in, and share in, the faith which Jesus had, in His Father's heart of love, which it was his life mission to make manifest. This sharing in Christ's implicit trust in His Father's love, this privilege of thus becoming the sons of God and worshipping the Father in spirit and in truth is the glorious gift of life eternal, of which Jesus spoke when He declared, "He that hath the Son hath life." He has already passed from death unto life.

It can now be seen that Campbell's understanding of justification by faith is intimately related to the whole question and concept of what is the essence of the gospel. Its necessary connection with assurance of faith is especially noteworthy because the latter was one of his principal concerns in his early pastoral ministry, and one which ultimately led to his trial and deposition. It is only in the light of his ultimate recognition of the virtual identity of true faith and righteousness that there can be perceived the fullness of that insight which was nascent in his early conviction that 'assurance is of the essence of faith and necessary to salvation.' Assurance, by its very nature, is subjective, personal, experiential. No one can really participate in the mind of Christ without experiencing His peace and trust in His Father's love. A person cannot have peace and joy and love without knowing it: he has the witness of the Spirit in himself, so long as he is participating in the mind of Christ, so long as he is sharing in the faith of Jesus.

Campbell's understanding of "justification by faith," then, is that it is sharing in the faith of Jesus, i.e., having the mind of Christ, having an implicit trust in God's love that is similar to Christ's. This is what true faith is. And this faith is what justifies in God's eyes (i.e., is accounted, or reckoned as, righteousness) because it is

righteousness--it is the only right attitude and response of man toward his Creator and heavenly Father. Such faith is the gift of God through His Spirit, to be received or rejected by the will of man. It is inseparable from the atoning and mediating work of Christ. It is by grace alone. And it worketh by love.

This, I believe, was Campbell's view of the real meaning of "justification by faith." It was a view that was fully shared and supported by his dear friend Erskine. It is for this reason that I have chosen to refer to them as modern "apostles of the righteousness of faith."

The preposition, "of", is used rather than "by", in this phrase, "righteousness of faith," because the preposition "by" implies that faith is something different from, and a condition of, righteousness, whereas the use of "of" is consistent with the idea that faith is righteousness, or more strictly speaking, that having the faith of Jesus is righteousness. (Any faith is not righteousness, but having the faith of Jesus--the faith that Jesus had--is righteousness.)

Campbell and Luther

Campbell was firmly convinced that his own understanding of the righteousness of faith was essentially the same as was Luther's. This he makes clear in an 8-page note

which he appended to a later edition of The Nature of the Atonement, entitled, "Luther's Teaching of Justification by Faith Alone." Excerpts from this highly significant Note follow. It begins:

I believe that I have truly expressed Luther's personal faith and consciousness in his contending for justification by faith; that which also was the secret of his power and the value of his work.

Faith is the right attitude of the human spirit toward God--the due response to His revelation of Himself to us, in rendering which our hearts are right with God. Justification by faith alone means that in pronouncing us just God regards only and exclusively the attitude of our spirits towards Himself. . . .¹⁹

In discussing the relation of good works to faith Campbell states that

The faith whose power to inspire confidence towards God is suspended, waiting for the consciousness of a supplement of feeling, is not that faith of love which quickens love. Of this Luther had the clearest discernment in the light not of a severe logic, though it is consonant with the severest logic, but of a deep personal experience--the experience first, of the mental agony he endured while engaged in the anxious attempt to perfect faith in the use of all the discipline prescribed for that end; and then, of the happy emancipation of his spirit as soon as he had fixed his exclusive regards on the Cross of Christ; an experience identical with that which Bunyan gives as that of his pilgrim when he came in sight of the Cross and the burden which he bore fell of itself from his back.²⁰ (italics added)

His main emphasis is still upon the primacy of faith. He is speaking of how the wrong kind of emphasis upon works hinders true faith, how it is "a distraction of the regard

of the spirit from the object of faith." He speaks of Luther's "happy emancipation of his spirit as soon as he had fixed his exclusive regards on the Cross of Christ."

The underlined sentence in the above quotation is also noteworthy. It calls in question a judgment which some may have formed from his earlier writing that Campbell has placed too much emphasis upon feeling as a test of true faith. Our confidence is not to be in feeling, but in Christ. Any perceived contradiction between this and his earlier teaching is more likely to be apparent than real, although growth in his understanding is to be expected.²¹

The intimate bearing which Campbell's understanding of righteousness by faith has upon the believer's peace and assurance is underscored in the paragraph which immediately follows the one last quoted above:

The divine acceptance of faith has as its counterpart in him that believes peace with God and joy in God, a peace and joy proportioned to the simplicity and strength of the faith from which they spring. This aspect of Luther's teaching we must realise if we would understand its power.²²

Campbell again explains how his view of these matters need not in any degree lead to boastful self-confidence in one's own subjective experience, as it is sometimes feared that it might. He maintains that there need be no limit to our assurance of faith on this account.

Here let us realise that the exclusiveness of the mind's regard as fixed on God's revelation

of Himself in Christ being preserved [his only proviso] no measure of confidence towards God can be too great, and all jealousy of such confidence, as if it were inconsistent with humility is only possible when that which is so judged is not understood.²³ (italics added)

Campbell here anticipates vigorous objection. He has the objectors asking

"Where is there room for the grace of humility?" is the question urged, when our obedience to divine light is regarded as presumptuous confidence in our own judgment. This question is repeated, when our joy in that personal assurance of God's acceptance which accompanies the response of faith to the divine love is assumed to be an unwarranted self-complacency in our own conscious state before God. [Here Campbell's answer is magnificent!] But, as it is true humility to believe, so is it true humility to rejoice in that which we believe. "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad."²⁴

The epigrammatic sentence underscored above (italics mine) is one of rare and penetrating insight. It reminds one that the very keynote of Scripture is rejoicing.

o o o o o

With the present chapter we have completed our consideration of each of four major themes in Campbell's understanding of the way of salvation, viz., (1) universal pardon, (2) assurance of faith, (3) the direct connection between the atonement and the Christian life of sonship, and, (4) the righteousness of faith. Hopefully, the close relation of these themes to each other has become increasingly evident as our study has progressed.

That which we first considered in detail, viz., universal pardon, continued to occupy a foundational place in his understanding from first to last. The penultimate chapter of The Nature of the Atonement is permeated with Campbell's conviction of the prodigality of grace, and of his belief that God has already pardoned all mankind in Christ. It is this assurance of the pardoning love of our heavenly Father, more than anything else, that moves the heart to evangelical repentance. In this light there is no need to view God as standing back--provision for satisfying justice having already been made--and saying, Yes, I will extend mercy and pardon to any one of you IF you are sincerely sorry for your sins, and turn from them. No, He says, "I have already forgiven you. Look at Calvary!" This is what severs the root of legalism,--which is the idea that if I do this, then God will be moved to do that. The need for such anxious thinking and doing is severed at the source. Also cut to the root, is the selfish motivation that would attempt to serve God in order to obtain His favour and the blessings of heaven, or here and now, in order to achieve peace of mind and freedom from guilt feelings. The motivation for holy living then becomes the desire to give glory to God, in the realization that the chief end of man is to glorify God and love Him forever.

On the other hand, the root of antinomianism (that other great error, the opposite of legalism, which has ever threatened to pervert the truth) is likewise cut by this understanding of the gospel, superficial appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. The direct relationship between Christ's atoning and mediating work and the life of sonship, of holiness, of participation in the mind of Christ, and of worshipping God in spirit and in truth, is so close that there is left no room for antinomian influences. An exceedingly high standard of holy living is thus enjoined without being embarrassed by the drawbacks of what has been termed "perfectionism." Thus it can be seen that Campbell's theology is characterized by balance as well as by profundity! In addition to these characteristics, a third should be mentioned--simplicity. His view of Christianity might well be summed up as simply: A life given us in Christ; that life lived, in union with Christ by His Spirit.

Chapter 10

ERSKINE ON JUSTIFICATION AND FAITH

Up to now we have given exclusive consideration to the soteriological views of Campbell, and have said nothing about the thinking and writing of his friend Thomas Erskine upon the same subjects of faith, justification and righteousness. The present chapter aims to fill this void.

Erskine was twelve years older than Campbell. Even before their association during the Row years Erskine had independently been formulating theological ideas similar to Campbell's. This is evidenced by his response upon first seeing him and hearing the young man preach: "I have heard today from that pulpit what I believe to be the true gospel."¹ He had already written a brilliant little book, The Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel which had attracted the attention of one of the leading Scottish divines.² From the time of their summer together at Row the two men were bound to each other by the ties of shared views and personal friendship which lasted until 1870, when Erskine died, two years before Campbell. Our specific concern in this chapter is to show how Erskine's expositions, especially those regarding the righteousness of faith, complement and reinforce the views of his friend.

Erskine's methodology was different from Campbell's.

He gave more attention to exegesis of particular passages of Scripture than the latter did. He used his extensive knowledge of Greek in a more visible manner than did his younger colleague. In this regard he was strong where Campbell was relatively weak. Erskine's detailed exegeses of key passages of Romans, as well as his perspective on the Epistle as a whole, offered just the kind of strengthening which Campbell's presentations needed. Campbell focused much of his attention upon Hebrews and the Johannine writings. This was just at the time when historical critics were beginning to downgrade their importance. Unquestionably Campbell saw himself in harmony with Paul, and he even made free use of certain of his Epistles, especially Ephesians, but he never really dug into Romans in any way approaching the exegetical depth that Erskine did. And Romans is the principal "righteousness by faith" book! It is the bastion of those holding to forensic justification, substitutionary atonement and imputed righteousness. What chance of survival would Campbell's views have had without some credible confrontation with the supposed thrust of Romans?

Erskine devoted a large portion of his 350-page volume Doctrine of Election (1837) to an exposition of Romans. He begins his running commentary on the Epistle in his Chapter VI (of The Doctrine of Election), which is entitled, "The Righteousness of Faith." He first considers the context of

Habakkuk's prophecy, to which Paul refers, and which contains the statement, "but the just shall live by his faith."³ After reviewing it, he observes that the prophet's heart was set at rest, and he was able to welcome the calamities, as soon as he discerned God's purpose in them, which he saw as it were shining through them. They were designed to be subservient and preparatory to the coming glory. "He was thus justified by faith--he was brought into submissive conformity to the will of God. . . . And thus having the mind of Christ, he had the righteousness of Christ."⁴ This is the only way, Erskine maintains, to rightly relate oneself to the trials and desolations of life--submit to them as sent by God to develop trust. It is by this faith that one becomes righteous--"for conformity to the will of God is righteousness." Erskine paraphrases the key text quoted by Paul to read: "The just, or the man who trusts God, shall live by the faith of the purpose of God revealed in it. . . ."⁵

It is thus evident that the faith which is here taught is a confidence in God, and a trusting of ourselves to His guidance, knowing that He will lead us safely through, though it must be by a way of sorrow and death, into his own kingdom. . . . This same confidence made Habakkuk righteous, for it made him of one mind with God, in his whole dealings with man. . . .

This, then, is the righteousness of faith, as set forth in the book of Habakkuk. . . .⁶

Inasmuch as Paul used this verse in Habakkuk as his text for the entire Epistle, Erskine concluded that Romans was "written expressly to show what that righteousness is which is by the faith of Christ."⁷ He states his belief that the expression "the righteousness of God" as it occurs in Rom. 1:17, 3:21-16 and many other places in the Epistle means "that condition of heart which God will acknowledge as righteous in man."⁸ He maintains that this righteousness does not consist of any record of past obedience or services, but it consists "simply in a man's personally and consciously meeting God in his own heart and surrendering himself to him as to one that is trustworthy." It is thus, as Luther called it, the article on which the standing or falling of a church depends.

For a church may have very confused doctrinal notions, but still if its members are meeting God in their own hearts, and giving themselves up to him, it is a standing and living church; and, on the other hand, a church may have very clear and correct doctrinal notions, but if this personal intercourse with God and surrender to him be wanting, it is a falling, dying church.⁹

Erskine goes on to describe this righteousness as just what man needs, because he can promptly enter into it without a guilty conscience, yet at the same time it is no "fictitious thing, but a true righteousness, not making void the law, but establishing it, and commending itself to every conscience."¹⁰ Furthermore, God is just in acknowledging it

as righteousness, for He does not excuse man from the punishment due to sin. No, He himself executes that punishment, but He does so only with the consent of the sinner; because, explains Erskine, "there belongs to the very substance of this righteousness a present accepting of punishment, and a present shedding out of the offending blood of man's will. . . . Now this", he concludes, "is the very righteousness described in Rom. 3:21-26, as the righteousness revealed in Jesus Christ. . . ."¹¹

The concept of "shedding out the lifeblood of man's self-will" is a recurring one in Erskine's thought. It is his way of expressing the idea of dying to self. There is no salvation for man apart from this death. All must be crucified with Christ if they would reign with him in glory. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me."¹²

Erskine's Free Translation of Romans 3:21-26

Erskine next submits a "free translation" of this crucial passage, Rom. 3:21-26:

But now a righteousness of God, that is, a righteousness which God will acknowledge, is manifested, which, though beyond the limits of the law, is yet witnessed to by the law and the prophets,--even a righteousness of God, through the faith of Jesus Christ, that is, a righteousness consisting in trusting God as Jesus did, which is offered to all, and rests upon all who thus trust him; for there is no difference, as all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and

such trusters are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set before us as making reconciliation by a trust exercised even in offering up or shedding his own blood, that is, by committing himself with filial confidence to his Father's leading, through sorrow and death: as an example of the righteousness to which he calls us, and which is founded, not on past rectitude, but on the forgiveness of sins committed during the whole time that the mercy of God has been sparing us; as an example, I say, of the righteousness to which he calls us at each successive present moment, according to which God is just, whilst he acknowledges the righteousness of the man who has the trust of Jesus--that is, who has the same trust that Jesus had."¹³

Because of its key importance this paraphrase has been reproduced without abridgment. Erskine knew that many would take strong exception to this "untheological" translation, for it makes out Christ's role to be primarily that of example rather than that of substituted sin-bearer, as most conventional interpretations would have it. Erskine, indeed, had a place in his thinking for Christ as substitute, as will be shown below; but here in Rom. 3:21-26, he felt, Christ's role is pictured as the example or pattern of the kind of faith that man, too, is to exercise. "Jesus . . . the Author and Finisher of our faith, is set before us as a pattern of the way in which we may possess ourselves of that righteousness." He refers to Psalms 40 as "giving a view of the righteousness of Christ as a pattern, precisely similar to the view which I have supposed this passage to contain."¹⁴

From the foregoing, it is clear that Erskine strongly

supported Campbell's concept of faith as righteousness, and that man is called upon to have the same faith as Jesus had. In his Christ the Bread of Life, it will be recalled, Campbell had touched on this theme of Christ as example when he pointed out that Christ would never have experienced "justification by faith," as the term is generally understood by scholastic theologians, e.g., by the imputed righteousness of Another, so in this sense Christ would have been different from all other men (not having to live by imputed righteousness) and thus in this important respect would not have been our example or pattern. Not so, Campbell had said, Christ was our example and pattern, as the One showing us the kind of faith and trust in the heavenly Father that we are to share in and have. Erskine not only approved of Campbell's Christ the Bread of Life, but he also went on to contend, in his exposition of Romans, that this Example/Pattern idea was the real meaning of its key passage, Rom. 3:21-26. This is evident from his "free translation," which we have now considered.

The Headship of Christ

Another way in which Erskine supplements and strengthens Campbell's positions is by emphasizing the headship of Christ, and the organic connection which Christ, as the

second Adam, has with all humanity. Here Erskine is interpreting the atonement in the light of the incarnation.

This was also Campbell's method. Erskine emphasizes the importance of Christ's having genuinely partaken of our humanity in order to fit him for his role as the pattern of righteousness for fallen man. He acknowledges that some would consider this degree of condescension to be "derogating to the dignity of the Saviour," but he continues:

yet if they will recollect that Jesus truly partook of that same flesh and blood of which the children were partakers, and on which the righteous sentence of condemnation lay; and was, therefore, in his sacrifice the real Head and not the mere substitute of the sinful race, and did what he did, as the right thing, becoming and fitting himself to do, as a partaker of that nature, and what would have been right for all men to do, . . . and if they will farther reflect that he did this thing, not that men might be relieved from doing [it themselves] . . .--they will see that . . . [it] is in perfect accordance with the word of God.¹⁵

Fundamental to Erskine's understanding of the book of Romans is the concept that Christ is our head, that at His incarnation he partook of that nature which He had come to redeem. In line with the emphasis of the early Greek Fathers of the Christian church that the unassumed is the unredeemed,¹⁶ Erskine saw that it was necessary for Christ to actually get inside of our fallen nature, so to speak, in order to really feel the weight of our sins and vicariously confess them before the Father with that attitude and mind of perfect contrition and perfect submission which alone

could atone for our sins. The attitude or mind which Christ thus exemplified, and continues to express in his on-going intercession, is that same mind which, by the gift of the Spirit, we are called upon to "let be" in us as it was in Christ Jesus. We are thus to participate in the ministry of our great Pattern, our Head, our High Priest. Here we see coming together the themes of atonement, incarnation, the humanity of Christ, his headship, his vicarious confession, and our participation with our Head through the Spirit. It is evident that Erskine's emphasis upon the humanity of Christ strengthened and enhanced the views of Campbell. That emphasis put into better focus the latter's insight that the atonement is best seen in the light of the incarnation. Although Campbell's understanding of the nature which Christ assumed at His incarnation was essentially the same as Erskine's (as evidenced by his sermons), Campbell was less explicit on the subject than was his friend.¹⁷

For support of the concept of Christ's vicariously confessing our sins--one of Campbell's main themes-- Erskine relies heavily on the Psalms, especially on Psalms 40:

Secondly [the headship and humanity of Christ was his first point, see above], in the Psalms we find Jesus continually confessing sin as one of the sinful race on whom the Lord had laid the iniquities of all, although he had no personal sins; and casting himself on God as the faithful God who forgiveth sin, and that forsaketh not those that trust in him. Jesus confessed sin, and the Father was faithful and just to forgive him his sin. He accepted his punishment, and God

remembered the covenant of life and raised him from the dead. Indeed, his propitiation consisted much of these two things, confession of sin, and acceptance of punishment; but those are not the actions of one who is preferring a claim to God's favour, founded on bypast obedience. On the contrary, they indicate that his official righteousness was founded on the forgiveness of past sin, a forgiveness exactly similar to that which is bestowed on us, namely, a forgiveness which does not remit the punishment of sin, but which carries us through it, into eternal life, on the other side of it.

This view, then, is surely agreeable to Scripture, and I may appeal to every reader, whether it does not commend itself to his conscience, as well as his reason, as most right, that the way by which Jesus made reconciliation for the race, as its head, should be also the pattern of the righteousness to which every individual of the race is called. Certain it is that it is only by yielding ourselves to that same Spirit in which Jesus lived and offered his sacrifice, and which he brought as a fountain of righteous life into our fallen nature, that any of us can become righteous, so that our righteousness must be essentially the same as his, being, in fact, only a rill out of his fountain.¹⁸

The Faith of Jesus

A distinctive feature of Erskine's interpretation of Rom. 3: 21-26, and that which sets it apart from almost all others, is that the acceptable righteousness there spoken of is not so much faith in Jesus as it is a sharing in the faith of Jesus: ". . . even a righteousness of God, through the faith of Jesus, that is, a righteousness consisting in trusting God as Jesus did. . . ." ¹⁹--which is Erskine's explanatory insertion of his understanding of the meaning of the

translation, "through the faith of Jesus" (dia pisteos 'Ihsou Christou). This translation depends on viewing 'Ihsou Christou as being a subjective genitive, rather than an objective genitive, as almost all modern translators assume it to be, in harmony with their theological understanding that it is the believers' faith in Christ's redemptive work that is imputed to them for righteousness. Erskine is not altogether alone, however, in his choice of the subjective genitive for this Greek phrase. The German scholar and commentator, Lange, also stoutly maintained this interpretation,²⁰ as did another German scholar, Haussleiter. Of the latter, the International Critical Commentary states the following, concerning the translation, "faith in Jesus":

This is the hitherto almost universally accepted view, which has however been recently challenged in a very carefully worked out argument by Prof. Haussleiter of Greifswald (Der Glaube Jesu Christi u. der christliche Glaube, Leipzig, 1891).

Dr. Haussleiter contends that the gen. is subjective not objective, that like the "faith of Abraham" in ch. iv. 16, it denotes the faith (in God) which Christ Himself maintained even through the ordeal of the Crucifixion, that this faith is here put forward as the central feature of the Atonement, and that it is to be grasped or appropriated by the Christian in a similar manner to that in which he reproduces the faith of Abraham. If this view held good, a number of other passages (notably i.17) would be affected by it. But, although ably carried out, the interpretation of some of these passages seems to us forced; the theory brings together things, like the pisteos 'Ihsou Christou here with the pistis Theou in iii.3, which are really disparate; and it has, so far, we believe, met with no acceptance.²¹

Clearly, Haussleiter's view is essentially the same as Erskine's on this central point. It is indeed true, as the writer of the Critical Commentary states, that if this view be correct, then other key passages in the Epistle to the Romans will need to be fundamentally altered in order to bring them into harmony with the proposed interpretation. This harmonization, Erskine has attempted in his exposition of the book of Romans which we are here considering.

The Meaning of Propitiation

For his understanding of the word propitiation (hilasterion) Erskine connects Rom. 3:25 with Hebrews 9:25, equating the latter's en haimati with the former's hilasterion: He considers very doubtful the KJV translation, "to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." He points out that the preposition en is very rarely used to denote the object of faith, and that "faith in the blood of Jesus" is an expression which never occurs in the Bible, even with the more appropriate preposition, eis. He suggests that diapistis may be co-ordinate with en hamati in 3:25, thus allowing the translation, "through trust, whilst he offered up his blood." In this light, the phrase could be seen to "describe the condition of our Lord's spirit during the shedding of his blood."

And thus we have Jesus here represented as appearing with his own blood, offered up in faith or in confidence toward his father, and so making propitiation as the great High Priest.²²

Erskine sees this understanding of propitiation as that which agrees with all of Scripture in regard to the way of salvation through Christ. It

agrees with the whole history of the life of Jesus, and especially with the history of his last sufferings, the termination of which was marked by an expression of filial confidence, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." It agrees also with the reproaches cast on him at that solemn hour, "He trusted God that he would deliver him. It agrees also with Job's confidence, "Though he slay me yet will I trust in him;" and with Habakkuk's, when he welcomed the Chaldean correction, as the preparation for the glory of God.²³

The Death of Self-Will

In the following passage Erskine expounds one of his main themes, viz., that the "shedding out of the blood of man's will" is the specific way in which we follow our Lord's example, and thus participate--in our limited sphere--in Christ's propitiation for our sins.

All sin consists in man's independent will; and therefore, the shedding out of the blood of man's will is that which cleanseth from all sin.

. . . This was the continual sacrifice of Jesus, who bore and confessed the sins of all men. And he is the unspeakable gift of God to all men, not in order that they may be excused from making this sacrifice, but in order that they may partake of the spirit of Jesus, and thus may be enabled to partake with him in this sacrifice of self--in this acceptable service--so that God may be just, whilst reckoning them righteous.²⁴

Here, then, in the above passage, we have Erskine's definition of sin as being simply man's independent will. We have also his delineation of how only that sin can be purged, by shedding out the lifeblood of that self-will by following in the footsteps of Him who prayed, "Not my will, but Thine be done."

In wrapping up his commentary on the third chapter of Romans he speaks of how the true righteousness described therein "establishes the law."

It establishes the law, not only by acknowledging its righteousness in condemning sin, but by being the only principle which can produce true obedience. In fact, it is true obedience--for it is a present and entire surrender to the will of God, to be directed by him, in doing or in suffering.²⁵

Justification and Substitution

Erskine next considers the 4th chapter of Romans. He sees Abraham's experience as an illustration of the righteousness of faith. In place of the word "impute," Erskine prefers "reckon" or "account" or "consider," for any of these latter three English words better conveys the meaning of the original than does the word "impute," which, Erskine says, "conveys the idea of a factitious transaction."²⁶ He says that the commonly held doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers does not find support in this 4th chapter, as is popularly supposed. The Biblical

expressions themselves, Erskine asserts, simply do not bear out the idea of imputation,

for it is twice distinctly asserted in verses 5th and 9th, that faith is reckoned for righteousness--not that Christ's righteousness is reckoned to a man who has it not, but that the faith which a man truly has, is in God's estimate reckoned righteousness.²⁷

Erskine ends his 6th chapter of The Doctrine of Election with a sobering indictment of the inadequacy of purely substitutionary views of Christ's atoning work. He likens them to the ancient Jews' distorted views of the efficacy of the sacrifice of bulls and goats.

The Jewish sacrifices were inefficient, because they were substitutes [*italics his*]--they suited the Jew outward--they were not the shedding of the blood of man's will, which is the true sacrifice.

. . . . The Jew outward had a confidence in the sacrifices of the law, whilst yet his own will remained unsacrificed; he loved the doctrine of substitution, because it seemed to combine the safety of the narrow way with the ease of the broad way; and his chief objection to Jesus was that he declared the necessity of a personal sacrifice in each individual, and denied the possibility of substitution in this great work. My dear reader, Jesus is not the substitute for men, but their head; and the work by which he made propitiation for men is that same righteousness in which he presents himself as a pattern for the imitation of all men. "Take up thy cross and follow me, and where I am, there shall my servant be. . . ."²⁸

The concept of Christ as our Head is fundamental to Erskine's understanding of the book of Romans, especially chapters 4, 5 and 6. In one of his earlier books, The

Brazen Serpent, he expounds this concept with great clarity. One of the facets of this subject is that the very fact of Christ's resurrection is evidence that God has forgiven all men their trespasses, that a universal pardon, or justification, as been accomplished by Christ's death and resurrection. "The great proof that Christ's death has indeed put away sin is his own resurrection. The grave is God's prison. Into that prison he was put as our Head and representative." By means of a simple illustration Erskine emphasizes the fact that liberation from prison implies that pardon has been granted: if we see a man in prison one day, and find him at liberty the next day, and ask him why he has been let out of prison, he would likely answer, Because I have been pardoned. Erskine continues:

Now it is written of Christ, that "he tasted death for every man," and that "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all," and that he is "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." He was put into the prison of the grave for the offenses of the flesh of which he was the head. And why was he liberated? Because those offenses, the offenses of the flesh, of the world, of every man, were punished and cancelled. He died as the condemned head of the race. He rose as the justified or righteous head of the race. He died because of our offenses (not that we might offend, but because we had offended), and he rose again because of our justification (not that we might be justified, but because we were justified).²⁹

Erskine defends his understanding of the meaning of the above verse (Rom. 4:25) in a long footnote--a note which ends with the appeal, "I beg my reader to weight this note."

It pertains to the Greek words dikaiosis and dikaiosune. His exegesis here is fundamental, it seems to me, to his entire understanding of the book of Romans, and indeed, of the whole New Testament as it pertains to the heart of the gospel.

An Important Note on Dikaiosis and Dikaiosune

He begins his note by saying: "This translation has been much objected to; and I don't wonder at it, for the whole theology of man is opposed to it." First of all, he turns the attention of those who are ignorant of Greek to one who was a respected authority in his day, Bishop Horsley, "a name certainly amongst the first of England's many scholars, and actually the first of her modern Biblical critics." He proceeds to "transcribe two or three sentences which prove that the Bishop would not have dissented from the subsequent part of this note."³⁰ The Bishop's words were:

"The original words are without ambiguity and clearly represent our Lord's resurrection as an event which took place in consequence of man's justification, in the same manner as his death took place in consequence of man's sins. It follows therefore that our justification is a thing totally distinct from the final salvation of the godly, pages 262-3. Our justification is the grace "in which we now stand," page 265.³¹

Here again is seen that distinction which we have already noted in Campbell's thinking, the distinction between justification, or pardon, and ultimate salvation.

Next, Erskine addresses those who are conversant with Greek, as he continues his important note:

Much error has originated from confounding two words, which, though related to each other, are yet quite distinct: these are dikaiosis and dikaiosune,--the first (viz., dikaiosis) being the judicial act by which God has removed the imputation of sin, during this accepted time, in virtue of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world,--and the second (viz., dikaiosune being the righteousness or character of God manifested in that act.³²

He goes on to say that in Scripture the dikaiosis is never said to be ek pisteos (by faith) because the dikaio-
sis, strictly speaking, is Christ's work and not man's. It "is simply in virtue of Christ's work, and independently of faith altogether, that the man is delivered from the imputa-
tion of sin, as becomes the subject of dikaiosis."³³ In contrast, "it is by faith alone in the dikaiosis that man
becomes righteous, or the subject of dikaiosune."³⁴

As our translators uniformly translate dikaiosis, justification, and dikaiosune, righteousness, they ought to have known that, although righteousness by faith is a Scripture doctrine, there is not the smallest shadow of such a doctrine in Scripture as justification by faith; taking justification to signify the judicial act which is expressed by dikaiosis.³⁵

Part of the trouble may have arisen, Erskine suggests, because there is but one verb (dikaiousmai) answering to the two nouns (dikaiosis and dikaiosune). The one verb can have two meanings depending upon which noun it is connected with. Thus it could mean (1) "I am the subject of dikaiosis",

i.e., I am freed from the imputation of sin." Or it could mean (2) "'I am the subject of dikaïosune', i.e., I am made righteous."³⁶ It is the latter alone that can rightly be described as being "by faith." It (#2) can be termed, with equal propriety, either "justification by faith" or "righteousness by faith." But neither expression can rightly refer to #1 because it (dikaïosis) is never "by faith." Dikaïosis, in Erskine's understanding, applies to all mankind universally, while dikaïosune applied only to believers (--believers in the dikaïosis!). It is #2 that Erskine sees as the great "end and object of the whole matter, and for the accomplishment of this the dikaïosis has been ordained."

He explains that

The dikaïosis answers to the universal atonement, --the dikaïosune ek pisteos to the purging of the conscience, or the personal assurance; the one declares God the Saviour of all men--the other declares him the Saviour specially of those who believe.³⁷

Not only does Erskine equate this "purging of the conscience" with personal assurance, as in this passage, but also he goes on to mention three Biblical types of this purging of the conscience:

- (1) the sprinkling of blood on the people,
 - (2) the sprinkling of the water of separation,
- and (3) the laying of the hands on the head of the victim.

Referring to the last of these, he ends his long note as follows:

Compare on this point especially Numbers xix. with Hebrews ix and x, from the comparison of which passages it appears that the cleansing in Numbers does not refer to the putting away of a condemnation, but is simply the type of the purging of the conscience, by the belief of a bypast atonement. I beg my reader to weigh this note.³⁸

It is beyond the scope of the present work to follow out all of the ramifications which stem from this root understanding of these Greek words pertaining to justification and righteousness. Such a study, if carried out, would doubtless reveal how this understanding vitally affects and illuminates almost every facet of the gospel as it is presented in the New Testament.

Universal, "Forensic" Justification

In Erskine's thinking, there was no such doctrine, strictly speaking, as "justification by faith" in all of Scripture.³⁹ Dikaiosis ek pisteos is simply not a Biblical term. The phrase is a mistranslation. It is a human invention in support of an erroneous theological speculation. The only justification (dikaiosis) spoken of in Scripture, Erskine would contend, is the universal justification of all men that was testified to by Christ's resurrection. This "justification" is what most Evangelicals in the Arminian tradition are wont to call "forensic justification," by which term they generally mean the provision made for the justification of all who subsequently repent, believe the

gospel, and turn from their sins. Forensic justification, it is supposed, satisfies aggrieved Justice, and thus makes it possible for God to extend mercy and to pardon all who believe in Jesus and who are sincerely sorry for their sins and turn from them.

"Forensic justification," in the popular Evangelical mind, is often thought of (when thought of at all) as a rather cold, impersonal thing--an ethical abstraction, priorly necessary, of course, in order legally to release God from the bounds of Justice and allow Him to exercise mercy. This legal or "forensic" justification is in contrast with (still in the Arminian way of thinking) that "real" and personal justification that comes to the believing soul upon his acceptance of Christ as his Saviour, and which brings with it such a warm and joyful sense of liberation.

For Erskine, on the other hand, the justification that has come upon all men is far from being a cold, legal abstraction. On the contrary, it is the manifestation of an almost inconceivably high and pure love of God to each individual of the human race (me included!). It is the manifestation of a pardoning love that has already removed every barrier of condemnation in God's heart that otherwise would surely stand in the way of His erring children returning to their Father's bosom. It is the actual believing in the existence of such a high and holy love as this in God's

heart--for me, in spite of all my sins and sinfulness,--that melts the heart as nothing else can, and that brings the very life of God into the soul. Whosoever really believes in this manner of love has passed from death unto everlasting life. He has been born again, and he knows himself to be a child of God. He has followed the injunction, Look and live! Now he knows himself individually to have been already pardoned. He was pardoned before, along with everyone else, but that pardon could do him no good until he believed it. Then it becomes for him the power of God unto salvation. It becomes for him the tidings of great joy. He has found the treasure hid in the field, and for joy thereof he goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field. Unconditional love has called forth unconditional commitment. The great dynamic of the gospel has been set in motion; and there is joy in heaven over another sinner that has evangelically repented--not in order to be pardoned and to obtain God's favor and the good things of heaven (this would be legal repentance), but because he has been pardoned, and because God's favor has been thus lavishly poured upon him, the realization of which brings heaven into his heart here and now. This experience, of course, is Biblical to the core, and one that is vital to salvation. Erskine had no hesitancy in calling it "justification by faith" so long as it be understood to mean the belief in, and the

reception of, by the individual, of the universal justification (dikaiosis) graciously bestowed upon all humanity, but which is of eternal value only to those who choose to live in its Light of Life.

It is now apparent that for Erskine the phrase in Rom. 4:25, "raised again for our justification," refers to the same thing that his friend McLeod Campbell expressed by the term "universal pardon," the challenge to which by the church authorities was one of the factors which occasioned his deposition. It should be noted that Erskine's book, The Brazen Serpent, which contains the long footnote cited above, and which discourses upon the justification of all men as testified to by Christ's resurrection, was written either just before or just after Campbell's trial, probably during the period in which the two men were in close contact with each other. Its writing may well have been motivated, in part, by Erskine's desire to defend what he considered to be that "true gospel" which he had discovered young Campbell to be preaching, so soon after he (Erskine) had finished writing his own work, The Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel. However this may have been, the Brazen serpent undoubtedly lent exegetical strength to Campbell's preaching--in the late 1820s--of universal atonement and universal pardon.

Erskine's Belief in Substitution

Although Erskine was opposed to the notion that Christ's death could substitute in place of our own having to die daily to self, or that his life of perfect obedience to his Father's will could substitute for our coming to have the mind of Christ reproduced in ourselves, still the gospel plan, in Erskine's understanding, was founded upon a great fact of substitution. "Remember," he enjoins us, "Christ came into Adam's place. This is the real substitution."⁴⁰ This thought is the key to Erskine's interpretation of Romans, chapters 4 to 6, and related passages, which are epitomized in chapter 5, verse 18: "Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Just in the same way that all mankind has been affected unfavorably by Adam's sin, so has all mankind been affected favorably by Christ's incarnation and atonement. Christ took the place of Adam, and any disadvantage which humanity has received from Adam is neutralized by the advantage which every person has received from the action of Christ, the Second Adam. This, manifestly, is Erskine's understanding of Paul's meaning in

these central chapters of the Epistle to the Romans: universal condemnation through our connection with Adam; universal justification through Christ's having connected Himself with our fallen nature and redeemed it. This places man in his "day of grace," during which period he is free to chose whether or not he will avail himself of this unspeakably precious opportunity--this second chance--to glorify God and to render his own calling and election sure.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to give attention to all facets of Erskine's theology. Virtually untouched is his non-Calvinist doctrine of election; also his important epistemological view on conscience, and his understanding of the inner witness of the Spirit and its relation to the Bible, his observations on true and false manifestations of spiritual gifts, and his views on eschatology, etc.. Interesting as these facets are, they do not bear directly upon his advocacy of the righteousness of faith, or upon his understanding of the non-imputational nature of justification by faith--which emphases of his coincided so closely with those of Campbell and which have constituted the principal focus of this study.

Closing Labors

Erskine wrote no books for the public after 1837, when The Doctrine of Election was published. His intercourse

and friendships with many prominent men and women of Britain and the continent of Europe,⁴¹ together with his charming and voluminous correspondence, preserved for us by William Hanna, largely occupied the latter half of his long life. His letters have been studied as delightful models of social and spiritual converse. He was a man who loved nature and art and Shakespeare and Plato. But above all, he loved God the Father, and Jesus Christ His Son. He died at Edinburgh on March 28, 1870. The sad event prompted William Hanna to pen these beautiful words:

. . . few have ever passed away from among their fellows, of whom so large a number of those who knew him best, and were most competent to judge, would have said as they did of Mr. Erskine, that he was the best, the holiest man they ever knew--the man most human, yet most divine, with least of the stains of earth, with most of the spirit of heaven.⁴²

Less than two years later, on February 27, 1872, his dear friend, McLeod Campbell, followed him in death. Thus passed from this world two godly souls, who have left behind them a rich legacy of Christian literature, and an influence that will not pass away. Something of that influence we shall consider in the following chapter.

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Chapter 11

AN ENDURING LEGACY

This chapter could well be considered to be a running commentary on the accuracy of the unwitting prediction made by the exhausted and confused clerk of the General Assembly when he announced the final vote which condemned Campbell in 1831: "These doctrines of Mr. Campbell will remain and flourish after the Church of Scotland has perished and been forgotten."¹ It will be recalled that this strange statement--the opposite of what the clerk intended--is what prompted Erskine to utter that stage whisper which surely ranks with the greatest serious repartees of history, "This spake he not of himself, but being high priest, he prophesied."²

In defense of the Church of Scotland it would be well to note that historian R. H. Story, in his Apostolic Ministry in the Scottish Church (1897), was able to look back and say: "The Church has long repented of its act of narrow-minded injustice, and has recognized the truth of the teaching which, sixty years ago, it branded as unsound."³

Dr. A. J. Scott, Campbell's one-time assistant pastor at Row, who later became Principal of Owens College, wrote to Campbell upon his having received the honorary D. D. degree:

The University of Glasgow has done what in them lies to reverse the sentence of 40 years ago, a leisurely repentance for a hasty deed, but one which acquired all the greater value as giving an imprimatur to the maturest expression of your thoughts.⁴

We have record of some of the favorable responses of prominent individuals, during Campbell's lifetime, to the germinal ideas contained in his writings. Principal Shairp, of United College, St. Andrews, wrote to Thomas Erskine:

I have lately read Mr. Campbell's book. Few books I have read are so suggestive, and have opened up so many great, deep and true thoughts on that and like subjects.⁵

At one time Shairp had sent a book which he himself had written to Campbell with this note attached:

There is no one to whom the book is more due than to yourself. . . . You know how much I prize your work on the Atonement as the only one I ever met with, which enabled me really to think and see some moral light through that mysterious fact and truth.⁶

Another young man, who later was to become famous as a New Testament scholar, was early in his career molded by the writings of Campbell. Fenton John Anthony Hort (1828-1892), who eventually co-edited with B. F. Westcott the Greek edition of the New Testament which became the classic "Westcott & Hort" for a host of later scholars, was one of the first to be struck by the merit of the Nature of the Atonement. While the book was still being processed by Macmillan Company, young Hort obtained one of the proof copies. He was impressed with this "valuable book on the

atonement" written by "a very noble Scotchman." "It is quiet and evangelical in tone, and not at all alarming; I do not think that it meets all sides of the question, but it expresses my own ideas better than any book I ever saw."⁷

Hort's co-laborer, Westcott, was also helped by Campbell. Concerning his preparation of The Victory of the Cross, published in 1888 as an outgrowth of a series of sermon-addresses delivered in Hereford Cathedral, Westcott acknowledged: "The only books I found helpful when I was endeavoring to study the question [of the atonement] ten years or so ago, were the familiar books of Dale and McLeod Campbell."⁸

The reference to Dale is to the Congregationalist, Robert William Dale (1829-1895), who wrote several books on the atonement. In the 18th edition of The Atonement, Dale says of Campbell's Nature of the Atonement:

"those who have read his book will understand me when I say that there is something in it which makes me shrink from criticism. . . . I feel in no mood to argue with him; it is better to sit quiet, and to receive the subtle influence of his beautiful temper and profound spiritual wisdom."⁹

We have already noted Denney's appreciation of The Nature of the Atonement:

There is a reconciling power of Christ in it. . . . The originality of it is spiritual as well as intellectual, and no one who has ever felt its power will cease to put it in a class by itself.¹⁰

Denney Reflects Campbell

Probably no English authors have written more about the atonement than have the two men we have just quoted, Dale and Denney. Echoes of Campbell's thinking are clearly present in Denney's last book, The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation, published posthumously in 1917. He observes that most previous treatises on the subject

leave something artificial in the connection between faith and salvation, an artificiality revealed in all the distinctions between imputed righteousness and infused righteousness, or between justification and sanctification, . . . 11

Denney's concept of faith was simple: when a person sees what the cross really means there is but one thing to do, "abandon himself to the sin-bearing love which appeals to him in Christ, and to do so unreservedly, unconditionally and forever. This is what the New Testament means by
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faith." Faith of this nature is what justifies a person.

When the sinner does thus believe he does the one right thing, and it puts him right with God; in St. Paul's language he is justified by faith. God accepts him as righteous, and he is righteousness; he has received the reconciliation (Rom. 5:11), and he is reconciled. It is quite needless to complicate this simple situation by discussing such questions as whether justification is "forensic," or has some other character, say "real" or "vital," to which "forensic" is more or less of a contrast. . . . It is not simply the act of an instant, it is the attitude of a life; it is the one right thing at the moment when a man abandons himself to Christ, and it is the one thing which keeps him right with God for ever. . . . 13

This, then, is Denney's understanding of justification by faith, or what is more accurately termed, the righteousness of faith. It is abundantly evident that Denney is here re-affirming what Campbell has already said, and that in this central area of the Christian faith these two men see eye to eye on the nature of faith and its relation to righteousness. In discussing faith as union with Christ, Denney's thought is strongly reminiscent of Campbell's:

All His thoughts and feelings in relation to sin as disclosed in His Passion--all His submission to the Father who condemns sin and reacts inexorably against it--all His obedience in the spirit of sonship--in their measure become ours through faith.¹⁴

Here is seen Denney's equivalent to what Campbell referred to as the believer's participation in the mind of Christ. "Acceptance of the mind of God with regard to sin, as something which wounds His holy love, to which He is finally and inexorably opposed" is one of two main characteristics of the believer's life of reconciliation in identification with Christ through faith. The other characteristic is "acceptance of love as the divine law of life--in other words, self-renunciation and sacrifice for the good of others." Each of these may grow continuously in depth and intensity. "Repentance is not the act of an instant, in which the sinner passes from death to life, it is the habit of a lifetime, in which he assimilates ever more perfectly the mind of Christ . . ."¹⁵ Thus unmistakably did Denney

reflect the thinking of Campbell, which was also the thinking of the New Testament writers, and also of Luther.

"Luther is abundantly right in his emphasis upon faith alone," declared Denney. "It is just the other side of Christ alone."¹⁶

Moberly Expands upon Campbell's View of Vicarious Penitence

A turn of the century writer on the atonement who is generally recognized to have stood upon the shoulders of McLeod Campbell is the Anglican scholar and Regius Professor of Pastoral Theology at Oxford, R. C. Moberly. In his book, Atonement and Personality (1901) he enlarges upon and deepens the insights of Campbell, and in measure supplements his deficiencies, while at the same time adding a richness and originality of his own. The work bespeaks a more modern understanding of the nature of human personality than would have been possible fifty years earlier, in Campbell's day. The latter half of the 19th century witnessed the beginnings of scientific studies into the unity in complexity of the human psyche, and Moberly's work reflects, in some degree, that concern. It manifests a keen insight into the workings of human nature at the practical level, and at the same time it combines this with an understanding of the nature of the atonement which closely parallels that of Campbell's.¹⁷ Perhaps his greatest amplification of Campbell's thought is

found in his discussion of penitence, and how sin has incapacitated man for just that genuine contrition and penitence which he so desperately needs, but cannot render, and how that Christ is uniquely able adequately to repent and to confess our sins for us, and with us, as we identify with Him through the Spirit. Only Christ Jesus can have a perfect penitence, and be the perfect Mediator between man and God; and it is only in Him that His righteousness--His perfect penitence and trust--can become ours. It is historian Frank's judgment that Moberly "continued the line of Campbell," and that "the core and center of Moberly's theory is inherited from Campbell."¹⁸

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Another modern writer on the atonement who has acknowledged his debt to Campbell is the Methodist New Testament scholar, Vincent Taylor. Like Campbell, Taylor objects to substitutionary views of the atonement as popularly entertained. In the Cross of Christ, Taylor discusses the content of Christ's saving deed under four headings, the last of which reads as follows: "Fourth, the saving deed of Christ issues in a ministry of intercession in which He voices our inarticulate penitence and desire for reconciliation."¹⁹ Of this statement Tuttle justly remarks, "No words could more clearly echo Campbell's constantly reiterated themes of Christ's confession and intercession." Tuttle

also points out the coincidence that Taylor's book, herein quoted, was published just 100 years after the Nature of the Atonement was first published in 1857.²⁰

Links between Campbell and C. S. Lewis

There is probably no Christian writer in modern times that has had a greater influence in evangelical circles than has C. S. Lewis. Prefacing each chapter of Lewis's Miracles is a brief, pithy quotation gleaned from his extensive reading. One of them is, "Those who make religion their god will not have God for their religion." This aphorism is attributed to "Thomas Erskine of Linlathen."²¹

Although I am not aware that Lewis ever directly referred to Campbell, there is a strongly presumptive historical link between the thinking of the two men--a line of probable influence that can be traced between them. Campbell's assistant pastor during his ministry at Row was an extraordinarily brilliant and devout youth named A. J. Scott. It is generally known that Scott's theological views were essentially the same as those of Campbell and Erskine. The three men have been viewed as a sort of triumvirate who had rather independently arrived at nearly identical convictions from their diligent study of Scripture.²² Scott himself, like Campbell, eventually had his license to preach revoked, because of his similar views.²³ Scott,

however, went on to become Principal of prestigious Owens College. While in that capacity he formed a close and lasting friendship with one of his pupils, named George Macdonald. The latter's son-physician-biographer tells us that probably no man had a greater influence upon his father than Principal A. J. Scott.²⁴ It is well known that Macdonald, in turn, was freely acknowledged by Lewis to have been his mentor, and spiritual father. It was the reading of Macdonald's Fantastes that led to Lewis's conversion to Christianity. In The Great Divorce, Lewis, while exploring the border regions of heaven, is delighted to run across his dear friend, Macdonald (whom he never met in life), who thereupon became his celestial Beatrice to be his guide, and sagely to answer his eager questions.²⁵ This line of influence--Campbell-Scott-Macdonald-Lewis--I have not found commented upon in any of the materials that I have read, although it has doubtless been noted before. I had previously noticed the Campbellian overtones in Macdonald's writings, but it was not until I learned that Macdonald had gone to Owens College that the probable connection dawned on me.

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The centenary of Campbell's death was celebrated in Scotland by the dedication of a plaque, and a commemorative window, in Campbell's old church in Row. A lecture was delivered by John McIntyre, Principal of New College,

Edinburgh. It was subsequently printed under the title "Prophet of Penitence: Our Contemporary Ancestor." Toward the close of his long address, commenting upon the aged couple's plea to Campbell, "Give us plain doctrine; for we be a sleeping people.", McIntyre remarked:

The plain doctrine which he gave them was not drawn from the text-books, or yet from the confessions of the Church. He preached Sunday by Sunday purely from the scriptures, finding his message there and not in the commentaries. He was condemned not because his teaching contradicted Scripture but because in the two main respects of election and assurance of faith he was held to contradict the Westminster Confession. But he was right. Where Scripture and Confession disagree, the Scripture must be allowed that last word.

. . . These issues have in a sense become the testing-ground of the authenticity of our religion. We need plain doctrine, so that the Church can again begin to discover what her purpose is in the world to-day: for there are many who have not yet lost their faith in God or their trust in Christ but who feel that the Church has lost all credibility. We have had over a hundred years since McLeod Campbell to heed the warning he gave. I doubt if we will have another hundred years. The sands are running out much faster now.²⁶

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Last to be mentioned in our survey, and probably the most important of Campbell's living appreciators, are the well-known Torrance brothers, T. F. and J. B.. Both men have written and spoken extensively--in articles, classrooms and sections of books--about John McLeod Campbell, and the

debt of gratitude that our generation owes to the humble pastor of Row.

James B. Torrance wrote an article entitled, "The Contribution of McLeod Campbell to Scottish Theology."²⁷ In it he reminds us that participation is a key word in Campbell's theology. He uses a diagrammatic model to clarify Campbell's organization of the Nature of the Atonement, a model which he subsequently expanded for classroom handout, and which is included in the Appendix of this thesis.

In a deeply significant contribution to a Festschrift for Karl Barth, J. B. Torrance has a chapter entitled, "The Vicarious Humanity of Christ." In it he underscores the important distinction between "legal repentance" and "evangelical repentance."

Legal repentance is the view that says, "Repent, and IF you repent you will be forgiven!" as though God our Father has to be conditioned into being gracious. It makes the imperatives of obedience prior to the indicatives of grace, and regards God's love and acceptance and forgiveness as conditional upon what we do--upon our meritorious acts of repentance. Calvin argued that this inverted the evangelical order of grace, and made repentance prior to forgiveness, whereas in the New Testament forgiveness is logically prior to repentance. Evangelical repentance on the other hand takes the form that, "Christ has borne your sins on the Cross, therefore repent!" That is, repentance is our response to grace, not a condition of grace. The good news of the Gospel is that "There is forgiveness with God that he might be feared" and that he has spoken that word of forgiveness in Christ on the Cross--but that word summons from us a response of faith and penitence.²⁸

He then illustrates how the priority of forgiveness to repentance is of fundamental importance even in every-day interpersonal relations.²⁹ Returning to the atonement theme, he says:

But implicit in our receiving the word of the Cross, the word of the Father's love, there is, on our part, a humble submission to the verdict of guilty. That lies at the heart of the Reformation understanding of grace. . . .

It was that insight which John McLeod Campbell, the Scottish theologian, developed in his remarkable, but often misunderstood book, The Nature of the Atonement, where he expounded the doctrine of vicarious repentance--vicarious evangelical repentance--in terms of the vicarious humanity and Sonship of Christ. . . .

McLeod Campbell grasped clearly what this means for theology, . . .³⁰

What this means, Torrance explains, is that we must interpret the atonement in terms of the incarnation, rather than vice versa. In concluding this article, Torrance states that "Vicarious Humanity and Union with Christ (the Headship of Christ and participation in Christ) are twin doctrines which must not be separated."³¹ (italics, his)

Just as Christ is seen as having a twofold ministry of bringing God to men and men to God, so there is seen a twofold ministry of the Spirit.

. . . He is both speaking Spirit and interceding Spirit, with a prophetic and a priestly office. Thus the vicarious humanity of Christ and the vicarious priestly work of the Spirit are both fundamental for our understand of worship, where Christ our Brother, our Advocate, our High Priest,

unites us with himself in his Self-presentation on our behalf to the Father.

"Participation" is thus an important word. It holds together what WE do, and that in which we are given to participate--the Son's communion with the Father, and the Son's Mission from the Father to the world.³² [End of the article.]

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T. F. Torrance, long-time professor of Christian dogmatics at the University of Edinburgh, and author of several books, has written a work called Theology in Reconciliation, Essays Toward Evangelical and Catholic Unity in East and West (1975). One fourth of the book is taken up with a long chapter entitled "The Mind of Christ in Worship - The Problem of Apollinarianism in the Liturgy." This 75-page chapter is replete with appreciative references to the work of McLeod Campbell as one preserving and carrying forward the burden of the early Greek Fathers in their opposition to the Christological errors of Apollinaris. He begins:

It was one of the favourite themes of John McLeod Campbell that Christian worship is the presentation of the "mind of Christ" to the Father, for what God accepts as our true worship is Christ himself. . . .

. . . My particular concern with McLeod Campbell in this chapter is to take my cue from his stress upon the essential place of the human mind of Jesus Christ in the mediation of our worship of the Father. Once we lose sight of the vicarious role of the mind of Jesus in its oneness with the mind of the Father, the whole meaning of worship changes and with it the basic structure and truth of the liturgy. That is what McLeod Campbell

sought to demonstrate in his profound little book Christ the Bread of Life, with respect to the Eucharist in the misunderstanding of Romanism and Protestantism alike. . . .

. . . Justification is not just a non-imputation of sin in which we believe; that would be some kind of justification by our faith. On the contrary, justification is bound up with a feeding upon Christ, a participation in his human righteousness, so that to be justified by faith is to be justified in him in whom we believe, not by an act of our faith as such. It is to participate in the actualised holiness of Jesus who sanctified himself on our behalf that we might be sanctified in him, in reality. . . .33

The final section of the chapter is entitled "The relevance of history for the understanding and reconstruction of Christian worship today." In it he says, in part:

So far as the holy ministry is concerned, the history of liturgical worship in the Church drives home the lesson that if the priestly agency of Jesus Christ is obscured, then inevitably a substitute priesthood arises to mediate between us and Christ. In the course of the centuries in East and West this came to take the form of a sacramental sacerdotalism, but in modern times, especially throughout the various Protestant churches, this takes the form of a psychological sacerdotalism. In both cases the centre of gravity rests in man's own self-offering, but in the latter case, which is a more subtle and certainly the worse form of deviation from the classical pattern of ministry, it is worship as man's self-expression that is predominant. . . .34

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to expand upon the prevalence, in modern Protestantism, of this man-centered, psychological sacerdotalism which Torrance here deplores. ³⁵ We shall notice one further passage which illustrates his main concern:

For theology as for worship, Jesus Christ is the place (topos) where God and man meet, where God stoops down to man and man draws near to God: the one place where we have access to the Father in the Spirit, the new and living way consecrated in the flesh of Christ. . . .

To return to the language of John McLeod Campbell, all our worship of the Father takes place properly within the circle of the life of Jesus Christ which he lived in our human nature in such a way that his whole life formed itself into worship, prayer and praise which he offered to the Father on our behalf. Our worship of God takes place then, McLeod Campbell insisted, in words which echo those of Cyril of Alexandria, through the mind of Christ, . . .³⁶ [italics, his]

Torrance ends this moving chapter, from which we have taken the above samples, as follows:

While we do not know how to pray or what to pray as we ought, the ascended High Priest sends us his own Spirit who helps us in our weakness by making the prayers and intercessions of Christ inaudibly to echo in our stammering in such a way that our prayers and intercessions become a participation in his before the Father in heaven:

Through him, with him and in him, in the unity of the Holy spirit, all glory and honor is thine, Almighty Father, for ever and ever. Amen.³⁷ [End of chapter; the italics are his.]

Thus has T. F. Torrance vividly brought before us the great burden of McLeod Campbell and of the early Greek Fathers in regard to the nature of that only acceptable worship of God, which is so sorely needed by the church today.

Chapter 12

RELEVANCE TO ADVENTISM

The work of Campbell and Erskine relates to Seventh-day Adventism in three ways: theologically, historically, and as a potential aid to spiritual renewal.

Theologically, the concerns of these two men directly address one of the principal issues currently polarizing the Adventist Church in the area of "righteousness by faith," viz., whether primary emphasis should be placed upon justification or upon sanctification, or in other words upon what some people prefer to speak of as Christ's completed work outside of the believer, or upon the Spirit's on-going work within the believer. All acknowledge that both are necessary. The main difference is upon priority, and upon where, in actual practice, the preponderance of emphasis is laid. When one looks below the verbal level, where the appearance of glib harmony still prevails, one sees that the practical differences in this area are very real and profound. They constitute the current phase of the age-old controversy over the place of faith and works in the Christian life, over the nature of faith, the nature of grace, and the character of God.

Campbell and Erskine essayed to resolve, to a large degree, this issue about whether justification or sanctification is to be given primary stress by suggesting that the

terms themselves ("justification" and "sanctification" as these terms had come to be rather rigidly defined in scholastic Protestantism), together with the related expressions, "imputed" vs. "imparted" righteousness, might better be replaced with more unitary concepts, such as "a life given; a life received." This elimination of terms that have come to be commonly defined in a misleading manner--e.g., in such a way as to suggest fictional elements in the idea of transferred merits--could go a long way toward answering the serious questions regarding certain substitutionary concepts of the atonement which are currently troubling deeply thinking and forward looking Seventh-day Adventists. The ethically dubious idea that one Person's character perfection could stand in the place of, and exonerate, another person's moral deficiency would be largely by-passed, as would also the supposed distinction between "standing" and "state," between how God looks upon a person who is assumed to be "covered by the imputed righteousness of Christ" and how that person really is, in actuality. The teachings of Campbell and Erskine point toward the virtual elimination of these dichotomies. Their unitary concepts tend to make irrelevant debates over whether certain Pauline expressions denote a declaring righteous or a making righteous. The concept that having the faith of Jesus, i.e.,

having the same trust in God that Jesus had, is righteousness, and is so acknowledged (or "reckoned") to be by God, is a concept which at a single stroke could resolve most of the issues which continue to divide Adventism on the subject of righteousness by faith. It is the concept that faith is a participation in the mind of Christ, a "letting this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." If our perception of, attitude towards, and feelings about, sin and ourselves and our neighbors and God are qualitatively like Christ's, to that extent we have the faith of Jesus and are therefore justly accounted righteous because, thus being in Christ and having his Spirit, we are righteous, i.e., we experience the perceptions, the attitudes and the feelings that are right--right and appropriate and sufficient for the creature in relation to God. This is righteousness by faith as understood by Campbell and Erskine. It is highly relevant, I maintain, to unresolved tensions within Adventism today, as well as within Evangelical Christendom generally.

Unquestionably, Campbell and Erskine placed their primary emphasis upon what they understand to be justification, rather than upon sanctification, although they preferred not to use either of these conventional terms. Their emphasis upon faith, rather than upon works, however, was saved from any antinomian tendency by their perception of faith as being participation in the mind of Christ. The end

result of their emphasis, so far from encouraging or permitting any ethical laxity, contrarywise, held forth an exceedingly high standard of righteousness to be realized in the believer himself, not merely to have "imputed" to him.

Even though the standard enjoined was very high--and here Campbell and Erskine offer a powerful corrective to the implicit notions of many in the conservative wing of Adventism--that standard was maintained without falling into legalism or perfectionism. This trap was effectively avoided by their emphasis upon evangelical repentance, rather than upon legal repentance, that is, upon the fact that God's favor and forgiveness are not bestowed upon the believer as a reward for his believing and repenting and turning from his evil ways (necessary as are these consequences). No. They are manifestations of the free and unconditional nature of God's grace, of the immutability of His character and the unendingness of His lovingkindness. The indicatives of grace precede the imperatives of law. Total grace calls for total commitment in obedience. It is the goodness of God that leads to repentance and good works, not the other way around. It is this understanding, more than any other factor, that cuts the root of all legalism and perfectionism. Yet it does so at the same time that there is maintained the highest standard of righteousness expected and required of the believer--the highest exaltation of law, as well as of

grace. This understanding of law and grace safeguards the gospel from the perversions of antinomianism on the one hand, and legalism on the other. It holds out hope of an effective healing of some of the deepest theological rifts in Adventism today.

Another area of theological relevance to Adventism in the thinking of Campbell and Erskine pertains to our doctrine of the heavenly sanctuary. Historic Adventism has been especially concerned with the when and the where of Christ's sanctuary ministry. Campbell was chiefly concerned with the nature of that ministry, with how it is carried out, and what is its experiential meaning to the individual worshipper. This important aspect of Christ's first-apartment ministry has been one concerning which Adventists, with their preoccupation with distinctively Adventist understandings of second-apartment ministry, have said almost nothing, beyond the undeveloped statement that it is from the first apartment that Christ "dispenses the benefits of His atonement." This is an area that Campbell, especially in his profound book, The Nature of the Atonement, has opened up and illuminated in great depth and breadth. This illumination, it seems to me, could greatly enhance our Adventist understanding of Christ's mediatorial work, and go a long way toward insuring that our doctrine of the sanctuary could never rightfully be described as being "weary, stale, flat

and unprofitable." Our understanding of first-apartment ministry, which Adventists believe will continue until probation closes (parallel with second-apartment ministry),¹ could thereby come alive and become deeply meaningful in ways that would augment, rather than detract from, our historic sanctuary doctrine.

Still another related area where the insights of Campbell might amplify Adventist theology is that of vicarious repentance and confession. In at least two places in her writings Ellen White made brief reference to Christ's having "taken the necessary steps in repentance, conversion and faith in behalf of the human race."² She never enlarged upon these cryptic statements. One wishes that she had done so; for they are clearly in line with the insights that were developed and elaborated upon by Campbell. The Messianic Psalms are replete with confessions of sinfulness, written in the first person, which would be obscure and inexplicable apart from the concepts of vicarious repentance and vicarious confession. These concepts illumine many an otherwise dark passage of Scripture.

Historical Relevance

The works of Campbell and Erskine have historical, as well as theological, relevance for Seventh-day Adventists. There is need for a broader understanding of the extent of

our historical roots, and for a greater appreciation for the rich heritage which our American advent movement possesses in earlier 19th century British, and especially Scottish, theology. Parallels and affinities between certain religious revivals on the two sides of the Atlantic have been greater than has been generally recognized. It is a well-known historical pattern that theological stirrings in the Old World have usually made themselves felt some decades later in the New. This pattern was evident in the arousal of interest in the nearness of the Second Advent. The British Advent Awakening movement, sparked in large measure by the preaching of Edward Irving, preceded its American counterpart by approximately fifteen years. Just as in the Old World there were devout thinkers, like Campbell and Erskine, who were not so much concerned with end-time prophecies and date-setting as they were with spiritual revival and that heart preparation necessary for meeting the Advent whenever it should occur, so, in America, in the ninth decade of the last century, there occurred a remarkable spiritual revival, one that was also sparked by two young irregulars, whose message also met with deep-seated opposition on the grounds that it was disturbingly different from traditional emphases, if not actually subversive of orthodoxy.

In regard to content also, there were marked similarities between the two movements which arose on opposite

sides of the ocean. Both focussed upon righteousness by faith, and especially upon the importance of having the faith of Jesus, upon participation in His righteousness. Both revivals arose out of the backdrop of a relatively rigid and lifeless orthodoxy, and as a protest against a dry as dust legalism. Although both stressed the primacy of grace over law, the highest standard of right doing was enjoined by both--unequivocally so. Yet both acknowledge the need for on-going repentance as higher and still higher views are obtained of God's holiness. But the repentance enjoined, in both cases, was seen as the result of the priorly perceived goodness and merciful favor of God rather than as that which evokes it. The motives for right doing were thus purified of those acquisitive elements which are inevitably present whenever right doing is performed in order that God may be gracious and that we may obtain the blessings which accompany His mercy. Right doing then becomes the natural response to a heartfelt appreciation of the selfless love of God revealed at Calvary.

Both revivals stressed the mediatorial work of Christ. More specifically, both stressed the vicarious confession and the vicarious repentance of Christ. Consider the following passage:

We read here his confession of sin. This was he as ourselves, and in our place, confessing our sins. . . . no man's confession of sin can, in itself, ever be so perfect as to be accepted of

God in righteousness, because man is imperfect. But 'it must be perfect to be accepted.' Where then, shall perfection of confession be found? Ah! in him my confession of sin is perfect; for he made the confession. . . . His confession is perfect in every respect; and God accepts mine IN HIM.³

If a person who was familiar with Campbell's thinking yet who did not know that the above passage was written by a leader of the later revival more than two decades after Campbell's death--if such a person, I say, should read this passage he could easily exclaim (regarding its content, not its style), "This is vintage Campbell!"

Whether there was in fact any direct dependence of the latter movement upon the former, which seems not unlikely, is relatively immaterial; for it is evident that both streams had been drinking from the same fountain.

Still another similarity between the two movements was the emphasis placed by both upon the humanity of Christ, and of his having partaken of the sinful nature of man (yet without participation in sin). The sinfulness of the nature which Christ assumed at his incarnation was prominently taught by the original proponents of the American revival. It is well known that the same view had been espoused in Britain, about 60 years earlier, by Thomas Erskine.⁴ It was for maintaining this "heresy" that his contemporary, Edward Irving, was tried and deposed. That Campbell also shared this view of the nature of Christ's humanity is suggested by

his thankfulness that his own indictment did not include this specific charge.⁵

Further historical relevance to Seventh-day Adventism is to be found in the fact that Campbell saw himself as carrying forward the Reformation begun in the 16th century in contradistinction to the falling away from Reformation insights which characterized developments in 17th century scholastic Protestantism. Heights attained in the former movement were to a great extent lost in the latter, as originally dynamic concepts of grace began to be frozen into rigid orthodoxy. In the light of the historical analysis to be found in the early chapters of The Nature of the Atonement it becomes evident that several of the emphases of the "new theology" in contemporary Adventism, such as the stress placed upon strictly forensic aspects of justification, upon the substitutionary nature of the atonement, and upon Christ's perfect obedience standing in for that of the believer, find their origins not so much in the recovered insights of Luther and Calvin as in the later systemizations of 17th century scholastic orthodoxy against which Campbell and Erskine themselves were protesting. Such a perspective can hardly fail to throw some light upon certain polarizing currents within Adventism today.

It is perhaps not unrealistic to hope that the insights of these devout Scotsmen might pave the way for a

reconciliation between conflicting views and parties. This would be possible only if (1) conservative Adventists on the one hand could see, along with Campbell and Erskine, that emphasis upon the primacy of justification and upon the freeness and unconditionality of grace need not lead to antinomianism, nor tend in the slightest degree toward laxity of life-style; and, on the other hand, only if (2) those Adventists who are more progressively minded could equally see that the strictest conformity to the mind of Christ, and the fullest obedience to the two great commandments of the law need not tend in the slightest degree toward legalism, nor toward what they deprecatingly refer to as "perfectionism." It seems to me that the insights of Campbell and Erskine could serve as powerful facilitators of both of these preconditions to any genuine healing of theological tensions within Adventism.

History makes clear that no single body of people has a monopoly on truth. While it is doubtless a fact that God has his specially chosen people in every age, it is important to remember that He is never solely dependent upon any particular group to carry forward his work. Nothing could be more fatal to any institution than for its members unconsciously to slip into the attitude that "we are the people, and wisdom will die with us." It will not. God will always have his torchbearers; and deliverance will arise, if not

from one quarter, then from another. "Repent," therefore, "and do the first works; or else I will come quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."⁶ As narrow provincialism is outgrown, a church which expects someday to spearhead a supra-denominational end-time movement should welcome any broadening of common historical bases.

Spiritual Relevance

Lastly, the work of Campbell and Erskine could make a spiritual impact upon Adventism. Perhaps our greatest need as a church is not for more money, nor for better schools or bigger hospitals. Nor is it for more people to donate time and money to missionary efforts, here or abroad. Undoubtedly, we need better scholars and greater preachers and wiser administrators. But our greatest need is for genuine spiritual revival, for a return to primitive godliness. The writings of these men are not only intellectually stimulating; they are spiritually enriching as well. They not only inform the head; they move the heart. They are experiential in their thrust. In all of them there breathes a loving and pastoral concern for souls. It has been chiefly in order to afford the reader a better opportunity to absorb the spirit of these devout men that I have chosen to quote

them verbatim as extensively as I have. Much of the original inspiration and sense of conviction can be lost by the use of paraphrases and summary statements.

While the need for a spiritual revival is generally acknowledged, seldom is much said about how one is to be effected. Just how is the flame of a non-fanatical revival enkindled? We have pointed to the answer that Campbell gave to this question in Chapter 3, "The Anatomy of a Revival." The Spirit of God bloweth where it listeth, and not always in just the same manner in different ages. But "where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in."

Final mention will be made of an important blessing that can be derived from reading the works of these Scottish apostles of the righteousness of faith. It is the felicitous catching, in some measure, of their irenic spirit. The respect and fairness and charitableness with which they always dealt with their theological opponents are qualities that are sorely needed in the church today. They were outstandingly exemplified in the lives of John McLeod Campbell and Thomas Erskine.

ENDNOTES

Introduction

1. "The relation . . . between Mr. Erskine and Dr. Campbell was one of entire independence on both sides. Each had come by a path of his own to conclusions which placed him in a position of deep sympathy with the other. And thus they stood, side by side, to the end--each a living spring and fountain-head of intellectual and spiritual refreshment, which has flowed from them by many channels to the world around." D. J. Vaughan, "Scottish Influence Upon English Thought," Contemporary Review 32 (June 1878):465.
2. J. B. Torrance, "The Contribution of McLeod Campbell to Scottish Theology," Scottish Journal of Theology 26 (1973):295.
3. Otto Pfleiderer, The Development of Theology in Germany since Kant and its Progress in Great Britain since 1825 (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., Ltd., 1909), p. 382.
4. R. S. Franks, History of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1918), vol. 2, p. 391.
5. North British Review 147 (April 1878): 209.
6. John Scott Liggett, The Victorian Transformation of Theology (Epworth Press, 1934), p. 38.
7. Cited by George Milledge Tuttle, The Place of John McLeod Campbell in British Thought Concerning the Atonement (Ph.D. dissertation, Emmanuel College, Victoria University, Toronto, 1961), p. 300.
8. A. B. Macaulay, The Death of Jesus (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1938).
9. James Denney, The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation (London: Hodder & Stoughton), p. 12.

10. Eugene Garrett Bewkes, Legacy of a Christian Mind: John M'Leod Campbell, Eminent Contributor to Theological Thought (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1937), pp. 1 and 9.
11. John Macquarrie, "John McLeod Campbell: 1800-1872," Expository Times 83 (June 1972):263.
12. B. A. Gerrish, "The Protest of Grace: John McLeod Campbell on the Atonement," Tradition and the Modern World: Reformed Theology in the Nineteenth Century (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 71-98.
13. See Thomas F. Torrance, "The Mind of Christ in Worship: The Problem of Apollinarianism in the Liturgy," Theology in Reconciliation: Essays towards Evangelical and Catholic Unity in East and West (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1975), pp. 139-214; James B. Torrance, "Covenant or Contract?: A Study of Worship in Seventeenth-Century Scotland," Scottish Journal of Theology 23 (February 1970):51-76; "The Contribution of McLeod Campbell to Scottish Theology," Scottish Journal of Theology 26 (1973):295-311; and "The Vicarious Humanity of Christ," The Incarnation: Ecumenical Studies in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed A. D 381, ed. Thomas F. Torrance (n.p.: Hansel Press, 1981), pp. 125-146.
14. The paper was by Christopher Kettler. The title: "The Vicarious Repentance of Christ in the Theology of John McLeod Campbell and R. C. Moberly."
15. H. Howard Williams, "I and Thou," Expository Times 69 (November 1957): 50-52.
16. Philip E. Devenish, "Divinity and Dipolarity: Thomas Erskine and Charles Hartshorne on What Makes God "God," Journal of Religion 62 (October 1982):335-58.
17. D. J. Jaughan, "Scottish Influence upon English Theological Thought," Contemporary Review 32 (June 1878):466.
18. Alexander R. Vidler, F. D. Maurice and Company (London: SCM Press, 1966), p. 242.
19. The Life of Frederick Denison Maurice 2 vol., ed. Frederick Maurice (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1884), 1:533.

20. Vaughan, "Scottish Influence," p. 464.
21. Ibid.
22. John Tulloch, Movements of Religious Thought in Britain During the Nineteenth Century, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1885), p. 127.
23. Thomas Erskine, The Supernatural Gifts of the Spirit, ed. R. Kelso Carter (Philadelphia: "Words of Faith," 1883).
24. In Guy Mannering, ch. xxxvii, Sir Walter Scott describes the preaching of John Erskine, the uncle of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen, and its effect upon Mannering: "'Such,' he said, 'going out of the church, 'must have been the preachers, to whose unfearing minds, and acute, though sometimes rudely exercised talents, we owe the Reformation.'" Quoted in Erskine of Linlathen: Selections and Biography, by Henry F. Henderson (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1899), p. 10.
25. Henderson, p.35.
26. There appears to have been only one important area upon which the two men differed. Erskine, in later life came to espouse the doctrine of Universalism, i.e., the belief that eventually all mankind will be saved. Writing to the Bishop of London on April 24th, 1866, Bishop Ewing says:

"We have just had a three days' visit from Mr. Campbell, of Row. . . . He differs from Mr. Erskine in one respect, feeling it possible that a free human will may eternally escape the Divine longings, which Erskine thinks incredible." (Cited by D. J. Vaughan, Scottish Influences, p. 471.)

Principal Shairp, in his Reminiscences, makes the following observation:

"In one thing, however, Mr. Erskine was altogether unlike most of those who hold the tenets of Universalism. No man I ever knew had a deeper feeling of the exceeding evil of sin, and of the Divine necessity that sin must always be misery. His Universalistic views did not in any way relax his profound sense of God's abhorrence of sin." (Ibid.)

Campbell underscores the same point. Writing to one of his sons on July 7, 1871, he says (referring to a review, in the Spectator, of Erskine's posthumous book, The Spiritual Order):

"The reading now of the book as a whole still leaves the same impression that I received when he read portions of the manuscript to me; namely, that is an imperfect representation of punishment that resolves it into the desire to reclaim. . . . I am thankful to see the Spectator drawing attention so emphatically to the wide difference between this volume and ordinary arguments for Universalism, in the deep sense of the divine condemnation of sin which possessed Mr. Erskine." (Ibid., p. 471f. Italics in the original.)

27. In Chapter 3 of The Nature of the Atonement Campbell extensively reviews the ideas on the atonement held by Jonathon Edwards and John Owen. In Chapter 4, entitled, "Calvinism, as Recently Modified," he discusses the work of several British theologians (Pye Smith, Payne, Jenkyn and Wardlaw).

Chapter 1

THE "ROW HERESY"

1. William Hanna, Letters of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen from 1800 till 1840 (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1877), p. 129.
2. Memorials of John McLeod Campabell: being Selections from his Correspondence 2 vols., ed. Rev. Donald Campbell (London: Macmillan and Co., 1877) 1: 21.
3. John McLeod Campbell, Reminiscences and Reflections: Referring to his Early Ministry in the Parish of Row, 1825-31, ed. Donald Campbell (London: Macmillan and Co., 1873), pp. 147-51.
4. Whole Proceedings, xxv.
5. Memorials, 1: 64f.
6. Ibid., p. 66f.
7. Ibid., p. 65f.

8. Ibid., p. 63f.
9. Ibid., p. 62.
10. Ibid., p. 55.
11. Robert Herbert Story, Memoir of the Life of Rev. Robert Story (London: Macmillan and Co., 1862), p. 98f.
12. Ibid., p. 109.
13. Ibid., p. 104.
14. Ibid., p. 105.
15. Ibid., p. 107f.
16. Ibid., pp. 113-17.
17. Ibid., p. 117f.

Chapter 2

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE HERESY TRIAL

1. R. B. Lusk, The Whole Proceedings before the Presbytery of Dembarton, and Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, in the case of the Rev. John M'Leod Campbell, including the libel, answers to the libel, evidence, and speeches (Edinburgh: Waugh & Innes, and J. Lindsay & Co., 1831), p. 18. Later on in the proceedings he tried to show that historically his view of the extent of the atonement was similar to that of the Reformers, and even implicitly compatible with the Westminster Confession, which was the official creed of the Scottish Church. After it was all over, however, in response to the query of his friend, A. J. Scott, he acknowledged that in this matter his view and that of the official creed were indeed irreconcilable, and that therefore his accusers were correct in calling his view "heretical" in reference to a strict interpretation of the Westminster Confession.
2. Ibid., p. 32.

3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p. 33.
6. Ibid. p. 34.
7. Ibid., p. 35.
8. Ibid., p. 35f.
9. Ibid., p. 37.
10. Ibid., p. 37f.
11. Ibid., p. 39.
12. Isaiah 40: 1 and 2.
13. John 1:36.
14. Whole Proceedings, p. 40f.
15. Ibid., p. 42.
16. Ibid., p. 43.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., p. 44.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., p. 45.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid., Cf. Campbell's statement in Nature of the At-onement, p. 339: "We thus enter into the peace and joy of believing, and reach at once that rest in God, the pursuit of which by exertions of our own have been so vain." Also in Reminiscences and Reflections, p. 135f: It was "my conviction that to bring the human spirit under the power of the personal sense of redeeming love at once imparts the true peace, and protects effectually, and can alone protect, from false peace." (italics supplied)
23. Ibid.

24. Ibid., p. 45f.
25. Ibid., p. 47.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. The Nature of the Atonement, p. 196.
29. Whole Proceedings, p. 49.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid., p.50.
32. Ibid., p. 337 of a new series of page numbering, which begins after p. 103 of the above series.
33. Ibid., p. 58 (new series).
34. Ibid., p. 62.
35. Ibid., p. 68.
36. Ibid., p. 69.
37. Ibid., p. 70f.
38. Ibid., p. 71f.
39. Ibid., p. 73.
40. Ibid., p. 72.
41. Ibid., p. 82f.
42. Ibid., p. 83.
43. Memorials, 1:75f. There Campbell writes to his father, in part, as follows: "my second witness (Mr. Hawkins) was enabled to give answers on every point of doctrine in question, which I cannot better describe than by saying that if all the best and most guarded and most explicit statements, which I had myself made on any occasion, had been culled out of my discourses and put together, they would not have done me more justice. In short, I might safely substitute them for my answers;
. . .

This last examination was the work of yesterday. It lasted six hours and a half, in all which time the witness did not utter one word that I could wish had been other than it was."

44. Whole Proceedings, p. 128f.
45. LeRoy E. Froom, in his Prophetic Faith of our Fathers, Vol. 3, p. 595, devotes a page to this moving sermon on Rev. 14: 16-12.
46. Whole Proceedings, p. 129.
47. Ibid., p. 130.
48. Ibid., p. 157.
49. Ibid., p. 159f.
50. Ibid., p. 83.
51. Ibid., p. 341ff.
52. Reminiscences, p. 38f.
53. The wording of this summary sentence is that of his son, Donald, with which words he eloquently sets off the above speech of his grandfather.
54. Henderson, p. 104f.
55. John 11:51.
56. James B. Torrance, in an article entitled, "Covenant or Contract?: A Study of the Theological Background of Worship in Seventeenth-Century Scotland," in Scottish Journal of Theology 23 (February, 1970), gives us an illuminating backdrop for this whole drama. He writes, in this 25-page article:

"It is beyond the scope of this paper to enter into the details of 'The Marrow Controversy' --which in itself is from beginning to end a most revealing commentary on Scottish theology. But in 1720 the General Assembly (in what has subsequently been called the Black Act) condemned the book, The Marrow of Modern Divinity, prohibited ministers from recommending it and enjoined ministers to warn their people against it.

The central issue of the whole controversy was whether repentance and faith and holiness are conditions of the Covenant of Grace. This the Marrow men denied and the General Assembly affirmed. Outstanding among the Marrow men were Thomas Boston, Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, James Hog, Ralph Wardlaw and others, who a few years later seceded from the Church of Scotland (with the exception of Boston, who died before the First Secession). The Secession was primarily over the vexed question of patronage, but there were deep-seated theological issues as well--issues which were to occasion constant controversy until John McLeod Campbell was to raise the same issues in a more thorough-going way a hundred years later, and be condemned on similar grounds." p. 59f

57. Robert Herbert Story, The Church of Scotland, Past and Present: Its History, its Relation to the Law and the State, its Doctrine, Ritual, Discipline, and Patrimony (London: William Mackenzie, 69 Ludgate Hill, E.C.), p. 288. For further discussion of the political/ecclesiastical background of Campbell's trial see D. Chambers, "Doctrinal Attitudes in the Church of Scotland in the Pre-Disruption Era: the Age of John McLeod Campbell and Edward Irving," Journal of Religious History 8 (December, 1974): pp. 159-182.
58. Ibid. (Story)
59. Memorials 2:297ff

Chapter 3

THE ANATOMY OF A REVIVAL

1. John McLeod Campbell, Reminiscences and Reflections: Referring to his Early Ministry in the Parish of Row, 1825-31, ed. Donald Campbell (London: Macmillan and Co., 1873), p. 123.
2. Ibid., p. 124.
3. Ibid., p. 124f.
4. Ibid., p. 127.
5. Ibid., p. 130f.

6. Ibid., p. 131.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., p. 132f.
10. Ibid., p. 133.
11. Ibid., p. 134.
12. Ibid., p. 135.
13. Ibid., p. 136.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., p. 152.
16. Ibid., p. 153.
17. Ibid., p. 153f.
18. Ibid., p. 138f. Campbell is not meaning to imply that works-fruit is not a valid test of whether true faith has been present. He allows that at the last day, God will judge men by their works. He also allows that works-fruit can be helpful in judging others, or in judging the validity of a particular doctrine, but he does not allow it to be used by the individual himself to judge whether he personally has right or title to trust in God, i.e., to have confidence in Him. The right or title has been given to all men in Christ.
19. Campbell's principal treatment of the inner witness of the Spirit is found in his book entitled, Thoughts on Revelation, with Special Reference to the Present Time (London: Macmillan and Company, 1862), esp. pp. 75-82.
20. The Nature of the Atonement, p. 196.
21. Reminiscences, p. 139.
22. Ibid., p. 140.
23. Ibid., p. 141.
24. Ibid., p. 143.

25. Ibid., p. 153.
26. Ibid., p. 191.
27. Ibid., p. 193.
28. Ibid., p. 193f.

Chapter 4

THE MIDDLE YEARS 1831 - 1851

1. J. H. Leckie, "Books that have Influenced Our Epoch: John M'Leod Campbell's 'The Nature of the Atonement'," The Expository Times 5 (February 1929): 199.
2. Memorials 1 (Campbell), p. 91.
3. Ibid., p. 95.
4. Ibid., p. 101f.
5. Ibid., p. 102
6. Ibid., p. 105. Concerning this warning, Campbell wrote his sister, under date of January 19, 1833: "The admonition in question my father represents as embodying a statement of the doctrines which they assume that I teach, and of which they express their abhorrence; and that statement is intended to include my teaching on other points besides the subject-matters of the libel. Of all my teaching it gives a very erroneous impression, and on the subject of the Lord's humanity it represents me as teaching what might justly be mentioned with abhorrence, viz., 'that our Lord's holiness was not immaculate.'" This tallies well with Campbell's statement in a letter to his father, dated September 11, 1830, "You see your fears as to their putting the question of the humanity of our Lord into the libel are groundless." (Memorials 1 p. 71f.) It was about this time that Edward Irving was tried and deposed by the Church of Scotland for his "heresy" regarding the humanity of Christ; so the Campbells had good reason for thankfulness that the charges against him did not address this issue. Alexander J. Scott, Campbell's early assistant, and later Principal of Owens College, also had his license to

preach revoked because of his view on the humanity of Christ. (See William Hanna, Life of Dr. Chalmers, vol. III, chapter 15, cited in Robert Herbert Story's Memoir of his father, p. 187n.) Erskine's similar position on this matter is well known (see Harry Johnson's The Humanity of the Saviour). He was never tried, however, because he was a layman, and held no official church office. It is evident that the view that Christ assumed fallen human nature at his incarnation was held in common by these four friends: Campbell, Erskine, Scott and Irving.. The latter has the distinction of being one of the very few British theologians that were mentioned by Karl Barth in his Church Dogmatics. Barth commends Irving for being one of the historic defenders of that "saving truth" of which "there must be no weakening or obscuring . . . that the nature which God assumed in Christ is identical with our nature as we see it in the light of the Fall" (Church Dogmatics I,2, p. 153f).

7. Ibid.
8. Wishing to encourage his father in the face of such persecution, he writes him: "It is the same scene beginning to be acted over again, which has been so often exhibited in the Jewish Church, and subsequently in the Roman Catholic Church, and now in the Protestant Church: and, unless we see our cause as the Lord's own cause, and our trials as for His name's sake, we shall not take the encouragement in God under them which we have a right to take. No doubt our kind and gracious heavenly Father cares for every matter that affects us; and, however individual or personal a trial or a grief may be, we are to come with it to the Lord for consolation, support, and guidance; and His word is, 'Call upon me when thou art in trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.'" Memorials I, p. 108f.
9. Ibid., p. 112f.
10. Ibid., p. 109.
11. Donald Campbell writes: "Unable as he was to agree with Irving during these later years of his life, Mr. Campbell never ceased to cherish the warmest affection for his old friend. After Irving came to Glasgow in broken health they were often together. Sometimes they rode together into the country; sometimes Irving rode by himself on Mr. Campbell's pony. One day, when

the sun was bright and the sky cloudless, there was a pause in the conversation and Irving, looking upwards, said with deep emotion, 'Oh that Thou wouldest rend the heavens and come down!'

Mr. Campbell's letters record some details of Irving's last days. It was a comfort to him to know that his name was on the lips and in the thoughts of his dying friend; and that the truth which made them one was present with him at last." Memorials I, p. 104.

Upon his death, Campbell wrote to his sister, "Dear, dear large-hearted, noble-minded Edward Irving has left us-- . . . "

12. Leckie, p. 200.
13. James B. Torrance, "The Contribution of McLeod Campbell to Scottish Theology," Scottish Journal of Theology 26 (1973):296.

Chapter 5

CHRIST THE BREAD OF LIFE

1. James Denney, The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1917), p. 120.
2. John Gambold, "The Martyrdom of St. Ignatius" Poetical Works of the late Rev. John Gamabold, A.M. (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1816), p. 90.
3. Campbell, Memorials II, p. 2.
4. The second edition of NA was published in 1867. Of it Campbell wrote: "I have in the introduction desired to approach the Atonement from the opposite side to that on which I have approached that solemn subject in the book itself.

In the book I assume the faith in an Atonement, and ask only the deeper consideration of its nature. In this introduction I have in view the state of mind now sometimes to be met, in which the Incarnation and Atonement, hitherto united in men's thoughts, are disjoined, and the faith of the Incarnation is accepted while that of the Atonement is rejected. Memorials II, p. 181f.

5. John 15: 5.
6. John 6: 51.
7. John McLeod Campbell, Christ the Bread of Life: an Attempt to give a Profitable Direction to the Present Occupation of Thought with Romanism, 2d., ed. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1869) p. 24.
8. Ibid., p. 35
9. Ibid., p. 36
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., p. 39
12. Ibid., p. 41
13. Ibid., p. 64
14. Ibid., p. 64f
15. Ibid., p. 71f
16. John 4: 34
17. John 15: 10.
18. CBL, p. 89.
19. The well-known Scottish theologian, T. F. Torrance, in a recent book (Theology in Reconciliation, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975, esp. pp. 139-42), refers very approvingly to this whole middle section of Campbell's Christ the Bread of Life, especially in connection with the subject of worship where he quotes Campbell's depiction of that worship in spirit and truth as being "the life of the Son in us that ascends to the Father." (CBL p. 92)
20. Ibid., p. 82.
21. Ibid., p. 89f
22. Ibid., p. 91.
23. Ibid., p. 97.
24. Ibid., p. 97f.

25. Reminiscences, p. 164f.
26. CBL, p. 98.
27. Ibid., p. 101f.
28. Ibid., p. 102.
29. Ibid., p. 102f.
30. Ibid., p. 103.
31. Ibid., p. 103-107.
32. Ibid., p. 108.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid., p. 109.
35. Ibid., p. 116.
36. Ibid., p. 118.
37. Ibid., p. 121.
38. Ibid., p. 122f.
39. Ibid., p. 105.
40. John 1: 4.
41. Thomas F. Torrance, in his book entitled, Theology in Reconciliation: Essays towards Evangelical and Catholic Unity in East and West (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1975), approvingly mentions McLeod Campbell at least ten times in Chapter 4, entitled, "The Mind of Christ in Worship: The Problem of Apollinarianism in the Liturgy." He speaks of Campbell's "profound little book Christ the Bread of Life" (p. 140), and especially refers the reader to pages 74-143 of that volume, which is just the section which we are reviewing in the present chapter.
42. CBL, p. 129f.
43. Ibid., p. 138f.
44. Memorials 1, p. 231.

45. Ibid., p. 213.
46. Ibid., p. 68.
47. Ibid., p. 234.
48. See Note 41.

Chapter 6

THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT

1. Leckie, p. 202.
2. C. E. Pritchard, "Modern Views of the Atonement," North British Review 92 (June, 1867): 186.
3. Leckie, p. 203.
4. Campbell, Nature of the Atonement, p. xvi.
5. Ibid., p. xviii.
6. Ibid., p. 272.
7. Ibid., p. 99f.
8. Ibid., p. 101.
9. Ibid., p. 101.
10. Ibid., p. 102.
11. Numbers 25: 10-13.
12. Nature of the Atonement, p. 103.
13. Ibid., p. 106.
14. Ibid., p. 106f
15. Ibid., p. 107.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid., p. 107f.

18. I refer to the question about the role of self love, and the popular notion that one must first love himself before he can love either his neighbor or God.
19. Ibid., p. 108f.
20. Ibid., p. 109.
21. Ibid., p. 109f.
22. Ibid., p. 101.
23. Ibid.

Chapter 7

THE RETROSPECTIVE ASPECTS OF THE ATONEMENT

1. In Appendix A is reproduced a one-page diagrammatic outline of Campbell's view of the atonement which has been prepared for classroom use by Professor James B. Torrance, of the University of Aberdeen, Scotland.

Also very helpful for study orientation is the Table of Contents of the Nature of the Atonement, which is reproduced as Appendix B. It bears clear evidence of having been carefully prepared by Campbell himself.

Extremely unhelpful--until the typographical error is detected--is the surely inadvertent reversal of "God" and "men" in the first item under Chapter VI in the Table of Contents:

"I. Christ's dealing with God on the part of men." It should read: "I. Christ's dealing with men on the part of God." (See both page 110.2 and p. 111 for confirmation of this correction.) Other editions of the Nature of the Atonement may not contain this misleading error.

2. Isaiah 55: 4.
3. John 14: 9.
4. Nature of the Atonement, p. 111f.
5. Ibid., p. 112.

7. Ibid., p. 114.
8. Ibid., p. 115.
9. Ibid., p. 116.
10. Ibid., p. 116f.
11. Ibid., p. 117f.
12. Ibid., p. 119.
13. Ibid., p. 121.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., p. 121f.
16. Ibid., p. 123.
17. R. C. Moberly, an Anglican clergyman, broadly developed this theme in his book, The Atonement and Personality (1901).
18. Ibid. (NA), p. 124.
19. Ibid., p. 126.
20. Ibid., p. 127.
21. Ibid., p. 118.
22. Ibid., p. 127.
23. Ibid., p. 128f.

Chapter 8

THE PROSPECTIVE ASPECTS OF THE ATONEMENT

1. Ibid., p. 130f.
2. Ibid., p. 133.
3. Ibid., p. 134.
4. Ibid., p. 134f.

5. Ibid., p. 134.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., p. 135.
8. Ibid., p. 137.
9. Ibid., p. 138.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., p. 138f.
12. Ibid., p. 139.
13. Ibid., p. 148.
14. Ibid., p. 149.
15. Ibid., p. 149f.
16. Ibid., p. 150.
17. Ibid., p. 153.
18. James Denney, The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1917), p. 120.
19. Campbell, The Nature of the Atonement, p. 155.
20. Ibid., p. 156f.
21. Ibid., p. 160f.
22. Ibid., p. 161.
23. Ibid., p. 164.

Chapter 9

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH

1. Ibid. (NA) p. 191.
2. 1 John 2: 2.
3. NA, p. 170.

4. Ibid., p. 171.
5. Ibid., p. 173f.
6. Ibid., p. 176.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., p. 178f.
9. Ibid., p. 179.
9. Ibid., p. 174
10. This is one of the four characteristic features of Campbell's works as noted by John Macquarrie, of Oxford University, in the Expository Times, June, 1972, p. 264.
11. Ibid. (NA), p. 183.
12. Ibid., p. 124f.
13. Ibid., p. 188.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., p. 190.
16. Ibid., p. 193.
17. Ibid., p. 194.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., p. 333. The references to page numbers in the 300s are taken from a long Note to his Chapter II, "Luther's Teaching of Justification by Faith Alone." This note, along with others, was appended to a later edition of The Nature of the Atonement. Written more than a decade after the original edition, it represents his most mature thinking on the subject.
20. Ibid., p. 334.
21. Cf. Ellen G. White on the distinction between faith and feeling, and that the latter is not to be our guide.
22. Ibid.

23. Ibid., p. 335.
24. Ibid., p. 336.

Chapter 10

ERSKINE ON JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

1. William Hanna, Letters of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen from 1800 till 1840 (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1877), p. 129.
2. The reference is to Thomas Chalmers. See Henderson, p. 35.
3. Habakkuk 2: 4.
4. Thomas Erskine, The Doctrine of Election: and its Connection with the General Tenor of Christianity, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh, David Douglas, 1878), p. 130.
5. Ibid., p. 131.
6. Ibid., p. 132.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid. As an important digression or qualification, Erskine writes (p. 124f): "I may repeat here, that it is quite clear from the context, that the righteousness of God in this place cannot refer to God's own character, but to that condition of character which he will acknowledge as righteousness in man. The apostle has said in verse 20th, that 'by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified;' that is, 'attain righteousness;' and then he proceeds to make known a righteousness which is attainable. Indeed, the whole of the preceding part of the Epistle relates to the condition of man's character before God--and the following chapter is manifestly on the same subject, so that it is only by losing the train of the argument, and taking hold of the form of the expression, that we are in danger of thinking otherwise of this passage. At the same time I would observe that the two views are really one at the root; for the righteousness of God in his dealings towards men consists in his purpose of leading man through the purifying process of penal sorrow and death, into his own eternal holy

life; and the true righteousness of man--that righteousness which is by faith--consists in his yielding himself to that purpose of God, and adopting it as his own, by doing which, he manifestly becomes a partaker of God's own very righteousness, not in fiction, but in reality."

9. Ibid., p. 141.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., p. 141f.
12. Luke 9: 23.
13. Doctrine of Election, p. 143f.
14. Ibid., p. 144.
15. Ibid., p. 145f.
16. See T. F. Torrance, Theology in Transition, pp. 139-266, for documentation of the emphasis placed by the early Greek Fathers (Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria and the Cappadocians) upon the full and complete assumption of humanity by the Son of God.
17. See Note 6 of Chapter 4 of this thesis.
18. DOE, p. 146.
19. Ibid., p. 143.
20. John Peter Lange, Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal and Homiletical, vol. 10, trans. and ed. Philip Schaff (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 1960), p. 129.
21. William Sanday and Arthur Headlam, International Critical Commentaries, vol. 26, eds. S. R. Driver, A. Plummer, C. A. Briggs, 5th ed. (Edinburgh, T.&T Clark, 1902), p. 83.
22. DOE, p. 147.
23. Ibid., p. 148.
24. Ibid., p. 149f.
25. Ibid., p. 151.

25. Ibid., p. 151.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., p. 151n.
28. Ibid., p. 154f.
29. Thomas Erskine, The Brazen Serpent: or Life Coming Through Death, 3d ed., (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1879), p. 87f.
30. Ibid., p. 88n.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid., p. 89n.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid., p. 90n.
38. Ibid.
39. "Justification by faith is an improper expression; it does not occur as a substantive in the Bible (see note, p. 88); it ought to be the righteousness of faith, and it means confidence in God, or having the conscience purged through faith in the atonement, which is the principle of confidence." TBS, p. 291.
40. Ibid., p. 118.
41. Among his special friends may be listed:

Thomas Carlyle
Frederick Denison Maurice
Thomas Chalmers
Norman McLeod
Madame de Broglie
Edward Irving
Alexander Scott
Merle d'Aubigne of Geneva
Alexandre Vinet of Lausanne
Adolphe Monod of Paris

8. Arthur Westcott, Brooks Foss Westcott, Bishop of Durham (London: Macmillan, 1898), vol. 2, p. 226.
9. R. W. Dale, The Atonement, 15th ed. (London: The Congregational Union of England and Wales, 1902), p. 424.
10. James Denney, The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1917), p. 120.
11. Ibid., p. 288f.
12. Ibid., p. 291.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., p. 305.
15. Ibid., p. 328f.
16. Ibid., p. 291.
17. For a discussion of Moberly's contribution to atonement thinking, see David Duffie, "Toward Understanding the Atonement: Some 19th and 20th Century Developments in Non-liberal Theology of the Atonement," an unpublished paper presented to the Atonement Subcommittee of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, January, 1979, pp. 17-22.
18. Franks, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 435.
19. Vincent Taylor, The Cross of Christ (New York: Macmillan, 1957), p. 95. For an overview of Taylor's views on the atonement, see David Duffie, "Some Contemporary Evangelical Views of the Atonement," The Sanctuary and the Atonement: Biblical, Historical, and Theological Studies, prepared by the Biblical Research Committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, eds. Arnold V. Wallenkampf and W. Richard Leshar (Washington, D.E.: The Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1981) pp. 504-508 and 511.
20. Tuttle, p. 276.
21. C. S. Lewis, Miracles: A Preliminary Study (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947), p. 83. There is no reference, and I don't know the source.

- reference, and I don't know the source.
22. Robert Herbert Story, in the Memoir of the life of his father, quotes a "recent" letter of Campbell's as follows: "That historical independence which we mark when two minds, working apart and without any interchange of thought, arrive at the same conclusions, is always an interesting and striking fact when it occurs; and it did occur as to Scott and myself; and also as to Mr. Erskine and me, and I believe, too, as to Mr. Erskine and Scott." p. 152n.
 23. Robert Herbert Story, Memoir, p. 187n.
 24. Greville MacDonald, George MacDonald and His Wife (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1924), p. 191.
 25. C. S. Lewis, The Great Divorce (New York: Macmillan Co., Inc., 1946), pp 64-80.
 26. John McIntyre, Prophet of Penitence: Our Contemporary Ancestor, a lecture delivered in the Rhu church on Thursday 24 February, 1972, to commemorate the centenary of the death of the Rev. John McLeod Campbell, D.D., Minister of the parish 1825-1831, (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1972), p. 21f.
 27. J. B. Torrance, "The Contribution of McLeod Campbell to Scottish Theology," Scottish Journal of Theology 26 (1973): 295-311.
 28. James B. Torrance, "The Vicarious Humanity of Christ," The Incarnation: Ecumenical Studies in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed A. D. 381 ed. Thomas F. Torrance (n.p.: Hansel Press, 1981), p. 142.
 29. "What did Calvin mean by saying that forgiveness is logically prior to repentance? The point is of fundamental importance in our interpersonal relationships. If two people have the misfortune to have a quarrel, and then one day one comes to the other and says, in all sincerity, 'I forgive you!' it is clear that that is not only a word of love and reconciliation, but also a word (perhaps a withering word) of condemnation--for in pronouncing his forgiveness, he is clearly implying that the other person is the guilty party! Indeed it can be a very hurtful thing, if not a self-righteous thing, to say to someone, 'I forgive you!'. How would the other person be likely to react? I could imagine that his immediate reaction would be one of indignation.

his word, he might well reject the forgiveness, because he refuses to submit to the verdict of guilty implied in it. He would be 'impenitent'--there would be no 'change of heart'. But supposing on subsequent reflection, he comes back to his friend and says, 'You were right! I was in the wrong!' implicit in his acceptance of love and forgiveness, he would be submitting to the verdict of guilty. There would be a real change of mind, an act of penitence on his part." Ibid., p. 142.

30. Ibid., p. 143f.
31. Ibid., p. 145.
32. Ibid.
33. Thomas F. Torrance, "The Mind of Christ in Worship: The Problem of Apollinarianism in the Liturgy," Theology in Reconciliation: Essays towards Evangelical and Catholic Unity in East and West (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1975), pp. 139ff.
34. Ibid., p. 206.
35. For a powerful indictment of this very prevalent trend in contemporary Christendom see Paul C. Vitz, Psychology As Religion: the Cult of Self-worship (Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans, 1977).
36. Ibid., p. 210f.
37. Ibid., p. 213f.

Chapter 12

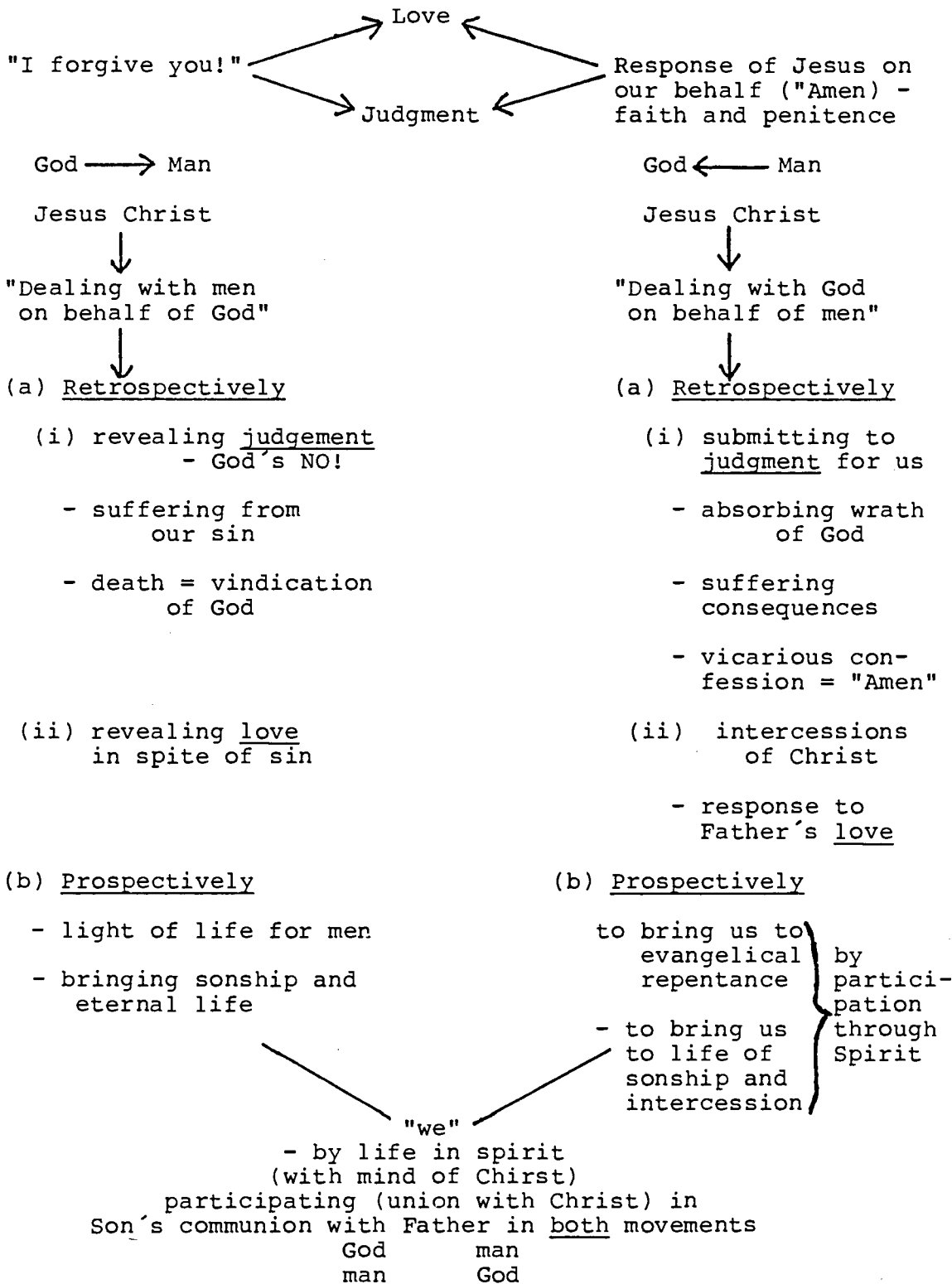
RELEVANCE TO ADVENTISM

1. See Numbers 29:11 and M. L. Andreasen, The Sanctuary Service (Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1937), p. 172.
2. Ellen G. White, General Conference Bulletin, 1901, p. 36.
3. Alonzo T. Jones, General Conference Bulletin, 1895, p. 302.

4. Harry Johnson, The Humanity of the Saviour: A Biblical and Historical Study of the Human Nature of Christ in relation to Original Sin, with special reference to its Soteriological Significance (London: Epworth Press, 1962), pp. 155-59.
5. See Note 4 of Chapter 6 of this thesis.
6. Revelation 2:5.

APPENDIX

John McLeod Campbell - The Nature of the Atonement
 (Diagram by James B. Torrance of the University of Aberdeen)



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