

Introduction:

“Every age has its own outlook. It is specially good at seeing certain truths and specially liable to make certain mistakes. We all, therefore, need the books that will correct the characteristic mistakes of our own period. And that means the old books. All contemporary writers share to some extent of the contemporary outlook... We may be sure that the characteristic blindness of the 20th century – the blindness about which posterity (future generations) will ask, “but how could they have thought that?” – lies where we have never suspected it, and concerns something about which there is untroubled agreement between Hitler and President Roosevelt... None of us can fully escape this blindness, but we shall certainly increase it, and weaken our guard against it, if we read only modern books. Where they are true they will give us truths which we half knew already. Where they are false they will aggravate the error with which we are already dangerously ill. The only palliative (medicine) is to keep the clean sea breeze of the centuries blowing through our minds, and this can be done only by reading old books.” – C. S. Lewis

“Far be it for me to imagine that Zion contains none but Calvinistic Christians within her walls, or that there are none saved who do not hold our views... I rejoice to confess that I feel sure there are some of God’s people even in the Romish Church.” – Charles Spurgeon

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)



Conversion:

- *“I sometimes think I might have been in darkness and despair now, had it not been for the goodness of God in sending a snowstorm one Sunday morning, when I was going to a place of worship. When I could go no further, I turned down a court and came to a little Primitive Methodist Chapel. In that chapel there might be a dozen people. The minister did not come that morning: snowed up, I suppose. A poor man, a shoemaker or something of that sort, went up into the pulpit to preach. The text was, ‘Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth’ [Isa 45:22].’ He did not even pronounce the words rightly, but that did not matter... He began thus: ‘My dear friends, this is a very simple text indeed. It says, “Look.” Now that does not take a deal of effort. It ain’t lifting your foot or your finger; it is just “look.” Well, a man need not go to college to learn to look. You may be the biggest fool, and yet you can look. A man need not be worth a thousand a year to look. Anyone can look; a child can look. But this is what the text says. Then it says, “Look unto Me.” ... ‘many of you are looking to yourselves. No use looking there. You’ll never find comfort in yourselves.’ ... ‘Look unto Me: I am sweating great drops of blood. Look unto Me; I am hanging on the Cross. Look: I am dead and buried. Look unto Me; I rise again. Look unto Me; I ascend; I am sitting at the Father’s right hand. O, look to Me! Look to Me!’ ... Then he looked at me under the gallery and said, ‘Young man, you look very miserable. And you will always be miserable—miserable in life and miserable in death—if you do not obey my text. But if you obey now, this moment, you will be saved. Young man, look to Jesus Christ.’ There and then the*

cloud was gone, the darkness had rolled away, and that moment I saw the sun; and I could have risen that moment and sung with the most enthusiastic of them of the Precious Blood of Christ.” – Charles Spurgeon

Ministry:

- Pastored Waterbeach Baptist Church from age 17 to 19
- Pastored New Parks Street Baptist Church (Later called The Metropolitan Tabernacle) from age 19 to 57
- His preaching ability was unlike anything London had seen
- His written sermons sold about 20,000 copies a week

What made him the “Prince of Preachers”

1. Christian growth came from knowing and exploring the depths of God

- *“The most excellent study for expanding the soul, is the science of Christ, and Him crucified, and the knowledge of the Godhead in the glorious Trinity. Nothing will so enlarge the intellect, nothing so magnify the whole soul of man, as a devout, earnest, continued investigation of the great subject of the Deity. And, whilst humbling and expanding, this subject is immensely comforting. Oh, there is, in contemplating Christ, a balm for every wound; in musing on the Father, there is a soothing for every grief; and in the influence of the Holy Ghost, there is a balsam for every sore. Would you lose your sorrow? Would you drown your cares? Then go, plunge yourself in the Godhead’s deepest sea; be lost in His immensity; and you shall come forth as from a couch of rest, refreshed and invigorated. I know nothing which can so comfort the soul; so calm the swelling billows of sorrow and grief; so speak peace to the winds of trial, as a devout musing upon the subject of the Godhead.” – Charles Spurgeon*
- *“Those who do away with Christian doctrine are, whether they are aware of it or not, the worst enemies of Christian living...because the coals of orthodoxy are necessary to the fire of piety.” - Charles Spurgeon*

2. Trusting God in the face of incredible opposition

- Traumatic Event at Surrey Gardens Music Hall
 - *“Perhaps never soul went so near the burning furnace of insanity, and yet came away unharmed.” - Charles Spurgeon*
 - *“I cannot but think, from what I saw, that his comparatively early death might be in some measure due to the furnace of mental suffering he endured on and after that fearful night.” - Darrel Amundsen*
- Newspapers Slandered him: *“His style is that of the vulgar colloquial, varied by rant...All the most solemn mysteries of our holy religion are by him rudely, roughly and impiously handled. Common sense is outraged and decency disgusted. His rantings are interspersed with coarse anecdotes.” - Essex Standard, April, 1855*
- Other Pastors Slandered him: *“Mr. Spurgeon was absolutely destitute of intellectual benevolence. If men saw as he did they were orthodox; if they saw things in some other way they were heterodox, pestilent and unfit to lead the minds of students or inquirers. Mr. Spurgeon’s was a superlative egotism; not the shilly-shallying, timid, half-disguised egotism that cuts off its own head, but the full-grown, over-powering, sublime egotism that takes the chief seat as if by right. The only colors which Mr. Spurgeon recognized were black and white.” - Joseph Parker*
- Physical Ailments: Gout, Rheumatism, and Bright’s disease
- Horrible Depression: His “Worst Feature”
 - *“Causeless depression cannot be reasoned with, nor can David’s harp charm it away by sweet discoursings. As well fight with the mist as with this shapeless, undefinable, yet all-beclouding hopelessness...The iron bolt which so mysteriously fastens the door of hope and holds our spirits in gloomy prison, needs a heavenly hand to push it back.” - Charles Spurgeon*
- Down-Grade Controversy

- Despite all of these trials, Spurgeon persevered
 - Trusted God with his depression
 - Trust God’s sovereign control over his trials:
 - *“It would be a very sharp and trying experience to me to think that I have an affliction which God never sent me, that the bitter cup was never filled by his hand, that my trials were never measured out by him, nor sent to me by his arrangement of their weight and quantity.”* – Charles Spurgeon
 - *“¹² Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory^[b] and of God rests upon you.”* – 1 Peter 4:12-14

3. An almost supernatural ability to serve his Lord:

- He founded 66 ministries
 - *“This list of associations, instituted by his genius, and superintended by his care, were more than enough to occupy the minds and hearts of fifty ordinary men.”* - Lord Shaftesbury
- Wrote more than 140 books

Died at the age of 57 on January 31, 1892

- *“If by excessive labor, we die before reaching the average age of man, worn out in the Master’s service, then glory be to God, we shall have so much less of earth and so much more of Heaven!”* – Charles Spurgeon

Herman Bavinck (1854-1921)



A Theologian for the Modern Age:

- Bavinck lived in the Modern world that was rejecting Revelation, Divine Inspiration, and all other “unscientific” beliefs
- *“In general, the current of the times is away from Christ and his cross.”* – Herman Bavinck

Theology in the face of Modernism:

- *“Holy Scripture does not want to give us an abstract concept of deity, but rather wants to put us into contact, all of us personally, with the living and true God. Scripture breaks off our notions and concepts and leads us back to God Himself. Hence Scripture does not argue about God, but presents Him to us and shows Him in all the works of His hand. Lift up your eyes and behold, Scripture seems to say, who has made all these things.”* - Herman Bavinck

C.S. Lewis (1898-1963)



Conversion:

- Lewis was an atheist for the first 30 years of his life. However, he couldn't shake his longing for "joy."
- Joy: *"the experience of an unsatisfied desire which is itself more desirable than any other satisfaction."* – C. S. Lewis
- *"An unattainable ecstasy has hovered just beyond the grasp of my consciousness...The sweetest thing of all my life has been the longing...to find the place where all the beauty came from."* - C. S. Lewis
- *"If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world."* – C. S. Lewis
- The inconsolable longing for joy lead to Joy Himself:
 - *"The books or the music in which we thought the beauty was located will betray us if we trust to them; it was not in them, it only came through them, and what came through them was longing. These things — the beauty, the memory of our own past — are good images of what we really desire; but if they are mistaken for the thing itself, they turn into dumb idols, breaking the hearts of their worshipers. For they are not the thing itself; they are only the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of the tune we have not heard, news from a country we have never yet visited."* - C. S. Lewis

Mere Christianity:

- *"...the Christian religion as 'understood everywhere by everyone.'"* – C. S. Lewis
- *"I have believed myself to be restating ancient and orthodox doctrines...I have tried to assume nothing that is not professed by all baptized and communicating Christians."* – C. S. Lewis

Enjoying the God of all Joy

- *"The Scotch catechism says that man's chief end is 'to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.' But we shall then know that these are the same thing. Fully to enjoy is to glorify. In commanding us to glorify Him, God is inviting us to enjoy him."* – C. S. Lewis

Lewis Stories: His stories meant to point to the True Story

- Narnia and Aslan: *"The figure of Aslan tells us more of how Lewis understood the nature of God than anything else he wrote. It has all the hidden power and majesty and awesomeness which Lewis associated with God, but also all the glory and the tenderness and even the humor which he believed belonged to him, so that the children could run up to him and throw their arms around him and kiss him."* – Bede Griffiths

- Great Divorce: *“There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, “Thy will be done,” and those to whom God says, in the end, “Thy will be done.” All that are in Hell, choose it.”* – C. S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*
- Screwtape Letters

Lewis’ Apologetics: Defense of absolute Truth

- He defended absolute truth in Modern world that is rejecting it
- If Truth is diminished, Joy is diminished.
- Alongside his stories, Lewis wrote logical defenses of Christian faith: *The Problem of Pain...Miracles...The Abolition of Man*, etc.

“If we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.” – C. S. Lewis

Billy Graham (1918-2018)



Early Ministry:

- Joined “Youth For Christ” and became their 1st full-time evangelist
- LA Revival 1949:
 - Event lasted 8 weeks...drew 350,000 listeners...3,000 people came to receive Christ
 - William Randolph Hearst (media mogul): “Puff Graham”

Media and Celebrity:

- Billy Graham had perfect timing ministering during worldwide media boom
- From Truman to Trump, Billy knew all 13 sitting presidents during his lifetime
- Graham had the ability to simultaneously appear as world famous and yet everyone’s friend.
- Became seen as Americas Pastor
 - *“Graham is the nearest thing that America has to an established church.”* - David Frost

Crusades: The Central element of Graham’s ministry

- 417 Crusades in his lifetime in 185 countries from 1947 to 2005
 - Longest: New York City Crusade in the 1950’s which lasted 16 weeks
 - Largest: South Korea in 1973: 1.1 million people

Message: 4 Essential Elements

- The Cross: Rebellious sinners could find peace with God through the cross
 - *“Without the cross, there is no salvation, there is no forgiveness.”* - Graham
- Decision for Christ: Goal of every crusade was “Making a decision for Christ”
 - *“There is no decision in your whole life that compares to this. You come.”* - Graham
- Rebirth: There was no true conversion without rebirth and transformation of a sinner’s heart
 - *“God gives a new nature to those who receive Christ...God’s standards demand regeneration.”* - Graham
- Alter Call: *“Just as I am, without one plea, But that Thy blood was shed for me.”*

Graham’s Gift - Ability to adapt teaching to the language and world of his audience

- *“We Communists have a high casualty rate. We’re the ones who get shot and hung and lynched and tarred and feathered and jailed and slandered and ridiculed and fired from our jobs, and in every other way made as uncomfortable as possible. A certain percentage of us get killed or imprisoned. We live in virtual poverty. We turn back to the party every penny we make above what is absolutely necessary to keep us alive. We Communist don’t have the time or the money for many movies or concerts or T-bone steaks or decent homes and new cars. We’ve been described as fanatics. We are fanatics. Our lives are dominated by one great overshadowing factor: the struggle for world Communism. We Communist have a philosophy of life which no amount of money can buy. We have a cause to fight for. A definite purpose in life. We subordinate our petty personal selves into this great movement of humanity. And if our personal lives seem hard, or our egos appear to suffer through subordination to the party, then we are adequately compensated by the thought that each of us in his small way is contributing to something new and true and better for mankind. There is one thing about which I am in dead earnest and that is the Communist cause. It is my life, my business, my religion, my hobby, my sweetheart, my wife and mistress, my bread and meat. I work at it in the daytime and dream of it at night. It’s hold on me grows, not lessons as time goes on. Therefore, I cannot carry on a friendship, a love affair, or even a conversation without relating to this force which both drives and guides my life. I evaluate people, books, ideas, and actions according to how they affect the Communist cause and their attitude towards it. I’ve already been in jail because of my ideas and if necessary I’m ready to go before a firing squad.”...And then he turn to the crowd and says “I want to ask you tonight do you have that much dedication to the Lord Jesus Christ?...I tell you Christ demanded no less.” – Billy Graham*

Influence:

- He was 4th civilian and 1st religious leader in US history to lay in the Rotunda of the US Capital
- By the end of his career, Graham had been seen and heard more than any other person in history
- He preached around 220 million people in 185 countries
- Last interview when asked “What would you do differently?”
 - *“I would study more. I would pray more. Travel Less. Take less speaking engagements...If I had it to do over again I would spend more time in meditation and prayer and telling the Lord how much I love Him and adore Him.”* – Billy Graham