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A COMPARISON OF  
JOHN ELIOT, WILLIAM CAREY AND HUDSON TAYLOR  
AS TO  
BACKGROUND AND MESSAGE

by  
Jay Story  
B.A. B.D.

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Introduction

A Comparison  
of  
John Eliot, William Carey and Hudson Taylor  
as to  
Background and Message

Introduction

A. Statement of Problem

One of the impressive things that catches the eye in any kind of survey of Missions is the way the Gospel has gone forth in every age and generation from the day Jesus Christ gave the royal commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature",<sup>1</sup> until the present day. It is impressive because of the consistency with which it has gone forth, because of its resistance to opposing influences and because of the way it has triumphed over impossible difficulties.

One of the things, however, that is not so impressive, perhaps, because it is not so evident, is the nature of the message that has been proclaimed from the beginning until now. This study therefore is an attempt to examine some of the evidence in one period, the modern period, of pioneer missions with a view to determining as far as is possible what is the Gospel that has been preached. Time and space forbid the inclusion of the pre-reformation period and even much of what is post-reformation. Consequently, three missionaries have

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1. Mark 16:15 (A.V.)

been selected and it is proposed to examine these from the following points of view: 1) the environmental factors in the early life of each 2) the cultural elements of the countries to which they went 3) their essential message and way of carrying on the work.

### B. Justification of Problem

In the mid-twentieth century there seems to be considerable confusion concerning the message of Missions. From the experience of a few years in India and the reading of a score or more missionary biographies the writer has been led to feel that much of this confusion is unnecessary. This has given birth to the desire to examine in more detail something of what has gone before in missions, with the hope that this will clarify the matter more fully for the writer himself and for those who may be concerned.

### C. Method of Procedure

As already indicated this is to be a comparative study of three pioneer missionaries, John Eliot, William Carey and Hudson Taylor. Each will be submitted to the same form of analysis. The first chapter will deal with John Eliot, the second with William Carey, the third with Hudson Taylor, the fourth will be a comparison of the three as to early background, respective countries ministered to and message preached, and the fifth chapter will present a summary of

the whole with conclusions.

#### D. Sources of Material

The writer wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the help of the librarians at the Biblical Seminary in New York, the New York Public Library (Rare Book Room) and the Missionary Research Library.

In dealing with the ministry of the missionary to the people the attempt has been made throughout to use only primary sources as far as possible while utilizing secondary sources for other aspects of the subject. Primary sources include letters, sermons, biographies, articles and journals. Secondary sources include history books, biographies, letters and magazine articles. A complete bibliography will be found at the end of the thesis.

Chapter I

John Eliot  
(1604-1690)

## Chapter I

John Eliot (1604-1690)

### A. Introduction

Mention of England brings to the minds of many, green grass, winding roads, trimly kept gardens or hedges and thatched roofs beneath which nestle tiny cottages. "The traveller in the eastern shires finds these charming little cottages everywhere; they smile at him from the midst of the fields, they snuggle beside the narrow country roads, they peep out from the lanes and squares of villages and towns."<sup>1</sup> This is England; England in the twentieth century and England in the sixteenth century.

Such peaceful beauty could not tolerate, one would think, malice or any form of evil. And yet the history of this early period is marked and marred by war and strife, suffering and bloodshed. Then it was that a man for a theft of four shillings could lose his life<sup>2</sup> and for a difference of opinion be burnt at the stake.<sup>3</sup> Protestant zealots in the reign of Henry VIII and later, of Catholic Mary, fled for their lives from the country.

Some of them found their way to Geneva and there<sup>4</sup> "they fell under the spell of Calvin." During the reign of

. . . . .

1. Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker: The Puritan Oligarchy, p.15.
2. David Chamberlain: Eliot of Massachusetts, p.27.
3. Wertenbaker, op.cit., p.18.
4. Ibid. p.18.

Elizabeth in the last half of the sixteenth century they returned, now as Calvinists, to spread the new doctrine and emphasis. It was probably in this way that, what has become known as the Puritan movement, was given its form and shape. However, "both the Calvinist problem and the Roman Catholic problem were met with the same weapon of religious uniformity,"<sup>1</sup> This policy was both the strength and weakness of Elizabeth's reign. For while it allowed for people of differing views and convictions within the broad requirements of uniformity, no provision was made for those who did not conform to even the nominal demands that were made for worship in the Church of England. This proved in time to be the ground and source of much trouble and distress for almost a century in England.<sup>2</sup>

Very quickly the Puritans found themselves divided into two camps, those who found they could hold their Calvinist convictions and conform to the Church, and those who carried their Calvinist principles further so that conformity to the Church in any sense was impossible. The two great principles that lay at the heart of Puritanism were, . . . "the insistence upon the personal relation between God and man, and the hatred of a professional religion."<sup>3</sup>

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1. Henry Offley Wakeman: The Church and the Puritan, p.36.
2. Ibid. pp. 38,39.
3. Ibid. p. 56.

With the death of Elizabeth in 1603 and the coming of James I to the throne matters were not improved. In 1593 before the death of Elizabeth . . . "parliament under pressure passed a law ordering all who would not conform to leave the realm."<sup>1</sup> James, a strong believer in the Divine Right of Kings, was not inclined to be any less lenient, so that clashes with the Puritans continued. However, it is to his credit that during his reign the famous translation of the Bible was made, known to us as the Authorized Version. As time went on Puritanism became represented by an increasing number of diversified groups. The chief differences among them were not so much in the area of doctrine as in the ways and means whereby the Reformation should be carried out. For example the Puritan Presbyterians believed in a national church but wanted the Reformation to come from within and according to Presbyterian principles. The Congregationalists were very close to them in wanting to purify the Church from within but put more emphasis on the autonomy of the local congregations.<sup>2</sup> "Having a similar understanding of the church, but convinced that no good could come out of staying in the Church of England, was the group known as Separatists."<sup>3</sup>

The crisis came in the reign of Charles I when parliament with the people rose up in arms demanding liberty.

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1. Kenneth Scott Latourette: A History of Christianity, p.813.
2. Dillenberger and Welch: Protestant Christianity, pp.107,8.
3. Ibid. p.108.



This was not before, however, many good folk for conscience' sake and because of gross injustices had felt compelled to leave the land and seek their fortunes elsewhere. The story of the Pilgrim Fathers and how they, in coming to America, marked the beginning of a new nation in a new land, is now ancient history. Not all of those who came then, or later, were free from impure or ulterior motives but for many the desire for religious freedom was the predominating reason for the venture. This was particularly true of those who responsible for the founding of the Massachusetts colony. Winthrop and others of this group believed that the only protection against evil was the establishing of a society after the congregational system with a sympathetic government. And closely linked with this was the conviction that worship must be after the Biblical model.<sup>1</sup> It was following in the train of this noble group, which later included such names as Thomas Hooker, Thomas Sheperd and John Wilson, that we find<sup>2</sup> John Eliot.

The ecclesiastical developments of this period ran parallel to the theological trends of the times. The Thirty-nine Articles were prepared by the Church of England but did represent an authoritative statement. The Book of Common Prayer, which was given its distinctive form in the reign of Elizabeth, exerted far more influence. "It reflects the

. . . . .

1. Wertenbaker, op.cit., p.32.
2. Ibid.

tendency to combine much of the ancient tradition of the church with some of the Reformation insights."<sup>1</sup>

"The Prayer Book contains prayers and liturgical forms dating from the early history of the church. These were adapted to the new situation, and practices considered contrary to the Word were abandoned in true Reformation form. The whole work reflects and unmistakable biblical basis."<sup>2</sup>

Had it not been for the intolerance of those in authority, particularly those who came after Elizabeth's time, in seeking to impose this order of worship on clergy and laity alike, many of the evils of the seventeenth century might have been avoided, and many of those who left their homes in England to seek a living elsewhere might not have done so. Anglicanism eventually learned to tolerate the most excessive extremes within its ranks, so that Latourette, writing in the middle of the twentieth century, in describing contemporary trends, says,

"The Church of England continued to be inclusive with a wide range of theological and ecclesiastical convictions. These were all the way from an ultra-conservative Evangelicalism . . . to an Anglo-Catholicism which hoped for 'reunion' of the severed branches of the Catholic Church under the Pope, but with the Pope, as the Bishop of Rome, . . ."<sup>3</sup>

And yet the Almighty God makes the wrath of men to<sup>4</sup> praise Him. The very places where Catholic Mary sought to exterminate the Protestants and thus the early glimmers of Puritan light in Essex and other counties, became, by the

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1. Dillenberger and Welch, op.cit., p.71

2. Ibid. p.72.

3. Latourette, op.cit., p.1390.

4. Psalm 76:10.

Grace of God, the stronghold of the whole movement.<sup>1</sup> And the very oppressions of men like Bishop Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury (1633-1645), which thrust out into the wilderness men and women of the highest ideals, the most brilliant intellectual acumen and the deepest of spiritual experience, were indirectly responsible for bringing the Gospel to a people who had never heard.

Among those who are perhaps lesser known of those who went out into the wilderness, is one, whose Christian character, missionary zeal and deep spiritual insight have made an indelible imprint on the pages of early American Church History. John Eliot who came to be known as the representative missionary of the seventeenth century,<sup>2</sup> although forgotten by many, laboured almost unceasingly for many years to win the early inhabitants of America, the Indians, to faith in Jesus Christ.

It is the purpose of this chapter to examine in some detail the life of John Eliot, the immediate environment out of which he came, the country to which he went and in particular the message that he preached and the way he carried on his work.

#### B. Background Leading to Life Work

Shakespeare was in the process of writing "Othello" in

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1. Wertenbaker, op.cit., p.18.

2. A.C. Thompson, Protestant Missions, p.53.

London and James I had recently ascended to the throne when John Eliot was born in 1604 at Widford, Hertfordshire, England.<sup>1</sup> Widford was a small parish of about five hundred people, twenty-five miles north of London near the border of Essex County. The exact date of Eliot's birth is not known but the old register of the church of St. John the Baptist in Widford bears this record of his baptism: "John Eliot, the son of Bennett Eliot, was baptized the 5th day of August, in the year of our Lord God 1604."<sup>2</sup> There seems to have been two branches in the Eliot family. "John's branch traced its origin to Sir William de Aliot, a Norman knight who came over with the Conqueror."<sup>3</sup> The other branch was that of Devonshire-Cornwall which produced the patriot Sir John Eliot (1592-1632) and several hundred years later the famous President of Harvard, Dr. Charles W. Eliot (1834-1925).<sup>3</sup>

From this it is evident that John, while not associated with aristocracy, was certainly well-born. His father was a landholder in four or five parishes, which was a large estate for those times. His will showed that he had well provided for the education of John at the University of Cambridge and also for the younger children. John was the third in a family of seven but little is known of his early

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1. Chamberlain, op.cit., p.9.
2. Ezra Hoyt Byington, The Puritan as a Colonist and Reformer, pp. 210, 211.
3. F.J. Powicke, ed., Some Unpublished Correspondence of the Rev. Richard Baxter and the Rev. John Eliot, Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Manchester, Vol.15, No.1, p.139, Jan. 1931.

life. Before he was six years old the family moved to Nasing in Essex County, a place that became famous for the number of Puritans that went forth from there to New England.<sup>1</sup> This was the country of waving saffron and famous for its Essex hops. This too was the place where the early persecutions of the Protestants had been most extreme. Perhaps this is one of the reasons it became a stronghold of Puritanism. Another reason would be the low state which the Church and clergy had fallen into. Wertenbaker says of this,

"In 1584 it was charged that of 335 benefices in Essex 173 were held by 'ignorant and unpreaching' ministers, and twelve by men of 'scandalous' life. . . . That conditions had not improved two decades later we gather from the statement that some ministers were drunkards, some were incontinent, some hunted on Sunday." 2

Little wonder that Puritanism, which contended for a ministry of pious, learned and able men, should flourish and bear much fruit in this area.<sup>3</sup> In such an atmosphere John spent most of his early years where he saw the two extremes, of evil on one side and holy living on the other. Fortunate was he to have in his favor a godly home. Writing later, he says of this period, "It was a great favor of God to me, that my first years were seasoned with the fear of God, the Word, and prayer."<sup>4</sup> Significantly, these three aspects of his early life became the ear-marks of his later life.

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1. Ibid. p.140.

2. Wertenbaker, op.cit., p.26.

3. Ibid. p.25.

4. Byington, op.cit., p.211.

He matriculated as a pensioner at Jesus College, Cambridge on March 20, 1618, at the age of fourteen and received the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1623. Apparently he was a good student and distinguished himself in the study of languages, especially Greek and Hebrew. It was here at Cambridge too that we have the first recorded evidence of his interest in philology and grammar.<sup>1</sup>

After graduation from Cambridge Eliot went to teach for a time in a school founded by the Rev. Thomas Hooker at Little Baddow, near Chelmsford, in Essex County. Hooker was not only Headmaster of the Grammar School but also the local preacher. With his strong Puritan views he exercised a tremendous influence in the community and consequently became an object of ecclesiastical persecution. Finally under pressure from Bishop Laud he was forced to flee to Holland, from which place later he found his way to New England where once again he took up his ministry, this time to the colonists.<sup>2</sup> However his association with Eliot had been long enough for him to make an indelible impression upon the younger man. Eliot was probably twenty-one or two when he came to Little Baddow and had had no genuine conversion experience, nor did he know what direction the course of his life would take. Under the gracious influence of this godly pastor and teacher Eliot came

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1. F.J. Powicke, op.cit., p.140.
2. Byington, op.cit., pp.212,213.

to grips with God. Cotton Mather, writing many years later after the death of Eliot, says, "His early conversion was through the influence of Thomas Hooker and much was due to him in making our Elisha."<sup>1</sup> Eliot himself said, in speaking of Little Baddow,

"To this place was I called through the infinite riches of God's mercy in Christ Jesus to my poor soul; for here the Lord said unto my dead soul, 'Live'; and, through the grace of Christ, I do live, and I shall live forever. When I came to this blessed family, I then saw, and never before, the power of godliness in its lively vigor and efficacy." <sup>2</sup>

Here too was he led to dedicate himself fully to the cause of Christ and to enter the Christian ministry. And now the course of his life begins to unfold. It was not long till he discovered, like his school-master friend before him, there was not much opportunity to preach the Gospel as he understood it, in England. Soon he began to look further afield, and though not under the same pressure that Hooker had been, he decided to bid farewell to England and seek, not only his fortune, but precious souls, in the New World.<sup>3</sup>

On November 4th 1631, at the age of twenty-seven, John Eliot with some fifty others arrived in Boston aboard the ship "Lyon", to join the Massachusetts Colony. Very quickly he united with the First Church in Boston and was at once

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1. Cotton Mather, The Life and Death of the Renowned Mr. John Eliot, p.10.
2. Nehemiah Adams, The Life of John Eliot, p.47.
3. Byington, op.cit., p.213.

asked to become their minister, while their pastor, John Wilson,<sup>1</sup> was away in England. It does not appear as to when or how he was ordained; whether before coming, or after arriving. Powicke says, "The Church (in Boston) recognized Episcopal Orders and since Eliot was a fully ordained minister in the Church of England he was fully qualified for the position."<sup>2</sup> However, this seems unlikely, Byington says, "He was ordained at Roxbury, November 5, 1632, as teacher of the church, and continued in that office until his death."<sup>3</sup> The latter statement would seem to be more in accord with the facts that are available. Subsequent events show clearly that he was fully ordained and laboured most acceptably in the ministry till his death.

In August 1632, the girl to whom Eliot had been betrothed in England, Hanna Mumford, arrived. They were married in October of the same year and for fifty-seven years they faced the storms of life together. About this time friends, to whom Eliot had previously agreed to minister, arrived from England. In spite of protests from the congregation in Boston who had grown to like their young minister very much in the few months he was there, and who wanted him to stay on as the teacher of the church working with the pastor, Eliot decided to follow his friends to their

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1. Cf. ante, p.4.

2. F.J. Powicke, op.cit., p.141.

3. Byington, op.cit., p.215.



choice of a location at Roxbury, a mile or so from Boston. Here he lived and in the environs of this place laboured for the remainder of his life.<sup>1</sup>

His ministry in Roxbury was much like that of any other Puritan pastor of his day. His custom was to conduct two services a week in Roxbury on Sunday and a week-night meeting once every two weeks. He was a well-read and widely-read man; to increase his knowledge of the Word and his love for his Lord and to feed his souls he would often be seen going to lectures at Boston, Charlestown, Dorchester and Cambridge. There he would sit as a member of the congregation and with Bible in hand follow the speaker most attentively.<sup>2</sup> For several years Eliot carried on his work in Roxbury unobtrusively and then he began to become concerned in a particular way for the spiritual welfare of the Indians in the surrounding neighborhood. This marked the beginning of a work which came to be his most important ministry, although supposedly incidental to his pastoral duties in Roxbury, and for which he became known by the beloved title, Apostle to the Indians. Before considering in some detail his message and way of working among the Indians, the next section will be devoted to an examination of the people to whom he came.

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1. F.J. Powicke, op.cit., p.141
2. Ibid. P.144.

## C. Cultural Elements in America

### 1. Religion and Social Structure

The people for whom Eliot had become burdened were a needy people. Nehemiah Adams says, "The Lowest degradation had been reached by these savages."<sup>1</sup> One of the Indians, Nishahkou, making his confession after his conversion, describes his early life in the following way,

"My parents and I were all wilde, we prayed to many Gods, and many other sins we did, and all the people did the same both men and women, they lived in all lust, they prayed to every creature; the Sun, Moon, Stars, Sea, Earth, Fishes, Fowl, Beasts, Trees etc. and all these things I did when I was a youth, and all these things I liked and loved to do . . . when I was grown up I loved lust, and delighted in it . . . I loved all sin, but especially lust, and all that I did was for the sake of lust." <sup>2</sup>

To some of the settlers the Indians were as animals, to others they were objects to be pitied, but to a few they were immortal souls who needed a Savior.

While inwardly their lives were in chaos, outwardly, they were a fine looking people and ". . . it was seldom that a crooked person was found among them."<sup>3</sup> It was largely a case of the survival of the fittest. Food was a very simple matter for them and consisted of pottage chiefly, made from all kinds of flesh, fish, roots, ground-nuts, squashes, oak acorns, walnuts, chestnuts all boiled together.

. . . . .

1. Adams, op.cit., p.31.

2. A Brief Narrative of the Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New-England, (1670) p.30.

3. Adams, op.cit. p.31.

Some nuts were ground to powder in order to thicken the mess. Whatever this menu may lack in appetizing value is certainly made up for in its nutritious value, although it may lack some important items. Their utensils were mostly made of clay; and dishes and spoons, of wood. Their beds were rude boards covered with skins; their homes or wigwams simply some slim poles stuck in the ground and covered with mats made from bulrushes. Small homes were heated by a fire in the centre of the floor. And this, as Cotton Mather says, ". . . was their only bed-clothes."<sup>1</sup> However, it is interesting to note that an adult Indian never went completely naked. Usually he wore the skin of a beast or feathers or both. A man would have a number of wives but one of these would be the chief wife. In time of sickness, a common remedy was to put the person in a house and heat it with stones from the fire. When the patient was thoroughly perspiring he would dash out and plunge into a brook of cool water.<sup>2</sup>

The Indian was a person of mixed emotions and feelings. Known for his hospitable character, he was also known for his exceedingly revengeful disposition. A stranger was always given the best food and lodging and served before themselves. But if someone was injured or murdered in the family, the relatives always sought satisfaction in lives, or wampum, that is shells, which was their form of money.<sup>3</sup> Their pleasure,

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1. Cotton Mather, op.cit., p.72.
2. Adams, op.cit. pp.31-33.
3. Ibid.

that is, for the men, (the women knew little of this) took the form of dances carried on for a week at a time during the nights while they slept in the day-time. They were notoriously an idle race, especially the men.<sup>1</sup> Cotton Mather describes them as, ". . . the very ruins of humanity," and "shiftless".<sup>2</sup> They lived above tremendous mines of copper and iron and yet owned not so much as a knife blade till the white man came.<sup>3</sup>

Hunting was about all that the men knew of hard labour, if this might be considered so. At times they seemed merry and light-hearted, as in the case when a group of pagan Indians visited a Christian Indian once. He, finding their appetites voracious, finally says to them, "You talk much of a bellyful, I wish we have victuals enough to fill them."<sup>4</sup> "All: 'Ha ha ha. They be not half full yet. Ha ha ha.'" <sup>4</sup>

At other times however they revealed a deep sadness and a disposition that was essentially melancholy. This was one of the door-ways through which the missionary could gain access to these poor people. Another door-way was through their attitude to the carriers of news. They delighted to hear news from a distant place and considered the messenger to be a god. They would sit down in a circle three or four deep and listen most intently.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Ibid.

2. Mather, op.cit., p.72.

3. Ibid.

4. John Eliot, Indian Dialogues, translated by J.E.(1671) p.9.

5. Adams op.cit., pp.39,40.

The religion of the Indians, referred to previously, was primarily a worship of the natural elements. Everything had a god in it, sun, moon, earth, fire and many other things, but the fire was god. Their chief deity lived in the south-west. Their priests or powows, who were conjurors, had an important place in society. They were responsible for the telling of fortunes, of advising in family and tribal affairs and of yelling over a person who was dying. All their religious activities were carried on with terrific noise. The Indians believed in the immortality of the soul, those who had done good in this life going to a place where they would be entertained, and the wicked going to a place where they would be in agony forever. However they had no belief in the resurrection of the body for good or bad.<sup>1</sup> Dreams were very important to them. If they had bad dreams they considered these the threatenings of God and at once they would get up, whatever hour of the night it might be, and engage in prayer. Their system of government was monarchical and the sachem or sagamore was attended by counsellors. If the chief or sachem of a tribe could be won for Christ very often many of his people would follow him.<sup>2</sup>

These are some of the cultural elements in the life of the Indians to whom Eliot came to minister.

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1. Ibid., p.37.
2. Ibid., p.40.

## 2. Business and Politics

Another element in the work, though perhaps not as important as the above, always in the background and sometimes in the foreground, was the colonist and his attitude to the Indians as well as to Eliot himself.

Woven into the very fabric of the colony was a basic interest in the Indian population. Mather quotes the Royal Charter, which brought them to the wilderness, as saying,

"To win and incite the Natives of that Country to knowledge and obedience of the only true God and Saviour of Mankind, and the Christian Faith, is our Royal Intention; and the Adventurers free profession in the principal end of the Plantation." <sup>1</sup>

And Byington tells us that, "The original seal of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay had on it the figure of an Indian, with the words, 'Come over and help us.'"<sup>2</sup>

When Eliot began the work with the Indians his congregation of colonists in Roxbury co-operated with him in every way, in arranging sometimes for his usual services of worship to be taken for him in the Roxbury Church and in giving generously to the Indian work.<sup>3</sup> The colonists in general were sympathetic and gave him every encouragement. Both the Plymouth Colony and the Massachusetts Colony had

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1. Mather, op.cit., p.69.
2. Byington, op.cit., p.206.
3. Mather, op.cit., p.70.

sought to be friendly with the Indians. Byington writes,

"The policy of the two Colonies had always been to cultivate peaceful relations with the aborigines. They had never engaged in war with them, except in defence against hostile attacks. In 1646, the English and the Indians were dwelling together as neighbours and trusting friends." <sup>1</sup>

This is about the date Eliot preached his first sermon to the Indians in their own language. He did not find however that the colonists were always an aid or asset in his labours. On one occasion he explains the former paucity of converts from among the Indians as being chiefly due to the unworthy conduct of nominally Christian people. <sup>2</sup> In a letter to Richard Baxter, the famous Puritan Divine, he speaks of the slow progress among the Indians. Here he speaks of how they use to visit the colonists but did not like to hear about religion; of heaven or of hell. So if anyone wished to be rid of them they would simply talk of holy things and the Indians would be gone. From this took to visiting families where religion was less thought of and therefore less spoken of. <sup>3</sup>

This was disturbing to Eliot, as was the worldliness and the emphasis on fashion which he found among some of the people. At a time when the men were concerned about dressing up their heads, he says, "We youthfulize our heads, as if that were our eternity." <sup>4</sup> The Indians were quick to see the

. . . . .

1. Byington, op.cit.p.208.

2. Chamberlain, op.cit., p.39.

3. John Eliot, Letter to Richard Baxter Oct. 7 1657, Bulletin of the John Rylands Library Manchester, op.cit.,p.159.

4. John Eliot, Jews in America, p.27.

short-comings and inconsistencies of the white man and were not slow to use them as an excuse for their own misbehaviours. However, the cause of the Kingdom went forward in spite of all, and the day came when some of the Indians saw beyond the counterfeit to the reality and became genuine Christians. One of these, Pium, who had become an evangelist, was one day speaking to a group of Indians whom he was trying to win for Christ, and spoke of recognizing many sins among the English colonists, . . . "which," he said, "provoke God to anger and to punish them; to the end that he might bring them to repentance. Do not imitate their sins but their virtues."<sup>1</sup> Even these simple folk learned to distinguish the difference between right and wrong wherever it was found.

On one other occasion Eliot had a difficult time with the colonists. This was more serious for this was the time when King Phillip, as he was called, led an uprising of hostile Indians against the colony. This took place late in Eliot's ministry, about the year 1775, after hundreds of Indians had turned to Christianity and their communities were well established. It was exceedingly painful when under the pressure of war the colonists began to get suspicious of Eliot's Indians. On one occasion when a barn was burned by hostile Indians the colonists attacked the Christian Indians, killing some and causing others to flee into the jungle.<sup>2</sup>

. . . . .

1. Indian Dialogues, op.cit., p.10.

2. Henry Dearborn, A Sketch of the Life of the Apostle Eliot p. 16.



These poor people were between two fires and but for the care of their beloved missionary and a few others, they would have been entirely destitute. When those who had fled were begged to return, they sent a letter in which they said, "We are not sorry for what we leave behind; but we are sorry that the English have driven us from praying to God, and from our teacher. We did begin to understand a little of praying to God."<sup>1</sup>

The events of these years proved far more catastrophic for the cause of missions than appeared at the outset. Many of the Christian Indians lost their lives during the war, some fighting on the side of the colonists, others from privations suffered in prison camps where they had been put because of suspicions concerning them. It was a sad chapter in the history of the work and a particularly painful one, not only to the Indians, but to their servant and friend, John Eliot.

#### D. Ministry to the People

##### 1. The Message Preached and Written

To treat exhaustively of every aspect of Eliot's message, what he believed and taught, would require a much larger work than this present study is intended to be. Therefore five topics have been chosen which are prominent in Eliot's writings and in most books which have been written

. . . . .

1. Ibid.

about him. These are as follows, Prayer, the Gospel, the Bible, the Church and Baptism. One or two will be dealt with rather briefly and the others in greater detail. The aim throughout will be to discover, as far as is possible, what he believed and taught about each of these subjects. It may be felt that the topic, the Gospel, includes all the others, and in a sense this is true. Here it is being considered in a more restricted manner with particular reference to sin and salvation.

#### i. Prayer

In dealing with this topic the problem at once arises as to how to distinguish between the theory and the practice. The last section of this chapter is to deal with the way Eliot practised what he believed but some things cannot be dealt with separately and will therefore be treated in a limited way here.

Eliot's converts were far and wide as The Praying Indians so it is not a matter of surprise to learn that Eliot was a man of prayer. The following are excerpts from a small book sent forth by Eliot and meant to be a kind of report on the progress of the work among the Indians. The statements are by Indian converts, translated by Eliot and checked by several friends who were familiar with the language. They reveal something of the Indians' experience and reflect the teaching and practice of their missionary for they had no other source of information apart from the Spirit of God and

. . . . .

the Word.

Monotunkquanit: "They said it was good to pray to God. . .  
and then almost my heart prayed to God." 1

Wutasakompauin:

"The Minister taught that word, that every man himself  
must pray and believe to be saved." 2

Antony:

". . . praying is the way to everlasting life." 3

Waban:

"Since I prayed to God, I know more of myself; but  
afore, I cared not for such things nor what they  
said . . . My heart was hard, therefore I could not  
pray . . ." 4

The following is from Indian Dialogues, also translated by  
Eliot, and is the testimony of another Christian Indian.

Piumbukbou:

"When I began to pray much tempted by devil how  
friends will laugh and ridicule but God gave me  
strength and also through the Word. . . benefits  
of praying are spiritual and heavenly, it teaching  
us to know God and the evil of sin; it teacheth us  
to repent of sin and seek for pardon, and it  
teacheth us to forsake sin forever: . . . we must  
pray to God for it is God that giveth rest and  
sleep to his servants." 5

These testimonies are better evidence for what Eliot taught  
and believed about prayer than anything else could be. He  
was a great man of prayer, setting apart whole days to just  
seeking the Lord. If he ran into any special problem or  
difficulty he would immediately give himself to special secret  
prayer. Adams says, "When he heard any special news he would

. . . . .

1. A Brief Narrative, op.cit., p.24.

2. Ibid. p.27.

3. Ibid. p.48.

4. Ibid. p.31.

5. Indian Dialogues, op.cit., pp.3,12.

6. Adams, op.cit., p.55.

sometimes say, 'Brethren, let us turn all this into prayer.'<sup>1</sup>  
His principle was, "That when we would have any great things  
to be accomplished, the best policy is to work by an engine<sup>2</sup>  
which the world sees nothing of." And as he took delight<sup>3</sup>  
in speaking to God, he took delight also in speaking of Him.  
His advice to young preachers was, "Pray, let there be much<sup>4</sup>  
of Christ in your Ministry." Cotton Mather tells us that he  
had . . . "daily practice of entering closet and shutting the  
door and also he set apart not rarely whole Days for Prayer  
with Fasting in secret places before the God of Heaven."<sup>5</sup>

His teaching and suggestions on how to walk with  
God in daily, unbroken fellowship and communion anticipate  
the Rules of Wesley's Holy Club at Oxford by about seventy-  
five years. They are in reality a commentary on different  
aspects of prayer and ways of communing with God. In epitome  
they are as follows,

- a) A seventh part of our time is all spent in Heaven,  
(referring to Sunday)
- b) Many more days to be set aside for fasting and thanks-  
giving.
- c) Regular worship to be observed.
- d) Private conversations to be flavored with spiritual  
things. (praying and singing together)
- e) Family duties to include morning and evening prayers  
and the catechizing of the children.
- f) Private devotions to be kept daily. (three times a day)
- g) Many ejaculations heavenward daily.

. . . . .

- 1. Ibid.
- 2. Ibid.
- 3. Mather, op.cit., p.14.
- 4. Ibid. p.49.
- 5. Ibid. p.13.

- h) To be occasional talks and acts of charity.
- i) All eating, drinking and other activities to be done as unto Him. <sup>1</sup>

This is not impossible, for he says, ". . . we have known some live thus and others, that have written of such a life, have but spun a Webb out of their own blessed experiences. If thou art a believer thou art no stranger to Heaven." <sup>2</sup>

Eliot was so much in the presence of God and kept his heart so much in the frame for prayer that he provoked all who came in contact with him to do likewise. <sup>3</sup> With him, as with many others, this was something to be caught, rather than taught. Prayer was essentially fellowship with God, which reached out in redemptive activity.

#### ii. The Gospel

The Apostle Eliot seems not to have been very far away from the Apostle Paul in the preaching of the Gospel. He says himself, . . . "the Lord hath taught us by the Cross . . . ." <sup>4</sup> And it is evident from his writings and those who have written about him that the Cross was a reality in his experience and in his preaching. It mattered little whether he was preaching to his congregation in Roxbury or the Indians out in the jungle he was uncompromising and utterly plain in his denunciation of sin and all that was contrary to the Word of God. Cotton Mather, his contemporary and intimate friend,

. . . . .

1. Mather, op.cit., p.21.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. p.14.

4. John Eliot, in Strength and Weakness, Sundry letters of ministers regarding the Indians, 1652, p.2.

writes of him that, "When dealing with sin he made his pulpit another Mount Sinai . . . from which flashes of light emanated,"<sup>1</sup> He seems to have stressed the holiness of God as seen in the Old Testament and the ten commandments in his initial dealings with people. Then when there was a genuine conviction of the awfulness of sin and people knew not which way to turn he would present the grace of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. He must often have been a thorn in the side to careless colonists who were inclined to be casual about their eternal welfare. He says, "We have many who profess the Religion they were born in, but we have (comparatively) only a few, who profess Religion upon evidences of their New Birth."<sup>2</sup> Personal regeneration by the power of the Holy Ghost was an important part of his message, which not everyone was anxious to hear. One of Eliot's Indian converts who became pastor or teacher of the local Indian Church at Natick said on this subject,

"All mankind are once-born, by rational birth they come into this world; but all God's children are born again . . . and this is spiritual birth (John 3:5). Baptism is the outward sign of it but the inward grace is a work of the Spirit, and the Spirit worketh by the Word of God. James 1:18,21." <sup>3</sup>

The thing which drove Eliot into the wilderness to reach the Indians was that, as Mather says, . . . "he thought men to be lost if our Gospel be hidden from them,"<sup>4</sup>

. . . . .

1. Mather, op.cit., p.49.
2. John Eliot, A Further Account of the Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England, Preface to All.
3. Indian Dialogues, op.cit., p.72.
4. Mather, op.cit.p.67.

He says further, "Our Eliot was no Mohametan, he could most heartily subscribe to that passage in the Articles of the Church of England, 'They are held to be accursed, who presume to say, that every Man shall be saved by the Law or Sect which he professeth'" . . . <sup>1</sup> He firmly believed that only the <sup>2</sup> Name of Jesus Christ can save. Eliot says concerning the death of Christ,

"Jesus Christ does what man cannot do 1) He fulfillls the holy law for sin 2) to suffer the penalty of this sin that the justice of God may be vindicated . . . every act of Jesus Christ was pure, perfect and meritorious, God saith, in him I am well pleased. Suffering of infinite value was necessary to redeem one soul, Suffering of infinite value was necessary to redeem the whole world." <sup>3</sup>

Christ does for man what man cannot do for himself, because <sup>4</sup> of his corruption by nature and lost condition.

Eliot was not a universalist but preached that Grace was available to those who believed. When addressing a group of Indians a question was asked about sinners going to heaven. He says, that this . . .

"did draw forth my heart to preach and presse the promise of pardon to all that were weary and sick of sinne, if they did believe in Christ who had died for us, and satisfied the justice of God for all our sinnes, and through whom God is well pleased with all such repenting sinners that come to Christ and believe in him; and the next day I took that text, Math. 11:28,29. . . ." <sup>5</sup>

. . . . .

1. Ibid. p.68.
2. Ibid.
3. John Eliot, Harmony of the Gospels, preface.
4. John Eliot, Christian Commonwealth, p.2.
5. John Eliot, letter from, published in The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel Breaking Forth upon the Indians in New England p.25.

His was a gracious ministry to the deepest needs of men.

This was emphasized further in his teaching concerning the covenant relationship between God and the believer. When a question was asked him regarding the salvation of children, Eliot said,

"Which question gave occasion more fully to teach them originall sin, and the damned state of all men: And also, especially it gave occasion to teach the Covenant of God, so that when God chooses a man or a woman to be his servant he chooses all their children to be so also: which doctrine was exceeding grateful unto them." <sup>1</sup>

This teaching on the Covenant including the children of the believer was a most comfortable doctrine, but it exposes one or two inconsistencies which will be considered in the section on baptism. Here at least are seen the two aspects of salvation; formerly man's believing, and now, God's choosing.

There was much of Christ in the preaching of Eliot.  
<sup>2</sup>  
Christ was central; and with this a strong reliance and dependence upon the Lord to give power and conviction. Speaking of this with respect to the Indians, he says, "It is the Lord, the Lord only who doth speak to the hearts of men, and he can speak to theirs, and doth, (blessed by his name)" <sup>3</sup> . . . He believed not only in the convicting and regenerating power of the Holy Ghost, but also in His power to make possible a holy life. When questioned by an Indian

. . . . .

1. Ibid. p.24.

2. Mather, op.cit., p.49.

3. John Eliot, Letter in Winslow's Glorious Progress of the Gospel, 1648, p.6.



about how to be true and faithful, he says,

"I answered, that if he did believe in Jesus Christ, he should have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in him, which is a good and a strong Spirit, and will keep him so safe, that all the Devils in Hell, and Powows on Earth, should not be able to do him any hurt; . . ." 1

This section may best be summed up by the testimony of one of Eliot's converts as he stood before the elders of the Church, as it reflects the teaching he has received concerning the Gospel. Monotunkquamit says,

"Oh let the Holy Spirit help me for I am ashamed of my sins; melted is my heart, and I desire pardon of all my sins; now I desire to forsake all my sins, and now I desire dayly to quench lusts, and wash off filth, and cast out all my sins, by the blood of Jesus Christ, and this I do by believing in Jesus Christ . . . I heard the Minister preach, That Christ was born like a man, and was both God and man, and dyed for us, and sheweth us the way of eternal life." 2

### iii. The Bible

Eliot's view of the Bible and its place in the building of the Church may best be seen in the way he used it himself. He was much opposed to the Roman Catholic system of withholding the Scriptures from the people. Cotton Mather says, "He could not live without a Bible himself."<sup>3</sup> And because of this he gave the Bible to the people. At great cost to himself in labour, time and money, he translated the entire Bible into the local Indian dialect. This was a herculean task for one man, even with his interest

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1. John Eliot, Tears of Repentance, a Further Narrative of the Progress of the Gospel . . .
2. John Eliot, A Brief Narrative of the Progress of the Gospel p.26.
3. Mather, op.cit., p.88.

in languages, coming as it did less than sixty years after the famous Authorized version had been produced, and was probably the first translation of the Bible made in a country so remote from Europe.<sup>1</sup> In the dedicatory note addressed to King Charles II in 1663 Eliot speaks of how the Spanish sent home gold and silver as the results of their labours, but he says, ". . . we present this . . . which upon a true account, is as much better than God, as the Souls of men are worth more than the whole world."<sup>2</sup> This was his view of the Scriptures and his unceasing labours in translating them indicate clearly that he considered the Bible indispensable in his ministry.

The Bible was essential to Eliot because he found in it a solution to every problem and difficulty. Concerning his Indians, he says,

"I have instructed them, that they should look only into the Scriptures, and out of the Word of God fetch all their Wisdom, Laws and Government, and so shall they be the Lord's people, and the Lord above shall Reign over them, and govern them in all things by the word of his mouth."<sup>3</sup>

In writing of setting up a new government at the time when Cromwell was in power, he says,

"This following Platform of Government, I do no farther urge, than you shall finde it to be purely deduced from

. . . . .

1. John Eliot, Dedicatory Note, Holy Bible 1663.
2. Ibid.
3. John Eliot, Strength and Weakness, op.cit., p.7.

the holy Scriptures. It is the holy Scriptures of God only that I do urge, to be your onely Magna Charta, by which you shoul be ruled in all things; . . ." 1

"The Scripture is able throughly to furnish the man of God (whether Magistrates in the Commonwealth, or Elder in the Church, or any other) unto every good work." 2

"The written Word of God is the perfect Systeme of Frame of Laws, to guide all the Moral actions of men, either towards God or man: . . ." 3

". . . compare the Prophecies of Scripture, with the present providences, and see if you finde not all things to come to pass, according as it is written. . ." 4

". . . who am no Statesman . . . but only spend my time in the Study of the holy Book of God." 5

In a most remarkable way he found the Scriptures his guide, not only in preaching, but in living. And this he had in common with other Puritans of his day. The Anglicans were divided in their allegiance between the Bible and tradition.<sup>6</sup> But as Dillenberger and Welch say,

"By contrast, the Puritans insisted that the Bible was the only place in which the norm for Christian living could be found . . ." 7

This section may be summed up also by the statement of an Indian Christian and Evangelist as he answers the question of a pagan Indian, "What Book is that you read in<sup>8</sup> and why do you call it the Word of God?" Pium answers,

. . . . .

1. John Eliot, The Christian Commonwealth, op.cit., Preface
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Dillenberger and Welch, Protestant Christianity, pp.106,107.
7. Ibid. p.107.
8. Indian Dialogues, op.cit., p.23.

"This is the Book of God's Law, which he hath taught holy men his Prophets and Apostles to write, and give unto us, to call us out of the broad way of sin and death, and to call us into the narrow way of Repentance, Faith in Jesus Christ and eternal life." 1

#### iv. The Church

Little has been said hitherto of Eliot's church connections and ecclesiastical sympathies. As might have been expected however, from the time he landed in Boston, he was a willing and ardent follower of the Congregational system of church government which was the accepted pattern in the colony. And from a follower he quickly became a leader in the movement.

Writing about the Church he says,

"A Church of Believers is a company of visible saints combined together with one heart, to hold communion in all the instituted Gospel worship, Ordinances and Discipline which Christ hath fitted for and given unto a particular Church. Such a company are frequently called A Church. Acts 2:47, 11:26, 14:23, 27, I Corth. 11:18, 20, 22 . . . Instituted by Christ and put into practice by the Apostles. Math. 16:18. The Rock confessed is Christ and Christ confessed is the Foundation of the Visible Church." 2

Then he goes on to say that a company of such believers have power to join together in Gospel Churches, and power also to call officers to administer the ordinances as instituted by Christ. These included directions in the Word, Sacraments, Prayer, Singing of Psalms and Collections.

. . . . .

1. Ibid.

2. John Eliot, Communion of Churches, p.2.

Speaking of receiving new members into the Church Eliot says,

"Upon due evidence of some hopeful work and change of heart by Faith and Repentance duly manifested to the Church, whereby the persons concerned may be in charity conceived able to examin themselves so to discern the Lord's will in the Sacraments, and spiritually to judge of a spiritual life, such ought, by the Church to be received into Communion in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper." 1

In a letter to Richard Baxter he makes clear who in his opinion is best qualified to judge the fitness of the candidate for Church membership. He says,

"No man on earth is so fit ecclesiastically to judge, according to his measure and manner, in a spiritual cause, as a believer. God and man will have more respect to the judgement of a sound believer y<sup>n</sup> of an ungodly officer." 2

"It is an unspeakable grace y<sup>t</sup> Christ hath dispensed in these times to raise up so many Congregational Churches to bear witness in y<sup>t</sup> poynt." 3

Eliot was very keen that candidates for Church membership should give public witness, because he felt it was a source of strength to the Church.<sup>4</sup> He says, "'Tis the Duty of every Christian, 'with the Mouth Confession is made unto Salvation.' . . . The Devil tries hard to get us to abandon this custom."<sup>5</sup>

He agreed with Baxter that the coming out of a

. . . . .

1. Ibid.
2. John Eliot, Letter to Richard Baxter, Jan. 10 1668, Bulletin of John Rylands Library, op.cit., p.165.
3. Ibid.
4. Cotton Mather, op.cit., p.61.
5. Ibid.

Church was not a good thing as the Separatists had done. In this way the best were taken out of all the Churches to form new ones.<sup>1</sup> He says,

"I cannot approve of it I would not be so dealt by, that if I have one or two or a few jewels in my interest another should come and rob me of them."<sup>2</sup>

He felt that such "jewels" should stay in their Assemblies and there exercise a good influence. Thus he encouraged his Indians not come and as he says, " . . . joyne to English churches. No, Let them rather keep Sabbath and worship together, and the strong help the weak."<sup>3</sup> Thus it is seen that Eliot was no Separatist in the ordinary sense of the word. However, on the other hand, regarding the Lord's Supper he speaks of the necessity of keeping away from the sacrament . . . "the ignorant and prophane and scandalous."<sup>4</sup> . . . " but not in such a way as to unduly offend.

He was anxious to have an indigenous church among the Indians. Writing of this he says,

"I find it hopeless to expect English Officers in our Indian Churches; . . . they must be trained up to be able to live of themselves in the ways of the Gospel of Christ . . . they must be taught to be teachers: for which cause I have begun to teach them the Art of Teaching, and I find some of them very capable . . . The Bible, and the Catechism drawn out of the Bible, are general helps to all parts and places about us,

. . . . .

1. John Eliot, Letter to Richard Baxter Oct. 7 1657, op.cit. p.159.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

and are the ground-work of the Community amongst all our Indian Churches and Christians." 1

He was greatly thrilled when he found the Indian Church of Natick sending out men to preach the Gospel to other tribes.<sup>2</sup>

Eliot was probably the first man in America to envisage the Ecumenical Church. He was not only the fore-runner of the ecumenical movement but also of what is commonly called in the mid-twentieth century, the cell movement. This latter is a group of committed people within the Church, meeting together for fellowship and to pray for the needs of the Church as a whole. Writing to Baxter he says,

"May not parochial communion be upheld so as to keepe the whole heape of chaff and corne together, only excluding . . . the scandalous . . . and besides this, may not the holy Saints, who are called higher by the grace of Christ, injoy together a more strikt and select communion." . . . 3

As for his ideas on ecumenicity, these surely antedate any kind of Protestant ecumenical activity by scores of years, if not by one or two centuries. In epitome his suggestions, as given in "Christian Churches", are as follows. At the top is an Ecumenical Council with its seat at Jerusalem. This will have no president and will be directly responsible to Christ. Through this Council Christ will rule the world.

. . . . .

1. John Eliot, A Brief Narrative . . . , op.cit. pp.5,6.

2. Ibid. p.6.

3. John Eliot, Letter to Richard B. Jan. 10 1668, op.cit., p.160.

It is made up of twenty-four delegates from National Synods. These in turn are made up of an equal number of delegates from Provincial Assemblies. These are made up of delegates from Councils of Churches, which are in turn made up of twenty-four delegates from twelve local Churches. This little book was precious document to Eliot, but largely passed unnoticed by others. Perhaps it would be better received in the latter part of the twentieth century or in the twenty-first century.<sup>1</sup>

To sum up, Eliot says, "The main end of Church-fellowship, is to represent unto the World, the Qualifications of those who shall ascend into the Hill of the Lord, and Stand in his Holy Place for ever."<sup>2</sup>

#### v. Baptism

Eliot's views on Baptism were in general those of the Church of England. He apparently never felt that these needed to be changed, and in fact, went to some lengths to defend them when John Norcott published a small book against the practice of infant baptism. Eliot writes in reply,

"... The Book speaketh with the voice of a Lamb, and I think the Author is a godly though erring Brother; but he acteth the cause of the warring Lyon . . ." <sup>3</sup>

"(Acts. 2:38,39) . . . the promise doth belong to you

. . . . .

1. John Eliot, Letter to R. Baxter, Sept. 22 1668, p.148.
2. Mather, op.cit., p.61.
3. John Eliot, A Brief Answer to a Small Book Written by John Norcot Against Infant-Baptism, p.1.



and to your children, and therefore the Seal doth belong unto them . . . " 1

" . . . A Believer and his children are but one lump, in his Church Station, the believing Parents sanctify the whole household . . . " 2

"We agree with the Anabaptists in the general proposition which is this, nothing is to be received in Divine, but that which hath a Divine Institution . . . We agree to it, but the particular proposition, the meaning, the assumption; there we differ . . . " 3

Norcott says, from John 4:1,2, "Jesus made Disciples and baptized, they were made Disciples, not born so." 4 Eliot replies,

"So it was with the first believers, but their Infants had the privilege to be born Disciples . . . " 5

"We ought to believe that our infants may be regenerated from the womb, if not, yet they are in the way to be regenerated, and are brought under the gale of the Spirit to accomplish it, and this is accepted." 6

It is not the purpose of this study to enter into a criticism, or even appraisal of Eliot's views, but merely to state them. At this point it is clear that he comes very near to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. Related to this is his concept of the covenant relationship between God and the believer, referred to previously. 7 For Eliot this covenant relationship was much like that found

. . . . .

1. Ibid. p.3.
2. Ibid. p.4.
3. Ibid. p.15.
4. Ibid. p.17.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid. p.26.
7. Cf. ante, pp.27,28.

in the Old Testament where, when God chose a man He chose his family also. As circumcision was the outward ratification of that covenant so baptism became the outward seal of the new covenant. Powicke says, in commenting on this subject in the correspondence between Eliot and Baxter,

"Eliot's conception of Baptism is a particular covenant made for or by, the candidate for Church membership. The doctrine, on the other hand is strange - very strange." <sup>1</sup>

Richard Baxter, perhaps Eliot's most influential friend, along with others, disagreed with him on this subject. He was probably the one chiefly responsible for Eliot's eventually modifying his views on baptism. How much Eliot did change is difficult to say. Baxter writing some nine years after the publication of Eliot's little book, and after considerable correspondence on the subject in the interim, in a letter of Sept. 22, 1688, expresses great delight that Eliot has reduced the differences between them to almost nothing. <sup>2</sup> It is safe to say, however, that Eliot continued to administer the rite of infant baptism, although in later years he probably attached less significance to this than he did in his early ministry.

## 2. Way of Working

Cotton Mather says, "He that will write of Eliot, must

. . . . .

1. F.J. Powicke, Bulletin of the John Rylands Library,  
<sup>OP.cit.</sup>, p.149.

2. Ibid.

write of Charity, or say nothing."<sup>1</sup> And this perhaps better than anything else is the key to Eliot's life and ministry. He was a man of great compassion and knew what it was to be<sup>2</sup> burdened for those in distress. When someone asked him towards the end of his life, how he was, he said,

"Alas I have lost everything, my Understanding leaves me, my Memory fails me my Utterance fails me; but I thank God my charity holds out still."<sup>3</sup>

Mather says,

"He was a great enemy to all contention, He advocated, Bear, Forbear, Forgive . . . His inclination for peace sometimes made him sacrifice the Right itself."<sup>4</sup>

But his was not a passive love that merely gave in to circumstances. Rather, it was the kind of love that issued in redemptive activity. And he was known far and wide as a man of great activity.<sup>5</sup> As has been pointed out previously, he was no stranger to the Secret Place. And undoubtedly it was here that love first kindled in his heart the burden and desire to go out and seek the lost among the Indians.

Mather says,

"I cannot find that any, besides the Holy Spirit of God, first moved him to the blessed Work of Evangelizing these perishing Indians."<sup>6</sup>

It was this love too that was not only the cause, but the

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1. Mather, op.cit., p.33.
2. Ibid. p.33.
3. Ibid. p.34.
4. Ibid. p.36.
5. Ibid. p.18.
6. Ibid. p.67.

explanation of his activity. This explains his identification with the people in such a way that they began to love him in return. It explains his mastery of the Indian language in a comparatively short length of time, the translation of the Scriptures and a multitude of other activities and details that otherwise would be meaningless or futile.

Eliot's personal habits verged on the ascetic and gave weight to his words as he moved among the Indians. Mather says, "We are all of us compounded of these two things, the man and the heart, but so powerful was the Man in this holy person that it kept the heart ever tied with a short tether."<sup>1</sup> His diet was very simple consisting of one plain dish for his dinner and often he would take no supper or very little. Drinking of wine was accepted in his time and yet he preferred water, for, as he said, "Wine is a noble generous drink, but, as I remember, water was made before it."<sup>2</sup> He had no pride of life; his dress was free from any ostentation and humility marked him out among men.<sup>3</sup> He was generous to the point of leaving himself sometimes in embarrassing positions. As is the case when on one occasion he gave away to a poor woman his entire monthly income and had nothing to bring home to his wife.<sup>4</sup> With the Indians it

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1. F.J. Powicke, op.cit., p.144.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Henry Dearborn, A Sketch of the Life of the Apostle Eliot, p.22.

was the same. He says,

"I never go unto them empty but carry somewhat to distribute among them . . . Christ went among people poor but we go among them rich." <sup>1</sup>

He liked to get up early in the morning and was a great lover of the sun-rise. Thus he charged his students, "I pray you, look to it that you be morning birds." <sup>2</sup>

Eliot began his study of the Indian language about 1643 and October 28, 1646, he preached his first sermon to the Indians. <sup>3</sup> Almost from the first his efforts were attended with success and he, as opportunities arose, began to move right out among them. This was part of his method, to go to the people wherever they were. About three years after his beginning, speaking of the progress of the work among the Indians, he says . . . "that maketh me have many thoughts that the way to doe it to the purpose, is to live among them in a place distant from the English." <sup>4</sup> Writing on another occasion, he says,

"There is a great fishing place upon one of the Falls of Merimack River . . . where is a great confluence of Indians every Spring, and thither I have gone these two years in that season, and intend so to doe the next Spring (if God will)" <sup>5</sup>

It must not be thought that these journeys into the wilderness were taken without difficulty and sometimes danger. In a

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1. John Eliot, Winslow's Glorious Progress of the Gospel, p.40.
2. Chamberlain, op.cit., p.66.
3. Ibid. p.47.
4. John Eliot, op.cit., Letter of Sept. 13 1649, p.23
5. Ibid. Letter of Nov. 12 1648, p.9.

letter to Mr. Winslow, Eliot says,

"I have not been dry night or day, from the third day of the week unto the sixth, but so travelled, and at night pull off my Boots, wring my Stockings, and on with them again, and so continue." 1

On one journey, when he was threatened with death by hostile Indians, he boldly said to them,

"My God is with me. I fear neither you nor all the Sachems in the country. I will go on and do you touch me if you dare." 2

Needless to say, he went on, in spite of every difficulty and obstacle and continued to reach hearts and lives for his Savior.

When he was able to gather a group of Indians who were willing to listen he very often followed a somewhat similar pattern in speaking to them. First he would open with prayer and then he would speak giving the main points of the Christian Faith. Finally there was a question period for him and for them. After ascertaining if they understood he would often ask,

- "1. Who made you and all the world?
2. Who do you look should save you from sin and hell? 3
3. How many commandments has the Lord given you to keep?"

He began with ideas that were familiar to them, such as Heaven is for good people and Hell for the bad, and from there he went on to present the Gospel. 4 His staying in

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1. Mather, op.cit., p.87.
2. Chamberlain, op.cit., p.49.
3. Mather, op.cit., p.86.
4. Ibid.

their homes on these visits, eating their food and living as they did enabled them to not only hear the Gospel but to see it at work in his life.<sup>1</sup> When the Indians began to be converted and were forming into small groups and churches then Eliot had a slightly different approach in his visits. He says,

- "In my exercise among them I attend to four things,  
1. I catechize children and youth (commandments . . .  
2. I preach out of some texts of Scripture wherein I study all plainnesse, and brevity, unto which many are very attentive.  
3. If there be any occasion, we in the next place go to admonish and censure, . . .  
4. We have them ask questions." 2

As Chamberlain says, "He believed new ways of living must be learned as soon as new truths are grasped."<sup>3</sup> For this reason he encouraged them to leave their wandering ways and to establish their own communities with a simple form of self-government. Here again, as in everything else, the Scriptures were the guide. He found an excellent pattern for them in the Old Testament system of choosing one ruler for ten people, along with its various modifications. He encouraged them too in the planting of orchards and gardens<sup>4</sup> and the use of tools in farming.<sup>5</sup> Women were encouraged to take up spinning<sup>6</sup> and all the Indians were to go to school when and where it was

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1. Chamberlain, op.cit., p.31.
2. John Eliot, Clear Sunshine of the Gospel, op.cit., pp.16-29.
3. Chamberlain, op.cit., p.51.
4. John Eliot, Winslow's Progress of the Gospel, p.15.
5. John Eliot, Clear Sunshine . . . op.cit., p.28.
6. Ibid. p.4.

possible.<sup>1</sup> Interestingly enough when the Indians had a real change of heart they were eager for other changes too.

All that has been said previously about the Word, Prayer, the Church and the Gospel needs to be remembered in thinking of the way Eliot carried on his work. Everything he did was saturated in prayer. He lived in heaven while he walked on earth. His principles of self-governing, self-propagating and self-supporting churches were basic to his message.

Not only was his work in the very early stages aided by gifts from the colonists but also from the first, friends in England were most generous in their support. In the costly work of translating the Scriptures and in other projects this assistance was most welcome. He himself, as has been intimated, gave from his own small income again and again when he found those who were suffering or in need.

Finally, after a life-time of loving service, he comes to the end of his way. One day towards the end of his life, when he had become rather feeble, he was climbing up the hill to the Church at Roxbury. As he climbed, he said,

"This is very like the way to heaven, 'tis up hill; the Lord by his grace fetch us up" . . . and then spying a bush near him he instantly added, "And truly there are thorns and briars in the way too!"<sup>2</sup>

And this is a commentary on his life, for he overcame thorns

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1. Mather, op.cit, p.87.

2. Adams, op.cit., p.49.



and briars as he pressed on the upward way by the clear conviction, which he often expressed in the following words,

"Prayer and Pains through faith in Jesus Christ will do anything." <sup>1</sup>

John Eliot died on May 20, 1690 in his eighty-sixth year. His last words were,

"Welcome Joy, Pray! Pray! Pray!" <sup>2</sup>

#### E. Summary

This chapter has dealt with the general and specific background of John Eliot seeking to show those factors which were influential in shaping his life and destiny. Attention has also been given to the country to which he came and the people among whom he laboured. Finally his message and way of working has been analysed in some detail in the attempt to show the nature of his message and those things which were prominent and important in his ministry.

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1. Chamberlain, op.cit., p.65.
2. Ibid.

Chapter II

William Carey  
(1761-1834)

## Chapter II

William Carey (1761-1834)

### A. Introduction

England in the eighteenth century, from a physical point of view, was not vastly different from the England of the seventeenth century. The leafy lanes and the trimly cut hedges were just as much in evidence and here and there, grazing cattle gave the air of tranquillity and peace.

Yet there were differences, profound differences, which spelled progress on the one hand and retrogress on the other. Dillenberger and Welch say,

"After 1689 both the Church of England and the Protestant bodies settled down to a period of comparative security. The battles had been fought and a religious settlement had been reached." 1

That the bloody persecutions of the earlier period should have passed away was reason indeed for thankfulness. However, unfortunately with the new period of peace and prosperity, came also a time of sad declension within the Church. Puritanism, as such, had passed on, leaving to its successors an orthodox theology, but in some instances, if not many, the living vibrant faith had vanished. Simultaneous with this decline was the growing emphasis upon reason in certain sections of the Church. Within Anglicanism itself, the stress upon reason had made such inroads that by the second decade

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1. John Dillenberger and Claude Welch, Protestant Christianity, p.127.

of the eighteenth century the evangelical witness had all but disappeared.<sup>1</sup> The way for this new cult had been paved by the Caroline Divines and the Latitudinarians. They had discarded some of the crucial points of the faith but the new cult called Deism, a form of natural religion, was<sup>2</sup> directly opposed to Christianity. Latourette says of it,

"Deism had many variations, but in general it held that there is a universal religion which is in accord with reason." 3 . . . "While many who continued to call themselves Christians were profoundly influenced by it, some of its advocates openly repudiated Christianity." 4

Deism rapidly gained in popularity and soon spread to the Continent. Its views, particularly in the latter half of the eighteenth century, were widely accepted.<sup>5</sup> In general Deists attacked the reliability of the Bible and denied the miracles.<sup>6</sup> With the spread of this false teaching spiritual poverty came to the churches, and finally, in many places spiritual death. Carey writing towards the end of the eighteenth century says,

" . . . the face of most Christian countries presents a dreadful scene of ignorance, hypocrisy and profligacy. Various baneful, and pernicious errors appear to gain ground, in almost every part of Christendom; the truths of the gospel and even the gospel itself, are attacked, and every method that the enemy can invent is employed

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1. Ibid. p.75.

2. Ibid. p.128.

3. Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christianity, p.984

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

to undermine the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1

God, however, does not leave Himself without a witness in any age or generation. And as in the Dark Ages there were people like Francis of Assissi and Ramon Lul, so even in the darkest periods described above, there were those who held tenaciously to a living faith in a living Saviour. Nevertheless, as the Church moved into the eighteenth century, it became increasingly evident that a general awakening was desperately needed. Part of the answer to this need was the Pietist movement on the Continent with its particular manifestation in the Moravian fellowship. This was a group which had held to its course when the storms had swept many others away. Notwithstanding its contribution in the area of Missions, which is unique in the history of Missions, probably its greatest contribution was to give birth, directly, or indirectly, to a movement which under the Wesleys was destined to sweep the whole of England and touch the uttermost parts of the earth.<sup>2</sup>

"... when reason clipped faith's wings, and enthusiasm was a reproach, and religion icily regular; when the critics held the field, and Hume was the oracle and Voltaire the idol, and Gibbon was subjecting the warm wonder of the first Christian centuries to cool analysis, and all people of discernment had discovered Christianity to be fictitious - England's soul was saved by three evangelists." 3

By God raising up the Wesleys and Whitfield a new

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1. William Carey, An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians, p.66.
2. Dillenberger and Welch, pp. 126,130.
3. S. Pearce Carey, William Carey, pp.9,10.

era was opened for England, spiritually, socially and economically. Latourette says of this period,

"In the brief but important period between 1750 and 1815 the situation in respect to Christianity became increasingly complex and more patently paradoxical." 1

It was into this atmosphere where Deism was rampant and the Evangelical Revival was in full swing that William Carey was born.

To learn his reaction to these influences and to study the course of his life as a result is the purpose of this chapter. The same form of analysis will be followed as was used in the case of John Eliot, considering first his background, then the kind of country he went to, and finally, his ministry to the people.

#### B. Background Leading to Life Work

William Carey was born on August 17, 1761 in the village of Paulersbury, Northamptonshire.<sup>2</sup> On August 23rd, a few days later, he was baptized in the local parish church.<sup>3</sup> This would indicate that his parents sympathies lay with the established Church, and for a time, even as a young man, William's sympathies and interest lay in this direction too. Much later in life, he wrote,

"I was a Churchman . . . and had always looked upon Dissenters with contempt." . . . 4

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1. Latourette, op. cit. p.1054.
2. Eustace Carey, Memoir of William Carey, p.5.
3. William Carey, Biographical Literary Notices, p.10.
4. Eustace Carey, op. cit. p.7.

His parents were humble folk and could make no claim to noble birth. The father, Edmund Carey, was originally a journeyman tammy weaver, but because he had a fair education, he later moved, in 1768, to Church End where he was appointed parish clerk and local school-master. William's entire early education was from his father. He quickly showed a thirst for knowledge and a taste for nature.<sup>1</sup> His sister wrote of him, that from the age of six the family recognized that he had unusual abilities . . . "Whatever he began he finished: difficulties never seemed to discourage him . . ."<sup>2</sup> His interests from a very early time were widely diversified, and included, botany, drawing and painting, birds and all manner of insects, gardening and flowers. These were not merely childhood fancies, but many of them became life-long interests and hobbies.<sup>3</sup>

Carey's early religious life seems to have been in some ways barren and fruitless. Although he speaks with appreciation of the daily parental drill in the Scriptures, and the strict Church attendance in which he was nurtured.<sup>4</sup> In 1805, writing to his friend Fuller from India, he says,

"In the first fourteen years of my life, I had many advantages of a religious nature, but was wholly unacquainted with the scheme of salvation by Christ. During this time I had many stirrings of mind, occasioned by my being obliged to read books of a

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1. Biographical Literary Notices, op. cit. pp.10-15.
2. Eustace Carey, op. cit., p.16.
3. Ibid. p.18.
4. S. Pearce Carey, op. cit., p.23.

religious character; . . . ." 1 "My mind was furnished with themes," he said at another time, "which afterwards were often influential on my heart, when I had little liesure." 2

But he says,

"Of real experimental religion, I scarcely heard anything till I was fourteen years of age . . . My companions were the lowest . . . so that I had sunk in the most awful profligacy of conduct. I was addicted to swearing, lying, and unchaste conversation;" 3

At the age of fourteen there came a change in his fortune as the time came for him to go to work. He was bound as an apprentice to a shoemaker at Hackleton. Here he came in contact with a fellow-worker of non-conformist background with whom he had many arguments. Although his friend at that time had had no genuine conversion experience nevertheless these conversations disturbed Carey. He says,

"As my uneasiness increased, my fellow-servant, who was about this time brought under serious concern for his soul, became more importunate with me." 4

Under his influence Carey began to read religious books and came under a growing sense of conviction. He says, . . .

"my opinions insensibly underwent a change." <sup>5</sup> And he began to favour the evangelical view of things. Hitherto no doubt he had been suffering from deistic thinking. Now he left the Established Church and began going to another church. He made an attempt at reformation, endeavouring to leave off

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1. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.5.
2. S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., p.23.
3. Eustace Carey, op.cit., pp.5,6.
4. Ibid. p.7.
5. Ibid. p.9.



lying and swearing, but still he did not know peace. A clerk in a neighbouring parish who was a devout person sought him out and after six hours reasoning with him, Carey says,

"He proved to my conviction, that my conduct was not such as became the gospel, and I felt ruined and helpless. I could neither believe his system of doctrines, nor defend my own. The conversation filled me with anxiety; and when I was alone, this anxiety increased. I was by these means, I trust, brought to depend on a crucified Saviour for pardon and salvation; and to seek a system of doctrines in the word of God." 1

Carey's conversion probably took place about the age of eighteen. Before he was twenty, he was married and in business for himself, making shoes. He was now anxious to propagate the faith which once he had persecuted.<sup>2</sup> Among the signs that his change was genuine was the fact that he came out publicly on the side of non-conformity. There were a number of important influences in his life after his conversion, when he was still new in the way. These included Mr. Sutcliffe, the Baptist minister in Olney, Rev. Thomas Scott, the clergyman in the Established Church at Olney (Carey did not become a Separatist bigot) and Robert Hall. The writings of the latter were a particular blessing to Carey as he groped towards the light.<sup>3</sup> However, he says of Thomas Scott,

"If there be anything of the work of God in my soul, I owe much of it to Mr. Scott's preaching, when I first set out in the ways of the Lord." 4

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1. Ibid. p.9.

2. Ibid. p.19.

3. S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., pp.33,34.

4. Ibid. p.33.

Carey rejected the hyper-Calvinism of his day and for this reason found fellowship with some groups more difficult than with others. It was probably because of this he preferred to worship at Olney with Rev. John Sutcliffe than in Hackleton.<sup>1</sup> By this time his views were decidedly Baptist, and in 1785, at the age of twenty-four,<sup>2</sup> he was accepted as a member into the Olney Baptist Church. He had begun village preaching before this but in 1786 he settled in Moulton where he became pastor of a small Baptist congregation. Later, in 1790, he accepted a call to a much larger congregation at Leicester. It was from here that he made his debut into the missionary world and into a ministry from which he never turned back.

Very early after his conversion Carey began to be concerned for the salvation of others. As he read books of far-away places he began to long for ways and means to be a missionary. Then he realized there were needs on his own door-step, and he earnestly sought, and eventually won both of his sisters to Christ.<sup>3</sup> At Moulton he continued to ply his trade of shoemaking while teaching school and pastoring the local Baptist Church. Poverty was never far from him in those days, and it was only by the most strenuous efforts he was able to care for his little family. It was in the school perhaps that the course of his life began to take

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1. Eustace Carey, p.32.
2. Biographical Literary Notices, p.2.
3. S. Pearce Carey, p.40.

shape. As he pointed out to his pupils when he was teaching facts about the religions of other countries he became deeply concerned. He would say,

"These are Christians, and these are Mohametans, and these are Pagans, and these are Pagans" . . . suddenly it struck him, "I am now telling these children as a mere fact, that which is a truth of the most melancholy character." <sup>1</sup>

He had already begun to show his linguistic abilities and had a fair knowledge of Latin and Greek. To these he added Hebrew, then, French, Italian and Dutch. And to confound the scholars utterly, he accomplished all this, not while pursuing a higher education in an academic institution, but in spare moments taken from mending shoes, teaching school and pastoring his flock. <sup>2</sup>

Carey was rapidly becoming an effective and able minister of the Gospel. More than one weary wanderer found his way to the Saviour through the faithful preaching of the Word. His ordination took place in 1787 and then three years later he moved to Leicester to serve the Harvey Lane congregation. It was here the burning and growing desire to proclaim the Gospel to the whole world gave birth to his famous treatise which for many years had been smouldering in his mind and heart. "An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians, to use means for the Conversion of the Heathen," was published in 1792, and with it the Church was challenged to take the Gospel to peoples of other lands. <sup>3</sup> At the

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1. Biographical Literary Notices, op.cit. p.11.
2. S. Pearce Carey, op. cit. p.49.
3. Ibid. pp.46-48, 68-82.

Northampton Association for Baptist ministers in May of that year Carey preached on Isaiah 54:2,3, "Enlarge the place of thy tent . . ." And his theme was summarized in that, now famous, exhortation,

"Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God." 1

The die was cast. There was no turning back. Friends who had been timid now rallied to him. Andrew Fuller, who had become a fast friend of Carey's, Ryland, Sutcliffe and others joined him at the next meeting of the Northampton Association at Kettering on October 2 1792, to form the "Baptist Missionary Society" . . . "for the Propagation of the Gospel amongst the Heathen." 2 Dr. Ryland speaks of this occasion,

"As to the immediate origin of a Baptist Mission, I believe God himself infused into the mind of Carey, that solicitude for the salvation of the heathen, which cannot be fairly traced to any other source." 3

About this time a certain John Thomas, a medical man and surgeon, who had been serving in India, arrived from there much concerned about the state of the lost heathen and seeking a society that would send him as a missionary. His qualifications having been examined, it seemed, in the Providence of God that the Society and he were prepared for each other. It was decided to open a mission to Bengal,

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1. Ibid. p.83.

2. Ibid. p.91.

3. C.B. Lewis, The Life of John Thomas, p.214.

and when Carey learned it was possible for a missionary to support himself there, he at once volunteered to join Thomas in the venture.<sup>1</sup> Very quickly preparations were made, and on June 13th 1793, Carey, with all his family, set sail for India. Shortly before this Carey had been scheduled to sail, and his wife had been unable and unwilling to join him. He had written to her, revealing the deep sense of conviction that was upon him,

" . . . If I had all the world, I would freely give it all to have you and my dear children with me; but the sense of duty is so strong as to overpower all other considerations; I could not turn back without guilt upon my soul. . . " 2

How glad he was, not for the delay, but that his wife and family were able finally to join him. When he departed from England Carey never expected to see its shores again, and he never did.

### C. Cultural Elements in India

#### 1. Religion and Social Structure

Though Carey was well informed concerning the countries of the world, he could not know in detail the multitude of problems he was to face in India. India was not in any sense a new country, and therefore its problems were not those of a primitive or simple society. Abbe Dubois, one of the greatest authorities on Hindu manners, customs

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1. Ibid. p.219.  
2. Ibid. p.236.

and ceremonies, writing about the end of the eighteenth century says, concerning the ancient character of the peoples,

"It is impossible to doubt for a moment that science and art flourished amongst these nations at an epoch when our most civilized countries of the West were still plunged in the dark abyss of ignorance. The various forms of their institutions, both political and social; their knowledge of mathematics, especially astronomy; their systems of metaphysics and ethics: all of these had long ago made the people of India famous far beyond their own borders; while the renown of Hindu philosophers had reached even Europe." 1

However, when one seeks to uncover the facts of the early beginnings it is very difficult, and in fact, quite impossible. The Abbe writes,

"Their first historians were in reality poets . . . who were guided solely by the desire to please their readers, and accordingly clothed Truth in such a grotesque garb as to render it a mere travesty from an historical point of view." 2

The most important of these early writings were, the Ramayana, the Bhagavata, and the Mahabharata; and these became the basis of the Hindu religion.<sup>3</sup>

Hindus and Mohammedans were the chief religious groups in the India of Carey's day. Much of his work was with the Hindus, although he dealt with numbers of Mohammedans too. Hinduism was essentially a religion of caste. Carey writing to the Society on August 5 1794, says,

"The obstacles in the way of the gospel are very great, and were it not that God is almighty and true, would be insurmountable. The caste is such a superstition as no

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1. Abbe Dubois, Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies, p.1.
2. Ibid. p.2.
3. Ibid.

European can conceive, and more tenaciously regarded than life. It was, I think, originally political, but is now interwoven with every circumstance of their lives; . . . " 1

Caste divided the people into four main sections and a multitude of sub-sections.<sup>2</sup> The Brahmins were the highest caste and those who adhered most strictly to the caste rules and regulations. Carey writing from Serampore later says,

"This part of the country is very populous and as full of idolatry as it can hold . . . I suppose no people can have more completely surrendered their reason than the Hindus. In all matters of business and everything relating to this world, they are not deficient in knowledge, but in all things relating to religion, they are apparently void of all understanding . . . " 3

The complete absence of an ethical standard seemed to run through the whole of society and undoubtedly had its precedent in the writings referred to previously. Drunkenness, licentiousness and immorality of all kinds was to be found everywhere. Even the gods are represented in these terms.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout all Indian history, the character of women has been maligned. The Ramayana tells us,

"Women are, by nature, crooked, fickle, sowers of strife."<sup>5</sup> These were the beasts of burden, the labourers and those who suffered the most in the social system. Dancing girls,

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1. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.129.

2. Dubois, op.cit., p.48.

3. William Carey, Serampore Letters, pp.61,62.

4. The Ramayana of Valmiki, English Abridgement, Introduction, notes and review by William Carey and J. Marshman, pp.130,38

5. Ibid. p.62.

attached to some Hindu temples acted as licensed profligates under the sanction of religion.<sup>1</sup> Widows were burned with the bodies of their husbands, or, in some inferior castes buried alive beside them.<sup>2</sup> Polygamy was very common.<sup>3</sup>

Truth and justice were almost unknown. Carey writing to a friend in New York of the Hindus, says,

"Tis true they have not the savage ferocity of American Indians but this is abundantly supplied with a dreadful stock of low cunning and deceit. Moral rectitude makes no part of their religious system, therefore, no wonder that they are sunk, nay wholly immersed in all manner of impurity."<sup>4</sup>

Not only did India present a grim outlook from the religious point of view, but physically also there were serious problems. The climate for many months of the year was very pleasant and then for a few months would reach such extreme temperatures as to be hardly bearable. There were many insects to contend with and because of them diseases like malaria. From other sources came dysentery and cholera, to mention but a few of the potential dangers in this area. Other hazards lay in the direction of the wild animals; snakes, tigers and leopards were plentiful.

Economically the people were very poor, and in times of famine, when the rainfall was inadequate or blight would strike, many would perish. Their homes were simple

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1. The Ramayana of Valmiki, op.cit., p.139.
2. C.B. Lewis, op.cit., p.18.
3. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.93.
4. William Carey, Serampore Letters, pp.61,62.



mud affairs, devoid almost of ornaments, pictures and books. Custom and caste bound them hand and foot to the past and rendered them almost powerless to change or progress.<sup>1</sup> Not all, however, were completely illiterate and many had a trade which they plied most acceptably. Carey writing of some of the people in Bengal says,

"They are very good book-keepers, many of them speak Persian well, many others Sanskrit, and many are very good workmen at various trades and businesses, as weavers, smiths, carpenters, bricklayers, and the like".<sup>2</sup>

The picture in general, however, at least with respect to the area where Carey was working, in Bengal, was exceedingly dark and hopeless. Small wonder that Abbe Dubois wrote of the utter impossibility of India ever becoming Christian in any sense of the word.<sup>3</sup> Whether Carey was ever acquainted with the Abbe and his writings or not, he was certainly acquainted with the conditions and the problems, yet his hope appears to have been in Another. For this chapter would not have been written otherwise.

## 2. Business and Politics

If the picture was black with respect to the heathen element in Bengal, it was not much brighter with respect to the European element, particularly as represented in the East India Company. Although the Company was there as the

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1. S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., p.166.

2. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.197.

3. Abbe Dubois, op.cit., Editor's Introduction, p.xxv.

official representative of a so-called Christian country, yet in practice there was little to commend it as such, and much to condemn it. Lewis tells us,

"The Charter conferred upon the East India Company by William III in 1698, made careful provision for the spiritual interests of the servants of the Company employed in the East. It expressly stipulated that 'in every garrison and superior factory,' there should be 'set apart a decent and convenient place for divine service only;' that one minister should be constantly maintained in every such place . . . appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Bishop of London." 1

There is little evidence to show that this injunction was ever carried out. However, in Calcutta a church was erected about 1715 from the gifts of the merchants. It was often served by laymen because clergy were so scarce. At one time it was destroyed by rebel troops, but it was later rebuilt. Apart from the buildings themselves there was little evidence of religious life in the European community. The Lord's day was nearly as little regarded by the British as by the natives. Religious observances were sadly neglected by the so-called Christians in Calcutta, and the state of affairs was even worse at other European stations in Bengal. In fact, at times, the East India Company actually opposed the observance of religious services!<sup>2</sup>

To look more closely at this community is only to make it more repulsive. Undoubtedly there were religious

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1. C.B. Lewis, op.cit., p.21.
2. Ibid. pp.23,24.

people among the Europeans, but they were few in number. One of the most prominent of these was Charles Grant who came to India in 1767 and later was appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors of the East India Company in England. He did much to further the cause of the Gospel in that needy land. But he was the exception. The Portuguese were almost wholly Roman Catholic and among the most debased class in Calcutta. The Protestants were less religious and not much more moral. Duelling was very frequent. Deism was the fashion and idolatrous practices of the natives readily countenanced. Drunkenness, gambling and profane swearing were widely practised. Nearly all unmarried Europeans lived in common-law with native women. With all this corruption the European community was known far and wide for its generosity in aiding poverty stricken families.<sup>1</sup>

The chaplains, the few there were, on the whole were not worthy of their vocation and often were guilty of moral laxness comparable to that of their parishioners.<sup>2</sup> Carey, at a time of great distress in 1794 soon after his arrival in India, wrote,

"I not only have no friend to stir me up, or encourage me in the things of God, but every discouragement, arising from my distance from Mr. Thomas, the infidelity of the Europeans, who all say that the conversion of the

. . . . .

1. Ibid. pp.32-34.  
2. Ibid. p.25.

natives is impossible, and the stupid superstition of the natives themselves . . ." 1

He further writes of a visit to a professor of religion in Calcutta, to whom he had been recommended, and from whom he hoped to receive some help and encouragement. He says, . . .

2  
"to my sorrow, found him at dice." Then, he went to another, an evangelical preacher of the Church of England. He says,

" . . . (he) received me with cool politeness. I staid near an hour with him; . . . He carried himself as greatly my superior, and I left him without his having so much as asked me to take any refreshment, though he knew I had walked five miles in the heat of the sun." 3

Such treatment in an eastern country, noted for its hospitality, could only be interpreted as a very great insult. Sir J.W. Kaye writing of conditions at this time says,

"Although the English in India were emerging from that absolute slough of profligacy and corruption, in which they had so long been disgracefully sunk, - though knavery and extortion were no longer dominant in their offices, and rioting and drunkenness in their homes - yet there was little Christianity in Calcutta at the end of the eighteenth century." 4

The British Government was almost constantly a thorn in the flesh to Carey and his associates, especially in the early years. It eventually became so difficult to get English ships to take missionaries to India, that in 1803 four were sent to America and from there came to India.

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1. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.113.

2. Ibid. p.97.

3. Ibid. pp.97,98.

4. Sir J.W. Kaye, quoted in S.Pearce Carey, op.cit., p.140.

This proved to be a blessing in disguise for it effectively served as a means of introducing the work to the American people.<sup>1</sup> The removal of the missionary family to Serampore brought a measure of relief and sympathetic interest from the friendly Danish government. However, this was not the solution to all their problems by any means. Carey writing to Fuller in 1807 says,

"India swarms with deists, and deists are, in my opinion, the most intolerant of mankind; their great desire is to exterminate true religion from the earth." And in another letter . . . "There are, however, many here who would rejoice to see Christianity wholly expelled from the country, and, particularly, to see any embarrassment thrown in our way. We, therefore, have no security but in God." 2

As time went on changes did come throughout the country, and the missionaries became, not only accepted, but highly respected, and were given almost complete freedom to carry on their work.<sup>3</sup> The truth remains however, which Carey so clearly foresaw in his "Enquiry",

"It is . . . a melancholy fact, that the vices of Europeans have been communicated wherever they themselves have been; so that the religious state of even heathens has been rendered worse by intercourse with them!" 4

This will give some impression of the nature of the country and the people, as well as an indication of the problems which the missionaries faced.

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1. William Carey, Serampore Letters, op.cit., p.15.
2. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.333.
3. Ibid., p.344.
4. William Carey, An Enquiry . . . op.cit., p.64.

## D. Ministry to the People

### 1. The Message Preached and Written

While Carey, as has been already indicated, was a good preacher, his real ministry did not lie in this direction but rather in the area of translation. For this reason there is not a great deal of recorded evidence of his convictions on spiritual matters. However, the broad outlines of his faith are clear, and here and there are flashes that give deep insight into his innermost thoughts.

As in the previous case of John Eliot, the following aspects of his message will be considered, Prayer, The Gospel, The Bible, The Church, and Baptism.

#### i. Prayer

From the very beginning of Carey's walk with God prayer had an integral place. Perhaps the earliest place where it began to make its influence felt, apart from his own experience of salvation, was within his family for he prayed earnestly for their salvation. And was overjoyed when both his sisters gave themselves to God. Early too he learned something of the art of intercession. For when he read of Cook's travels in the South Seas and of the people there, and then of the abominable slave trade he felt he had to do something. His sister Mary said,

. . . . .

1. S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., p.40.

"I never remember his engaging in prayer with the family or in public, without praying for those poor creatures." 1

Carey believed that one of the ways of meeting the needs of men was through prayer. However, he did not believe that prayer was all that God required of men. He became very impatient with the ministerial Association when it seemed that all they were willing to do was pray about the needs of the heathen. He believed that true prayer led to action, thus enabling God to respect and answer the pleadings.<sup>2</sup> This emphasis on obedience in prayer and with prayer, was characteristic of Carey's simple, straightforward way.

In times of trouble and distress, of spiritual deadness and slackness, he sought solace in prayer and urged others to do likewise. When in one of his early pastorates the church was in trouble, Eustace tells us,

"Days of fasting and prayer were set apart in which there was much of a spirit of importunity and brotherly love, . . . " 3

And Carey himself writes on Jan. 17 1794, facing much difficulty,

"What a mercy it is to have a God; and how miserable must they be who have no knowledge of or value for the throne of grace!" 4

He knew some degree of intimacy with his Heavenly Father for he writes in his journal Nov. 9 1793,

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1. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.32.

2. S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., p.52.

3. Eustace Carey, op.cit., 48.

4. William Carey, Journal, quoted in Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.94.

I think I have had more liberty in prayer, and more converse with God, than for some time before." 1

And on June 8, 1794,

"Was enabled this evening to wrestle with God in prayer for many of my dear friends in England . . . This was a time of refreshment to my soul indeed."

The next night, "Felt enlarged in prayer, and thankful for the many mercies which I daily receive from God . . ." 2

July 7, 1794,

"This evening was enabled to plead a little with God for the heathen; but it was so flat, and destitute of strong crying and tears, that it scarcely deserves the name of prayer." 3

These are not the writings of a man who considered prayer a ritual or formality. Words like "liberty", "refreshing", "wrestle", "strong crying and tears" are the vocabulary of one who has a strong acquaintance with this holy art.

His journal goes on in this manner for a few years and then breaks off abruptly as he is forced to abandon it for his translation work. Henceforth his correspondence was often written in journal-like fashion, but of necessity omitted many of his personal reflections. However, enough has been given to make it clear that Carey was not a stranger to the Secret Place.

Shortly after the departure of his son Jabez to be a missionary in Malay, Carey wrote to him,

"Trust always in Christ. Be pure of heart. Live a life of prayer and of devotedness to God . . .

. . . . .

1. William Carey, Journal, op.cit., p.75.
2. Ibid., p.120.
3. Ibid., p.126.



We shall often meet at the throne of grace." 1

This perhaps, best sums up his convictions as to the place and importance of prayer in the life of a believer.

#### ii. The Gospel

There was no doubt in the mind of Carey as to the depravity of human nature and the lost state of men outside of Christ. The whole thrust of his "Enquiry" was to make this clear and to put the responsibility for doing something about it squarely upon the Church as the one body which had already become a recipient of Divine grace. He says,

"Sin was introduced amongst the children of men by the fall of Adam, and has ever since been spreading its baneful influence . . . By changing its appearances to suit the circumstances of the times it has grown up in ten thousand forms, and constantly counteracted the will and designs of God . . . In one period the grossest ignorance and barbarism prevailed in the world; and afterwards, in a more enlightened age, the most daring infidelity, and contempt of God . . . as they increased in science and politeness, they ran into more abundant and extravagant idolatries." 2

He goes on,

"Yet God repeatedly made known his intention to prevail finally over all the power of the Devil, . . . It was for this purpose that the Messiah came and died; that God might be just, and the justifier of all that should believe in him." 3

Writing later from Serampore, he says,

" . . . millions of perishing Heathens tormented in this life by means of idolatry, Superstition, and Ignorance,

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1. S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., pp.302,303.

2. William Carey, Enquiry . . . op.cit., pp.3,4.

3. Ibid. p.5.

and subject to eternal Misery in the next, are pleading."<sup>1</sup>  
Writing in 1795, Carey says,

"The guilt and depravity of mankind, the redemption by Christ, with the freeness of God's mercy, are the themes I most insist upon."<sup>2</sup>

It is interesting to note his manner of dealing with those who came to him for spiritual help. In his journal he gives an instance of his conversation with some natives who came to him for instruction. He says,

"I told them that all men were sinners against God, and that God was strictly just, and of purer eyes than to approve of sin. I endeavoured to press this point, and to ask how they could possibly be saved if this was the case. I tried to explain to them the nature of heaven and hell; and told them that, except our sins were pardoned, we must go to hell. They said, that would be like the prisoners in Dinagepore goal. I said, no; for in prison only the body could be afflicted, but in hell the soul; that in a year or two a prisoner would be released, but he never would be freed from hell; that death would release them from prison, but in hell they would never die. I then told them how God sent his own Son to save sinners; that he came to save them from sin; that he died in the sinners stead; and that whosoever believed in him would obtain everlasting life, and would become holy." . . . "I told them that God was under no obligation to save any man; and that it was of no use to make offerings to God to obtain pardon of sin, for God had no need of goats, kids, sheep etc. . . . but that he was willing to save for the sake of Jesus Christ."<sup>3</sup>

Carey believed the heathen were damned and didn't hesitate to tell them so. But he was quick along with this to extend to them the offer of redeeming grace in Jesus Christ. More and more, as he went on, redeeming love became his theme.<sup>4</sup>

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1. William Carey, Serampore Letters, op.cit., p.34.
2. William Carey, in Biographical Literary Notices, p.100
3. William Carey, Journal, op.cit. p.148.
4. A.H. Oussoren, William Carey, p.206.

He was not concerned merely to be preaching the Word; he looked for the moving of the Spirit and conviction of sin. It was then he knew that the work was of God. He spoke of some being in very great distress, darkness and almost despair.<sup>1</sup> On one occasion he writes of an experience,

"Three at Maypal appear to be in earnest about eternal things . . . There is a stir in all the neighbourhood, and many come to hear the word of God. . . ." 2

It was this "stirring" that he longed for. When he heard of revival movements in America, he wrote to his friend Williams in New York,

"I most sincerely wish that such a work was taking place in India, and that we could see Brahmans, Mussulmans and Deists falling before the word of God." 3

The Deists were no different from the others in Carey's mind, unless their sin was greater because they had more light.

The way was not made easy for those who would find it difficult, because of caste or other reasons. Salvation involved discipleship too, in Carey's mind, and he was fully confident that God would work. He writes, in the early years,

"I doubt not but a few more years will show Brahmans renouncing their caste believing in Christ and throwing their idols to the moles and to the bats." 4

"O what a blessing," he says, "is the gospel which provides

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1. William Carey, in Biographical Literary Notices, p.5.
2. C.B. Lewis, op.cit., p.298.
3. William Carey, Serampore Letters, p.82.
4. Ibid. p.63.

a Saviour and a Sanctifier!"<sup>1</sup> Holiness, and likeness to Christ was the goal.

Christ was the centre or hub about which his life and ministry moved. He wrote to his son, Jabez, "All that is not built on the foundation of Christ Crucified will fail."<sup>2</sup> . . . "Make mention of His Righteousness, even of His only." When he was yet new in the land, he wrote, "O how long will it be till I shall know so much of the language of the country as to preach Christ crucified to them!"<sup>3</sup>

This section may be summed up with a statement from a letter written to England by Carey and his associates in 1806, after they had seen God at work in their midst. They write,

"We only want men and money to fill this country with the knowledge of Christ. We are neither working at uncertainty nor afraid for the result. We have tried our weapons, and have proved their power. The Cross is mightier than the Caste. We shall be more than conquerors." <sup>4</sup>

#### iii. The Bible

Several years ago the United Bible Societies asked A.M. Chirgwin to make a world-wide study of the place of the Bible in evangelism. The result of this study, which has been published, is convincing proof of the fact that the

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1. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.116.
2. William Carey, quoted in S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., p.306.
3. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p 111.
4. William Carey and Associates, quoted in S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., p.252.

Bible and evangelism belong to each other.<sup>1</sup> Chirgwin writes,

"The association between the Bible and evangelism is as old as the Bible itself . . . It is a fair summary that all through its history, wherever the Church has been engaged in trying to win the outsider and the non-Christian, it has used the Bible as its main instrument. What is more, the times when the Church has gone to its evangelistic task with the Bible open in its hands have been precisely the times when it has won many of its greatest conquests. The Bible has in fact been the cutting-edge of the advance." 2

All this Carey knew one hundred and fifty years before the above survey was made. And in fact, his work and labours undoubtedly provided important statistics for it. In Carey's mind, to give the people the Bible was to give them the Gospel. He writes to Williams in 1801,

"Pray for us that we may be faithful to the end and that the word of the Lord in our hands may be quick, and powerful, sharper than a two edged sword, so that its glorious effects may be seen in the destruction of Sin and Superstition and in the erection of the Kingdom of our glorious Redeemer in this Land of Darkness and the Shadow of Death." 3

Carey, along with Marshman and Ward, his two famous associates, were prepared to put one thousand copies of the Scriptures into every language of India, for a remarkably small sum of money. They write to the Society in 1815,

"Thus then Five Hundred Pounds will almost secure the gospel's being given to any one of the provinces of India;"4

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1. H.R. Weber, The Communications of the Gospel to Illiterates, S.C.M. Press Ltd. London 1957, p.33.
2. A.M. Chirgwin, The Bible in World Evangelism, S.C.M. Press, London 1954, quoted in H.R. Weber, op.cit., p.33.
3. William Carey, Serampore Letters, p.68.
4. Carey, Marshman and Ward; Memoir relative to the Progress of the Translations of the Sacred Scriptures, p.17.

Carey's love for, and loyalty to, the Word of God, had its beginning early in life. At one stage he was a great admirer of William Law. His biographer says,

"Law's intensity and devoutness strongly drew him. What restrained him was Law's seeming trust of intuition beyond the written Word, whereas Carey was persuaded that, not by transcending Scripture, but by diligent and dutiful ascertainment and appropriation of its truth could God reliably be known. He resolved to master what was written, to make himself a man of the Book." 1

"To many the book was 'rank poison'; to Carey 'sweetest wine'. He never read a book with such rapture. He drank it eagerly to the bottom of the cup." 2

Like the great evangelist John Wesley he could easily have earned the nick-name, "Bible Moth". He wrote himself of the importance of Bible study,

"The word of God! What need (there is) to pray much and study closely, to give ourselves wholly to those great things, that we may not speak falsely for God. O that we may never trifle with so important things." 3

And of his own need in this respect, he says,

" . . . I have need to read the word of God more; and, above all, I want a heart to feed upon it." 4

As in prayer he believed in action, so in the reading of the Bible he believed also in obedience. The Bible was not merely to be read but to be followed. Speaking of this with respect to governments, he says,

" . . . let my opinions about the best mode of government

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1. S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., p.9.

2. Ibid. p.34.

3. William Carey, in Biographical and Literary Notices, p.80.

4. William Carey, Journal, quoted in Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.74.

be what they might, yet the Bible teaches me to act as a peaceful subject under that government which is established where Providence has placed or ever may place my lot; provided that government does not interfere in religious matters, or attempt to constrain my conscience: in that case, I think it my duty peaceably to obey God rather than men, and abide by all consequences." 1

If Carey had never written anything of his views concerning the Bible, his translation work alone would speak volumes. It is inconceivable that any man, however great his philological ability might have been, who did not have a holy love for the Scriptures, who did not consider them indispensable to the need of mankind, and who was not dominated and driven by the love of God as described in those same Scriptures, could have, or would have, performed the gigantic task which Carey did. His translation of the entire Bible into seven major languages, and portions of it, usually large portions of it, into twenty-eight dialects,<sup>2</sup> will always stand as a permanent memorial to his regard for the Word of God.

To sum up, Carey says, writing of difficulties in the work,

"... though caste, and a great number of superstitions, are great obstacles, yet I know there are only two real obstacles in any part of the earth, viz., a want of the Bible, and the depravity of the human heart." 3

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1. Eustace Carey, op.cit., pp.208,209.
2. S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., p.415.
3. Eustace Carey, op.cit. p.163.

#### iv. The Church

Carey says very little concerning the Church in his writings. It is evident as has been noted, that for him at least, the forsaking of the Established Church and the embracing of nonconformity, was a necessary part of his conversion. This seemed, initially, to be related, not so much to any views of baptism, as to his search for reality. Perhaps if he had met Thomas Scott earlier he would never have left the Church of England. However he did eventually come to have very decided views regarding baptism and this undoubtedly led him to the Baptist fold.

He was a strong believer in Church discipline and did not hesitate to administer it either in his parishes in England or in India. Writing to a brother-minister while in England he says,

"Preaching, though a great part, is not all of our employ. We must maintain the character of teacher, bishop, overlooker in the chimney-corner as well as in the pulpit." 1

As a shepherd of the flock, the people knew his guiding and restraining hand. In India it was the same; there was a standard to be met and it was the same for all. How grievous it was when the Indian brethren fell, yes, and even his own<sup>2</sup> sons, and had to be disciplined in the name of the Church. But Carey was firm, although gracious in his dealings with

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1. S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., p.48.
2. Ibid. p.237.



them. He writes, "We are obliged to encourage, strengthen, counteract, disapprove, advise, teach, and yet all so as to retain their warm affection."<sup>1</sup>

He was anxious when some of the men among the Indian converts showed promise, to have them share in the ministry and work of the Church. He writes, April 20, 1807,

"Three Brethren, Ram Mohun, Konnie and Krishna Das were set apart to the office of Deacons."<sup>2</sup>

And on May 31, 1807, "Ram Mohun was set apart to the work of the ministry."<sup>3</sup> In the same year Carey wrote to Fuller,

"... our native brethren are constantly employed. Six of them have a monthly allowance from us, and are continually out as itinerant preachers."<sup>4</sup>

To get the Gospel out was the burning desire of the missionaries, and probably it was necessary for them to have paid evangelists. They could not have known the problems that this would lead to for future generations who sought to establish an indigenous church.

Carey loved the fellowship of believers. When he had not been in India very long, and had been working alone, he wrote,

"O may I again taste the sweets of social religion, which I have given up, and see, in this land of darkness, a people formed for God!"<sup>5</sup>

. . . . .

1. Ibid. p.237.

2. William Carey, Serampore Letters, p.123.

3. Ibid.

4. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.330.

5. Ibid. p.91.

The time came when this desire was fulfilled. For in 1812, he writes,

" . . . I have seen the word of God take root in this land, so that there are now belonging to this mission, or connected therewith, eleven churches, and two or three more are on the eve of being formed. Some of these churches are in an infant state, but there are others which have thirty, forty, seventy, and even a hundred and fifty members." 1

What a cause of rejoicing it was to have such a company of people who had chosen to forsake all for Christ.

As has been intimated earlier, Carey, though a non-conformist, was no bigot. He had a great love for, and desire to fellowship with, all true believers. He was in a genuine sense ecumenically minded. When the Cape of Good Hope fell into the hands of the English, Carey wrote to Fuller,

"Should it continue so, would it not be possible to have a general association of all denominations of Christians from the four quarters of the world, kept there once in about ten years? I earnestly recommend this plan. Let the first meeting be in the year 1810 or 1812 at furthest. I have no doubt it would be attended with very important effects." 2

Although this desire was not fulfilled, at least in the way Carey anticipated it, it shows something of the depth and breadth of his vision with reference to the Church.

#### v. Baptism

Nothing has been said hitherto about Carey's baptism as a believer. Apparently, it was only a short time

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1. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.345.
2. Ibid. p.323.

after his conversion when he became interested in this subject. He describes the occasion in a letter to Dr. Ryland,

"A sermon preached by Mr. Horsey, of Northampton at the rhantism of an infant, and some conversation with Mr. Hume, . . . had drawn my mind to the subject of baptism; but I do not recollect having read anything on the subject till I applied to Mr. Ryland, sen., to baptize me: he lent me a pamphlet, and turned me over to his son, who after some time baptized me." 1

His baptism took place in October of 1783, and this effectively severed any remaining connections he may have had with the Established Church. Baptism by immersion was now for him a matter of conviction, and the sign and seal of the believer's position in Christ.

In his "Enquiry" Carey uses this very doctrine of baptism as a spring-board to challenge his denomination and the Church in general to world-missions. He says,

"Was not Christ's charge to evangelize the nations addressed to the apostles, and not meant for us? . . . Then why do we baptize? If baptism concerns us, world-missions must no less. The two were bidden in one breath, were part and parcel of each other." 2

Here is another example of Carey's straightforward and honest attitude to the Bible. He felt on reading its pages that a certain mode of baptism was the will of God. By the same token he saw also that as baptism in itself, apart from the mode, was the commandment of Christ, so was the evangelization of the world. And as he was obedient in the one so he sought to be obedient in the other.

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1. William Carey, in Biographical and Literary Notices, p.9.
2. William Carey, Enquiry, quoted in S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., p.70.

As might be expected Carey's views of baptism led him as time went on into conflict with other missionary communities in India, who came later and held the opposite view. Eustace Carey says of this problem,

" . . . and, as the controversy embraces both the subject and the mode of the ordinance in question, there was no possibility of escaping the difficulty; nor was any honourable course open to either party, but that of permitting the other, both in preaching and in organizing churches, to follow out their own convictions of truth and duty, and in the solemn work of translation, to give a simple and faithful version, without hesitation and without compromise." 1

The difficulty arose partly over Carey's translations. In one translation he was using a word for baptism which clearly meant, to dip or immerse. His non-Baptist friends in Bengal protested and the Bible Society felt obliged to withdraw its support from the work, for Carey and his colleagues could not for conscience' sake change the translation. They felt they had used the best and most accurate word, and stood by it. Friends in England quickly rallied to their help so<sup>2</sup> that the work was able to proceed.

The baptism of the first Indian, Krishna Pal, took place on December 28th 1800, when even Carey had almost abandoned hope of ever seeing a baptism. The opposition from the natives was terrific. Krishna's whole family with him would have been murdered the night before his baptism had not the Governor of Serampore sent a guard to protect

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1. Eustace Carey, op.cit.pp.313,314.
2. S. Pearce Carey, op.cit. p.371.

them.<sup>1</sup> But once the baptism took place others soon followed.

Carey's words on the occasion of this first baptism of an Indian sum up in brief his convictions concerning this ordinance. Ward, his colleague, writes of the event,

"... Carey then spoke in Bengali, particularly declaring that we did not think the water sacred, but water only, and that the one from amongst them about to be baptized professed by this act to put off all sins and all debtahs, and to put on Christ. . . ." 2

## 2. Way of Working

Carey said one day to his nephew,

"Eustace, you may know by this, whether what they say of me is true. If they say I am a plodder, it is true. I have no genius, but I can plod." And Eustace says, "This, if we use the word plod to signify the steadfast unimaginative direction of the intellect to a single subject, is the fact." 3

Surely Carey describes himself most accurately, though some may find it hard to believe that he had no genius. The theme of his sermon at Kettering was the theme of his life,

"Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God." 4

Although he was a humble man, when he had once made up his mind to a course of action, nothing would turn him aside from it.<sup>5</sup> Though he may have lacked imagination and other worth-while attributes, he had tremendous faith in the

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1. S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., p.196.

2. Ibid, p.197.

3. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.xv.

4. Cf. ante, p.55

5. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.xvii.

promises of God and absolute confidence that the laws of God do not change. In matters of conscience, as has been noted, he was most careful. He never took oaths; his last marriage was delayed three weeks because he was unwilling to certify on oath, to the facts necessary to procure a license. He seemed to be quite lacking in diplomatic talent. If he had anything to say, he said it, and said it all at once.<sup>1</sup> Often he complained of laziness. Again and again in his journal we read words like these, . . . "a careless indolence<sup>2</sup> possesses my spirit, and makes me unfit for anything." This seems strange for a man who accomplished more in a single life-time than most others would in several. In fact his nephew writes,

"My admiration for my uncle increases every day, he has not in the course of a whole month, a single half hour, in which he can, consistently with his own feelings of the importance of his work, relax from the hardest labour" . . .<sup>3</sup>

If Carey was indolent, then perhaps the world could do with a great deal more of that kind of indolence. Eustace further writes,

" . . . and we are given to understand, that his powers of labour were so great, as to consume the strength of three of them (pundits) incessantly." <sup>4</sup>

When in 1812 a fire broke out on the compound at Serampore

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1. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.xvi
2. Ibid, p.115.
3. Eustace Carey, in Biographical and Literary Notices, p.39.
4. Eustace Carey, Memoir of William Carey, p.xix.

bringing great losses to the mission and to Carey in particular, he simply gets up and goes on. He writes of this to Fuller,

"The loss of manuscripts of the Telinga, Kurnata, Sikh, Sanscrit, and Assam languages, is a very heavy loss . . . The ground must be laboured over again, but we are not discouraged: indeed, the work is already begun again in every language: we are cast down, but not in despair". . . 1

But Carey's most serious trial was his wife, who after a serious attack of dysentery when they had been in India but a short time, went out of her mind. For twelve years Carey bore with amazing patience and fortitude this grievous sorrow until she died, all the while carrying on his labours. 2

From the first Carey demonstrated his linguistic ability in the new country. His eagerness to master the language was frustrated to some extent in the early days by the nature of the language itself and also by his own insistence that missionaries should be self-supporting. Of the language he writes,

"One of the greatest difficulties a missionary has to encounter, especially during the two or three first years of his work, arises from the poverty and perversion of language. Even greater hindrances the missionary finds to his work are from the metaphysical and idolatrous use of language." 3

His theory of self-support was most interesting, and proved eventually to be entirely practical for him and his

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1. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.352.
2. S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., pp.164,271.
3. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.150.

colleagues, although they suffered much in the early years. Carey had written of this before coming to India. In brief his plan was that the missionaries were to be set down in the country to be evangelized, and at the first supplied with some means of establishing themselves. After this they were to support themselves by whatever means possible that would be consistent with their profession.<sup>1</sup> For Carey this meant running an indigo factory for some time, and later becoming Professor of Bengali, Sanskrit and Marathi at Fort William government college.

In writing of the plan Carey says something of the kind of missionaries that are needed to fulfill it, He says,

"The missionaries must be men of great piety and prudence, courage and forbearance; of undoubted orthodoxy in their sentiments; and must enter with all their hearts into the spirit of their mission . . . their first business must be to gain some acquaintance with the language of the natives . . . by all lawful means endeavour to cultivate a friendship with them . . . and as soon as possible let them know the errand for which they were sent. They must endeavour to convince them that it was their good alone, which induced them to forsake their friends and comforts . . . They must be very careful not to resent injuries . . . offered them . . . nor to think of themselves, so as to despise the poor heathen. . . . They must take every opportunity of doing them good, and labouring and travelling night and day, they must instruct, exhort and rebuke, with all long-suffering, and anxious desire for them, and above all, must be instant in prayer for the effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the people of their charge." 2

This description of, what might be considered, the ideal

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1. C.B. Lewis, The Life of John Thomas, p.221.
2. William Carey, quoted in C.B. Lewis, op.cit., p.250.



missionary to Carey's mind, was in reality a description of himself. For he fulfilled in almost every detail this concept of a missionary in his own personal life, and in the way he carried on his ministry.

Although a man, who proved in the final analysis to be a person of diversified abilities, Carey was nevertheless selective in his occupations realizing that he who would excell in everything generally succeeds in nothing. For this reason he denied himself the pleasure of much literature in order that he might thoroughly become an oriental linguist. However he still found time for an agricultural society which he was instrumental in forming, and for the study of botany. His botanical garden and collection of specimens became one of the most famous, if not, the most famous in the country.<sup>1</sup>

His system of acquiring a knowledge of the various languages of the country was quite unusual. He was quick to minimize the value of his labours and to give the impression that with the proper approach and a little effort, one could very quickly master all the languages of India. He spoke of the mastery of Sanskrit and the cognate languages as nine-tenths of the mastery of any Indian language. He says,

"With a previous knowledge of the mode of construction,

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1. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.xix.

and nine tenths of the words in any one language, the study of it can scarcely deserve the name of labour." 1

In this manner the Scriptures could be translated into every language of India. Then Carey goes on to say, and here he approaches the idea of an indigenous work,

"Nor when the Scriptures are thus translated, will a European missionary be in every instance requisite for the purpose of introducing the gospel into the provinces. A brother born and raised up in India, or even a Hindu convert, though incapable of translating the Scriptures, may acquire the local character, if different from his own, go among his bordering neighbours, and quickly attain a language so nearly allied to his own . . . . And so some have done . . . Krishna Das . . . took the Orissa New Testament, went into that country, learned the language and laboured there. . . ." 2

From this may be seen that Carey did not think it was necessary for a European to always be the one who took the lead in the work of evangelization.

Carey felt that education was important. One of the reasons he accepted the position in Fort William College was because of this and also of the increased number of contacts he would have to minister to in that particular circle of society. Much earlier than this, in 1795, he and his colleagues became concerned about schools for some poor children. He says, "We formed a plan for setting up two colleges, for the education of twelve youths in each." 3 He proposed to feed and clothe the students for seven years and

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1. Carey, Marshman and Ward; Memoir . . . op.cit., p.13.
2. Ibid. p.16.
3. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.142.

to introduce them to the study of Sanskrit, Persian and particularly, the Scriptures.<sup>1</sup>

As Carey became increasingly successful and more and more famous he did not become less humble.<sup>2</sup> Although his income vastly increased in later years from various sources still he maintained the same standard of living as he had formerly and turned all that was received over and above the small amount needed for his family, into the mission. He was probably one of the heaviest contributors to the mission over the years.<sup>3</sup> Eustace says,

"Whatever he earned, he considered a sacred trust for the missionary cause. . . He died poor, and in his will disavows any and every personal right to the missionary premises, which he had mainly contributed to purchase and erect."<sup>4</sup>

When in 1815 he felt his time was running out he speaks of giving himself wholly to the work of translation,

"Convinced therefore that, at our time in life, we cannot serve our generation more effectively in any other way, it is our determination, as far as the Lord shall enable us, to devote the remainder of our days to labouring therein ourselves, and to the training of others to the work, who may carry it forward when we are laid in the grave."<sup>5</sup>

In spite of sickness that brought him close to the doors of death, he laboured on for a further nineteen years.

This noble ministry may best be summed up in the

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1. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.142.
2. Ibid. p.359.
3. Biographical and Literary Notices, op.cit., p.86.
4. Eustace Carey, op.cit., p.xxi
5. Carey, Marshman and Ward, op.cit., p.17.

words of the covenant which Carey and his colleagues drew up in the early days and which they sought to keep throughout the years. It reflects and reveals the spirit that was in them

- "1. To set an infinite value on men's souls.
2. To acquaint ourselves with the snares which hold the minds of men.
3. To abstain from whatever deepens India's prejudice against the gospel.
4. To watch for every chance of doing the people good.
5. To preach 'Christ crucified' as the grand means of conversion.
6. To esteem and treat Indians always as our equals.
7. To guard and build up 'the hosts that may be gathered.
8. To cultivate their spiritual gifts, ever pressing upon them their missionary obligation, - since Indians only can win India for Christ.
9. To labour unceasingly in Biblical translation.
10. To be instant in the nurture of personal religion.
11. To give ourselves without reserve to the Cause, 'not counting even the clothes we wear our own.'" 1

How faithfully this covenant was kept by God's servant William Carey, has been described in a limited way in this section.

Carey died on June 9th 1834. In his will he had requested that the following lines, and nothing more, be cut upon his tombstone,

"A wretched, poor and helpless worm,  
On thy kind arms I fall." 2

#### E. Summary

This chapter has dealt with the life and ministry of William Carey giving some of the important features and characteristics against the background of his native country

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1. S. Pearce Carey, op.cit., pp.248,249.
2. Biographical and Literary Notices, op.cit., p.19.

and the land in which he laboured. The attempt has been made to show how his tremendous philological ability became, under God, a vehicle of redeeming grace.

Carey's background in England included the general influence of the Deism of his day, as well as the specific influence of nonconformist Christian friends who eventually led him to Christ. In India he faced not only the problems of heathenism but the problems also of Deism again through the colonial system.

In spite of these contrary influences Carey remained true to his convictions and faithfully proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation. Through much persecution and suffering he eventually came to be accepted and respected throughout the land of India and particularly in the province of Bengal. His most outstanding contribution was in the area of philology. His various translations of the Bible, made in the interest of getting the Gospel out to the people, has alone given him a place unique in the history of missions.

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Chapter III

Hudson Taylor  
(1832-1905)

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A. Introduction

The nineteenth century was a century of peaceful progress throughout the world, and particularly in England. We are told that, "Seldom if ever had mankind been so nearly free from the scourge of war for so long a period."<sup>1</sup> The area of progress, which was most prominent in some ways, was man's exploration of his physical environment. Along with advance in this area came important implications and complications for the church and Christianity.

If the last half of the eighteenth century was increasingly complex and filled with paradoxes with respect to Christianity, the nineteenth century was even more so. Dillenberger and Welch tell us,

"This was an era of profound intellectual ferment, in which forces both within and outside the church combined to pose new problems for Christian thinking and to shape new perspectives for the understanding of the faith."<sup>2</sup>

After 1815 the contradictions became so intensified that it seemed on one hand as though Christianity was doomed, while on the other hand it surged forward with a power and a vitality that caused Christian communities to be planted in almost

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1. Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christianity, p.1064.
2. Dillenberger and Welch, Protestant Christianity, p.160.

every part of the globe.<sup>1</sup>

This century saw the rise of liberal theology, in some respects the logical successor to Deism, the development of the Social Gospel and a new prominence given to Biblical Criticism, better known as Higher Criticism.<sup>2</sup> These movements were all related to each other and to the new developments in science. The evolutionary hypothesis associated with the name of Charles Darwin (1809-1882) to many intellectuals as well as others was a refutation of the creation account and therefore a challenge to the authority of the Bible and its inspiration.<sup>3</sup> The tumult increased with some influential leaders turning away from Christianity and others propagating views not in accord with the Bible. Thomas Carlyle was one of these who still believed in God but definitely rejected traditional Christian dogmas.<sup>4</sup> Others believed that science and its findings made the Christian faith impossible to an intelligent honest mind, and became atheist or agnostic.<sup>5</sup>

Simultaneous with the chaos that seemed to develop in some areas of thought and life and the development of the foregoing movements, was the rise of other movements almost independant of, and sometimes opposed to, the current

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1. Latourette, op.cit., p.1054.
2. Dillenberger and Welch, op. cit., pp.165,201.
3. Latourette, op.cit., p.1076.
4. Ibid. p.1072.
5. Ibid. p.1163.



intellectual trends. Within the Church of England came the Oxford Movement with its emphasis on the *via media*, perhaps more related to the trends of the time than some. Also within the Church was the growth in influence and numbers of the Evangelical minority. These rejected the findings of critical scholarship, were strong on the fundamentals of the faith and encouraged a vigorous missionary programme.<sup>1</sup>

Outside the Church there was a rapid growth in non-conformist elements, including the Methodists, Baptists and Congregationalists. Sunday Schools became increasingly effective and various interdenominational organizations, such as the Young Men's Christian Association, were formed. Various social and humanitarian reforms were brought about under the leadership of men like Shaftesbury and Wilberforce.<sup>2</sup> As has been intimated there was a great increase of missionary activity during this period. Almost every denomination instigated overseas missions and a number of interdenominational missions or faith missions were formed.<sup>3</sup> Much of this activity came as a result of Carey's manifesto and his prodigious labours in India.<sup>4</sup>

One of the most significant movements of the century, apart from the intellectual and theological developments mentioned, was the spiritual revival of 1859, which broke

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1. Latourette, *op.cit.*, p.1166.

2. *Ibid.* p.1200.

3. Dillenberger and Welch, *op.cit.*, pp.166,172,173.

4. *Ibid.* p.166.

out first in Northumberland in England of that year.<sup>1</sup> The revival proved to be of widespread significance and multitudes were swept into the kingdom of God. It also had its impact on the whole missionary programme,<sup>2</sup> as people became concerned for others and purse strings were loosened.<sup>3</sup> It is a matter of irony perhaps, that in the same year precisely and within a few months of the outbreak of the revival, Charles Darwin's famous, world-shaking treatise on the "brigin of species" was published.<sup>4</sup>

Into this century with its unique problems and opportunities, Hudson Taylor made his entrance. It is the purpose of this chapter to consider his life and ministry in the same manner in which John Eliot and William Carey have been considered.

#### B. Background Leading to Life Work

Hudson Taylor was born on May 21, 1832, in Barnsley, Yorkshire, England. Long before this date, however, influences were at work which were destined to shape the direction and purpose of his life. It was surely no accident that his great grandfather, James Taylor, on the very day of his wedding, and but an hour before, should have come under

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1. J. Edwin Orr, The Second Evangelical Awakening in America, p.88.
2. Ibid. p.139.
3. Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor in Early Years, p.499.
4. Dillenberger and Welch, op.cit., p.201.

terrible conviction of sin by the Holy Ghost, and after a struggle should have yielded his life to God. Subsequently, he became an ardent follower of the, once despised, Methodist cause, and thus the course of the Taylor family was set for generations to come.<sup>1</sup> Years later Hudson Taylor speaks of how his own father became concerned about the needs of China before his birth. Because of circumstances beyond his control he was unable to go, so he prayed that God would give him a son who would become a missionary to that land. Taylor knew nothing of this until his return to England after more than seven years in China.<sup>1</sup> He says,

"... it was very interesting then to know how prayer<sup>2</sup> offered before my birth had been answered in this matter." And this was but the first of a multitude of prayers which he saw answered in a long life-time.

Taylor's father was a chemist in the town of Barnsley, but more than this, was a devout Christian and a popular preacher in the local community. In business he was known as a man of honesty and integrity, to the poor and needy he was a kind and generous friend, while to his family he was a loving father and a strict disciplinarian.<sup>3</sup> All of these qualities, developed even further, in some respects, eventually became characteristic features which marked in a most unusual

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1. Howard Taylor, op.cit., pp.3-9.

2. J. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, 1894, p.2.

3. Howard Taylor, op.cit., pp.32-34.

way the life and ministry of his son.

Taylor's mother also was a very important influence in his early life, particularly his spiritual life. Writing later, he says of this period,

"I had many opportunities in early years of learning the value of prayer and of the Word of God; for it was the delight of my dear parents to point out that if there were any such Being as God, to trust Him, to obey Him, and to be fully given up to His service, must of necessity be the best and wisest course both for myself and others."<sup>1</sup>

Yet he says, . . . "in spite of these helpful examples and precepts my heart was unchanged."<sup>2</sup> He speaks of association then with skeptical friends, one of whose strongest arguments against Christian people being their inconsistencies, . . . "who while professing to believe the Bible were yet content to live just as they would if there were no such book. . ."<sup>3</sup>

Taylor goes on to say,

"I frequently felt at that time, and said, that if I pretended to believe the Bible I would at any rate attempt to live by it, putting it fairly to the test, and if it failed to prove true and reliable, would throw it overboard altogether. These views I retained when the Lord was pleased to bring me to Himself; and I think I may say that since then I have put God's Word to the test. Certainly it has never failed me. I have never had reason to regret the confidence I have place in its promises, or to deplore following the guidance I have found in its directions."<sup>4</sup>

It was at about the age of seventeen that he was finally

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1. Hudson Taylor, op.cit., p.3.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. pp. 3,4.

converted, primarily through the prayers of his mother. She, visiting with a friend at some distance from Barnsley, suddenly, one day became burdened for the salvation of her son, and went apart to pray. At this very time, far away at home, he came under conviction of sin and entered into peace. When his mother returned two weeks later he hurried to tell her the good news, only to hear her say, "I know, my boy; I have been rejoicing for a fortnight in the glad tidings you have to tell me." Amazed, he learned how she had prayed on that eventful day till God had given her the assurance that her prayer was answered.<sup>1</sup> Taylor says of this incident and of the loving interest of other members of his family,

"Brought up in such a circle and saved under such circumstances, it was perhaps natural that from the commencement of my Christian life I was led to feel that the promises were very real, and that prayer was in sober matter of fact transacting business with God, whether on one's own behalf or on behalf of those for whom one sought His blessing." 2

Not long after his conversion, Taylor, having yielded himself fully to God for service anywhere, became impressed with the fact that the Lord wanted him to be a missionary in China. Learning of the great need for medical work there, he began to seek training in this direction and also to prepare himself in other ways, such as, keeping a closer physical discipline and engaging in any kind of Christian

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1. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, pp.5,6.  
2. Ibid. p.6.

work that he could. However, it needs to be said, that his primary concern was that he might be spiritually equipped for the task. This, to his mind, outweighed all other considerations and qualifications in importance. There were several things he felt he needed to learn in this latter area before he would be qualified to take the Gospel overseas to another race. One of these was, to learn to trust God directly for his financial needs, rather than a human agency. Another was, to learn the art of personal soul-winning. He believed that if he could not influence people for Christ in England, he could hardly expect to do so in China. His preparatory years are packed with illustrations of the providential dealings of God and how he learned through prayer to do the impossible.<sup>1</sup>

On one occasion when he was working and living in Hull, he went to visit a sick woman in the slum area. The situation was desperate and the woman was dying of starvation. A half crown was all that Taylor possessed in the world at that time, and he knew that to part with it would leave him in dire straits. How gladly would he have given a shilling if he had had it, but to part with the whole half crown seemed too much. He tried to talk of spiritual things and to pray, but all was cold and lifeless. Finally, he realized

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1. Howard Taylor, op.cit., pp.107-183.

that the Lord wanted him to give his last coin. Reluctantly he gave it to the husband to buy some food, and then a flood of joy came into his heart as he saw that now he would have to trust the Lord for the morrow. He says,

"Not only was the poor woman's life saved, but I realized that my life was saved too! It might have been a wreck - would have been a wreck probably, as a Christian life - had not grace at that time conquered, and the striving of God's Spirit been obeyed." 1

The following morning he sat down to his plate of porridge not knowing where his next meal would come from, but having already reminded the Lord of his need. He was not accustomed to receiving mail on Monday morning, but this morning there was a letter for him. On opening it he discovered a blank sheet of paper, a pair of kid gloves and a half sovereign. Then he realized that his investment had been repaid by four hundred per cent and his heart was full of praise. He says,

"I then and there determined that a bank which could not break should have my savings or earnings as the case might be" . . . (years later)"a determination I have not yet learned to regret." 2

This incident was a tremendous source of strength to him in later years as he faced difficult circumstances in China.

When he went up to London some time after this to continue his medical studies Taylor had further opportunity to prove the faithfulness of God. He says,

". . . much as I had rejoiced at the willingness of God

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1. Hudson Taylor, op.cit., p.17.

2. Ibid. p.18.

to hear and answer prayer and to help His half-trusting, half-timid child, I felt that I could not go to China without having still further developed and tested my power to rest upon His faithfulness; . . . " 1

The opportunity for this came about when he received offers both from his father and the Chinese Evangelization Society (the organization under whose auspices he eventually went to China) to bear his expenses while he was in London. He says,

" . . . while waiting upon God in prayer for guidance, it became clear to my mind that I could without difficulty decline both offers (each would think the other had accepted the responsibility) . . . and I felt that without anyone having either care or anxiety on my account I was simply in the hands of God, and that He, who knew my heart, if He wished to encourage me to go to China would bless my effort to depend upon Him alone at home." 2

How God did meet Taylor's needs, even to raising him up when he was afflicted with a malignant fever, and thus gave him the assurance that he was fitted for China, is a study in itself.<sup>3</sup>

There is one other aspect of the spiritual life that Taylor was particularly concerned about. This was the matter of influencing people for Christ. Towards the end of his training period in London, and just before his departure for China, he was assigned by the doctor with whom he was working, to tend a patient suffering from senile gangrene. The man,

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1. Hudson Taylor, op.cit., pp.22,23.
2. Ibid. p.23.
3. Howard Taylor, op.cit.pp.161-169.



who was an atheist, did not know that he probably did not have long to live. Taylor was much concerned for his soul but learned that the man was violently antagonistic to religious things. When the vicar had called a short time before to visit him he had spit in his face. Taylor began to pray about the man but for the first few days said nothing of a religious character to him while at the same time he sought to win his friendship. He took special care in dressing the diseased limb so that soon the pain lessened and the man began to show his grateful appreciation. One day when he showed particular appreciation Taylor ventured to tell him of what God had done for him in Christ. With a great effort the man closed his lips and turned his back. Daily, from that time, after dressing the wound, he spoke a few words of Christ. But always the response was the same, a resentful silence. After some time Taylor began to despair, and finally, one day he had almost decided not to speak to the man of the Lord, and was about to leave when he noticed the surprised look on the sick man's face. Taylor says,

"I could bear it no longer. Bursting into tears, I crossed the room and said, 'My friend, whether you will hear or whether you will forbear, I must deliver my soul.'" 1

He poured out his heart to him and then asked if he might pray. The man said, "If it will be a relief to you, do." Taylor goes on,

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1. Hudson Taylor, op.cit., p.37.

"I need scarcely say that I fell on my knees and poured out my whole soul to God on his behalf. I believe the Lord then and there wrought a change in his soul. . . within a few days he definitely accepted Christ as Saviour . . . and began to rejoice in hope of the glory of God." 1

This gives an insight into the character of Taylor, and the way in which he was prepared, or prepared himself, for his work in China. He says himself, referring to the above incident,

"Perhaps if there were more of that intense distress for souls that leads to tears, we should more frequently see the results we desire. Sometimes it may be that while we are complaining of the hardness of the hearts of those we are seeking to benefit, the hardness of our own hearts, and our own feeble apprehension of the solemn reality of eternal things, may be the true cause of our want of success." 2

On September 19th 1853, at the age of twenty-one, Taylor set sail for China aboard the small ship, "Dumfries". This voyage of over five months duration proved to be a further training ground and opportunity, in the face of terrific storms, to prove the faithfulness of God.

### C. Cultural Elements in China

#### 1. Religion and Social Structure

The China to which Taylor came, like India, was not a new country, but a country of ancient traditions with well established customs and practices. Taylor, writing of the history of China in 1884, says,

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1. Hudson Taylor, op.cit., pp.36,37.
2. Ibid. p.38.

"For forty centuries it has enjoyed many of the fruits of a certain manner of civilization and of literary attainment. . . . While the inhabitants of our highly-favoured island (England) were wandering about painted savages, the Chinese were a settled people, living under the same form of constitutional government as they at present possess. . . . When Moses, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, led the people of Israel from the house of bondage to the Promised Land, Chinese laws and literature were probably not inferior to, while their religious views were far in advance of, those of Egypt, the worship of graven images not having been introduced into China until some centuries after this period. Upwards of two hundred years before the call of Abraham, certain astronomical observations were recorded by Chinese historians, which have been verified by astronomers of our own times." 1

One of the results of this constitutional government was the steady increase and spread of the population. The Chinese were not divided into tribes and clans which were always fighting with one another. Rather, they pursued peaceful occupations, as agriculture and commerce. Others sought social prominence by literary attainments. Because of these facts the increase of the people had fewer checks than in most nations.<sup>2</sup>

Of course they were not entirely free of war and strife. One of the worst rebellions, which developed into a revolution, was almost at its peak when Taylor arrived in China in March, 1854. In its earlier stages the movement, under its leader, Hung Siu-ts'uen, was definitely sympathetic to Christianity. And it looked for a time as though the whole of China would be opened up for evangelization. The leader

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1. J. Hudson Taylor, China's Spiritual Need and Claims, sixth edition, 1884, pp.3,4.
2. Ibid. pp.9,10.

wrote,

"I have promulgated the Ten Commandments throughout the entire army and the rest of the population, and have taught them all to pray, morning and evening. . ." 1

However by the time Taylor arrived in China affairs had taken another turn, and the movement which had appeared in Europe as though it would be an aid to evangelization, proved to be rather a menace to the cause of Christ.<sup>2</sup>

The three major religions of China in the nineteenth century were Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. In Buddhism and Taoism there was no personal, supreme, all-powerful deity, but rather a formless, timeless reality. Buddhism taught a pantheistic identity of the human soul with the world soul. The Tao of Taoism was likewise an impersonal force.<sup>3</sup> Of Confucianism, Nida says,

"In a sense Confucianism is somewhat more of a philosophy than a religion, because it does not insist upon the supernatural as a sanction for human behavior or life; but in its teaching of the ultimate validity of its canons of social ethics (in contrast with the personal ethics of Taoism) and loyalty to the family (which on practical level becomes ancestor cultivation), it is a kind of religion, even though a very earthy one." 4

It is not the purpose of this study to attempt an analysis of these ancient religions, but rather to mention briefly some of the effects of religion upon the people, particularly as the missionary came in contact with them.

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1. Howard Taylor, op.cit., p.173.

2. Ibid. pp.202,216.

3. Eugene A. Nida, Customs and Cultures, pp. 171,172.

4. Ibid.

A Buddhist leader said, after hearing the preaching of the Gospel for the first time,

"I have long sought for the Truth, as my father did before me; but I have never found it. I have travelled far and near, but without obtaining it. I have found no rest in Confucianism, Buddhism, or Taoism; but I do find rest in what I have heard here to-night. Henceforth I am a believer in Jesus." <sup>1</sup>

The evils of Buddhism were many. It taught men to give to the work of their own hands the adoration due to God alone. It forbade the eating of pork, but not the use of opium; prevented marriage, but not adultery; taught that a bad man's soul might be released from hell if his friends would pay for the performance of certain rites, while a good man would be left to suffer if his family happened to be poor and could not give all the priests demanded. <sup>2</sup> When Taylor went to work for a time among the people in Swatow, a seaport on the south-east coast, he wrote,

"If ever there were a place needing the blessings of the Gospel, it is certainly this place. Men are sunk so low in sin as to have lost all sense of shame, . . . lower even than the beasts that perish. The official classes are as bad as the rest, and instead of restraining evil are governed themselves by opium and love of money. . ."<sup>3</sup>

He goes on,

". . . Sin does indeed reign here, and, as always, those most to be pitied and whose case seems most hopeless are the women. However low men sink in heathen lands, women sink lower. Looked upon as hardly having any soul, girls are sold here for wives or slaves, and are left entirely without education. . ."<sup>4</sup>

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1. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, p.103.
2. Howard Taylor, op.cit., p.351.
3. Ibid. p.369.
4. Ibid. p.370.

Much of the religion as practised by the people was idolatry. However the effect of the war in destroying homes and breaking up families, as well as the ravages of numerous famines and pestilences, had caused many to begin to lose confidence in their gods of wood and stone. The result was that in the last half of the nineteenth century there was an almost unprecedented opportunity for the missionary to come in and minister in a Christian way to the sorrow and suffering of the people.<sup>1</sup>

The natural conditions of the country were in many respects conducive to missionary work. The many rivers with their tributaries made accessible by water almost every part of the country. Where one could not travel by water, there were other conveyances such as wheel-barrows, sedan-chairs, horses, mules and donkeys. The most heavily populated area was in the north and this was where prejudice was least against the European, and also where language difficulty was at a minimum. In the whole country the Mandarin dialect was most widely spoken and therefore a mastery of this language gave one communication with the vast majority of the people.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Business and Politics

This section will not be restricted to this subject but will seek rather to include people and groups other than

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1. Hudson Taylor, China's Spiritual Need and Claims, op.cit. p.45.
2. Ibid. pp.45,46.

Chinese with whom Taylor came in contact.

Almost from the first Taylor found himself in difficulty with other missions and missionaries. Although there were always those who were warmly sympathetic to him and heartily approved of his methods, there were many who did not. On the one hand he did not always feel at home in the missionary circles in Shanghai. As his biographer says,

"The influence of the world was tremendously strong in Shanghai, even in missionary circles. It was the heyday of the Settlement, as regards financial and commercial opportunities . . . Without finding fault with anything or anyone in particular, there was a general spirit of sociability that surprised Hudson Taylor a good deal. It was not what he had expected in missionary life, and fell far short of his ideal." 1

Undoubtedly missionaries were faced with the decision of either separating more or less from those who were engaged in business in China or by contact with them raising their own standard of life to conform, in some sense at least, to the socially accepted standard of the community.

On the other hand Taylor was criticized for several things. Although fairly educated he had no college or university training. He was connected with no particular denomination or church and after the early days when he resigned from the Chinese Evangelization Society, he had no organization to support him. He came to preach the Gospel, but was not ordained. He planned to do medical work, but was not a doctor, for he had been unable to complete his training

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1. Howard Taylor, op.cit., pp.217,218.

before leaving England.<sup>1</sup> Then as he became better acquainted with the customs and the people he felt led to identify himself more closely with them, by wearing their clothes, eating their food and as far as possible living as they did. This lowered him considerably in the eyes of the Europeans<sup>2</sup> who felt that such behaviour was most unbecoming. As time went on and the China Inland Mission was founded, Taylor was criticized on other grounds. He was sending newworkers into the interior, whereas it was felt that such important work should be done by older experienced people. Of course he would have gladly sent experienced people but none were available.<sup>3</sup> Much of the criticism came from people who were not fully acquainted with the circumstances and the problems,<sup>4</sup> but standing afar off saw things in a distorted light. At one point in the early days of the Mission, severe criticism from a missionary of another society, unfamiliar with the facts of the case, almost split the Mission and put a stop to the entire work.<sup>5</sup>

However as time went on a good deal of prejudice was broken down and Taylor and his fellow-workers came to be better accepted. A missionary of the London Missionary Society writing in 1880, says,

. . . . .

1. Ibid. pp.217,218.

2. Ibid. pp.424,437.

3. Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission, p.292.

4. Ibid. p.293.

5. Ibid. pp. 106,107.



"They are opening up the country, and this is what we want. Other missionaries are doing a good work, but they are not doing this work." 1

In the same year, one of Her Majesty's consuls writing from Hankow included the following in his official report concerning Taylor and his colleagues,

"... the missionaries of this society have travelled throughout the country, ... and, never attempting to force themselves anywhere, they have made friends everywhere; and, while labouring in their special field as ministers of the Gospel, have accustomed the Chinese to the presence of foreigners among them, and in a great measure dispelled the fear of the barbarian which has been the main difficulty with which we have had to contend."2

One of the constant obstacles to missionary work was the opium traffic carried on by foreigners. Coming into a new area to do evangelistic work with a friend, Taylor says,

"... we found ourselves landed in the midst of a small but very ungodly community of foreigners, engaged in the opium trade and other commercial enterprises." 3

Of course they were most unwilling to be identified with such people in any way, not only because of their business but because of their lives. This was one of the reasons they found work so difficult in that area. The people had come to hate the traders and therefore hated them too.<sup>4</sup>

Coolie traffic or slave trade was also carried on under the protection of the foreigners. Sometimes a thousand men at a time were shipped to Cuba and other places, many of

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1. Ibid. p.350.

2. Ibid.

3. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, p.72.

4. Ibid. p.73.

them perishing before they even reached their destination.

Taylor says of this,

"The men are engaged (nominally) for a certain term of years, but few live to return. A bounty is paid for them, and they are told that they are going to make their fortunes, or they are entrapped by worse means. Once on the ship the agent receives so much a head for the poor fellows who soon find themselves in captivity of the most horrible kind." <sup>1</sup>

Some of the traders lived worse lives than the heathen. Under such circumstances it is little wonder that the missionaries<sup>2</sup> were regarded with great suspicion.

These are some of the elements in the country with which Taylor had to contend.

#### D. Ministry to the People

##### 1. The Message Preached and Written

Taylor's ministry was primarily evangelistic and because he was a deeply spiritual man a good deal has been recorded of his thoughts and feelings on spiritual matters. His message will be considered here by the same criteria as has been used in previous chapters with the endeavour to discover as accurately as possible what he believed and taught on these subjects.

##### 1. Prayer

As has been observed, prayer in the life of Taylor was not a theory, but a fact. It is exceedingly difficult

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1. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor in Early Years, pp.366,367.
2. Ibid. p.367.

to separate his belief from his practice and perhaps that is the way it should be. A friend writes of a prayer meeting he attended in London led by Taylor,

"I had never heard anyone pray like that. There was a simplicity, a tenderness, a boldness, a power that hushed and subdued one, and made it clear that God had admitted him into the inner circle of His friendship. He spoke with God face to face, as a man talketh with his friends. Such praying was evidently the outcome of long tarrying in the secret place, and was as a dew from the Lord . . . to hear Mr. Taylor plead for China was to know something of what is meant by 'the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man'." 1

This is the description of a man of God and it is necessary to see something of his inner life in order to appreciate what he has to say on this very important subject of prayer.

From the day his spiritual life was born in prayer, prayer seems to have marked his life in a very special way. Not many months after his conversion he speaks of having a lieisure afternoon and says,

"I retired to my own chamber to spend it largely in communion with God. Well do I remember that occasion. . . . The presence of God became unutterably real and blessed; . . . I remember stretching myself on the ground, and lying there silent before Him with unspeakable awe and unspeakable joy." 2

Instinctively one feels this is holy ground and almost a literal fulfilment of the Word, . . . "in thy presence is fulness of joy;" . . . <sup>3</sup> In this relationship of intimate fellowship and communion with God were learned the principles and practices

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1. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission, pp.220,221.
2. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, pp.7,8.
3. Psalm 16:11.

which characterized his life-long ministry and much of the work of the mission that was founded by him.

In Taylor's mind the primary emphasis in prayer was fellowship. He says, at the beginning of a prayer-meeting in China,

"In meeting for prayer to-night, let us keep in view two objects -

1. That we seek to be drawn by fellowship nearer to God and to each other.
2. That we seek by prayer to see more the needs of our work, and to obtain more fully God's guidance in it." 1

On another occasion he writes, "Wonderful thought! that God should desire fellowship with us" . . . 2 And again,

"How much prayer there is that begins and ends with the creature, forgetful of the privilege of giving joy to the Creator." 3

"Oh, to be . . . daily, hourly longing, hungering, thirsting for His presence! . . ." 4

This emphasis on fellowship or communion is evident too in the two incidents previously mentioned where he engaged in prayer.

When pleading for interest and concern on behalf of China, he puts the above thought in another way. He speaks of the Divine order in prayer as being that which is given in the Lord's Prayer. Only after praying, "Thy kingdom come;

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1. Hudson Taylor, Days of Blessing in Inland China, p.9.
2. Hudson Taylor, Choice Sayings, p.15.
3. Hudson Taylor, Union and Communion, p.40.
4. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor in Early Years, p.426.

Thy will be done, as in heaven so in earth. . ."<sup>1</sup> were personal petitions to be offered. First, that worship and adoration that seeks to hallow His name and desires that His will may be done, involving a relationship with the Father, then come the petitions. Taylor says,

"Is not this order often reversed in the present day? Do not Christians often really feel, and also act, as though it was incumbent upon them to begin with, 'Give us this day our daily bread;' virtually concluding with, 'If consistent with this, may Thy name be hallowed too?'"<sup>2</sup>

Having entered into the place of fellowship and communion, and having established communication, it was a perfectly natural thing then to present one's own needs and the needs of others. Taylor's attitude was very much that of a child coming to his father and knowing that his father would supply his needs. This attitude of simple, child-like trust in his heavenly Father also was deeply characteristic of his prayer-life. There were no needs; there were no problems; there were no difficulties that he could not bring with absolute confidence to the Father and know that he would get a hearing. All this was linked with a knowledge of the Word.

He was emphatic that prayer must be according to the will of God and that this was only possible as the Word of God abides in the heart. He says,

"Those prayers only will be answered which are in harmony

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1. Luke 11:2

2. Hudson Taylor, China's Spiritual Need and Claims, p.2.

with the revealed will of God: . . . Unless the Word of God is abiding in us, how can we be sure that our petitions are in harmony with His will?" 1

"Again, a full knowledge of the Word will often bring to our recollection appropriate promises, and thus enable us to pray with that faith and confidence which are so closely connected with answers to prayer." 2

Thus an intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures is linked with an intimate acquaintance with the heavenly Father, and the knowledge of His will with the petitions of the seeker. Perhaps this may best be summed up in the words of the Psalmist

"Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." 3

Because Taylor knew what it was to delight himself in the Lord, he knew also what it was to have God fulfil the desires of his heart. The answers he received to prayer in his early years and in his later years with respect to almost every kind of need it is possible to conceive of, are simply astounding. Writing of his own experience, he says,

"The writer has seen God, in answer to prayer, quell the raging of the storm, alter the direction of the wind, and give rain in the midst of prolonged drought. He has seen Him, in answer to prayer, slay the angry passions and murderous intentions of violent men, and bring the machinations of His people's foes to nought. He has seen Him, in answer to prayer, raise the dying from the bed of death, when human aid was vain; has seen Him preserve from the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and from the destruction that wasteth at noonday. For more than twenty-seven years he has proved the faithfulness of God in supplying the pecuniary means for his own temporal wants, and for the need of the work he has been engaged in. He has seen God, in answer to prayer, raising up labourers

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1. Hudson Taylor, Choice Sayings, p.50.
2. Ibid.
3. Psalm 37:4.

not a few for this vast mission-field; supplying means requisite for their outfit, passage and support, and vouchsafing blessing on the efforts of many of them, both among the native Christians and the heathen Chinese . . . " 1

Well could Taylor say,

"The Throne of Grace is open; the scope for petitions unlimited, save by our want of faith; and the promises are sure." 2

ii. The Gospel

One of the truths of Scripture that was particularly precious to Taylor was the second coming of Christ. This was one of the strong motivating factors in all his missionary work. It caused him to live simply and desire supremely the salvation of souls while there was still time and opportunity. 3

Along with this was a tremendous burden for people outside of Christ. Speaking of the few in China, about one in twelve thousand, who were Protestant communicants in 1884, Taylor says,

"Mournful and impressive fact - such is the proportion of those who are journeying heavenward to those whose dark and Christless lives, if not speedily enlightened, must end in dark and Christless deaths, and - after death the judgement!" 4

Another time he writes, ". . . in the case of the unbeliever the final issue of disobedience is inexpressibly awful." 5

And again in 1884, he writes of China,

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1. Hudson Taylor, China's Spiritual Need and Claims, p.49.
2. Hudson Taylor, Choice Sayings, p.51.
3. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission pp.407,408.
4. Hudson Taylor, China's Spiritual Need and Claims, pp.11,12.
5. Hudson Taylor, Choice Sayings, p.44.

"It is surely high time that this ancient and most interesting empire had the gospel fully proclaimed in its purity and soul-saving power. Long enough has it been held in the thralldom of sin and Satan. No other nation has been left for so many centuries to suffer in darkness, and to prove how utterly unable man is to raise himself without Divine revelation, and the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost." 1

Concerning the message of salvation, Taylor tells of an incident in one town,

"I preached Jesus to a good number of people. Never was I so happy in speaking of the love of God and the atonement of Jesus Christ. . . And how rejoiced I was when, afterwards, I heard one of our hearers repeating to the newcomers, in his own local dialect, the truths upon which I had been dwelling! Oh, how thankful I felt to hear a Chinaman, of his own accord, telling his fellow-countrymen that God loved them; that they were sinners, but that Jesus died instead of them, and paid the penalty of their guilt." 2

Referring to the incident in the New Testament of Peter setting out to walk to Jesus on the water, and how when he turned his eyes away he at once began to sink, Taylor says,

". . . and then he uttered that beautiful prayer, 'Lord save me'. This is a favourite text with me in preaching to the Chinese. The 'Lord' first, and in large characters. 'Me' last, and least in size. And the two joined together by the word 'save'; as the Lord's salvation unites me to Himself." 3

The real issue in salvation for him was trusting in Christ. He says, "We did not become believers by struggling, but by trusting in what Christ had done for us; . . ." 4 Although he faithfully preached a crucified Saviour, 5 Taylor did not

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1. Hudson Taylor, China's Spiritual Need and Claims, p.3.
2. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, pp.51,52.
3. Hudson Taylor, Days of Blessing in Inland China, p.24.
4. Hudson Taylor, Choice Sayings, p.19.
5. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, p.64.



believe that preaching alone was sufficient; the Gospel had to be practised. He says,

"It is not the mere preaching of the Gospel that will do what needs to be done. Our life must so tell on the people that they cannot mistake what we are. 1

Neither did he believe that Salvation was an end in itself. He says,

". . .What is the object of being apprenticed to a builder but to learn to build? What is the outcome of being joined to a Saviour if we do not learn to save? Though we might ourselves be saved, should we be His disciples indeed?" 2

He is not suggesting here that the believer should take the place of Christ, but rather that he become a co-worker with Him in the redemption of the lost. Taylor spoke much too, not only of service, but of the fullness of blessing in Christ and the importance of witnessing to it as it became a reality. He says,

"I do think that as with regard to salvation, with the heart one believes, and with the mouth confesses to salvation, so with regard to fullness of blessing, it is as important to confess with the mouth, as it is to believe in the heart, that He has fully saved us, cleansed us, and means to keep us." 3

As Taylor did not believe that mere preaching alone was sufficient, neither did he believe that there was any substitute for the work of the Spirit of God in changing hearts and lives. Medical and educational programmes might have their place but they could never take the place of the

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1. Hudson Taylor, Days of Blessing in Inland China, p.41.
2. Ibid. pp.25,26.
3. Ibid. pp.111,112.

regenerating power of God in the lives of men and women. He says of this,

" . . . if we are going to put medical skill in the place of Divine power for changing the heart, we shall be disappointed. If our medical missions bring people nearer to us, and we can present to them the Christ of God, medical missions are a blessing; but to substitute medicine for the preaching of the Gospel would be a profound mistake. If we get the idea that people are going to be converted by some educational process, instead of by a regenerative re-creation it will be a profound mistake." <sup>1</sup>

Taylor sought for and longed for the power of God in his whole ministry. He knew full well that it was the Touch from Above alone that could make the gracious word and loving deed redemptive.

His emphasis was always on the person of Christ.

He says,

"If we would be soul-winners and build up the Church, which is His Temple, let us note this: not by discussion nor by argument, but by lifting up Christ shall we draw men unto Him." <sup>2</sup>

### iii. The Bible

Dillenberger and Welch referring to the motivating power behind the nineteenth century missionary movement, say, "For many, the dominant impulse was found in the authority of the scriptures . . . ." <sup>3</sup> This was particularly true of Hudson Taylor. Although he was not oblivious to the trends of the time, like his contemporary, Hepburn of Japan, he was

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1. Ibid. p.90.

2. Hudson Taylor, Union and Communion, p.24.

3. Dillenberger and Welch, op.cit., p.171.

apparently indifferent to changing views and opinions.<sup>1</sup>  
That Taylor was aware of the changing currents in his generation, particularly with reference to the Bible, is evident from some of his writings where he mentions criticism and inspiration. He says,

"It is well to be fully assured of the verbal and plenary inspiration of God's Holy Word, and very striking to notice how important arguments in Scripture sometimes turn on the word used, and sometimes even on the accidence of the word . . . ." 2

"Why is so much time worse than wasted over criticism of different books (of the Bible)? What is needed is the humble, reverent, prayerful meditation of those who are determined to do the will of God; to such the guidance of the Spirit is promised, and the Divine perfections of the Word are revealed." 3

This briefly indicates Taylor's view on these subjects. It also reveals again his basic, characteristic attitude towards the whole of life, as he transports the problem into the area of the practical.

On the written Word and the incarnate Word, he says,

"In speaking on this subject, the Lord Jesus as our sufficiency, it is well to remind ourselves of the close connection that exists between the written Word of God and the incarnate Word of God. We shall never enjoy the one apart from the other. It is through God's own revelation in the written Word that we really see and know the Word who was made flesh and who rose from the dead. It is through the written Word we shall feed on Him, not through our own speculations. It is important that we bear in mind that as the Incarnate Word is a Divine Person, so is the written Word a Divine Message; and as we may rest all our soul's interests on Jesus

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1. Dorothy R. Pape, Hepburn of Princeton, His Magazine, March 1960, p.26.
2. Hudson Taylor, Choice Sayings, p.33.
3. Ibid. p.34.

Christ, so we may rest all our soul's weight on the Word of God. To be unsettled on the question of inspiration is to be overcome by temptation, and to be unable to accomplish God's work. The connection between full faith in God's Will, as revealed in His written Word, and in the Incarnate Word of God is so close and intimate, that you can no more separate them than you can separate between body and soul, or soul and spirit. Begin to separate them, and to study theology instead of the Word of God, rather than as a mere aid in gaining a fuller grasp of it, and if it does not make you weaker rather than stronger, you will be fortunate indeed! No! Take God's Word as it stands, and God's Christ as He reveals Himself to us, and enjoy all in Him." <sup>1</sup>

Taylor's faith was rooted in the Scriptures and they were his constant and unfailing guide in his ministry.

It was from the Bible he learned the evil of debts, <sup>2</sup> and he early resolved that he would be no man's debtor, save in the matter of the Gospel. In this, he felt very much like the Apostle, debtor to all men. <sup>3</sup> He says, "To borrow money implied, to my mind, a contradiction of Scripture - a confession that God had withheld some good thing, and a determination to get for ourselves what He had not given." <sup>4</sup> From a very early age, as has been seen, he learned to go directly to God for his needs and to ask Him according to His Word and His promises to meet them.

In speaking of the training of missionary candidates Taylor urged them to develop a hunger for the Word and a growing knowledge of it. And with reference to the call, he

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1. Hudson Taylor, Days of Blessing in Inland China, pp.59,60.
2. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, p.99.
3. Romans 1:14.
4. Hudson Taylor, op.cit., p.99.

said,

"It is no more safe to build on mere inward feelings (though these may be of great value) in the matter of the divine call than it would be to build on such feelings as a ground for assurance of salvation. The only safe ground in either case is the Word of God." 1

Translation work was done by Taylor at various times, although this ministry did not assume large dimensions, partly because others were either doing the work or had made a beginning at it. He speaks of the great blessing that came to him when working on the revision of the New Testament in the Ningpo dialect. Although it seemed a rather mechanical task to him at the time, subsequently he discovered that he had really been feeding on the Word as he worked on it, and had learned important principles which were a great aid to him in the founding of the China Inland Mission.<sup>2</sup>

Taylor firmly believed that people who accepted the Bible and its teachings were committed to action. If the Bible were not true it should be thrown aside, but if it were true there was no alternative but to live according to it. Speaking on this, he says,

"If any of you were offered a Bank of England note, whether for five pounds or five thousand pounds, you would never doubt the value of it. You would take the words printed on it as sure. And are not the words printed in this book as sure? No part of the book is unworthy of our credit. It is either God's word or it is not what it is represented to be." 3

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1. Hudson Taylor, The Missionary Candidate, pp. 5,16.
2. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, p. 117.
3. Hudson Taylor, Choice Sayings, p. 32.

On this ground he presented the claim and needs of China to people in England, who professed to believe the Bible, and pleaded for workers to go with him back to China. On the same ground he offered to the people of China eternal life through Jesus Christ.

In an amazing way, perhaps as few have done, Taylor tested and proved the statements and promises of the Bible. This section may best be summed up with the words quoted earlier.<sup>1</sup> After walking with God for about forty-five years, he says in 1894,

"... I have put God's Word to the test. Certainly it has never failed me. I have never had reason to regret the confidence I have placed in its promises, or to deplore following the guidance I have found in its directions." 2

#### iv. The Church

It is difficult to identify Taylor with any particular denomination or group. Though brought up in a strong Methodist background he seldom makes reference to the Methodist Church in his writings. When he went up to London to prepare for his work in China he seems to have, for a time at least, had fellowship with Brethren folk. Perhaps this fellowship influenced him more than is apparent. A friend who knew him in those days wrote,

"I do certainly think that the intercourse he had with friends then . . . must have considerably influenced his views of Christian faith, doctrine, and practice. Those were palmy days (among the Brethren) in which there was

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1. Cf. ante, p.95.<sup>46</sup>

2. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, p.4.

much of the Holy Spirit's teaching. . . ." 1

Whether this was the reason or not, it does seem that Taylor had little interest in the church as a formal institution or organization. What he was deeply concerned for, however, was the church as the body of Christ, a living pulsating fellowship. From early years he seemed to be inter-denominationally minded and sought fellowship with all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. This was another of the marks of his ministry. And in this sense he could be said to be ecumenically minded.

It was not that Taylor rejected church government or discipline but rather that he was not committed to any particular form of such. He writes,

"Our work is evangelistic and unsectarian: we desire to win souls for Christ, and not to spread any particular views of church government." 2 Writing in 1866, he says, "Those already associated with me represent all the leading denominations of our native land - Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist, Baptist and Paedobaptist. Besides these, two are or have been connected with the 'Brethren' so called. It is intended that those whose views of discipline correspond shall work together, and thus all difficulty on that score will be avoided. Each one is perfectly at liberty to teach his own views on these minor points to his own converts; the one great object we have in view being to bring heathen from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God. We all hold alike the great fundamentals of our faith, and in the presence of heathenism can leave the discussion of discipline while together, and act as before God when in separate stations." 3

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1. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor in Early Years, p.171.
2. Hudson Taylor, China's Spiritual Need and Claims, p.87.
3. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission, p.416.

From this it is evident that in Taylor's mind the form of church government or discipline was not an important matter or a cardinal doctrine. What was basic or fundamental was the deliverance of captives by the power of God.

In his devotional commentary on the Song of Solomon, Taylor speaks of the Church as the bride of Christ, and of her relationship to her Lord and to the world. He says,

"She would fain claim him fully, without giving up herself fully to him; but it can never be: while she retains her own name, she can never claim his. . . We have to take our choice: we cannot enjoy both the world and Christ. The bride had not learned this: she would fain enjoy both with no thought of their incompatibility." 1

Of sacrifice, he says,

"True devotion will rather ask to be allowed to give, and will count as loss all which may not be given up for the Lord's sake." 2

In commenting on the passage, "I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots," he uses the illustration of a friend who found it necessary to take an extended journey overland in a carriage draw by a dozen wild horses. The indescribable behaviour of the horses, each pulling in its own direction in a fearful manner, resulted in the friend reaching his destination much bruised and battered. Taylor says,

"Is not the Church of God to-day more like these untrained steeds than a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariot? And while self-will and disunion are apparent in the Church,

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1. Hudson Taylor, Union and Communion, pp.11,30.

2. Ibid. p.68.

3. The Song of Solomon, 1:9.



can we wonder that the world still lieth in the wicked one, and that the great heathen nations are barely touched?" 1

He longed for unity and co-operation among those who named the name of Christ that the gospel might more effectively be taken to those who had never heard.

Taylor learned much from his association with William Burns, a Scottish missionary, with whom he worked for some time in his early ministry in China. He says of Burns,

"His views especially about evangelism as the great work of the Church, and the order of lay evangelists as a lost order that Scripture required to be restored, were seed-thoughts which were to prove fruitful in the subsequent organization of the China Inland Mission." 2

Taylor was interested in self-support for the Chinese Church, although this did not have the priority that it came later to have in the work of the mission in the twentieth century. In 1898 four hundred and sixty-seven native workers were supported through the Mission and he says, "... 138 others are either self-supporting or are provided for by native contributions." 3 When England signed a new treaty with China June 26th 1858, in the very early days of the work, and it looked as though the whole of inland China was going to be opened up to the missionary, Taylor longed with others to go into the new territories. He wrote,

"May He (the Lord) give 'gifts' to many of the native Christians, qualifying them . . . for the care of the

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1. Hudson Taylor, Union and Communion, p.20.
2. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, p.59.
3. Ibid. p.128.

"churches already formed and thus set us free for pioneering work." 1

Though he was a strong believer in the need of itinerant evangelism to take the gospel to new places and areas in China, Taylor did not believe in leaving a church partly established and before it was able to care for itself in some measure at least.

Concerning the nature and character of the church he did not accept an easy believism, but insisted that faith in Christ must issue in consecration and holiness. He says,

"We wish to place on record our solemn conviction that not all who are Christians, or think themselves to be such will attain to that resurrection of which St. Paul speaks in Phil.3:11, or will thus meet the Lord in the air. Unto those who by lives of consecration manifest that they are not of the world, but are looking for Him, 'He will appear without sin unto salvation'." 2

#### v. Baptism

Although the word baptism occurs frequently throughout Taylor's writings there is little or no indication as to his convictions on this subject, apart from the fact that it was essential for church membership and the necessary outcome of a genuine conversion experience.

In 1898 he writes,

"... the records for the year 1897 show a larger number of baptisms of converted heathen (1325) than those of any previous year in the history of the Mission." 4

. . . . .

1. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor in Early Years, p.467.
2. Hudson Taylor, Union and Communion, p.84.
3. Howard Taylor, op.cit., p.480.
4. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, p.129.

It is evident that Taylor is referring here to the baptism of believers, and yet the very wording of the above, "baptisms of converted heathen," perhaps suggests there were other baptisms from which he wished these to be distinguished. For example there might have been baptisms of converted people who were not heathen, in the same sense at least, or, there might have been baptisms of individuals who were neither converted nor heathen. Infants would come into the latter category. Whether this is the implication here or not it is clear that when Taylor proposed in 1886 to open up a Church of England district with the Rev. W. Cassells (later Bishop Cassells) in charge,<sup>1</sup> that was tantamount to saying that he accepted the principle of infant baptism for that area.

This seems to have been actually the case and reveals an amazing strategy in the light of the strong convictions that are often held on the subject of baptism. The only explanation that may be offered is that while baptism itself was important, the manner or mode by which the rite was administered, to Taylor's mind was one of the minor points of difference within the mission fellowship and had nothing to do with the great fundamentals of the faith which they all had in common. This seems to have been his attitude from the first in China and probably was for some time before he ever left England.

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1. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission, pp.401,555.

## 2. Way of Working

Throughout the foregoing sections of this chapter, more than once reference has been made to the China Inland Mission. As Taylor grew older it became increasingly difficult to separate him, or to distinguish him from the missionary society of which he was the founder in 1865. The China Inland Mission from its inception was a growing expression of Taylor's faith in God and love for the Chinese people. When he wrote, "The number of missionaries (including wives and associates of the mission) is now, at the close of 1898, over 780,"<sup>1</sup> he was merely writing a commentary in brief on the faithfulness of God in meeting his needs for forty-five years and in raising up a multitude of workers to help him.

An incident from his early life reveals a principle which became basic to Taylor in his future life and work. When he was in search of information about China, he learned that a congregational minister in his town had a useful book. The minister kindly agreed to lend it to him and asked him how he proposed to get to China. Taylor writes,

"I answered that I did not at all know; that it seemed to me probable that I should need to do as the Twelve and the seventy had done in Judaea - go without purse or scrip, relying on Him who had called me to supply all my need."<sup>2</sup>

The minister gently remonstrated with him, saying,

"Ah, my boy, as you grow older you will get wiser than

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1. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, p.128.

2. Ibid. pp.8,9.

that. Such an idea would do very well in the days when Christ Himself was on earth, but not now." <sup>1</sup>

Taylor, writing in 1894, about forty-five years later, goes on to say,

"I have grown older since then, but not wiser. I am more than ever convinced that if we were to take the directions of our Master and the assurances He gave to His first disciples more fully as our guide, we should find them to be just as suited to our times as to those in which they were originally given." <sup>2</sup>

It is difficult to say that one principle more than another governed Taylor's life. But this child-like trust in God surely lay very close to the centre of things. This has been illustrated somewhat in incidents from his background and in his prayer-life. He was continually thinking of his work and activities as being the Lord's rather than his. Thus he was able to live almost free from tension, insisting that the responsibility for matters of major and minor importance was the Lord's, not his. <sup>3</sup> As this idea of, . . . "not I, but Christ," <sup>4</sup> became more of a reality in his experience, he called it the "Exchanged Life". <sup>5</sup> The essence of it was as he says,

"Not a striving to have faith, or to increase our faith, but a looking off to the Faithful One. . . ." <sup>6</sup>

As might be expected, the deeper revelation of this "exchanged

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1. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, p.9.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. pp.1,2.
4. Galations 2:20.
5. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission, pp.168-183.
6. Ibid. p.172.

life" came to Taylor at a time out in China when work was particularly pressing and he was conscious of a greater need in his own personal life. Linked with this experience was the discovery of a new meaning for him in John 4:14, "Whoso-<sup>1</sup> ever drinketh . . . shall never thirst." The result of these experiences was not only deeper joy and peace, but the ability to do a phenomenal amount of work with the minimum<sup>2</sup> of worry and anxiety.

Sherwood Eddy writes of meeting Taylor in 1894 in Detroit, when Taylor was on furlough,

" . . . I was able then to feel his deeply spiritual influence. He was one of the purest, humblest, most sensitive souls I ever knew, fervent in prayer, mighty in faith, his whole life dedicated to the single object of doing the will of God. I felt myself in the presence of a man who had received a Kingdom which could not be shaken, without or within." <sup>3</sup>

Undoubtedly the impression Taylor made on others was the<sup>4</sup> direct result of his experience with God.

This is further confirmed in his way of working among the Chinese. Mention has been made of his desire to live close to the people. Taylor considered the wearing of native dress essential, and along with this a large measure of conformity to Chinese manners and customs. This made contact with the people in the interior much easier.

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1. Ibid. pp.202-213.

2. Ibid. pp.203,211.

3. Sherwood Eddy, Pathfinders of the World Missionary Crusade, p.194.

4. Ibid.

He says,

"I have never heard of anyone, after a bona fide attempt to become Chinese to the Chinese that he might gain the Chinese, who either regretted the course taken or wished to abandon it." 1

". . . if we would have our lives invested to the utmost profit, we must be among the people." 2

The basis of his thought here was the Incarnation. Christ did not come among men as an angel of light. He says, "But to save man He became man, not merely like man." 3 Thus Taylor urges those who are working with him, "Let us in everything not sinful become Chinese, that we may by all means 'save some'." 4 The apostle Paul too was cited as one who lived a public life out among the people and whose life was not hidden when he suffered trial, loss and sorrow. 5

Taylor's plan of work in the early days was to itinerate, preaching wherever possible and giving out Gospel portions, books and tracts to all who were literate. 6 Often, on such trips he faced difficulties and dangers but he refused to give up. On one such occasion when he and his companion learned of the danger in the city to which they were going, he says,

"Whether it were to bonds, imprisonment, and death, or whether to distribute our Scriptures and tracts in safety, and return unhurt, we knew not; but we were determined, by the grace of God, not to leave Tung-chau any longer

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1. Howard Taylor, op.cit., p.89.
2. Hudson Taylor, Days of Blessing in Inland China, p.35.
3. Howard Taylor, op.cit., p.90
4. Ibid. pp.90,91.
5. Hudson Taylor, op.cit., p.35.
6. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, p.52.

without the Gospel. . ."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. De la Porte who had known Taylor in China, when addressing a meeting in London, spoke of seeing him come home at the close of a day with his face covered with blisters from the heat of the sun and utterly exhausted. He told how Taylor would throw himself down to rest, only to rise again after<sup>2</sup> a few hours to the toil and hardship of another day.

On more than one occasion Taylor found that his medical training opened the door for evangelistic work, as happened once when he was able to successfully treat a local Mandarin. The Mandarin at once advised the procuring of rooms for a hospital and dispensary which previously<sup>3</sup> without his help had been unobtainable in the city. While Taylor's primary work was evangelistic to rescue the souls of the perishing, he was not unmindful of the physical and material needs of the people. It was rather a matter of priorities and using the time, energy and talent that God had given him in the way which he believed God wanted him to use them. When famine struck in Shansi the China Inland Mission rendered distinguished service in feeding and caring for multitudes. Taylor even agreed, as he was in England at the time, to his wife's returning before him leaving the children to another, so that she with a group of women could

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1. Ibid. p.51.

2. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor in Early Years, pp.370,371.

3. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, p.74.



go into the famine-stricken area to minister to the multitude<sup>1</sup> of girls and young women there suffering in deep distress. The motive in this venture was not primarily humanitarian, but something much deeper, and here we come again to the touch of the Spirit of God on this life. Taylor writes to his wife from England at this time,

"It is not for your pleasure or mine that we are separated, nor for money-making, (much money came in at this time for famine relief) nor for our children's sake. It is not even for China, or the missionaries or the Mission: no - for Jesus' sake. He is worthy!"<sup>2</sup>

In the final analysis this is the motive that drove Taylor to China, and dominated and controlled his life. It might well be said that all he did, that was worthy, he did for Jesus' sake. This is not theological terminology, in a sense, but it is penetratingly plain that primarily for this reason Taylor was responsible, probably more than any other man, for the evangelization of inland China.

After his resignation from the Chinese Evangelization Society in 1857 because of its policy, and its tendency to incur debts in order to meet financial obligations,<sup>3</sup> Taylor worked for a time on his own. It was a trying time for him, but a blessed time as he discovered God's faithfulness afresh<sup>4</sup> and felt His seal upon his life. When he was invalided at

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1. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission, pp.310-318.
2. Ibid. pp.315,316.
3. Hudson Taylor, op.cit., p.99.
4. Ibid. p.100.

home in 1860 it appeared that his ministry had come to an end.<sup>1</sup> However with the recovery of his health and the birth of the China Inland Mission in 1865 after much travail of soul, a wider ministry is opened to Taylor than he had ever known before.<sup>2</sup> With this came the opportunity to put into practice on a much larger scale principles which he had learned earlier in the university of adversity.

The principles of the China Inland Mission were simply and basically Taylor's own principles for carrying on missionary work, only organized in a systematic way and adapted to the needs of an expanding group. Briefly they were as follows,

1. The Mission was to be interdenominational and international.
2. Members were to receive no guaranteed salary but were required to trust the Lord to supply their needs.
3. No solicitation of funds was to be made or authorized.
4. Direction of the work was to be by missionaries on the field, not by the home committee.
5. Work was to be not Mission centred but China centred.
6. Aim was to evangelize the whole of inland China, in the following way,
  - i. Establish the Church in the capital of every province.
  - ii. Establish the Church in the chief prefectures.
  - iii. Establish the Church in subordinate prefectures.
  - iv. Establish the Church in less important centres.
7. The above was to be implemented by first of all making a survey in the form of exploratory trips. This was to be accompanied by preaching and colportage work.<sup>3</sup>

As churches were established, widespread itineration was exchanged for the development and consolidation of the churches.

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1. Howard Taylor, op.cit., p.10.
2. Ibid. pp.25-32.
3. Hudson Taylor, After Thirty Years, p.4.

When other missions opened up work in an area where Taylor or his associates were working, the policy was to retire to other more needy places.<sup>1</sup>

Taylor did not feel there was much place for hard missionaries on the mission-field. He says,

"They are not like the Master, He is never hard. It is better to be trusting, and gentle, and sympathising, even if often taken in, rather than sharp and hard." 2

He was essentially a happy man. "There is no surer way of finding happiness," he says, "than by heartily engaging in the work of the Lord . . ." 3 Among all the characteristics caught by the converts from their missionaries, nothing was more important in its results, Taylor believed, than a love for souls. "Learning, eloquence, natural gifts, all," he says, "all go up in the balances as lighter than nothing, if not permeated with this supreme endowment." 4

As for converts Taylor was most insistent that they should be able to read the Word of God for themselves. Even enquirers, including women and children were to be taught to read. With the Romanised system of printing an ordinary child could learn to read the New Testament in a month. Witnessing, of course, was essential for converts and in this way the gospel was carried by many to their own people. 5

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1. Ibid. p.4.

2. Hudson Taylor, Days of Blessing in Inland China, p.40.

3. Hudson Taylor, Choice Sayings, p.40.

4. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor in Early Years, p.469.

5. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission, p.241.

As converts showed fitness they were ordained as deacons,  
elders and pastors,<sup>1</sup> to minister to the people.

As Taylor's particular ministry was a spiritual one,  
his definition of this, to sum up the section, may be helpful.  
Though he refers to one area the truth may well apply to other  
areas of life. He says,

"What is spiritual ministry? It is that if you see me to  
be wrong you are able by prayer, by spiritual power, by  
tact, by love, forbearance and patience to enlighten my  
conscience, and thus cause me gladly to turn from my  
mistaken course to the right one." <sup>2</sup>

Two texts that were key-texts in Taylor's life and  
in the life of the mission he founded, were "Ebenezer"  
("Hitherto hath the Lord helped us") and "Jehovah-Jireh" ("The  
Lord will provide.") <sup>3</sup>

On June 3rd 1905 Taylor died, leaving to mourn him  
hundreds of missionary associates and friends, and thousands  
of Chinese Christians.

#### E. Summary

This chapter has been a study of Hudson Taylor,  
considering briefly his background in the nineteenth century,  
the cultural elements of the country to which he came and in  
some detail the nature of his message and ministry. Some  
attention has been given to the deeply spiritual character of

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1. Ibid. p.403.

2. Ibid. p.582.

3. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, p.106.

his life and the influence this had on his work as a whole.

His background included many influences that were deeply spiritual, the greatest of these being his own family circle. In spite of the skepticism and rationalism that was characteristic of his day he became a devout Christian with strong evangelical convictions. In an age of criticism he became an ardent student of the Bible and determined to prove its validity by a life of faith. Because he believed the Word of God he felt compelled to go forth and preach the Gospel to those who had never heard.

China with all its problems of ignorance, superstition and fear only confirmed him more deeply in the way that he had chosen. His principles of faith expressed in his own life and demonstrated more widely in the China Inland Mission which he founded, established a precedent in the history of missionary methods. Hudson Taylor's conclusion after years of trusting God for himself and for others was, that the Word of God, that is the Bible, is absolutely reliable and may be literally accepted and followed without fear or reservation of any kind.

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Chapter IV

Comparative Study of  
Eliot, Carey and Taylor

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A. Introduction

The first three chapters have presented a study of Eliot, Carey and Taylor in the form of an analysis of their respective lives and ministries. The analysis was not intended to be exhaustive, but rather suggestive, in seeking to bring out the salient features in each case. In order to accomplish this each man was considered with respect to,

1. Background
2. Cultural Elements of the Country to which He Went
  - a. Religion and Social Structure
  - b. Business and Politics
3. Ministry to the People
  - a. The Message Preached and Written
    - i. Prayer
    - ii. The Gospel
    - iii. The Bible
    - iv. The Church
    - v. Baptism
  - b. Way of Working <sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this chapter is to consider these three men together in a comparative study using the material of the first three chapters and following a similar outline. It is hoped that those respects in which they are identical, similar and different will become evident as the materials are examined by this procedure. The particular concern, as noted earlier, <sup>2</sup> is for the message and way of working and those

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1. Cf. ante, Introduction
2. Ibid.

factors relevant to them.

## B. Comparative Study

### 1. As to Background

It is sometimes said that man is the product of his environment. If this statement should be even partially true then the environment becomes an important factor in shaping the life and destiny of the individual.

Generally speaking Eliot, Carey and Taylor all faced the influences of different centuries although born in the same land of England. Eliot knew something of the power of Anglicanism in the seventeenth century,<sup>1</sup> Carey was thoroughly familiar with the Deism of the eighteenth century<sup>2</sup> and Taylor was certainly not unacquainted with the intellectual and critical trends of the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> It is true that Puritanism was a powerful influence in Eliot's time, yet the powers that be were, on the whole, opposed to it.<sup>4</sup> So that it may be said that the prevailing intellectual and religious trends in all three centuries were opposed to orthodox Christianity and vital faith in Christ.<sup>5</sup> Eliot, Carey and Taylor all elected to stand against the popular emphases and became missionaries in spite of, rather than

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1. Cf. ante, pp.8-10. 7-9
2. Cf. ante, pp.47,48,64. 12-13, 57
3. Cf. ante, pp.91-93, 118,119. 80-81, 90, 105
4. Cf. ante, pp.3-5. 7-5
5. Cf. ante, pp.8,47,64,90,91. 7-12, 5, 80, 91



because of the influence of their day. This needs to be qualified with respect to Eliot who might not have gone to America had it not been for the pressure from the hierarchy.<sup>1</sup>

While it may not appear that the currents of their times had much effect upon the lives of Eliot, Carey and Taylor, unless it was to drive them in the opposite direction, there were nevertheless environmental factors that did powerfully influence them. These were found in the home and the local community. All three were born in villages, if Barnsley, where Taylor was born, could be classed in this way.<sup>2</sup> Eliot probably came from the wealthiest home, with the most culture and certainly the best education.<sup>3</sup> Carey in all of these points was the poorest of the three.<sup>4</sup> However, none of them could be said to have come from the upper class, as classes are understood in England. While Carey did not have the formal education of Eliot or of Taylor, he was as truly educated as they because he was self-taught, and ultimately proved in the academic sense also to be the most highly qualified.<sup>5</sup>

They all expressed gratitude for Bible training in the home, but only in Taylor's case was the spiritual influence such as to lead directly to his conversion.<sup>6</sup> Carey speaks as

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1. Cf. ante, p. 10.
2. Cf. ante, pp. 7, 49, 93. 94
3. Cf. ante, p. 9.
4. Cf. ante, p. 50.
5. Cf. ante, pp. 74, 83. 66, 74
6. Cf. ante, pp. 95, 96. 84, 85

though his early training may have been a formality and refers to it as definitely lacking the personal touch.<sup>1</sup> Both Carey and Taylor are known to have passed through a period of skepticism or indifference prior to conversion.<sup>2</sup> Taylor was converted at seventeen, Carey at eighteen and Eliot about the age of twenty-two. Eliot and Carey were both indebted to friends in the matter of conversion and subsequent blessings.<sup>3</sup> For Taylor, the important center of influence before and after conversion, seemed to be the fellowship of his own family circle.<sup>4</sup> The important point here seems to be that all three were deeply and permanently influenced by others who were more or less intimate with them and concerned for them.

The conversion experience itself seems to have been in each case a definite crisis in their lives. In Taylor's case it was focused into a few moments one afternoon when he entered into peace.<sup>5</sup> For the other two it may not have been as precise as this, but it was certainly an experience that happened in a brief span of time.<sup>6</sup> There is nothing to indicate that conversion in any of them was the culmination of an educative process carried on from childhood. In fact Carey says at the age of fourteen, in spite of early religious training, ". . . I had sunk in the most awful profligacy of

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1. Cf. ante, p. 51, 95. 25. 80
2. Cf. ante, p. 51. 45. 36
3. Cf. ante, pp. 10, 51, 52. 9
4. Cf. ante, pp. 95, 96. 60. 85
5. Cf. ante, p. 96. 55
6. Cf. ante, p. 10, 52. 9. 46

conduct.<sup>1</sup> And just before his conversion he says, ". . . I felt ruined and helpless."<sup>2</sup> Eliot speaks of the Lord causing his dead soul to live,<sup>3</sup> and Taylor referring to childhood training says, ". . . in spite of these helpful examples and precepts my heart was unchanged."<sup>4</sup> Undoubtedly the early training played an important part in their lives as they all admit, but it could not save them. For each, conversion seemed to be clearly the coming to the end of oneself and trusting Christ for all. The result of it was a definite change in their lives, marked chiefly, perhaps, by a desire to serve others. Eliot entered the ministry, Carey joined the non-conformists and began to preach and Taylor began to make preparations for the mission-field.<sup>5</sup> Thus it seems evident that the personal experience of salvation that each passed through became an important factor in directing the course of their lives.

The call to preach the gospel to those who had never heard, came to each of them in different ways and under different circumstances, but for all three it involved a burden for souls and a desire to win the lost. Eliot's Puritan convictions led him into fellowship with the Congregationalists in America;<sup>6</sup> Carey's convictions led him to

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1. Cf. ante, p. 51. 45

2. Cf. ante, p. 52. 45

3. Cf. ante, p. 10. 4

4. Cf. ante, p. 95. 30

5. Cf. ante, pp. 10, 53, 96, 97. 47, 85, 86

6. Cf. ante, p. 31. 26

the Baptists,<sup>1</sup> while Taylor's convictions seemed to lead him to no particular denomination or church, but rather to seek fellowship with all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup> Out of these different backgrounds they went forth with the gospel, Eliot as a Congregationalist, Carey as a Baptist and Taylor as a member of an interdenominational fellowship.

Eliot, Carey and Taylor came out of three different centuries, each century having its respective problems. They came with varying academic qualifications and differing ecclesiastical affiliations, and went forth to countries as distant from one another as America, India and China. But they had in common a warm fellowship of believers who loved them and prayed for them, a deep and definite experience of personal salvation and a concern and burden to preach the gospel to those who had never heard.

## 2. As to Cultural Elements of Countries to which They Went

Eliot went forth to America in the seventeenth century, Carey to India in the eighteenth century and Taylor to China in the nineteenth century. Each of these countries presented its own peculiar problems with respect to religion and culture, and also with respect to the European element. Perhaps for Eliot it was the least difficult as he had his church fellowship with him in America and he went out from

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1. Cf. ante, p. 53. 47

2. Cf. ante, p. 122. 108

this on journeys into the wilderness to minister to the Indians. However as time went on this was also true, in a sense, of Carey and Taylor.

In all three countries there were pagan religions to contend with. In America, the religion was chiefly animism, but in India and China religion was more highly organized and had many ancient traditions.<sup>1</sup> Whether or not these religions had much in common in their teachings, they were much alike in their effect upon the moral and spiritual life of the people. The depths of evil and wickedness, of moral depravity and degradation in each country was appalling.<sup>2</sup> The lot of women was particularly despicable in India and China and perhaps to a lesser degree in America.<sup>3</sup> The Hindu caste system perhaps made the situation in India the worst of the three. Here people were bound body and soul to the past by chains forged for centuries.<sup>4</sup>

Problems of climate, disease, travel and communication were greatest in India and China, but America was not without its difficulties in the seventeenth century. Each country had one or more languages to be mastered before work could be carried on effectively. For Eliot this meant reducing a language to writing that had never been written before. For

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1. Cf. ante, pp. 56-58, 101, 102. 50-52, 90, 91
2. Cf. ante, pp. 13, 58-60, 104. 12, 52-54, 92
3. Cf. ante, pp. 59, 104. 22, 92
4. Cf. ante, p. 60. 53

all three missionaries it meant a certain amount of translation work in order that the people could have the Scriptures in their own language.

Among the Europeans in the various countries were those who were sympathetic to the work of the missionaries. However, there were others who were critical and in some cases openly opposed. Carey had a particularly difficult time with the British government.<sup>1</sup> In fact it may be said, that of the three, he seemed to have the most to contend with from the point of view of paganism, civilized or uncivilized. Added to these was the very serious trial of taking care of his wife for thirteen years when she was out of her mind. Taylor ran into the problem too of difficulty with various business elements, particularly slave traders and opium traders.<sup>2</sup> But his most serious problem in this area perhaps was with missionaries of other societies who were critical of his unconventional methods of working.<sup>3</sup> With Carey and Taylor, however, later years brought recognition and general acceptance from almost every quarter. The most serious blow to Eliot's ministry from the European element, came near the end of his life when, during King Phillips war, some of the colonists turned against his Indians and were the cause, directly or indirectly, of the death of many of them.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Cf. ante, p. 63. 56
2. Cf. ante, pp. 108, 109. 96, 97
3. Cf. ante, pp. 105-107. 93-95
4. Cf. ante, pp. 20, 21. 18, 19

In all of the countries there were foreigners whose lives were a disgrace and definite liability to the cause of Christ.<sup>1</sup> Again it was Carey who seemed to suffer the most, for he had not only such to contend with, but the philosophical problem of deism too, for the English brought it with them from England. He says, "India swarms with deists, and deists are, in my opinion, the most intolerant of mankind; their great desire is to exterminate true religion from the earth."<sup>2</sup>

This has been an attempt to show by comparison some of the cultural elements of the countries to which Eliot, Carey and Taylor came. While Carey seems to have had the greatest problems in this area, it is evident that each country and situation had difficulties related to culture, religion, business and politics.

## 2. As to Ministry to the People

Coming as they did out of different centuries, from largely different backgrounds to countries as geographically remote from one another as the three under consideration, the question now arises, did Eliot, Carey and Taylor each have a different message also and a different way of carrying on their work? It is the purpose of this section to compare, or contrast, as the case may be, their ministries to discover

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1. Cf. ante, pp. 18, 19, 62-64, 108, 109. 16, 17, 55-57, 96, 97  
2. Cf. ante, p. 64. 57

wherein they were alike and wherein they differed.

The same outline that has been used in previous chapters will be followed here. It is necessary to remember in considering this phase of the subject that sometimes what is explicit with one is implicit with another and that therefore in comparing the message of three different people a degree of interpretation is inescapable. Every effort will be made to be loyal to the context out of which statements are taken, as well as keeping in mind the message as a whole of the person concerned.

#### 1. Prayer

Even a casual study of the lives of Eliot, Carey and Taylor reveals that prayer was integral and basic in the ministry of each of them. Apart from traces of dryness at times in Carey's journal when he is referring to prayer there is no evidence in the writings of any of them that would suggest that prayer was a formality, a ritual or merely a means to an end.

It seems fairly clear that for each of them prayer was primarily fellowship or communion with the God of Heaven. Cotton Mather says of Eliot that he had . . . "daily practice of entering closet and shutting the door and also he set apart not rarely whole Days for Prayer with Fasting in secret places before the God of Heaven."<sup>1</sup> Eliot was so much in the

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1. Cf. ante, p.23. 2)



presence of God that others who came in contact with him<sup>1</sup> were convicted by the fragrance of his life. While prayer never seems to have been as dominant in the life of Carey as in Eliot and Taylor, nevertheless the pure quality is there. He speaks of having liberty in prayer and conversing with God.<sup>2</sup> Strangers may pray or say prayers, but only friends may converse with God. When Taylor speaks of stretching himself on the ground before the Lord and hungering and thirsting for His presence, it is surely evident that in his own way and in his own words he is expressing an experience identical with that of Eliot and Carey.<sup>3</sup> These were men who truly walked with God and were well acquainted with the secret place of the most High.<sup>4</sup>

If nothing more was said of the prayer-life of Eliot, Carey and Taylor, it might be concluded that they were mystics and had little intercourse with the outside world. But this was far from the case, for out of the sanctuary flowed rivers of living water.<sup>5</sup> Eliot delighted in speaking to God, but he also took delight in speaking of Him;<sup>6</sup> Carey could not tolerate a ministerial Association that could pray but would not act,<sup>7</sup> and Taylor who knew well what it was to delight himself in the

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1. Cf. ante, p. 24. <sup>21</sup>
2. Cf. ante, p. 67. <sup>60</sup>
3. Cf. ante, pp. 110, 111. <sup>98, 99</sup>
4. Psalm 91:1.
5. Ezekiel 47:1-12.
6. Cf. ante, p. 23. <sup>20</sup>
7. Cf. ante, p. 66. <sup>58, 59</sup>

Lord, knew also what it was to receive the daily bread from His gracious hand.<sup>1</sup> For each of them prayer was not only fellowship, but a redemptive activity through which circumstances and lives were changed and God was glorified.

Taylor knew more than Eliot or Carey of continued dependance on God for the smallest necessities of life. Prayer for him was in a particular sense, a refuge and a place where he did business with God. Throughout his ministry, apart from the first few years, he had no salary or stipend. Therefore he and his associates also, learned to look to God directly in prayer for the supply of all material needs.<sup>2</sup> Thus prayer became a further opportunity to demonstrate the power of God.

Concerning spiritual matters Taylor, on the whole, has written more explicitly than either Eliot or Carey. Perhaps this is because he wrote more fully, or more clearly, or both. He is very definite that prayer, to be successful, must be according to the will of God, and therefore according to the Word of God.<sup>3</sup> This relationship of the will of God to the Word of God and to prayer is suggested by Eliot and Carey but is not as clearly defined.<sup>4</sup>

To put it briefly, prayer was for the three of them a vital living force, a refuge in the time of trouble and a means of grace for themselves and for others.

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1. Cf. ante, p. 98.<sup>87</sup>
2. Cf. ante, pp. 98, 99, 132, 133. <sup>87, 88, 117, 118</sup>
3. Cf. ante, pp. 112, 113. <sup>100, 101</sup>
4. Cf. ante, pp. 30, 31, 72, 73. <sup>27, 28, 64, 65</sup>

## ii. The Gospel

There was little of essential difference among Eliot, Carey and Taylor concerning their views of prayer. And this is also true of their views of the gospel and the Bible.

Eliot, coming as he did out of a Puritan background, probably made more use of the Old Testament Scriptures than did Carey or Taylor. However they were together in believing that the judgment of God was against sin and that the heathen were lost. In fact this was the basic conviction that sent them forth to preach the gospel.<sup>1</sup> For Taylor there was the added motivating factor of the second coming of Christ.<sup>2</sup> This does not mean that Eliot and Carey did not believe in the second coming of Christ, but simply that it was not as prominent in their thoughts.

Concerning salvation, they are agreed that the sinner must trust in Christ alone for forgiveness and redemption. They seem to stand close to the apostolic order here, in the lifting up of a crucified Saviour. In their preaching and ministry the person of Christ was very important and in fact, central.<sup>3</sup> Above all, Eliot, Carey and Taylor looked for the breath from Heaven, the touch of the Holy Spirit upon lives in regenerating and quickening power. Without this,

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1. Cf. ante, pp. 26, 68, 69, 114, 115. 23, 60, 61, 101, 102

2. Cf. ante, p. 114. 101

3. Cf. ante, pp. 27, 28, 69, 71, 115. 24, 25, 64, 63, 102

they felt their labours were vain.<sup>12</sup>

While each of them expressed it in different ways they all regarded salvation as a beginning, and not an end in itself. Eliot speaks of being kept in the way of holiness,<sup>2</sup> Carey speaks of discipleship and sacrifice<sup>34</sup> and Taylor speaks of the fullness of blessing and service.<sup>4</sup> Putting these thoughts together one gets the spectrum of the life in Christ.

iii. The Bible

Perhaps nowhere else are the convictions of Eliot, Carey and Taylor clearer than with respect to the Bible. The Bible, in a sense, becomes the watershed from which flow their beliefs concerning prayer, the gospel, the church and baptism, as well as everything else.

Chirgwin's report on the place of the Bible in evangelism throughout the world revealed that a vital relationship existed between the two.<sup>56</sup> This is corroborated by the work of Eliot, Carey and Taylor. But more than this, an examination of their writings reveals the particular view of the inspiration and the authority of the Bible which they held. If, as suggested above, the Bible was a watershed from which flowed all their beliefs, then their view, or views, of inspiration and authority are very important.

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1. Cf. ante, pp. 28, 70, 116, 117. 25, 62, 103, 104
2. Cf. ante, p. 28. 25
3. Cf. ante, pp. 70, 71. 62, 63
4. Cf. ante, p. 116. 103
5. Cf. ante, p. 72. 64

Though they came from different centuries and therefore in some respects each spoke a different language or used a different terminology, nevertheless it is evident that Eliot, Carey and Taylor shared very much the same view concerning the inspiration and the authority of the Bible. Taylor as usual is the most explicit of the three, writing as he did in an age of criticism, but there is little that he says that does not find an echo in the writings of Eliot and Carey.

To them the Bible was the inspired Word of God, and the infallible rule for faith and life. They did not think of the Bible as something separate or different from the Word of God, but rather as identical with it. Eliot uses the words, "Scriptures" and the "Word of God" interchangeably, and in his whole-hearted approval of all the precepts of the Scriptures he stands squarely in the centre of Puritan tradition.<sup>1</sup> Carey gives us a clue to his feelings on this subject when he refuses to go beyond the pages of the written Word in following William Law and insists that, the study of its pages is necessary that one may not speak<sup>2</sup> falsely of God. Taylor clearly states his belief in the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, and emphasizes the organic relationship between the written Word of God and the incarnate Word of God. He says, "To be

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1. Cf. ante, pp.30,31. 23,28  
2. Cf. ante, pp.72,73. 64, 65

unsettled on the question of inspiration is to be overcome by temptation, and to be unable to accomplish God's work."<sup>1</sup>

Apparently the interest and concern of Eliot, Carey and Taylor was not with such questions as, What is Scripture, and where did the Scriptures come from, but rather, what to do with the Scriptures they had. As has been intimated,<sup>2</sup> all three, and particularly Carey and Taylor, faced popular trends in their respective generations that were directly opposed to such a view of the Bible as they held. Whether or not they were aware of the philosophical implications of their position is not clear, but one thing is clear, that their primary concern was to take the Bible as they had it, to accept it and believe it, and to obey it and to follow it as literally as they knew how. None of them ever expressed any regrets at having chosen to walk in this way, and the results of this present study would seem to indicate that as their respective ministries widened and became more influential over the years, their conviction concerning the Bible, far from being shaken, was only deepened and more fully confirmed. Taylor says, near the end of his life, ". . . I have put God's Word to the test. Certainly it has never failed me. I have never had reason to regret the confidence I have placed in its promises, or to deplore following the guidance I have found

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1. Cf. ante, p. 119. <sup>105</sup>

2. Cf. ante, p. 139. <sup>104(?)</sup>

in its directions."<sup>1</sup>

To all three the Bible was a light for the path, a sword for the fray and food for the soul.<sup>2</sup> The very acceptance of its tenets committed them to follow its precepts and the result for each was a ministry of reconciliation.

The magnificent work of translation of Carey and of Eliot, not to mention the lesser work of Taylor in this area, was only one outcome of their acceptance of the authority of the Word of God. The Bible for each of them was an indispensable instrument of evangelization and in a very profound sense they believed that to give the people the Scriptures in their own language was to give them the gospel.<sup>3</sup>

#### iv. The Church

While Eliot, Carey and Taylor shared the same view of inspiration and authority, this did not necessarily mean they agreed in their interpretation of Scripture in every instance. Concerning the church and baptism they were in general agreement, but as to the details there were some obvious differences. Here Taylor seems to stand about half-way between Eliot and Carey.

They agreed that the church was the body of Christ, and consisted of companies of believers wherever they might be worshipping. And concerning the fellowship of such an assembly

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21. Cf. ante, p. 121. <sup>107</sup>

2. Cf. ante, pp. 30, 72-74, 117-120. <sup>27, 64-66, 104-107</sup>

3. Cf. ante, pp. 29, 72, 120, 130, 131. <sup>26, 64, 106, 115, 116,</sup>

they speak with much appreciation. Each of them expresses in his own way something of the value and the pleasure of having fellowship with those of kindred mind.<sup>1</sup>

They differ however in matters of church government and discipline. This may have had something to do with the particular period in which they each lived, for there were no Methodists in Eliot's time. Eliot's sympathies lay with the Congregationalists, and this meant an emphasis on the congregation for accepting church members and in the giving of discipline as well as other matters.<sup>2</sup> Carey was a Baptist, and therefore differed with Eliot most decidedly on the mode of baptism, although not on the fact of baptism. The Baptist form of church government and discipline was somewhat similar to the congregationalists as they also stressed the importance of the local congregation.<sup>3</sup> Taylor, however, seemed not to be interested in any particular denomination or church as such, but simply in the fellowship of believers. He worked with members of nearly all the denominations and groups in the China Inland Mission and seems not to have been partial to any. He recognized the importance of church government and discipline and made provision for it by arranging for those of similar views to work together.

To Taylor's mind, perhaps more so than to Eliot's or

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1. Cf. ante, pp. 34, 35, 76, 122. 30, 31 68, 108
2. Cf. ante, pp. 31-33. 28-30
3. Cf. ante, pp. 75, 76. 67, 68



Carey's, these differences were of minor importance compared to the great task of bringing souls from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God.<sup>1</sup>

Eliot, Carey and Taylor were interested in an indigenous church and sought in various ways to foster it in their respective fields. Eliot was perhaps the most advanced in this respect in some of his ideas, at least he is the most explicit on the subject. He taught his Indians to teach others and instructed them to look in the Scriptures for guidance in their self-governing communities. He greatly rejoiced when one of the Indian churches started sending out missionaries to another tribe.<sup>2</sup> Both Carey and Taylor had similar experiences, but perhaps because the work was much larger in some ways, they knew more of the established mission approach which included a paid native ministry.<sup>3</sup>

Eliot and Carey both expressed interest in some kind of ecumenical movement or fellowship, and Eliot in particular went to some length to outline his views.<sup>4</sup> Taylor was strongly interdenominationally minded but expressed no interest or views in a world council of churches such as Eliot advocated.

While Eliot, Carey and Taylor differed on some matters concerning the church, they were agreed that its essential nature was a fellowship of believers in Jesus Christ.

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1. Cf. ante, p. 122. 108
2. Cf. ante, p. 34. 30
3. Cf. ante, pp. 76, 77, 124. 68, 69, 110
4. Cf. ante, pp. 35, 77. 31, 68, 69

## v. Baptism

On the matter of baptism Carey and Eliot were in decided disagreement. Eliot held to the practice of infant baptism, emphasizing the covenant relationship which was made for, or by the candidate for church membership.<sup>1</sup> Carey on the other hand left this teaching when he joined the Baptist church, and accepted the practice of believer's baptism.<sup>2</sup> There is little may be said on this. Both of them held firm convictions as to their views and Eliot went to some trouble to defend his by writing a small book on the subject.<sup>3</sup> Carey also had difficulties when one of his translations was criticized because of the word he had used for baptism. Those who did not share his views of baptism felt he was propagating Baptist views by using a word in the translation which suggested dipping. The Bible Society withdrew their financial support but Carey stuck to his translation.<sup>4</sup>

Taylor again found the matter of the mode of baptism of minor importance and was able to accept within the Mission fellowship those who practised both adult and infant baptism. This does not mean he did not have his own convictions on the subject, but that the saving of souls was so much more important that differences in this matter were not considered fundamental.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Cf. ante, p. 37.<sup>33</sup>
2. Cf. ante, p. 78.<sup>69</sup>
3. Cf. ante, p. 36.<sup>32</sup>
4. Cf. ante, p. 79.<sup>70</sup>
5. Cf. ante, p. 126.<sup>112</sup>

vi. Way of Working

Eliot, Carey and Taylor had much in common, not only in their message but in their way of delivering it. Eliot and Taylor particularly spoke much of being among the people and of identification with them in one way or another. Carey perhaps did less of this because of his translation work. Each of them knew something of what Taylor called, "itinerating", although it took a different form in their respective circumstances.

They were all men of humble and devout character, recognizing their dependance on God in whatever they set their hands to. The dominant thing about Eliot was his love and compassion for people; Carey was marked particularly by his patience and perseverance in the face of overwhelming obstacles, and Taylor was the man of faith who could believe God for the impossible. Yet each of them knew much of all of these qualities as their work and labours so faithfully testify. In the face of danger and difficulties they proved to be bold and courageous, refusing to accept defeat for any reason.

All that has been said concerning prayer, the gospel, the Bible, the church and baptism is relevant here. They

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1. Cf. ante, pp. 40, 83, 129-130. 35, 74, 115
2. Cf. ante, pp. 40, 76, 130, 133. 36, 68, 116, 118
3. Cf. ante, p. 38. 34
4. Cf. ante, p. 80. 71
5. Cf. ante, pp. 113, 114, 127, 128. 100, 101, 113, 114
6. Cf. ante, p. 41, 81, 82, 130, 131. 36, 72, 73, 116, 117

worked by prayer and the Word, and the gospel was their message. Whenever a group of believers were gathered together the church became an evangelizing agency, and everywhere baptism was the sign and seal of the Christian. All three accepted the principle of discipline and believed in administering it when it was necessary. Carey particularly stressed the importance of education and Eliot and Taylor agreed, to the extent that every convert should be able to read the Bible.

In their spirit and attitude to the work and to the people, Eliot, Carey and Taylor were in essential agreement. In details as to methods there were some differences. Both Carey and Taylor were the founders of missions, although Carey, it must be admitted, was rather the unintentional founder of the Baptist Missionary Society. Perhaps there is a difference in method involved here that is more than a detail. Carey and Taylor were agreed in their desire that the missionary should be independant, but they each meant something different by this. Carey believed the missionary should be independant by taking some kind of occupation and thus paying his own way. While Taylor's idea of independance was that the missionary should trust the Lord to meet his

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1. Cf. ante, pp. 42, 75, 76, 122, 37, 167, 168, 108
2. Cf. ante, pp. 29, 30, 85, 86, 134, 26, 27, 75, 76, 119
3. Cf. ante, pp. 55, 56, 127, 133, 49, 150, 112, 113, 118
4. Cf. ante, pp. 82, 83, 73, 74

material needs while carrying on a full-time programme<sup>2</sup> of work. This meant that Taylor and those that were associated with him actually worked by prayer. For whenever they had a need they waited on the Lord. In this way Taylor and hundreds<sup>1</sup> of missionaries had their needs supplied. This attitude of taking everything as from the Lord meant a deeply spiritual ministry. But while Taylor applied the principle differently Eliot had exactly the same point of view when he spoke of prayer as ". . . working by an engine which the world sees nothing of."<sup>2</sup>

They all began with a simple evangelistic ministry but as time went on Carey's main ministry became the work of translation and Taylor's the work of organization and administration as he directed the activities of a vast number of missionaries and laid strategic plans for the evangelization of the whole of inland China.<sup>3</sup> Eliot alone seems to have maintained much the same ministry throughout his life of preaching and teaching.<sup>4</sup> However, his circumstances were somewhat different as his work with the Indians was in addition<sup>5</sup> to his work as a pastor to his own people in Roxbury.

Eliot, Carey and Taylor each had favourite sayings or texts for which they became famous. Eliot's was, "Prayer and

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1. Cf. ante, pp. 127, 133. 113, 118
2. Cf. ante, p. 23. 20
3. Cf. ante, pp. 86, 127, 131, 133. 76, 113, 116, 118
4. Cf. ante, pp. 20, 21, 42, 43. 18, 19, 37, 38
5. Cf. ante, pp. 12, 13. 11, 12

Pains through faith in Jesus Christ will do anything."<sup>1</sup>

Carey said, "Expect great things from God. Attempt great

things for God."<sup>2</sup> For Taylor, the following names and verses

from the Bible were most precious, "Ebenezer" ("Hitherto hath  
the Lord helped us,") and "Jehovah-Jireh" ("The Lord will provide."<sup>3</sup>)

These statements, in a sense, characterize and summarize the  
respective ministries of the three and speak volumes as to the  
kind of men they became by the grace of God.

### C. Summary

This chapter has been a brief survey of the lives of  
Eliot, Carey and Taylor with the attempt to compare them  
as to background, cultural elements of the countries to which  
they went and ministry to the people. The effort has been  
made to state as clearly and as fairly as possible the points  
wherein they agreed and wherein they differed.

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1. Cf. ante, p.43. 39
2. Cf. ante, p.55. 49
3. Cf. ante, p.135. 120

Chapter V  
Summary and Conclusion

## Chapter V

### Summary and Conclusion

#### A. Summary

The purpose of this study has been to make a comparison of three pioneer missionaries, John Eliot, William Carey and Hudson Taylor as to background, respective countries ministered to and message preached, with a view to determining the extent to which they agreed or differed in the message proclaimed. Admittedly the study has been limited to certain aspects of the life and ministry of each, nevertheless sufficient material has been considered to indicate something of what they had, or did not have, in common.

The first chapter dealt with John Eliot as a Puritan missionary of the seventeenth century and described the kind of people the American Indians were and the kind of ministry he exercised among them. Mention was made of his translation of the Bible and his life-long service of preaching and teaching. The second chapter presented William Carey as a missionary coming out of the latter part of the eighteenth century and described something of his opposition to the Deism of his day and his ministry among the people of India particularly in the area of translating the Scriptures into many languages. Mention also was made of the situation in India, religious and otherwise. Chapter three introduced

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Hudson Taylor as a missionary of the nineteenth century with a great burden for the people of China. Something of the evils of paganism in that land were outlined and some of the problems Taylor had to contend with. His deeply spiritual ministry was described briefly and his emphasis upon faith in God for the supply of material needs.

Chapter four was a comparative study of the three missionaries using the findings of the first three chapters. It was observed that they came out of different centuries and were in general opposed to the various intellectual and theological trends of their respective periods. They went to different countries but faced problems and difficulties that were qualitatively similar though quantitatively different. It was discovered that each had had a personal and definite experience of salvation in Christ and subsequently became burdened for the souls of the lost. On examining the message they proclaimed it was learned that they were in general agreement concerning prayer, the gospel and the Bible. Prayer for each of them was a vital force without which their labours could not be fruitful. The gospel was based on the premise that the heathen were lost and that Jesus Christ was the only way of salvation through his death and sacrifice upon the cross. Sin was accepted as a reality that had to be faced and dealt with. Salvation was a beginning of a new life of service and of fullness of blessing in Christ.

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A very high view of the inspiration of the Bible was held and its teachings and precepts were followed as closely as possible. The Bible in every instance was the cutting edge of their approach to the non-Christian. Concerning the church and baptism, Eliot, Carey and Taylor had some difference but all accepted the fact of the church and the need of baptism. Their methods of working were largely similar with respect to identification with the people, their humble dependance on God and the establishing of churches wherever possible. Prayer and the Word were indispensable instruments in the ministry of each.

#### B. Conclusion

It is now the time and place to return to the question that was asked at the outset of this study. What is the message of missions? On the basis of the material covered here it is impossible to give an unqualified answer to this question. However, this much seems clear that in the minds of Eliot, Carey and Taylor there was no confusion concerning this question. This also may be said that, though they represented different centuries and came from different backgrounds, there was no confusion either between them or among them concerning the message of Missions. They were motivated by the same Power and proclaimed essentially the same message, at least, insofar as this has been examined in

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the foregoing pages.

In terms of this study therefore it may be said that the message of Missions is independent of time and circumstance, and is not necessarily related to the popular and accepted currents of thought in any age, and, in fact, may often be opposed to them. From this study too it is evident that the message may only be proclaimed by one who has himself personally experienced the power of it. The acceptance of the reality of prayer and the authority of the Bible as the Word of God are intimately related to the proclamation of the message. The gospel includes the fact that all men are lost and that Jesus Christ through His sacrificial work on the cross is the only Savior from sin. Salvation becomes the beginning point of a new life of redemptive activity in the service of Jesus Christ. This message is not only to be preached but to be demonstrated by word, thought and deed.

This is the inescapable conclusion that comes from the study of the life and ministry of John Eliot, William Carey and Hudson Taylor.

The implications of their message for modern missions and for Missions as a whole may be much greater than is generally supposed. Certainly when one considers the position of these men in the history of missions it is not possible to pass over lightly what they have said and done. Perhaps some of the confusion in the twentieth century concerning the

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message of missions arises from the unwillingness to learn from the past, and in particular from those pioneers of the previous three centuries who opened up whole areas of the world to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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# The writer does not accept the general theological views  
of this author but accepts as accurate his findings in the  
matter, or matters, referred to.