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## The Essential Christ

**Earl Clement Davis** 

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The Eneutive Churt,
Sewm. Tur. 12. 1922
Muring Seure.

The Execution Christ. drawich 53,

ferm sister of fool was that beel is lift, the set a foother, a living reality. frem working in and about us stimulating us to youth and clarely want, but we the manifestatus of this in the constant stries who this of our lines to search for truth, to give in gordens and expers our selves in beauty.

The article world is related in intelligence, that speaks to us in truth goodness and hearty. As the favorthe for this child, so the hiring spirit of Truth Hovelier and Beauty to us, freeen were were the preliment of growth into the fullness of the Romers of growth of life, -its truth, its goodness, its hearty.

But, we ask ourselves, white frefore: Ties has been world in use that we

on one feet way respect to there relieving stringlents that hid us to Runs the truth of life, to she its hidding, and to enter who its defect ratis factors. Here we stand up The theshold of the wort marriellur field of Mundelle and misden that The mind has ever dreamed of. We are fearfully wordwfully work," raise the frahuistof ald, "my substance was wet his from thee, when I work works in bleet, and univerly monght in the live est facts of the earth." What is books of us, lumas henigs, freel genre, enfohe of work and flay, love and but, menny and lofe, - fuel of dreams, furfres, arfinations, and ideals.? To go book way to the time when Front une began his flysicol extitame.

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How is this accomplished. - This fectolized egg sel. with its peignt of Proto-flower and them choworems begin to multiply, developed two waits lives of cells, 17

here seels, where functions is that of reproductive; and securely, the so-collect somatic reels which wake of the structure of the body . - the body of man is confired of an offregotion of an infinite number of ceels . - such as shir sells . burns sells murele ceels, gland cells, ananged was to unstitute the organs of the books.

Hort to the interest this werning centers the new very system, for it is in the newors septimes that fersimably developes. The newer systems is surfixed an infrinte un ber of news cells, Each neme sell write of malested seel body and a new fibre extending from the body seel body to narious facts of the body. It is like a system of telefores is the sily, with the seel body corresponding to the teleflines instrument, and The runes corresponding to the runer.

In this nervors systems, these are to be found three Kinds of connections. Une the swellest, or reflex seems system, which many be solled a sert of auto-matic telefling system. There is are exciter at the end of the rine, which sends in any merroye to the sell body, the rell. body reacts to this mersage auto: matically and sends out the message that reures the nurcles to recent. I'm There are rurny little interval teleftime agetens, corresponding to frivate teleftone systems, which work. quite indefendent of there auto wolie systems. - furt for they are selote of to the automatic system is not known but there they are. 3 med These is that fait of the nervous systems, makinish is related to conscious: uses. It is the sentral teleffore exchange of the booly, where the somestims are made between the incoming unice, and the outgoing

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but this central exchange, where sits corrections come corrections come all the mess-ges of life, from inforcey to death, that go into our training, ensel elleration. Here are rentered the exchange corrections that rountitute the hobits extractions that rountitute the hobits extractions and training. Here are recorded set the experiences of our own life: here are recorded are that exceptions and training.

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Thus for reience. But me much does sets not sest solisfied, he contemplate This manuellers mechanism of sells. The fivelest of millions of years of con evolution any fivees, We see the finduit ar it stown itself is known ferrers. We moth a human character develop, - with its habits, its standards, its furfuses. its bottles for right, its devotion to ideals ils loy alties, its crusificors, and with cres whole being struct to its defti in winder and mysling, we ask whit

in there in this central exchange where consciousness selects, and combines, coul clinects thought and conduct. I habot is there is fewerally that we order and claimfres, and commands.

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of affections, some effect to serfuel. To every wel of herois underst there strang with in us. to impulse to govelness. Though to have refine, and reason chape, These come, a wine with out refly, Tis manis fercliture to be rope, when for the touth he ongot to die.

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I short suspect of in my sheel while, the own swow was still on the general, and when I again mentured out to come the gardene wall only a hundred steps from me, I was astronoled to find that the fields of my were in the sas."

Many of you one Friday evening heard that interesting more Musell Con well, tell of some of the interesting ferrom that he tool wet. John Burn, unged though left, and into death, by a work we wither. Consumeli our father, - sacreficing every ferred interest for a surve ideal. Wholom Lincoln forming out his heart and sind in Confer huin quito regardless of folitical exfectioncy, what has deter : mined the underet of thesell convill himself. - Education for forming ween and women, -

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So this is my faith, my consider,

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Biology and the Social Public,
by

theorye Horrard Parker

Itanyhten & Miffle, The Essential Christ
Earl Clement Davis
November 12, 1922
Morning Service
Lancaster, PA

## Isaiah 53

Jesus' idea of God was that God is life, like unto a father, a living reality, forever working in and about us stimulating us to growth and development. We see the manifestations of this in the constant stimulations of our lives to search for truth, to grow in goodness and express ourselves in honesty.

The outside world is ordered in intelligence, that speaks to us in truth, goodness and beauty. As the parent to his child, so the living spirit of Truth, Goodness and Beauty to us, forever urges us along the pathways of growth into the fullness of the knowledge of life, its truth, its goodness, its beauty.

But we ask ourselves, what preparation has been made in us that we on our part may respond to these alluring sentiments that bid us to know the truth of life, to do its bidding, and to enter into its deepest satisfactions?

Here we stand upon the threshold of the most marvelous field of knowledge and wisdom that the mind has ever dreamed of. "We are fearfully and wonderfully made," said the psalmist of old. "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." What is back of us, human beings, full grown, capable of work and play, love and hate, memory and life, full of dreams, purposes, aspirations and ideals?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Psalms 139:14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Psalms 139:15.

To go back only to the time when each one began his physical existence in the form of an egg cell, just large enough to be seen by a very keen human eye. It has a diameter of about 1/5 of a millimeter. A millimeter is 0.0394 of an inch. 1/5 of that is about .008 of an inch in diameter. This minute egg is a mass of protoplasm, containing some fine yolk granules, and a spherical nucleus, whose diameter is about 1/7 or 1/8 of the entire cell.

When this cell is fertilized by the sperm cell, 1/35000 the size of the egg cell, we have the second step in the growth of the human being, the individual has begun to develop. Now each female cell contains 48 tiny particles and each male cell contains 47 tiny particles, called chromosomes. In the process of fertilization, 24 of these chromosomes from each parent, are contributed to the new cell, now forming, that is to grow into a human being.

Now these 47 or 48 tiny particles contained in this minute human cell make up what we call our inherited characteristics, color of hair, physical appearance, temperamental characteristics. These tiny units, chromosomes, determine the inherited characteristics of a body that grows to be 16,250,000,000 times the size of the determining particle.

How is this accomplished? This fertilized egg cell, with its freight of protoplasm and chromosomes begins to multiply, developed two main lines of cells. First, germ cells, whose function is that of reproduction, and secondly, the so-called somatic cells which make up the structure of the body. The body of man is composed of an aggregation of an infinite number of cells, such as skin cells, bone cells, muscle cells, gland cells, arranged so as to constitute the organs of the body.

Our interest this morning centers in the nerve cells which constitute the nervous system, for it is in and about the nervous system that personality develops. The nervous system is composed [of] an infinite number of nerve cells. Each nerve cell consists of a nucleated cell body and a nerve fiber extending from the cell body to various parts of the body. It is like a system of telephones in the city,

with the cell body corresponding to the telephone instrument, and the wires corresponding to the wires.

In this nervous system there are to be found three kinds of connections. One, the swiftest or reflex nerve system, which may be called a sort of automatic telephone system. There is an exciter at the end of the wire, which sends in a message to the cell body. The cell body reacts to this message automatically and sends out the message that causes the muscles to react. 2<sup>nd</sup> there are many little internal telephone systems, corresponding to private telephone systems, which work quite independent of these automatic systems. Just how they are related to the automatic system is not known, but there they are.

3rd there is that part of the nervous system which is related to consciousness. It is the central telephone exchange of the body, where the connections are made between the incoming wires and the outgoing wires by the mystery of all mysteries of life, human consciousness.

Let me describe this marvelous central exchange in which is centered that mysterious consciousness that is the essence of us. This exchange is located in the thin covering of the brain, a wrinkled [sheet] that if spread out smooth and flat would cover about 1 foot and one half square. If compressed into a solid it would be a little less than on cubic inch. It contains about 9,200,000,000,000 cells, and in a normal man, it is about 1/5000 part of his total weight.

Into this central exchange, where sits consciousness, working connections make all the message of life, from infancy to death, that go into our training, and education. Here are centered the exchange connections that constitute the habits established by education and training. Here are recorded all the experiences of our own life! Here are recorded all that we have learned by reading, study, and investigation.

Here is this cerebral Cortex, as it is called by the scientists, where consciousness makes the selection of incoming messages, and establishes the connections for outgoing messages to the world, takes place all those

marvelous developments of ideas, reasoned judgements, moral purposes that determine our conduct.

Thus far science. But our mind does not rest satisfied. We contemplate this marvelous mechanism of cells, the product of millions of years of an evolutionary process. We see the product as it shows itself in human persons. We watch a human character develop, with its habits, its standards, its purposes, battles for right, its devotion to ideals, its loyalties, its crucifixion. And with our whole being stirred to its depths in wonder and mystery, we ask what is there in this central exchange where consciousness selects, and combines, and directs thought and conduct. What is there in personality that so orders and classifies and commands?

The answer is one of faith, not a blind credulous faith, but a faith that carries us forward in the direction to which all known facts point, a faith so confirmed by all that we know and experience, that it becomes a great compelling conviction. The faith is this: that somehow in that wonderful mystery of conscious personality, that operates in the central exchange of our cerebral cortex, there is a central urge that reaches out towards the truth, goodness, and beauty of the world. To every stimulating call that bids us inquire into the truth of life, there goes forth from us a responsive answer. To every alluring well of beauty and harmony from the outside world, there wells up some sense of appreciation, some effort to respond. To every act of heroic conduct there within us the impulse to goodness.

Though love repine, and reason chafe, There came a voice without reply, "'Tis man's perdition to be safe, When for the truth he ought to die."<sup>3</sup>

Within us is the urge that responds to the temptations, to truth, goodness, and beauty without. "I and my father are one," said Jesus. The God without and the God within are of like life. Purpose registers in us because it is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Sacrifice," a Quatrain in *The Poems of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1867, p. 296.

grounded in the world without. We bear witness to the nature of the world because we have had insight into every fiber and cell of our being some of the essence of truth, goodness and beauty that is within and without.

The ancient Greek said "The logos became flesh and dwelt among us." The eternal truth is within us. We are very God of very God, of the same essence as the father. At the heart of the human being is the image and the purpose that is God. The Essential Christ.

"A picket frozen on duty,

A mother starved for her brood,

Socrates drinking the hemlock,

And Jesus on the road;

And millions who, humble and nameless,

The straight, hard pathway plod,-
Some call it Consecration,

And others call it God."4

What then is it in us that urges us to seek to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God?

What compelled von Baer, who first discovered much that I have told you about the human cell, to shut himself out from the world, and to sacrifice his health for that knowledge? In his autobiography he writes, "And so it happened that in the course of a year I shut myself up in my shell while the snow was still on the ground, and when I again ventured out to cross the garden wall only a hundred steps from me, I was astounded to find that the fields of rye were in the ear."

Many of you one Friday evening heard that interesting man, Russell Conwell<sup>5</sup> tell of some of the interesting persons he had met. John Burris, urged through life, and into death, by a moral conviction. Conwell's own father, sacrificing every personal interest for a moral ideal. Abraham Lincoln pouring out his heart and soul in Cooper

 $<sup>^4</sup>$  Final stanza of "Each in His Own Tongue" by William Herbert Carruth (1859-1924).

 $<sup>^{5}</sup>$  Russell Conwell (1843-1925). American Baptist minister, orator, philanthropist, lawyer and writer. See Wikipedia.

Union quite regardless of political expediency. What has determined the conduct of Russell Conwell himself? Education for young men and women.

Pick your way all down along the line of human history. Who stands out as the leaders in thought, in action in influence? Those whose lives have been determined by a great purpose in the world. Those in whom the Essential Christ, the image of God in the life of man has sat in control in the central exchange where man's conscious conduct is determined.

So this is my faith, my conviction.

N.B.: The biological data in this sermon are taken from  $Biology\ and\ the\ Social\ Problem$  by George Howard Parker, Houghton + Mifflin<sup>6</sup>

 $<sup>^{6}</sup>$  Parker, George Howard (1864-1955). Biology and Social Problems, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914.