



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

Donald Soper is dead!



Donald Soper, created a life peer in 1965 by Labour Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, was a life-long socialist and radical in the popular sense of the word. He was born on January 31st, 1903 and died on December 22nd past. Soper's ministry was spent mainly in London, where for many years his open-air preaching at Hyde Park corner and Tower Hill became almost a tourist feature. His skill at putting down hecklers became a source of entertainment and it, rather than his message, a mixture of socialist dogma and modernistic theology, drew the crowds.

He was an opponent of war and, for a period during the Second World War, was banned by the BBC and his meetings were monitored by government observers! He was never far from controversy. He created a storm when he attacked the Queen for encouraging gambling by attending horse races, and Prince Philip for his playing of polo on the Lord's day. These were matters about which most Bible-believers would have found themselves in agreement with him. However, he subsequently denied that he was a "hardline Sabatarian."

His radicalism was not based upon the teaching of the Bible but owed more to anti-establishment thinking, popular amongst undergraduates in the post-First World War years.

His anti-heckling skills forsook him on one occasion. He came to Northern Ireland and was opposed by Rev. Ian Paisley because of his unscriptural views on Christ and the way of salvation. On that occasion he, and not his hecklers, was silenced!

Donald Soper was a false prophet and a preacher of a false gospel. He once said: "I would rather have been a born-again communist than a born-again Christian." If this statement says anything it says that he was not a born-again Christian. He said of faith that it was a "matter of will rather than a matter of contemplation." He obviously was of the opinion that sinful man had the ability to believe on Christ. Saving faith is the gift of God we are told by Paul in Ephesians 2:8. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.

That Donald Soper's voice is no longer raised in dissipating a false gospel and misleading men and women is something for which we are thankful. However, we cannot but be sad when we think of the eternity to which this man of great intellectual gifts has gone and the many, who, trusting his guidance, have likewise perished with him.