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# The EVANGELICAL STUDENT

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WILLIAM J. JONES, *Editor*

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## Editorial

**I**N a sketch of Samuel Rutherford, Andrew A. Bonar writes something which bears heavily upon virile Christianity among students, as well as among lay believers. He says: "It might be instructive to enquire why it is that wherever godliness is healthy and progressive, we almost invariably find learning in the Church of Christ attendant on it; while on the other hand neglect of study is attended sooner or later by decay of vital godliness."

The averting of genuine study of the Word of God is a danger into which modern college and theological seminary students too easily fall. But a similar danger, and one just as perilous is the error of thinking that true learning and true piety are incompatible. How facile it is to divorce the knowledge of the universe—natural revelation from the knowledge of the Word—divine revelation, and assume that they are two different kinds of knowledge! The student, whether evangelical or not, finds it a sore temptation to forget truths of apparently remote subjects when he focuses his attention on what he regards as religious truth. In succumbing to this snare he errs greatly; he fails to consider that every truth has its ultimate significance only in its proper relation to God.

Arduous study of the world, or of God, or of man must ever be for the Christian student a reverent and a devotional study. But it should be *study*, the bending of the whole mind and soul on the object. And every devotional act of the Christian student, whether alone or with other Christians should be intelligent. Too often piety is severed from learning; too often students are inclined to pray or sing without the understanding!

If we as evangelical students are to make any deep and lasting impress upon the Church in our generation, we must not take our studies lightly nor our devotionals carelessly. Both have a place and both must be cultivated. It is not enough that we have fervor; there must be fuel of truth for the fervor to consume! God as a god of truth must ever be worshipped in spirit and in truth. And there is no more exacting and demanding task than that enjoined upon all believers by the Apostle, "bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ". It is not knowledge which is to be cast down, but that—whether it be called knowledge or imagining—which exalts itself against the "knowledge of God". Religious mystics abound in student circles. They would have one believe that the more the intellect is submerged, the more godly one is likely to be. That is not the Apostle Paul's view, nor is it the view of saintly souls of the Church in all ages, whose hymns of praise, for instance, are redolent with devotional charm. They are rich in worship because they are rooted in the knowledge of God and not in man and his ephemeral emotional states.

## Paul the Soul-Winner's Pattern\*

LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER

**A**MONG the many divine transformations which are accomplished in and for the individual at the moment he is saved, is the removal of his citizenship from earth to heaven. Of those who believed on Him, Christ said, "they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:14), and the Apostle Paul has declared that "our citizenship is in heaven" (Philippians 3:20, 21 [R. V.]). Being caught up into heaven and from thence commissioned to return for soul-winning service wrought great reality into the heart of the Apostle whereby he could say, "to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you" (Philippians 1:23, 24), and "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (II Corinthians 5:11).

Since he thus becomes a citizen of heaven, it would be both reasonable and natural for the believer to be caught away from this world at the moment he is saved; but, like the Apostle, each child of God is commissioned to remain here as a witness for his Lord. Christ said, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." According to the precise meaning of Ephesians 4:11, 12 we are to recognize that all believers are appointed to service, and we are given to understand that God has provided pastors and teachers for the edification of the saints unto that ministry which is committed unto *them*. From these passages we observe that every child of God is an heaven-commissioned witness in a world to which he sustains no relation other than that of an "ambassador", a "pilgrim", and a "stranger". The individual Christian may be called to service in one field or another, but there is no commission to service itself other than this universal divine appointment. Certainly the saints need to be "edified" unto their great task.

There are various responsibilities of Christian service. The simpler forms of testimony are borne by the great number of Sunday School teachers, mission workers, colporteurs, and soul winners. Over these are those divinely commissioned with ministry gifts for the direction and edification of the larger group. And over ministers are the seminary professors who prepare the pastors and teachers. It naturally results that if there is no missionary, soul-winning passion in the seminary, there will be little or none in the life of the pastor and teacher, whose failure will be reflected in ever-widening circles. It therefore follows that the man who lacks a flaming zeal for the salvation of lost souls, is by so much, disqualified to serve as a teacher of teachers in a theological seminary. Believers are not detained in this world to refute human speculations and philosophies: they are given a living message from God before which falsehood withers, and the forces of darkness tremble.

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\*The Convention message on evangelism, adapted and modified by the author from stenographic notes of the address.

Let it not be supposed that there is no need for scholarship and intellectual culture in the execution of the believer's task. No service in this world is so demanding educationally. However the education is *specific*, calling for a knowledge of God and His Word.

In rebuking the modern notion that full-rounded, mental culture and soul-winning passion are incongruous, one needs only to cite the Apostle Paul. In him was combined the greatest intellect and educational attainment of his day with a burning evangelism which could say, "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (I Corinthians 9:22), and saving a soul, according to the Apostle, is more than outward transformation.

At least five times in the inspired text of the New Testament this great Apostle is held before all believers as a God-given example of Christian service and activity. "Be ye followers of me" is a command which no other Christian would dare to proclaim; yet God has thus honored this unique servant above all others. We therefore turn to the records of his ministry with the divine requirements of emulation resting upon us.

In Romans 10:1 we find the Apostle pouring out his desire to God in behalf of his own people that they might be saved.

In II Corinthians 5:13 and 15, he announces his great confidence in the fact that Christ died in behalf of all. Therefore, henceforth, he knows no man after the flesh; he knows them only as those for whom Christ has died. All earthly distinctions from the highest to the lowest are dissipated, and the greatest honor that can come upon any human being—that Christ should die for him—is already conferred upon him.

In I Corinthians 9:18-27 he declares the character of his service for which he will be rewarded. In his service he makes the gospel without charge that he may "gain the more." He refuses controversy with Jew, legalist, the man to whom the law is given, and the weak, that by all means he may *save some*.

In Romans 9:3, the Apostle uncovers the deepest longings of his heart. There he states with surpassing emphasis, "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh". Above all others, he would assure us of the fact that, since Christ has become a curse, there is no need for another. Is he not saying rather that, having been so possessed of the Spirit of Christ, he is *willing* to be accursed if thereby a soul might be saved?

To what length will he go in tireless service for others! From such a heart of devotion he exhorts us: "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (I Corinthians 1:9); "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58).