

Scriptures and Doctrine :: What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie

What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/9/20 1:06

There is established at Westminster Chapel, in memory of Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, what is known as The Campbell Morgan Memorial Bible Lectureship. A lecture is given each year by different men, in the month of June, in harmony with the Biblical principles which governed Dr. Campbell Morgan's ministry. The Lectures are published each year in order to amplify the spoken Word and extend the influence of the Lectureship.

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When the Trustees who have instituted this Lectureship invited me to deliver the second Lecture, I could not and did not hesitate to comply with their wish. I am deeply sensible of the honour they have done me, and grateful for the opportunity to identify myself with their intention, in concrete ways, to perpetuate the memory of one who, on both sides of the Atlantic, exercised a unique ministry, by voice and by pen, in popularizing interest in and knowledge of the Holy Bible.

The Christian public of London was greatly privileged to have the opportunity for so many years of listening to the preaching and teaching of George Campbell Morgan, and I am confident that the time will never come when Westminster Chapel will cease to be a centre of Biblical instruction and inspiration to all who desire these blessings.

The subject I have chosen for your consideration is in some sense novel, but of the utmost importance for a true apprehension and adequate appreciation of the incomparable and inestimable value of those Sacred Scriptures which we call *The Bible*.

I begin by assuming that but for the Bible Christianity would not have survived. The Bible is the record of a divine revelation, and if there had been no record, no one, after the apostolic age, would have had any means of knowing what that revelation was. Oral tradition would have become more and more corrupt by omissions, additions, and other influences, until, finally, the truth would have been altogether lost.

This observation relates to the recorded New Testament revelation, but it must be evident that except for the Old Testament Writings the entire background of the New Testament revelation would never have been known, for Judaism had misread its own history.

The Biblical record is not the original revelation, but, had there been no record, we would never have known what the revelation had been, or, indeed, that there had been a revelation.

Christians do not worship the Bible, but the God who therein is revealed, but we do realize, or we ought to, that the Bible which makes the redeeming God known to us is, beyond all estimate, our most precious heritage.

Our present task is to try to envisage the obliteration of the Bible, and all traces of it, in our history, literature, art, music, language, social institutions, worship, service, and individual life.

I cannot hope, within the limits imposed by this lectureship, to succeed in so ambitious a task, but perhaps I may start a line of thought which will lead us to renewed thankfulness to God for having given to us such a book as the Bible, and thankfulness also for all who have diligently studied it, and faithfully expounded it.

I do not claim originality for the idea of the obliteration of the Bible, for in a book with the title *The Eclipse of Faith*, which was published anonymously in the middle of the nineteenth century, but was written by a Henry Rogers, there is a chapter called, *The Blank Bible*.

It tells of a dream a man had, that, on turning to read his Bible, as was his custom, he found only blank pages. On inquiry, he learned that all the Bibles in his neighbourhood were also blanks, and all copies also in the book shops.

Some people, who never looked at the Bible while they had it, became interested in it now that it was lost.

One man who had never read it, said that it was "confounded hard to be deprived of his religion in his old age." Another person greatly mourned the loss of her Bible, because in it, for greater safety, she had deposited £100 in notes, and these, too, had become blanks. All the Bibles in the land were blanks, and the volumes were being sold for day-books and ledgers; and instead of Isaiah, and our Lord's parables, there were orders for silks and satins, cheese and bacon.

Then a movement was set afoot to re-write the Bible from the memories of those who had read and studied it.

A Trinitarian differed from a Unitarian over a critical recension. An Episcopalian did not agree with a Presbyterian that the words bishop and presbyter were interchangeable. A Calvinist had a vivid recollection of Romans ix, and an Arminian had some doubts about some of Paul's sentiments. Husbands remembered what was due from their wives. Undertakers remembered it had been said that there was "a time to mourn." A comedian recalled that it was said there was "a time to laugh." Some young ladies remembered that there was "a time to love," and everybody knew there was "a time to speak," except a Quaker who thought that there was "a time to keep silence."

Protestants and Papists disagreed about many passages, and some infidels thought that the visitation on the Bible was a great mercy, removing a book which promoted idolatry.

This dream begins to show what consternation and confusion would result from the obliteration of the Bible, but the subject can be indefinitely expanded.

Of course, the major disaster would be the loss of the Bible itself, but that would involve so many other losses, the contemplation of which must make the mind to reel, and the heart to faint.

Let us, then, consider some of the influences which this Book has exercised, which would have had no being had there been no Bible.

#### What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/9/20 9:20

##### THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE ON ART

By *Art*, more is meant than at first may be thought, for it includes architecture, sculpture, symbolism, painting, mosaics, monograms, frescoes, stained glass windows, and decorated manuscripts, and on all these Christianity has left its imprint.

In *Architecture*, from the basilicas of the time of Constantine to the magnificent cathedrals of our own time and country, the Christian idea and ideal have stood in marked contrast to the pagan temples of the ancient Greeks. Although it has been said that the devil invented Gothic architecture to prevent the people from hearing the Gospel, yet, expressive as it is of sacrifice, aspiration, peace, unity, and beauty, it is the embodiment of Christian ideals, and to multitudes has been an aid to Christian worship. Christian architecture, as Forsyth has said, "is stone made spiritual and musical," it is "symphony in stone."

As to Christian *Symbolism*, it is almost contemporary with the Christian era, appearing before the end of the first century. The favourite symbols have been the *Fish*, representing the fulness of Christ's divinity; the *Dove*, representing peace; the *Ship*, representing the Church; the *Anchor*, representing hope; the *Good Shepherd*, and the *Lamb of God*. All these, as early as the second century, have been found in the catacombs of Rome.

But later, and down to our time, the influence of the Bible on *Painting* is seen in a very large number of masterpieces. As examples, one need only mention the *Madonnas* of Rubens, Raphael, Michelangelo, and of others; Rembrandt's great works on *The Supper at Emmaus*, *Christ before Pilate*, *The Descent from the Cross*, and many more; Raphael's *Transfiguration*; Botticelli's *Adoration of the Magi*; Tintoretto's *The Marriage Feast*; Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper*; Guido's *Ecce Homo*; *The Presentation in the Temple*, and *Mary Magdalene* by Titian; Correggio's *Assumption of the Virgin*, and *The Crucifixion* by Van Dyck, Velasquez, and Fra Angelico; and the more modern religious studies by Millais, Hole, Holman Hunt, Millet, G. F. Watts, Burne-Jones, Gabriel Rossetti; and Tissot's 350 water-colour drawings on New Testament subjects.

But for the Bible these works would never have existed, and Art Galleries in London, and Dresden, and Florence, and Venice, and Paris, and Antwerp, and Milan would never have housed these great creations of Christian Art. It is not too m

uch to say that some of the finest work that has ever been done by pen, and brush, and chisel, and trowel, has been done in the presentation of themes and scenes which only the Bible can supply.

**What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/9/21 9:50**

Then there is

### THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE ON MUSIC

Christian music, comprehensively understood, is much more popular - that is, 'of the people' - than Christian art, for it embraces psalm, hymn, anthem, carol, cantata, chorus, chant, and oratorio, and their instrumental accompaniments as well.

If there had never been a Bible, all these expressions of emotion and aspiration, of adoration and faith, would never have come into being, and the loss would have been incalculable and calamitous.

If there had been no Bible there would have been no *Psalms*. Never would we have known the thrill of singing *Ye gates lift up your heads on high; I to the hills will lift mine eyes; O send Thy light forth, and Thy truth; All people that on earth do dwell; O God, our help in ages past; Let us with a gladsome mind; and, The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want.*

Don't you begin to feel a chill in your very bones at the bare thought that these inspirations might never have been?

That, however, would have been only the beginning of the loss. But for the Book of Proverbs, we would never have sung *O happy is the man who hears instruction's warning voice*. But for the Epistle to the Hebrews, we would never have heard *Father of peace, and God of love, we own Thy power to save; or, Where high the heavenly temple stands, the house of God not made with hands*. But for Luke's Gospel we would never have heard of the *Magnificat*, the *Benedict us*, the *Gloria in Excelsis*, and the *Nunc Dimittis*. And but for the final Apocalypse, we would never have known that heaven will be full of song, and that the singers will be Angels, and Living Creatures, and Elders, "and every creature in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands."

But the Church has always been a singing Church; and the song began in the Upper Room that night when Jesus and His disciples, at the Institution of the Supper, sang a hymn, part of the Hallel of Psalms cxiii-cxviii. The early Christians, we are told, sang, not only with their spirit, but also with their understanding, which their posterity have not always done; and they sang, not Psalms only, as some Scottish folk still do, but also "hymns and spiritual songs; making melody in their heart" (for all cannot do it with their voice) "to the Lord."

But this early custom would not long have survived if the knowledge on which it was based had been lost. The written Word of God has inspired sacred song in the West in an unbroken line from the time of Ambrose to the present day, and, as we shall see, this has increased in volume and richness in times of evangelical revival; but it has all been rooted in the written Word.

But for the Bible would we ever have heard of *John* and *Charles Wesley*, *Isaac Watts*, *Philip Doddridge*, *William Cowper*, *Paul Gerhardt*, *John Newton*, *Augustus Toplady*, *Bernard of Clairvaux*, *Gerhard Tersteegen*, *Reginald Heber*, *James Montgomery*, *John Keble*, *John M. Neale*, and a host of others, men and women, who, drawing inspiration from the Scriptures, have poured it out again in immortal song!

Thousands of Christian hymns are so much a part of the thinking of evangelical Christians, that it has never occurred to us, perhaps, that we might never have had them. Yet, if the Bible had not been written, we would never have sung, or have heard sung, *Abide with me, fast falls the eventide; All hail the power of Jesus' name; Jesus, Lover of my soul; Rock of Ages, cleft for me; How sweet the name of Jesus sounds; Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts; Nearer my God, to Thee; Jesus shall reign where'er the sun doth his successive journeys run; When I survey the wondrous Cross; O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; Jesus, Thy boundless love to me; O happy day that fixed my choice; O Love, that wilt not let me go; Em feste Burg ist unser Gott, A firm defence our God is still; and so on through thousands of hymn books.*

Would it mean nothing to you if these were taken out of your life? Then you must still be "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." It is true that we have, and sing, many songs of sweet emptiness, which cannot claim to have origin

ated in the Scriptures, and the loss of these would be a distinct gain, but the truly Christian hymns are in the warp and woof of the Church's life, because the Bible is there.

But in addition to all this, what magnificent contributions to Sacred Music we have on the grand scale; productions which are especially the heritage of the peoples of Western Europe.

One need name only Haydn's *Creation*; Handel's *Messiah*; Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, and his 190 Church Cantatas; Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, with its '*O rest in the Lord,*' and, '*He that shall endure to the end*'. Spohr's *The Last Judgment*; Purcell's *Jubilate*; Sullivan's *The Light of the World*, and his tune to '*Onward, Christian Soldiers*'; and Stainer's *Crucifixion*.

All this, and vastly more, would never have been, if the Bible had never been written!

**What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/9/22 0:17**

But further, there is

### THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE ON LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Considerable as has been its influence on Art and Music, its influence on Language and Literature has been vastly greater. But for the Bible the English Language, and English Literature, as we know them, would never have been. Prof. Quiller-Couch, lecturing at Cambridge University, said:

Quote:  
-----"The Scriptures in our Authorized Version are part and parcel of English Literature," and "the most majestic thing in our Literature," "a well of English undefiled."  
-----

And again,

Quote:  
-----"The Authorized Version has set a seal on our natural style, thinking, and speaking"; "it is in everything we see, hear, and feel, because it is in us, in our blood."  
-----

And J. R. Green, in his *History of the English People*, says:

Quote:  
-----"As a mere literary monument, the English Version of the Bible remains the noblest example of the English tongue, while its perpetual use made it, from the instant of its appearance, the standard of our language."  
-----

And Macaulay said of the English Bible:

Quote:  
-----"If everything else in our language should perish, it would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power."  
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Try to imagine, then, what would happen if the Bible and all its influences were obliterated!

It would mean that all copies of Bible manuscripts would disappear, and consequently all Scripture quotations and references in the writings of the Church Fathers; all Versions of the Bible also, the *Bishops'*, the *Authorized*, and the *Revised*; and all translations of the Bible, which are in over 1,000 languages and dialects; and in consequence, of course, so would

d all agencies for the circulation of the Scriptures, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the National Bible Society of Scotland, the Hibernian Bible Society, and the Trinitarian; all Bible Societies in Europe, and in America, and all similar agencies throughout the world.

All these would go, and with them, all the influences they have exerted on the mind and heart and will of uncounted millions of people, of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues, and all their effects upon social and national life everywhere.

But what if the Bible and all its influences were to be expunged from English Literature, that, for instance, of the Elizabethan and Victorian periods! Could anyone assess the loss?

MILTON's *Paradise Lost*, and *Paradise Regained* would completely disappear, for the one is about the Fall in Eden, and the other is about Christ's victory over the devil in the wilderness. Could we afford to lose these masterpieces, as literature?

And think of SHAKESPEARE'S works.

Bishop Wordsworth wrote in 1864:

Quote:  
-----"Take the entire range of English literature; put together our best authors, who have written upon subjects not professedly religious or theological, and we shall not find, I believe, in them all united, so much evidence of the Bible having been read and used, as we have found in Shakespeare alone."  
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And a more recent writer has said that "Shakespeare definitely made identifiable quotations from or allusions to at least forty-two books of the Bible."

There are many passages in Shakespeare which cannot be understood by anyone who is not acquainted with the Bible. Such references are found in Hamlet, As You Like It, Richard III, King Henry IV, All's Well, and in numerous shorter works.

And what about BUNYAN?

But for the Bible, do you suppose we would ever have heard of the Bedford tinker? Bunyan's contribution to style and to literature is due entirely to the Authorized Version of our Bible, which he so imbibed, and in which he so soaked, that the only way he could write was Biblically.

This unlettered man produced 60 works, longer and shorter, one for each year of his life. The elimination of many of these would not mean serious loss, but the Life and Death of *Mr. Badman*, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, *the Holy War*, and, greatest of them all, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, "final flower of Puritan theology and experience," these are part of the English Language, and of English Literature.

This masterpiece, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, has been translated into no fewer than 108 languages and dialects, and has become a part of the thought-stock of an uncountable multitude of people.

What a tragic gap would be made in literature by the elimination of Bunyan's characters; *Christian*, *Evangelist*, *Obstinate*, *Pliable*, *Prudence*, *Talkative*, *By-Ends*, *Hopeful*, *Great-Heart*, *Ready-to-Halt*, and many others! Of this book Gosse says: "It is the matchless and inimitable crystallization into imaginative art of the whole system of Puritan Protestantism"; and, remember, it is based squarely on the Bible.

But these are not isolated instances of the Bible's influence in literature. *Herbert*, *Crashaw*, *Quarles*, *Spenser*, and *Addison* must be added to those who in the 16th and 17th centuries were indebted to the Bible. *Francis Bacon* has more than 70 allusions to the Bible in his Essays. And it can be safely claimed that all that is best in the Victorian period gives evidence of this influence, which, were it extracted from the writings of *Wordsworth*, and *Tennyson*, and *Browning*, and *Carlyle*, and *Ruskin*, and *Cowper*, and *Coleridge*, and *Burns*, and *Scott*, and *Thackeray*, and *George Eliot*, and *Dickens*, and *Keats*, and *Stevenson*, and *the Brontes*, and *Hawthorne*, and *Longfellow*, and *Southey*, and many more, would so impair them as, in some instances, to ruin them.

An index of Bible references in the writings of Ruskin makes a volume of over 300 pages; and in Van Dyke's book on *Tennyson* is a list of the poet's Bible quotations and allusions which covers 24 pages.

For over 1200 years the Bible has been an active force in English literature, and during the whole period it has been moulding the diction of representative thinkers and literary artists.

With the obliteration of the Bible all that would go, with the result that we would not have a literature at all.

And all the religious classics would go also: the *Devotions* of Lancelot Andrewes; Keble's *Christian Year*; the *Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas À Kempis; the *Thoughts* of Pascal; the *Saint's Rest*, by Richard Baxter; the *Confessions* of Augustine; *Holy Living*, and *Holy Dying*, by Jeremy Taylor; the *Serious Call*, by William Law; the *Cardiphonia*, by John Newton; Rutherford's *Letters*, and hundreds more; for, but for the Bible, these things could never have been written, or thought.

And, to an extent which is not appreciated, the language of the Bible has entered into our common speech, and all the time terms are being employed by the people, the origin of which, for the most part, they do not know.

Illustration of this is seen in such expressions as, *highways and byways*; *hip and thigh*; *arise as one man*; *lick the dust*; *a broken reed*; *the root of all evil*; *weighed and found wanting*; *the sweat of his brow*; *a word in season*; *heap coals of fire*; *a pearl of great price*; *the burden and heat of the day*; *wars and rumours of wars*; *an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*; *casting pearls before swine*; and hundreds more. These are often used in a sense quite false, and entirely opposed to their original meaning; but that only demonstrates the influence of the Bible where it is least intended or expected.

When we sing, *God Save the King*, we are using Bible language (1 Sam. x. 24). The inscription over the front portico of the Royal Exchange is from Psalm xxiv, "*The earth is the LORD's and the fulness thereof.*" The University of Oxford has for its motto, *Dominus illuminatio mea*, which is from Psalm xxvii. Truly in the very fabric and fibre of our life is this Book of books.

#### What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/9/22 23:44

And now, for a moment, let us think of

#### THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE ON BELIEF

Everybody believes something, if it is only that he believes nothing. It is not humanly possible not to believe. The heretic believes that he is orthodox; and even the lunatic believes that he is sane.

But when we come to Christian belief, we are face to face with monuments of theological thought, representing the progress of the Church's Faith; a Faith which expresses itself in Creeds, Confessions, and Catechisms, These have been of the substance of Christian thought for 1600 years.

One needs only to name - the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Te Deum Laudamus; the Augsburg Confession, the Westminster Confession; the Catechisms of Geneva, and Heidelberg; the Larger, and the Shorter Westminster Catechisms - to indicate the wealth of theological thought which is the Church's heritage.

But these Statements of Faith - and there are many more - are based on the Bible, and if it and all its influences were obliterated, all these summaries of the Truth would disappear, and with them the Christian Church, for, but for these Creeds, Confessions, and Catechisms, there would never have been any personal faith, any public testimony, any doctrinal vindication, any authoritative dogma, any test of orthodoxy, or any standard of discipline; everyone would have believed, and said, and done "that which was right in his own eyes"; and where would that have landed us!

Had there been no Bible, would we ever have heard of *Irenaeus*, and *Justin Martyr*, and *Tertullian*; of the *two Clements*, and *Origen*, and *Athanasius*, and *Basil*, and *Augustine*, and *Jerome*; of *Aquinas*, and *Calvin*, and *Luther*, and *Zwingli*?

And had there been no Bible and no beliefs, the noble army of martyrs would never have existed. Wild beasts would have lost many a meal in Roman arenas; Inquisition racks would never have been stained with the blood of Christian confes

sors; nor would fire flames in London, Oxford, and Edinburgh ever have licked human flesh.

If the Bible had never been written, women like *Perpetua*, and *Felicitas*, and *Blandina*, and *Margaret Lachlan*, and *Margaret Wilson* would never have glorified the history of courage. Nor would we ever have heard of *Savonarola*, and *Huss*, and *Latimer*, and *Ridley*, and *Cranmer*, and *Tyndale*, and thousands of others "of whom the world was not worthy."

Only for deep convictions would people suffer as the saints have suffered, and those convictions could have grown in no other soil than that of the Bible; but if there had been no such Book, there would have been no such sufferings, because there would have been no such convictions for which to suffer.

**Re: What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/9/23 3:26**

The Bible is not just a book. It is the living Word of God from Gen 1: and "God said let US" to the last verse in Rev: ReÂ 22:21

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. It is Jesus Christ from cover to cover and He is the life of every one who believes from the first one in Genesis to the Last one in the millennium. True the way God has dealt with man is different in each concept God has given that man might be saved, unto our present dispensation of Grace and from the Cross as that which is life in Christ, that is Christ in you the Hope of Glory, the final Gospel of Paul to fulfill the Word of God in Christ Jesus.

In Christ: Phillip

**Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/23 10:33**

If there had never been any scriptures there would have been a big problem. We would of had to rely on man's fallable word of mouth. We'd probably all had been bad catholics. We would not be able to read of Christ. We'd all be a mindless swarm. This reminds me of Luther's Day.

[www.cornerstoneorlando.org](http://www.cornerstoneorlando.org)

**Re: What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/9/24 12:43**

And who can estimate

**THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE ON SOCIAL REFORM**

It has been a charge against evangelicalism that it has no social passion, that its pursuit of the salvation of souls excludes interest in the salvation of society.

Nothing could be further from the truth than such a charge, and they who make it only advertise their colossal ignorance.

Social reform in our own and other countries owes more to evangelicalism than to any other influence.

It was *John Wesley*, *William Wilberforce*, *Thomas Clarkson*, *Granville Sharp*, *Fowell Buxton*, and *Abraham Lincoln* who fought the slave traffic, and they were all evangelicals.

It was *John Howard* and *Elizabeth Fry*, both evangelicals, who championed the cause of prison reform.

To the memory of that great reformer, *Lord Shaftesbury*, a pioneer emancipator of industrial England, and also an evangelical, stands the Eros Monument in Piccadilly Circus, purchased with the pennies of the grateful poor.

It was *John B. Gough*, *Frances Willard*, and *Sir Wilfred Lawson* - all evangelicals - who attacked the entrenched interest of the drink traffic, and whose labours resulted in many Temperance Societies for both old and young.

It was *Robert Raikes*, an evangelical, who inaugurated Sunday Schools in this country, which, says J. R. Green, "were t

he beginnings of popular education."

It was *Benjamin Waugh*, *George Muller*, *William Quarrier*, *C. H. Spurgeon*, *J. W. C. Fegan*, and *T. J. Barnardo*, all pronounced evangelicals, who espoused the cause of the children, and established Orphanages in England and Scotland which are flourishing at the present time.

It was *William* and *Catherine Booth* who brought into being the vast and world-wide organization of the Salvation Army. *Sir George Williams* originated the Young Men's Christian Association. *Arthur Broome* founded the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (R.S.P.C.A.); and *Florence Nightingale* was the great reformer of hospital nursing. All these were outstanding evangelicals, and deeply-rooted believers in the Word of God.

But if there had been no such Word there would have been no such benefactors and benefactions, and this country would at this time be sunken in the most incredible bestialities, as indeed it was, in the earlier half of the eighteenth century, before the Evangelical Revival, as Dr. Bready has shown in his book, *England, Before and After Wesley*.

**What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/9/25 9:44**

And we must not omit to refer to

### THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE ON PREACHING AND REVIVALS

Do we realize that if there had been no Bible there would have been no Christian preachers, or teachers, or commentators, or Biblical scholars; for there would have been nothing to preach, nothing to teach, and nothing to investigate!

But look at this a little more in detail.

Had there been no Bible there would have been no *Preachers*, for preaching owes its existence to revealed religion. Had God never spoken to men, they never would have had anything to preach, and so the possibility of any record of preaching would have disappeared, and the necessity for Theological Colleges and Bible Institutes from the time of *Samuel* to the present day, would never have existed.

As preaching from the time of *Christ* to the present time has been dependent on His incarnation, life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension, and as this supreme revelation has for its background the whole of the Old Testament, it is easy to see that if the Bible had never been written, we would never have had any knowledge of preaching under either the Old Covenant, or in the time of *Christ*, or in the Apostolic age; and without all this, preaching from the close of the first century A.D. would have had neither foundation nor substance, and, needless to say, the loss through these nearly nineteen hundred years would have been incalculable and calamitous.

We would never have heard of the warning words of *Enoch and Noah*, the instructions of *Moses*, the testimony of *Joshua*, nor of the challenge of *Elijah*. The seraphic utterances of *Isaiah* would never have reached us:

Quote:

-----"Seek ye the LORD while He may be found,  
Call ye upon Him while He is near;  
Let the wicked forsake his way,  
And the unrighteous man his thoughts;  
And let him return unto the LORD,  
And He will have mercy upon him;  
And to our God,  
For He will abundantly pardon."  
-----

We would never have listened to the tender pathos of *Jeremiah* and *Hosea*; to the denunciations of *Amos*, and *Micah*, and *Malachi*; nor to the encouragements of *Ezekiel* and *Zechariah*.

We would have been entirely ignorant of the preaching of *John the Baptist*, and *Peter*, and *Stephen*, and *Paul*; and what

would be a more grievous loss than all beside, we would never have heard the words of the greatest of all preachers:

Quote:  
-----"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."  
"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."  
"I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die."  
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Scores of suchlike utterances, which are in the warp and woof of Christian thinking and experience, would never have been known, if there had been no Bible.

We would have remained strangers also to the eloquence of *Ambrose*, and *Chrysostom*, and *Jeremy Taylor*, and *Chalmers*, to the profound thought of *Athanasius*, and *Augustine*, and *Calvin*; to the conscience-smiting pleading of *Luther*, and *Wesley*, and *Knox*; and to the passionate evangelism of *Whitefield*, and *Spurgeon*, and *Moody*. And to these great names we must add those of: *Bernard*, and *Eckhart*, and *Tauler*, and *Sibbs*, and *Baxter*, *Owen*, and *Bunyan*; *Hooker* and *Donna* and *Fuller*; *McCheyne*, and *Caird*, and *Matheson*; *Dale*, and *Parker*, and *Morley Punshon*, and *Maclaren*; *F. W. Robertson*; *J. H. Newman*, and *H. P. Liddon*; *Christmas Evans*, *John Evans*, and *William Williams*; *Vinet*, and *Godet*, and *Monod*; and *Tholuck*; *Jonathan Edwards*, and *Finney*, and *Phillips Brooks*; *Beecher*, and *Bushnell*, and a host of others down to this hour. Had there been no Bible there would have been no *Campbell Morgan*, preacher and teacher, and tens of thousands of people would never have sat in this Church, listening to him expounding the Word of Life. And, of course, if there had been no preachers, and teachers, and spiritual leaders, there would have been no cathedrals, or churches, or chapels, or mission halls; but the land would have been full of gin palaces, casinos, and brothels.

All this ministry owed its existence to the fact and substance of the Bible, and had the Book never been, these men and their messages would never have been.

And what in a passing moment can we say about *Revivals*? It has been thought that the Christian Church exists, as a motor car is worked, upon a succession of explosions. It is a fact, at any rate, that in the history of the Christian Church a law of periodicity, in this matter of revivals, is discernible.

This law is implicit in all progress. There are times of ebb and times of flow in poetry, and art, and literature, and learning, and science, and commerce; and it would be strange indeed if there were no such times in spiritual experience. But the fact is, there have been religious revivals throughout all ages, and these, we may see, have been essential to spiritual progress.

Revival is a re-awakening to something that has been forgotten, a flourishing again of something that appears to be dying, a stimulus of attention and interest in something that has been neglected; and this, I say, has characterized the history of religion for millenniums. We have illustrations of it in the time of *Moses*, of *Samuel*, of *Hezekiah*, of *Jonah*, and of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*.

In the *first* century *Pentecost* was a mighty leap forward in the spiritual experience of men. In the *fifth* century Chrysostom's preaching of the cross enraptured multitudes in Constantinople.

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In the *sixteenth* century, *Luther*, in Germany, *Calvin* in Switzerland, and *Knox* in Scotland, were, in different ways, making

g religious history, and the results have been seen and felt ever since. *Calvin's* great message centred in the truth of God's sovereignty, and is embodied in his *Institutes*; and *Luther's* great message centred in the truth of Justification by Faith in Christ alone, and its abiding expression is in Protestantism. *John Knox* in Scotland, with tremendous power, attacked the ignorance, superstition, and tyranny of his time by proclaiming emancipation in Christ. His uncompromising and fiery ministry gave to Scotland a national life and a national Church, and made religion the dominating factor in the common life of the people.

Then, in the *eighteenth* century came the great Evangelical Revival under the ministries of the *Wesleys* and *Whitefield*, John the theologian, Charles the poet, and George the evangelist. This movement changed the face of England, not only spiritually, but also socially, politically, and educationally, and the effects of it are still with us.

Towards the end of the *nineteenth* century came the movement inspired instrumentally by *Moody* and *Sankey*, a movement which stirred the whole of the British Isles; which brought salvation and spiritual renewal to multitudes of people, and a great impetus to missionary work abroad.

And at the beginning of the *twentieth* century revival again visited Wales, which, among other benefits, resulted in a diminution of drunkenness, an abandonment of feuds, and the restitution of property.

Who can compute the compelling and restraining power for good of all this preaching, and all these revivals! Yet, had there been no Bible there would have been none of it, and instead of spiritual renewal there would have been a deepening and damning degradation. But for the Bible there would have been no revivals of religion, for there would have been no religion to revive. But for the Bible the world would have been, and would still be, a loathsome reeking charnel-house.

**What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/9/28 9:35**

And what can one say about

### **THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE ON THE MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE**

To tell this story would require, not a paragraph, but a library, and many libraries. Yet, for our present purpose, we may get a flash-back which ought to stir our souls.

Speaking only of Protestant Missions, and only of the modern period of missions, at least 400 Missionary Societies could be named which operate in every part of the world.

Up to the beginning of this century over 500 missionaries had made translations or revisions of Holy Scripture; and there were about 90 Protestant Missions to the Jews.

Dr. Dennis, of Princeton University, has written a work of over 1,600 pages on the sociological results of Christian Missions in every part of the world.

Now if there had never been a Bible, nothing of this would ever have existed, and the whole world would still be "sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death."

But as statistics may leave most people cold, let us for a moment or two be more personal.

Referring still only to the modern period of missions, if there had been no Bible, no work would have been done by *Carey*, or *Marshman*, or *Ward*, or *Henry Martyn*, or *Alexander Duff* in India, and there would have been in that vast land no Christian hospitals, educational institutions, or zenana work.

*Morrison*, and *Burns*, and *Griffith John*, *Timothy Richards*, and *Hudson Taylor* would never have gone to China. *Hepburn*, and *Verbeck* would never have gone to Japan; and we would never have heard of *Paul Kanamori*, or of *Kagawa*.

*Underwood*, and *Gale* would never have gone to Korea. *Keith Falconer*, and *Samuel Zwemer* would never have gone to Arabia. *Moffat*, and *Livingstone*, and *Macbay*, and *Fred Arnot*, and *Mary Slessor*, and *Dan Crawford* would never have gone to Africa. *Allen Gardiner*, and similarly devoted missionaries, would never have gone to South America. *Williams*, an

d Paton, and Patteson, and Chalmers would never have gone to the Islands of the Pacific.

And the time would fail me to tell of John Eliot, David Brainerd, Charles Abel, Andrew Murray, Mary Read, Christina Forsyth, James Gilmour, C. T. Studd, Bishop Hannington, Adoniram Judson, Robert Laws, Raymond Lull, Dr. Pennell, Pandita Ramabai, Sadhu Sundar Singh, James Stewart, Spencer Walton; and of Dame Edith Brown, Amy Carmichael, Mildred Cable, Evangeline and Francesca French, who happily are still with us; and a throng of other great souls who counted life lost that was not thrown away for God.

What, suppose you, moved all these to such high and noble enterprise! Only one thing, the revelation of the redeeming God in Christ Jesus, the record of which is given only in the Bible.

But if there had been no Bible there would have been no missionary enterprise or history; and no one would have lived for Christ, and died for those for whom He died.

**What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/9/29 9:53**

And a brief word must be said about

**THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE ON THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL**

The Scriptures have never been the preserve of weak-minded men and sentimental women, nor of the unlettered and the ignorant, for even before they were written, the truth orally proclaimed made converts in the households of Herod and Caesar, and many of the early martyrs were men and women of social distinction and of intellectual eminence.

The difference between mediocrity and genius, when laid hold of by Christianity, is not in the value of souls, for all are alike dear to God, but in what ability can do for the Kingdom of God which inability cannot do.

AUGUSTINE, the intellectual, tells his story in his *Confessions*, and a sad one it is. He spent his youth in profligacy, while pursuing the study of rhetoric, and he was the heartbreak of his devoted and godly mother, Monica. When twenty-two years of age, while in a garden in Milan, contemplating his misspent life, he tells us that he heard a voice saying: "Take up and read, take up and read," and, opening a Bible which he had with him, his eyes fell on the words:

Quote:  
-----"Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envy; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."  
-----

By these words Augustine was led to a saving knowledge of God, and he became one of the greatest of the Church Fathers, of theologians, and of writers, whose influence has been stamped upon the Christian Church for 1600 years.

Had the Bible never been written, he could not have read it and if he had never read it, he would never have been heard of; and we would never have known of the *Confessions* of that repentant sinner and forgiven saint; nor would we ever have heard of his *City of God*, and 250 other books.

It was in the library of the University of Erfurt that a student, twenty years of age, whose name was MARTYN LUTHER, had his attention attracted to a volume of the Bible, a book at that time practically unknown. This he read and re-read whenever he could.

Later, in the city of Rome, as he was saying prayers on the Lateran Staircase, the words of Habakkuk kept sounding in his ears, "The just shall live by faith."

As he climbed the Staircase, imagining that he was earning a year's indulgence at every step, he was startled again by the same words, as if a voice of thunder had uttered them - "The just shall live by faith."

"What folly," he said to himself, "to seek indulgence from the 'Church when God is willing to acquit me of all my sins, if I

believe in His Son."

That was the Scripture which, through Luther, changed the course of the world. "It was," says F. W. Boreham, "as though all the windows of Europe had been suddenly thrown open, and the sunshine came streaming in everywhere."

Out of that truth, of justification by faith in Christ alone, came the mighty Reformation, and revival spread like an epidemic.

In his *Grace Abounding* JOHN BUNYAN tells us that he never went to school to Plato or Aristotle, but, he says,

Quote:

-----"I betook me to my Bible, and began to take great pleasure in reading it, but especially the historical parts thereof."  
-----

And again,

Quote:

-----"I began to look into the Bible with new eyes, and read as I never did before; and especially the Epistles of the Apostle Paul were sweet and pleasant to me;  
-----

and he adds, "indeed, I was then never out of the Bible." And so by this means, the drunken tinker of Bedford was so enlivened and enlightened by the Spirit of God as to write the greatest book in the world next to the Bible, *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

But learned or ignorant, rich or poor, religious or irreligious, all men and women who have ever received eternal life have done so, and still do so, by the revelation which the Scriptures embody. *The Pilgrim's Progress* opens with the words:

Quote:

-----"I saw a man clothed with rags standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked and saw him open the book, and read therein; and as he read, he wept and trembled; and not being able longer to contain, he broke out with a lamentable cry, saying, 'What shall I do?'"  
-----

Yes, that is the Book which has brought conviction of sin, and led to conversion through grace, of everyone who has ever become a pilgrim to the Celestial City in the Land of Beulah beyond the River; each one has gone through the Wicket Gate; and if the stories of all who have passed that way were written, "the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." These stories constitute the miracle of all the ages.

And when in a Methodist Society Meeting in Aldersgate Street in this city, on May 24th, 1738, the devout and seeking JOHN WESLEY heard someone read Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans, his heart, he tells us, was

Quote:

-----"strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."  
-----

Out of that conversion came the revolutionizing 18th century Revival, and the rise of the great Methodist Movement. That Revival, as J. R. Green has shown, and later, Dr. Bready, changed the religious and social face of Britain, and has had repercussions to the ends of the earth.

And JOHN NEWTON has told us that when he was eleven years of age he went to Africa that he might be free to sin to his heart's content. There he sank into abject degradation, first becoming a slave, and later, a trafficker in slaves. His mouth was always full of oaths and curses, and he was on the highway to hell.

But in March, 1748, when he was twenty-three years of age, he was caught in a terrific storm at sea, and his ship was foundering. In utter despair he cried to God for mercy, and mercy God showed him.

That deep-dyed sinner became the Rector of St. Mary Woolnoth of this City, the writer of that religious classic, the *Cardiphonia*, and the joint-author with William Cowper of the Olney Hymns. The hand that had sent so many to an ignominious death, wrote, *How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear, and, One there is' above all others, well deserves the name of Friend, and Begone unbelief, my Saviour is near*, and many another which Christians will sing right up to the Golden Gates.

Take one more instance:

When CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON was fifteen years of age, one snowy day in a Primitive Methodist Church in Colchester, in January, 1850, he heard a preacher say a few simple things on the text, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."

Then the preacher, catching sight of this youth, addressed him personally. He told him that he would be miserable all his life unless he looked to Jesus for salvation. And Spurgeon tells us that he looked and looked until he almost looked his eyes away, and he saw what he looked for; and that day God laid His hand upon one who was to become the greatest Gospel preacher of the Christian age; who, for over thirty years, preached to 10,000 people every Sunday in the Metropolitan Tabernacle at Newington Butts; who brought hundreds of thousands of people to the Cross of Christ; whose sermons are published in more than 60 volumes; who founded a College for those who would preach the Gospel he so deeply loved an Orphanage, and a Colportage Society; and whose death fell upon London as a calamity.

These men owed everything to the Bible, and had there been no Bible, there would have been no Augustine the theologian, no Luther the reformer, no Bunyan the immortal dreamer, no Wesley the revivalist, no Newton the hymn writer, and no Spurgeon the evangelist; and if these were taken out of history, the rent would be so great as to render the garment of Christendom almost unrecognizable.

**What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/9/30 21:50**

And finally, our rapid survey must include a word on

### **THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE ON HOME LIFE**

The homes of a nation must be its greatest blessing, or its greatest curse. No nation has yet survived whose home life was not founded on true religion. Ancient Egypt, Assyria, Greece, and Rome all passed away because they had not the true foundation; but for nearly 2000 years the Christian Church has survived because the Bible struck root in the homes of the people.

Bible instruction in the family began centuries before the Incarnation, and Jewish children were taught the story of their nation from the time of Abraham.

Harnack has shown that in the apostolic age the Old Testament had its place in the Christian home. Timothy, we read, was early taught the Scriptures by his mother and grandmother, and this practice continued, with the New Testament Writings added, throughout the early centuries. For a thousand years Romanism tried to prevent it, but with the Reformation it came in again like a flood, and to-day no home need be without a Bible.

The question was put more than once to Bunyan's pilgrim: "Where are your wife and family?" The Bible, and the Christ of the Bible, are for the home as well as for the individual soul. The *Family Bible* is a noble idea, until it becomes merely a register of births, marriages, and deaths. The mother is the maker of the home, and the contribution of mothers to the building of the Church of God can never be fully known, but something of its significance may be seen in the offspring of goodly mothers.

Think of Monica and Augustine, of Susanna and the Wesley sons, of Mary and George Washington, of the mother of John Newton, of Nancy and Abraham Lincoln, of Margaret Ogilvy and J. M. Barrie, and a host of others, women builders of the City of God.

Surely in all literature there is no more moving picture of a pious home than the one Robert Burns has given us in his Cotter's Saturday Night:

*"The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,  
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;  
The sire turns o'er, with patriarchal grace,  
The big ha'-bible, ance his father's pride:  
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,  
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare;  
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide.  
He wales a portion with judicious care;  
And 'Let us worship God!' he says with solemn air.*

*Then kneeling down to Heaven's Eternal King,  
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:  
Hope springs exulting on triumphant wing,  
That thus they all shall meet in future days,  
There, ever bask in uncreated rays.  
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,  
Together hymning their Creator's praise,  
In such society, yet still more dear;  
While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere,"*

But if there had been no Bible, such homes would never have existed.

Perhaps enough has been said to show that the Bible is the most creating, regenerating, civilizing, humanizing, educating, reforming, and inspiring power in all the world, and that the most lurid imagination cannot conceive what would be the state of the world to-day if there had never been a Bible.

But we place this emphasis on the Book, only because it is the one inspired and authoritative record of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

It is little wonder that, throughout the ages, the devil has attempted to discredit or destroy the Bible, in spite of Christians, and, alas, sometimes by means of them.

If he had succeeded, what a kingdom he would have had by now! But he has not succeeded. We still have Christ, and the Bible, and the Christian, and the Church, and the Gates of Hell shall never prevail against them.

*"The Cross it standeth fast, Hallelujah!  
Defying every blast, Hallelujah  
The winds of hell have blown,  
The world its hate hath shown.  
Yet it is not overthrown,  
Hallelujah, for the Cross!"*

**What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/2/25 9:57**

Excerpted;

"And what in a passing moment can we say about *Revivals*? It has been thought that the Christian Church exists, as a motor car is worked, upon a succession of explosions. It is a fact, at any rate, that in the history of the Christian Church a law of periodicity, in this matter of revivals, is discernible.

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**Re: What If There Had Never Been a Bible! ~ W. Graham Scroggie, on: 2008/2/27 19:48**

Thank you for this.