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→\*SERMONS\*←

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THE RELIGION OF NATURE AND OF CULTURE.

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*The way of Cain.*—JUDE II.

GOD created Adam in His own image, crowned him with glory and honor, and constituted him the vicegerent of heaven, in this then fair world so lately launched.

By his own transgression Adam fell—fell from his allegiance to God—fell from his high throne of power. He broke away from God, and nature broke away from him. He lost his self-control, and lost control of that magnificent domain, of which the Almighty had made him lord.

Not only so, but he lost God's image, and his whole being, henceforth, was marred and mutilated, and wrecked and ruined. And Adam was the head of the human race, so that the stream of life was poisoned at its very source, and all its waters became tainted and turbid, and so they will ever continue to be until at last they empty themselves into the wide, deep sea, unless grace interpose to make the waters pure and sweet.

Adam begat a son in his own likeness—not God's—that was gone—but his own—and his own bore the imprint of the evil one, to whose subtle agency he had sinfully succumbed. Thus the first man born into the world was not only the child of Adam, but also, in some sense, the child of the devil, and demonstrably our brother, though it be not either politic or pleasant flatly to affirm it. It has been the custom to cast stones upon his grave, as did the

The Gospel was thus historically introduced into the world of the age of Christ and His apostles, in just the way suited to its needs. We think that it can readily be shown that the men of that age and those races were representative men, and that they thus reappear in all ages. From age to age the four Gospels appeal to the classes who, in temperament, mental constitution, training and modes of thought, are like those for whom of old, in obedience to the inspiring breath of God, they were originally prepared. For the man by nature and training inclined to bow to authority, to appreciate divine religious forms, to exalt the peculiar position of the people of God, and to trace the marvellous plan of God in the preparation for the Messiah and in the progress of His kingdom, the Gospel which Matthew wrote for the Jew must possess a permanent and absorbing interest. For the man of power, reverencing law, given to action, fitted to be an actor or leader in pushing forward the conquest of the world for Christ, the Gospel which Mark wrote for the Roman

must retain its old significance and an ever-potent inspiration as a battle-call of the Almighty Conqueror. For the man of reason and taste, of philosophic and aesthetic culture, the man longing for the perfect manhood, cherishing a world-wide sympathy with mankind, delighting to contemplate the universal reach of the grace of God the Father to sinners, the Gospel which Luke wrote for the Greek must maintain an increasing reasonableness and an undying influence as the voicing of the infinite Reason of the one Divine Man. For the Christian, the man of faith, saved by the incarnation and atonement of the Son of God, the man of the new and divine life of obedience and devotion to Christ, the man dwelt in, enlightened, guided, and helped by the Holy Ghost, the Gospel which John wrote for the Christian Church cannot fail to retain an immortal fascination and to furnish a supreme satisfaction as the utterance of God's eternal Word to the believing soul. The four Gospels thus voice the fundamental facts of Christ's redemption for all mankind in all ages.

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### PERSONAL REASONS FOR BELIEVING CHRISTIANITY TO BE A REVELATION.

BY PROF. A. A. HODGE, D.D., THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, PRINCETON, N. J.

To the question, "Why do I personally believe Christianity to be a Revelation?" I would say:

1. I recognize the obvious fact that my rational and moral intuitions, and the information they afford, are as valid as my sense perceptions and the discoveries they make of the material world. Personality, freedom, moral responsibility—the eternal, ultimate, universal, and supreme obligation of the Right, are to me the first and most sure of realities.

2. The light of my own personality, will, intelligence, and conscience, cast upon external nature, and upon the human society which surrounds me, reveals God. He is manifested in the exercise of my own consciousness, and in the phenomena of external nature, as the invisible spirits of our fellow-men are visible in

their persons and actions; and I spontaneously recognize Him as certainly as I recognize them. Intelligence, choice, and, therefore, personality, are everywhere visible in the successions of external nature; and the presence of a presiding moral personality is witnessed to by the sense of responsibility and of guilt never absent from my own consciousness. To the extent to which science renders nature intelligible is the latter proved to be the product of an ever-present and acting intelligence. This God is discerned to be immanent in the external and internal world, as distributed through space and time, just as clearly as the phenomena themselves through the medium of which He is manifested. At the same time, He is just as clearly and as certainly discerned as a moral and prov-

identical Governor objective to ourselves, transcending all phenomena, and speaking to us, and acting upon us from without.

3. As thus revealed, it is evident that this God has created me in His own image. Instincts, also, which cannot be denied, testify that He is my Father. As a child of God, unassuageable instinct cries for union with Him. As a subject of His moral government, I know myself to be justly exposed to His wrath because of sin, and that I must have a Mediator to make my peace, else I die. His treatment of the race historically, and of me personally, affords strong presumption that He will sometime reveal Himself to me, and redeem me from the ruin effected by my sin.

4. I was born in a Christian family, and in a Christian Church. Parents and friends lived before me from the beginning lives which, in strong contrast with the character of the surrounding community, were unmistakably supernatural. Through the subsequent years, I have seen innumerable individuals of many nationalities whose lives and deaths, in spite of all inconsistencies, possessed the same supernatural character. All these referred the mystery of their lives to the facts of an Incarnation of God eighteen hundred years ago, and to the subsequent indwelling of a Divine Person in their hearts. The history of this stupendous event, and the promise of this indwelling, I found recorded in a Book, itself giving, whenever and wherever believingly received, equal evidence of supernatural origin and power.

5. The Bible and the Church thus present me with *Christ*. I find His person, life, words, death, and resurrection, and the consequence thereof, to be, when accepted as intended by the evangelists, the key which gives unity to all history, or, on the contrary, when not so understood, an infinite anomaly, neither to be reasoned away, nor explained. The very God immanent in nature and in conscience is revealed in this Christ with a satisfying completeness, solving all problems, and satisfying all needs—expiating human guilt, sanctifying human life,

reconciling the Moral Governor to His sinful subject, and uniting the Heavenly Father to His child.

6. This objective revelation of Christ in the Bible and in the Church, once accepted as genuine many years ago, has ever since been developed and strengthened in my consciousness, by a religious experience, which, however imperfect, has proved continuous, progressive, and practically real, to this day—a power in my life as well as a light in my sky.

7. This confidence grows more entirely satisfying through every renewed examination I am able to make of the historical monuments by which the fundamental facts of Christianity are certified. The authenticity of the records, the definite certainty of the facts, the miracles wrought, and the prophecies fulfilled, are among the best established events in history. If these be denied, there will be nothing left of which we can be sure. The supernatural birth, life, death, and resurrection of the *God-man*, and the miraculous growth of the early Church are all to me certainties, implicated in all rational views of the past or present state of mankind.

8. This is corroborated by all I have learned, as for years the pupil of Joseph Henry, of the genuine results and tendencies of modern science. Instead of stumbling at special and transient collisions, I have seen it to be true, as in all other healthy, open-eyed vision, that the worlds of matter and spirit, and the revelations of Scripture and science gloriously supplement and interpret each other. As the body is organized to the uses of the spirit, and the shrine to its resident divinity, so science is evermore unveiling the Temple which none other than the Triune God of Christianity can fill with His presence and crown with His glory.

9. The conviction of the truth of Christianity is greatly confirmed by the violent contrasts afforded by all other religions, by the miserable failures the best of them achieve; in their historical records; in their representations of God, of nature, and of man; in their provisions for the needs of the human reason, conscience, or affection; in the relation of

their cosmogonies to the results of modern science; and in their influence upon human character and life, individual and collective.

10. Finally, my satisfaction with Christianity is consummated by the sorry plight presented by all the various parties

who deny its truth, or rebel from its authority. Uncertain, inconsistent, inharmonious, instable, unfruitful, they take refuge in negations, and nowhere dare confront Christianity with positive, coherent counterpositions of creed, of evidence, or of practical results.—*Ex.*

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### AN APPEAL FOR THE SABBATH.

TO THE TOILER AND TO THE FOREIGN-BORN.\*

The Sabbath is catholic as the mission of Christ, and symbolizes and commends the universality of the divine beneficence and compassion. It summons the lowly, the sinful, and the wretched into the sympathizing presence of the same loving Father. It appoints for them as well as for more fortunate classes a day of audience with God, consecrates earth canopied with the blue sky as a temple for them to worship in, and transfigures life as their stewardship. It is a symbolic rest and jubilation over creation and redemption accomplished. In the Sabbath ritual the human race unite in commemorating the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and in celebrating common faith, common duty, common hope, and common worship. The Sabbath is a permanent provision for rest, worship, good works, charitable ministries, higher education, and exaltation of the character and destiny of all mankind. As a primitive divine ordinance it is above the State and above the Church, and will remain the basis of union, fellowship, and discipline of all believers in God, a Saviour, and a future life.

There is no interest of man the Sabbath will not subserve. It assures health to the body, vigor to the mind, and purity to the heart.

In its true observance the lost brotherhood of humanity is restored, a new patent of nobility is found, and man rises above any order made by the decree of kings. Diploma of university, nor membership of royal academy of science and

art, attests so exalted attainments or so high character as the true discipline of the Sabbaths of life assures.

#### TOILER.

Is not the Sabbath a firmer defence of the liberty, rights, and dignity of your manhood than Magna Charta or the American Declaration of Independence? Does it not, by the prestige of divine authority, wrest you from the clutch of the world's greed and power, and one day in seven exalt you, in inviolability of person, property, family, and worship, as a peer of kings? Is it not a bulwark of free institutions, a provision for popular education and for the amelioration of the condition of all classes of men? Have atheists, materialists, and Sabbath-contemning communities ever raised up Howards, Raikes, Mullers, Clarksons, to champion reforms, and awaken sympathy and make provision for the suffering classes? Are not the Church of Christ, following the example of their divine Lord, the true benefactors of the poor?

Is not the Sabbath an ever-recurring opportunity for teaching the ignorant, succoring the distressed, relieving the oppressed, and elevating the lowly? When rich and poor meet together on the Sabbath, do not the covetousness of the one and the envy of the other melt into the sympathies of a common brotherhood? Does not the greed of men draw away the poor from the sanction of God's presence on the Sabbath that it may enslave them? Does it not beguile them from attending to God's voice on the holy day so that it

\* From advance sheets of "The Sabbath—Its Permanence, Promise and Defence." By W. W. Everts, D.D. Published by E. B. Treat, 771 Broadway, New York. Price, \$1. See premium offer.