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THE FORGOTTEN AND IGNORED ELEMENT OF MAN'S BEING - HIS ETERNAL SOUL!!



Dr. John Habgood

The great apostasy edges closer to its final and ultimate denial. That denial is given us in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4. "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

The same truth is found in Peter's writings. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction," 2 Peter 2:1.

The present apostasy will culminate in man's outright denial of the Lord Himself and the Antichrist setting himself up as God.

The Christ-rejecting ecclesiastical world took a step nearer to that final apostasy in the mid-1990s with the denials voiced by Dr. John Habgood, the former Archbishop of York. He was reported in 'The Times' newspaper as saying that there was nothing in the human body that departs when we die. He claimed that the individual's identity was "held in the mind of God". He also said that hell was not regarded as a serious option these days.

The Bible only

Wherever Dr. Habgood got his views, (his gibberish cannot be analysed, even if we were to try) it was certainly not from the Bible. The Bible and the Bible only is the religion of the true Christian. Dr. Habgood's own credal standards clearly teach that. Article 6 of the 39 Articles of Religion, the doctrinal basis of Anglicanism, states: "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite necessary to salvation . . ."

Article 20 states: "And yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another. Articles 21, 22, 28 and others similarly uphold the final authority of God's Word on all matters doctrinal.

I am quoting from a copy of the Anglican Prayer Book published by the Anglican Church in Ireland. It states that at the ordination of an archbishop the following passage of Holy Scripture is read: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen," Matthew 28:18-20. The candidate for ordination also takes the following oath. "Are you persuaded that the holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? And are you determined out of the same holy Scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge; and to teach or maintain nothing as required of necessity to eternal salvation, but that which you are persuaded may be concluded and proved by the same?" The ordinand answers, "I am so persuaded, and determined, by God's grace."

If this or a similar form of service was employed at the ordination of Dr. Habgood, then he is an oath-breaker. Irrespective of the form of his ordination service, he is a blasphemer. He is an enemy of Jesus Christ and in the name of Jesus Christ we denounced him when first we heard of his blasphemy and prayed that God would put his hand upon him and manifest His anger and judgment upon him for the wicked words he uttered. If ever there was a work of the devil it is that work to which John Habgood put his hand, namely the deceiving of people into believing that they have no soul and there is no hell awaiting the unconverted sin-



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Let me state a few simple gospel truths.

I. MAN CONSISTS OF MORE THAN A BODY.

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Thess 5:23.

Man has a spirit, a soul and a body. He was thus created. "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul," Genesis 2:7.

Man consists of that which is of the earth and that which came directly from God.

II. THE BODY IS THE LESSER ELEMENT

I want to give you three Bible proofs of this truth.

1. It is implied metaphorically. It was while I was engaged in my own private Bible reading that I came upon a verse in Daniel, chapter 7. I thought to myself: Here is a good verse for answering old Habgood. Consider what the verse says. "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me," Daniel 7:15. Daniel is saying that the vision he had seen grieved him in his spirit which was to be found in the midst of his body. The Aramaic word for body here is 'sheath'. His body was a sheath containing his spirit. Which is the more important — the sheath or the sword it contains? A soldier in battle may throw away his sheath but he will not throw away his sword!

Consider Paul's very clear words to the Corinthians. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," 2 Corinthians 5:1. The body is only a tabernacle which will be dissolved at death and the believer's soul will then go to dwell in a building prepared of God in heaven. This leaves no doubt about which is the more important element of our being.

Again, this truth that the body is the lesser element of man's being —

2. Is stated directly. Look again at a verse already mentioned. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Thess 5:23. I want you to note the order. The body comes last for it is least important.

In Matthew 10:28, it is made clear by the Saviour that the soul is to be preserved even at the loss of the body. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

In Matthew 16:26, the Lord Jesus makes it clear that nothing can compensate for the loss of the soul. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

In Luke 12:20, the Saviour shows that it is the soul God demands back from men when their day is done. "But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

Our third Biblical proof is this:

3. It is demonstrated emphatically. The whole purpose of Christ's death and the preaching of the gospel is the salvation of the souls of men. Yes, the bodies of the redeemed will be raised from the grave and will be glorified in the day of Christ's return but the emphasis is always placed upon Christ dying to redeem the soul from sin and damnation, for it is the vital part of our being. Look at these few scriptures. "Receiving the



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end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls," 1 Peter 1:9. "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls," 1 Peter 2:25. "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls," James 1:21. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you," Hebrews 13:17.

Finally, consider the fact that:

III. IT IS WITH THE SOUL THAT MAN COMMUNES WITH GOD.

1. The body communicates with earthly things but it is the soul that communes with God. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance," Psalm 42:1-2, 5. The body is tied to the earth. The regenerated soul may soar heavenward and Godward.

2. The religion of Christ is spiritual. Here is where you may distinguish between true and false religion. False religion consists of ritual, of the visual, of the tangible. It has its statues and its images, its bells and beads, its candles and incense. It has its theatre and pomp. Great emphasis is placed upon architecture and visual beauty. True worship is spiritual. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," John 4:24. God forbade the use of images when He said, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments," Exodus 20:4-6. We look on Christ as He is set forth in Holy Scripture, not with the eyes of the body but with the eyes of the soul. "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," Matthew 22:37.

3. The sinful soul is saved when it is brought into union with Christ. As the touch of Christ healed the sick and raised the dead, so spiritual life is imparted to the soul brought into union with Christ. The sinner is effectually called to Christ by the Holy Spirit convincing him of his sin and showing him Christ. His will is renewed and he is enabled to embrace Christ by faith. This truth is set forth in the story of the woman with the issue of blood. "When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague," Mark 5:27-29.

What this woman heard concerning Christ she believed and she became convinced that if she BUT touched the hem of His garment, she would be healed. As a result of her faith in the Saviour, healing virtue went forth from Him when she touched his clothing and she was made whole of her illness.

There is salvation for you right now if you believe the gospel and by faith reach out and touch Christ. Call on Him NOW for salvation and He shall answer you.

*O touch the hem of His garment
And thou, too, shalt be free;
His saving power this very hour
Shall give new life to thee.*

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matthew 16:26.



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The clear implication of these words of Christ are emphatically denied by John Habgood and the many like him in today's 'religious' world who reject the Scriptures of truth.

- Ivan Foster (Based upon a sermon preached some 25 years ago).