



Lecture 1933

William Penn

*The Light  
of the  
World*

*John A. Hughes*

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## The Light of the World

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The name of William Penn has been chosen because he was a Great Adventurer, who in fellowship with his friends started in his youth on the holy experiment of endeavoring “to live out the laws of Christ in every thought, and word, and deed,” that these might become the laws and habits of the State.

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# Foreword

This lecture has been written under the compulsion of two ideas.

The first is that the doctrine of the Inner Light which is central to the life, thought, and practice of the Quakers, is of universal application and must therefore be applied to every field of human experience as a standard interpretation and a motive to action. It is possible that nothing is more necessary for Friends at the present time than to centre on the teaching which is peculiarly theirs and to work it out.

The second idea is this. There are movements of thought in our time which indicate an approach to what may be described as the Quaker philosophy of life. They need, however, the religious factor to complete them, and Quakerism stands in the position to give this. But it will not be able to do so until it has thought out its own teaching more fully. If it is prepared to do that it will find itself in the position of having a vital religious message, which can be preached, and which will command a hearing. If Quakerism keeps close to its Guide, it will be able to reinterpret the Christian religion without losing any of its divine mystery, and at the same time be able to meet and to crown the best thought of today.

The present essay is an attempt in these directions. It does not claim finality; but the hope of the writer is that others may be stimulated to take in hand this vital task, and do it more fully and perfectly.

JOHN A. HUGHES.  
February 27, 1933.  
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# THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

## *A Great New Testament Proclamation*

The writer of the Fourth Gospel had a great proclamation to put before the world: a theory of the Universe: a new book of Genesis: a belief in the relation that exists eternally between God and the world.

His mind was filled to overflowing with a sense of the divine mysteries. He had thought and meditated long upon them: on God and creation; on the life of God which is the light of men; on Christ in whom he believed the divine Word, the eternal Logos, the Wisdom of God, had been incarnated. And all that he had thought had passed through the crucible of Christian life and experience until it had become fused into certain great residual concepts. It was these he had to proclaim.

But how could his thought be put into words? Was not this an impossible task as it always is, for the “highest cannot be spoken”? It was indeed impossible, and yet the attempt had to be made, for we are constrained to communicate to others what is of vital importance to ourselves. He could not put into words all that he knew to be the truth, but what could be done he did. In brief, graphic, symbolic phrases, he set out the maximum, surely, that can be said about God. “God is spirit;” “God is love;” “God is light.” The thought that God is life was implicit also in his thought, though it did not

pass over into so many words. What he felt to be the truth about Christ went into the great phrase, the Light of the World.

### ***A Modern Quaker Proclamation***

With a belief akin to that of the Evangelist that the work of religion is to proclaim divine truths, we take up the study we have before us of the Light of the World. The text of our proclamation might well be an adaptation of the first sentences of the Fourth Gospel. "In the beginning was the Light; and the Light was with God; and the Light was God." For it is not only a study of Christ on which we purpose to enter, but a wider study of the Light of the World, or if we prefer it, the Logos theory, or the theory of the Inner Light, so that we may have a theory of life which is adequate both for thought and for religion in our day. This wider study is not alien to the spirit of the Evangelist, for indeed those first verses of his Gospel contain a whole theory of the universe and of its origin and continuance; and while he does indeed speak of Christ as the "Light of the World," we must recall also that in his mind it is God who is the light.<sup>1</sup> There is only one Light of the World, and it is this truth which we wish to proclaim with all its implications.

### ***"God Is Light": The Solution of All Problems***

In the course of our study we are bound to come across certain matters which are not universally accepted, even amongst Christians. And these may be hard for some of us to make our own. But whatever our

personal views may be, let us recognize that in the truth contained in the great saying, “God is Light,” lies the key to the solution of every problem, in the earth and out of it.

“Have I knowledge? confounded it shrivels at  
wisdom laid bare.  
Have I forethought? how purblind, how blank, to the  
Infinite Care!  
Do I task any faculty highest, to image success?  
I but open my eyes – and perfection, no more and no  
less,  
In the kind I imagined, full-fronts me, and God is  
seen God  
In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul and  
the clod.”<sup>2</sup>

The Light of the World! Of all the world! We have indeed a key to the knowledge and understanding of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth.

### ***The Inner Light, and the Logos Doctrine***

This is important for us to bear in mind, for the doctrine of the Inner Light, which the Friends have made central to their life and teaching, has in some minds at least been narrowed down until it has come to mean little more than that power within man, that organ, by which he apprehends God and truth. But it is more than that. It is more than that Seed of God which is within us: that “life within our lives, which turns towards God [and which] has been spoken of as the Seed.”<sup>3</sup> It means more than that divine Guide whose



promptings we know, that “faithful and true witness and just monitor in every bosom.”<sup>4</sup>

This doctrine of the Inner Light ought to be equated by us with that ancient Logos doctrine which found its way into Christianity in the Fourth Gospel. If this equation is made, then there are vast areas of life which we shall naturally occupy and explore in its light; areas which at present are barely touched by it. Of these the worlds of science and art stand out pre-eminently as examples. It has been with hesitation and apology in the past that religion has intruded into these fields. But religion has a right of entree everywhere in life. It is perilous to bar it out. Neither the subject-matter nor the achievements of either art or science, nor, for that matter, any other form of human activity, can be understood except in the light of the Logos doctrine. This is what the doctrine of the Inner Light ought to include for us, and the rest of our time in this lecture will be taken up with a more detailed examination of that idea.

### ***Religion and the Physical Universe***

Our point of departure will be the physical universe. There are two attitudes of mind which we may well correct here. One is that we have no choice but to leave the physical world to the scientist to explain and to interpret. He alone, we are told, can do it. He has the necessary data and knowledge: we have not.

The other attitude is that religion has no sort of concern with science, or at any rate can very well get along without it. This is true only in the respect that religion is not a body of

thought, but a life lived with God. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that religion always contains an idea about God, and a view also of the origin and development of the world. For this purpose, therefore, it makes use of the specialized knowledge which science alone can supply. The religion of the eighth or the sixth century before Christ, for example, included a cosmogony, or theory of world creation, which was based on the science of that particular age. The religion of our time must derive its cosmogony from the science of the twentieth century. Religion is a growing, dynamic thing, and therefore rejoices in the growth of human knowledge, and incorporates it into its own thought as it is able and as it seems well.

### ***Can the Scientist Explain the World?***

So far as the attitude of leaving the physical world to the scientist is concerned, all we need to remind ourselves is that the work and method of the scientist is for the most part to weigh and to measure his universe. He deals almost exclusively with mass and motion, and he observes always from without. It is the work of philosophy and religion to give meaning to it all: to say what it is all about.

If, then, science were to insist that the laws of matter and motion are all that are needed to explain the physical universe, religion, remembering the factors not only of order but of beauty in the universe, as well as the values of life, mind and personality, would insist on the insufficiency of such concepts. To be more particular, the beauty of a Gothic cathedral can never be explained by mere knowledge of the stresses and strains of the structure, nor the skill with which

these are distributed. A Gothic masterpiece calls out our admiration not merely because of the mechanical skill involved in its building, the application of the laws of mass and motion, but infinitely more by that immeasurable quality which we can only call the soul of the building; and rightly, because it is the projection into stone and proportioned space of the soul of its builders. "All the steam in the world ... could not build Chartres," wrote Henry Adams.<sup>5</sup>

How, then, do we feel in regard to the architectonic aspect of the physical universe, the whirling nebulae with their glorious shapes, or the structure of the electron, which has been described by one student of physics as no more and no less than a pattern in space and time? How is it that wherever we turn we meet strict mathematical laws on which the whole universal structure rests in whole and in part; or that there is patterning throughout it all? If in our explanation we declare that as the light of man shines in and through a lovely building, so the Light of the World shines in and through the structure of the physical universe; is not this a conclusion to which we do well to come? We may note at this point how much impressed the astronomer, Sir James Jeans, has been by the fact that all his mathematical cogitations in regard to the universe are ratified by what he actually finds in it. He therefore states his conclusion that the universe is built on such perfectly applied mathematical principles that God must be the Mathematician of it all, since, we may infer, mathematical principles have no power to apply themselves, but have to be applied!<sup>6</sup>

## ***Freedom in the Physical World***

How much attention we are to pay to those writers on the physical universe who claim that whereas up to recent time enquirers found evidence only of rigid law in the material world, they now find on closer examination something which has the look of freedom of choice and of action, it is hard for us to say. But we may note the fact as indicating that the scientific world no longer affirms with the same unanimity as heretofore that the strict laws of matter and motion will serve to explain everything.

## ***Matter and Mind***

We might observe, however, that while scientific thinkers have been content through a considerable period to think of the world in terms of matter and of mind, separated by an unthinkable gulf, now Professor A. N. Whitehead states that scientific thought can no longer tolerate such a “bifurcated” universe. The antithesis between matter and mind has now broken down, and Professor Julian Huxley is but one who reminds us that the term matter will no longer serve to describe this “x” stuff. We can no longer speak of “dead matter.” We must be prepared to think, on the other hand, he tells us, that that which we know in ourselves as mind is inherent in all living matter: and since nature is one, we must go deeper still, and admit that what is present in living matter must be present also in that inorganic matter which is the basic stuff of all organic life and from which it springs! In other words, these writers present us with a universe which is monistic. It is one, that is to say, in a sense which was glimpsed long ago by those who first formulated the Logos doctrine: one in a sense in which those who hold this

doctrine today find it also possible to believe. The universe is lit from one central universal source: one light shines in it through and through: the rays of that light pervade it all. These rays are the physical laws of the universe, the mathematical principles which rule it, and the mind which permeates it all.

### ***The Lamp of Life***

The presence of mind in the universe is not a matter of speculation, at least in one portion of it. We know there is mind, because we have the immediate intuitive apprehension of mind in ourselves. Apart from ourselves we may see evidences of mind in the rest of the organic creation. By external observation we cannot, however, observe it in the inorganic. A stone is merely a stone to us: unmoving so far as we can see, and unresponsive to external stimulus. But perhaps the truth is as Bergson has expressed it. "God is asleep in stones, dreaming in animals, awake in man."

At any rate, how wonderful the story becomes as soon as we step up the ladder from the inorganic to the organic! Here the miracle of life faces us. The word miracle, however, is misleading, and can only be used by us in a special sense. The difference between the inorganic stuff of the universe and that same stuff when organized by the principle which dwells within it into the simplest and lowliest form of living matter is like stepping into a new world. It is here where the seeing eye and the quickened imagination are needed.

A school girl in a Friends' School not so long ago came in her biology class to the study of protoplasm. This is how she

commented on her experience in a letter home: “You need not go far afield to find the Holy Grail.” The Knights of the Round Table ranged far in their search for it, but the Quaker finds it here and near. So, likewise, does the naturalist of the type of Lorenz Oken, who saw in nature the record of the “everlasting transmutations of the Holy Ghost in the world.” Alongside of these two examples of what may well be described as the Quaker attitude towards nature we may place the testimony of Robert Browning in the poem, “Sludge the Medium”:

“We find great things are made of little things,  
And little things go lessening till at last  
Comes God behind them. Talk of mountains now?  
We talk of mould that heaps the mountains, mites  
That throng the mould, and God that makes the mites.  
The name comes close behind a stomach-cyst,  
The simplest of creations, just a sac  
That’s mouth, heart, legs and belly at once, yet lives  
And feels, and could do neither, we conclude,  
If simplified still further one degree:  
The small becomes the dreadful and immense!”

### ***The Miracle of Life***

If we use the word miracle to describe what we find in the very simplest form of existence, and if we use the word to describe the successive emergences of life, those startling leaps on to new levels of existence, from single celled organism to multiple-celled: from fish to mammal and bird: from mammal in unbroken sequence to man, we use it not in the sense that some have had in mind, namely, that at each

successive step in the evolution of the world God came in to supply something which was not there, and to make possible that which would not otherwise have been possible. We can understand why they should have thought in this way, since that which occurs at each successive step is so truly astonishing in its beauty and its increasing complexity. But this is not how we look at it today. For us the miracle rather lies in the existence at all of that impulse of life within, that Inner Light of life, which through vast ages has slowly manifested itself from the electron to the amoeba, from the amoeba up to man, moving from glory unto glory!

### ***The Light Breaks Through***

In the whole process we see, as it were, a breaking through of the Light. It is in one aspect as if windows were opened. How dim are the windows of the amoeba, and yet we are amazed to be taught that it can actually learn in some cases and to some extent by experience, and so gives evidence of the working of a mind, in germ at least. The starfish can learn still more: the chimpanzee can ape the ways of the human being. But it is when we come to the level of man that we find so many open windows, and the light of mind pouring in and out again.

### ***The One Light and Men's Souls***

There was a time when we were puzzled to know where in all this the soul came in. Was there a point below which soul was not found, and above which it was found? Such questions tend to disappear so soon as we recognize that nothing whatever comes into being apart from the Light within. Only God is self-existent: the world comes into being

because it is eternally indwelt by God and no part of it can come into being otherwise, and there is no part which is not thus indwelt.

In other words, whilst we are bound to recognize the differences and distinctions in the universe, its “infinite variety,” yet there is a sense in which our belief must be monistic, in which with truth we can say, “All things are one.” This is so, since it is one Light of life which radiates throughout all nature, one and only one. It is one Mind in which we all share. There is one Soul of all the world.

### ***The Light of the World and Knowledge***

We may at this point turn naturally to the question of knowledge. How is it that we know? No one can answer that question fully. Suffice it to say that we do know, for example, how to breathe or sleep; how to walk or talk; how to help ourselves and adjust ourselves in a thousand different ways. We have the power of memory, and can store up knowledge in our minds. We distinguish the true from the false: we can know one another, and we can know God. In every one of these activities we use the one and the same universal energy. The energy which is in the stars, or which we use to drive a locomotive, is the same which in us is transmuted into thought and love, as well as every other human activity. Are we asked in what places the Light of the World burns, we must answer, “Wherever we find traces of this one universal energy.”<sup>8</sup> It is the vehicle of its manifestation.



This has to be remembered when we discuss problems connected with the Inner Light in religious experience. We are inclined to say it is not this, nor this: not conscience, not intelligence, not imagination, but rather that special assurance of a Presence with us from time to time, that deep insight into heavenly truth, that sense of being called and of being guided. It may be right and convenient to make such distinctions, but not if in doing so we fall into the mistake of describing other forms of mental or other activity as merely human or mechanical. What I have of vital power *in any form* I have received. I did not create it. It is a given thing. What I do, or what I know, is by no power of my own contriving. If I think, if I move, if I pray, or even if I sin, in every case I use the one universal energy, which I am bound to relate to the power of God. I can do nothing by myself, but what I can do is to use this power of God which in me is life: it is the Light of the World which is my light. It is even true that when I sin I take the divine power that is within me and wrest it to my own uses away from life into death.

### ***The Divine Linkage***

There is another way in which we ought perhaps to look at this question of knowledge. Just as in the physical world a linkage is made by means of the light between the objects that are seen and the eye which sees them, so is a linkage made between the objects of thought and the mind which thinks. Plato dwells on the mystery of that “which imparts truth to the things that are known and the power of knowing to the knower”<sup>9</sup> and calls it the Form of the Good. It is indeed only because we and the objects we know both share in the divine life, and a bridge is thus made between us, that

knowledge is at all possible. Further, it is only on this account that fellowship is possible. When we enter into fellowship with our fellow human beings, with nature, or with God, it is by means of the divine linkage with which we are bound together, so that all fellowship is and can only be in God.

## *A Summary*

What we have said up to now may be summed up in the following words:

“The rays that visibly illumine heaven and earth, the flashes of wisdom in the human soul, demand a source which is not phenomenal; and God is the real intellectual light of which the light of stars and sun, and the brightest thoughts of men, are but the symbol or the image.”<sup>10</sup>

It is in this vein, then, that we must be prepared to extend our thought of the manifestation of God to the whole world and see in it the infinite transmutations of the heavenly Light which proceeds from God. This is the thought of the writer of the book of Wisdom, writing of wisdom as we should do of the Logos, or of the Inner Light.

“Wisdom is more mobile than any motion;  
Yea, she pervadeth and penetrateth all things by  
reason of her pureness.  
For she is a breath of the power of God,  
And a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty:  
Therefore can nothing defiled find entrance into her.

For she is an effulgence from everlasting light,  
And an unspotted mirror of the working of God,  
And an image of his goodness.  
And she, being one, hath power to do all things;  
And remaining in herself, reneweth all things:  
And from generation to generation passing into holy  
souls  
She maketh men friends of God and prophets.”<sup>11</sup>

### ***The Constant and the Changing***

The picture on which we are working, and which is true to our experience, is that of a dynamic universe, that is to say, one which is in a state of becoming. Yet there is one constant unchanging power within it. We come now to the point where we must recognize that we are involved in an insuperable intellectual difficulty. For whereas we are obliged to think of the Light of the World as from everlasting to everlasting, constant and unchanging, on the other hand we have to think of it as being manifested by degrees in individual lights, and with infinite pain. There is no way in which the mind can bridge over the difficulty there is here. It must be accepted as a paradox: as what Karl Barth calls an “intolerable contradiction.” There is no other alternative but to accept it. The Light is from everlasting, and yet it is becoming. A similar contradiction lies in the related fact that the Light is one, and yet it is many. In it are my light and yours and the myriad lights of the universe: and yet it is One Light. A mystery lies here, great and deep: that of the One in the many, and the many in the One.

## ***A World That Is Becoming***

We may note at this point an important consideration which this matter of becoming involves for us. We can no longer hold to the thought of a world which once issued perfect from its Creator's hand. Nor can we think that man was once perfect and then fell from perfection. The picture which we have in its place is of a world which has emerged from formless chaos through countless aeons and levels of attainment up to where it is as we know it now: and of man as having shared in this upward climb.<sup>12</sup>

## ***Human Differences in a Dynamic World***

From this thought of a dynamic universe several considerations result. In the first place it means for us a recognition of human differences and distinctions, levels of power and attainment, in the same creative spirit in which Jesus recognized them. The Kingdom of God is a dynamic relationship in which such differences are treasured. This is a sound biological conception. Our lights do indeed vary from one another. This is a vital truth which needs to be upheld by us. For there is today what we may well describe as a conspiracy against man, which either in the name of a false theory of democracy, of state organization, or other forms of mass organization and regimentation, aims consciously or unconsciously at the flattening out of human distinctions.

M. Y. Follett has stated with force her faith in the opposite.<sup>13</sup> True democracy in her view would look on the individual as a dynamic personality, essentially different from every other individual, and would come to him with the appeal, "Give

me your difference.” This makes vast demands indeed upon our powers of faith and imagination as well as of organization. It is easier far to run a state machine or an educational machine which treats all individuals as if they were exactly similar. But this is a fatal road in the long run. It runs directly counter to the evolutionary process: or as we would prefer to put it, following the lead of Lorenz Oken, it resists and blocks the “everlasting transmutations of the Holy Ghost in the world.” Wherever that type of thought or organization pushes up its head which denies or disregards the essential individuality of the human soul and its value, there we may be sure we have a sin against the Light – the sin against the Holy Ghost.

### ***Levels of Attainment and Mutual Understanding***

The doctrine of levels involves us in another most important consideration, namely that of mutual understanding. This is notoriously difficult as we know, and especially so when persons of widely different talents, or lights, and opportunity happen to be involved. The question arises in every democratic society, and a particularly acute form of the question presents itself in the following terms: “By what means can men and women of average and sometimes of low-grade intellect know how to select the highest types of individuals for posts of leadership?” We have enough experience of the use and effects of mass propaganda and of the appeal to mob passion and instinct to know something of the dangers we have to meet in this regard. Here is a problem of education and of mutual understanding which democracy has to solve if it is to survive, or if it is not to be made the play of party machines and demagogues, or swept aside by

dictatorships. Perhaps our one safeguard is to see one another “in the light of the incarnation of God.”

### ***Communion with Nature, and with God***

The question is of wider reference still. The levels of attainment in this dynamic universe are almost infinite in number, though the Light in all is one. We constantly find it difficult then, as we have observed, to throw a bridge of understanding between ourselves and other human beings. This difficulty is enlarged when we step outside the range of human life. For while we may recognize intellectually the possibility of mind and of free will as existing in germ at least even in the electron, yet we have no real means of understanding what they are like on that level, and we have to guard against thinking that it is mind and free will as we experience them. We must not think of the atom as “a little man,” as a great naturalist has warned us.

This applies equally when we think of God. Mind, free will, personality in God are on the level of God, not on our level; yet we constantly cause trouble by overlooking this in our discussions of the nature of God. God is not a big man; nor on the other hand is God impersonal because he does not have a body as we have. In approaching this whole difficult question of values on different levels or orders of existence, we might do well to bear in mind a great Old Testament saying, “My ways are not your ways; neither are my thoughts your thoughts,” as a kind of key to the problem. I think, I experience personality as a man; I do not know what it is to do either of these as God, or as an atom. And yet if I keep close to my thought of the one Light of the World, I

must admit that as it is alight in me, so must it be also in God and in the atom, only in each case on its appropriate level of intensity and fullness.

This thought is ratified by intuitive experiences which came to us of unity with nature, and unity with God. These intuitive experiences of unity with nature and with God remind us that however difficult it may be in thought to imagine the possibility of such kinship, yet it is possible for us to know it by the experience of entering into it. In other words while we cannot imagine the nature of personality in God or the atom, that does not debar us from living communion both with nature and with God.

### ***Variety of Levels and Life's Opportunities***

The fact of levels is of tremendous consequence, as it is related to the question of life's opportunities. I am to a large extent "determined." I am a man, and it is therefore on the level of human nature that I must live out my life. Further than that I am limited by the range of my gifts. I may have little or no skill with my hands in comparison with others, while on the other hand my eye sight may be keener and my skill at games greater. Suppose then we admit such limitations even to the extent of saying that having two talents we cannot have more, nor less. These are ours: these and these only. Does this condemn us to a rigid determinism leaving us all too little scope for creative endeavor?

The answer is to be found in a piece of homely advice frequently urged upon us: "Live up to your lights." Indeed between the lowest and the highest possible attainments in

any one human life the differences are so extreme as even to suggest life on different levels, the lowest being brutish, the highest God-like. The task of life, the “great game” of life, is to occupy all the territory possible within the given area which lies before any one of us. To exercise our talents to the full requires from us will, discipline, tenacity, artistry and the readiness to endure pain. There will have to be the sacrifice of lower for the sake of higher aptitudes, an exhibition of heroic virtue – and all this merely to do what is possible within the area of our own limited capacities. It is enough for one life: We do not need to ask for more!

### ***Higher Levels to Come***

There is another thought, however, connected with this. Unless we are to think that the emergence of the Light in the world has now reached its highest peak, and that the process of evolution is complete in us, there are levels of existence here in this world which have yet to be attained. If, then, there is any eagerness in us to reach out not only to the bounds of the possibilities within us, but even beyond them, and to break through the bars of the prison of that nature which hems us in at present to something as yet unknown and beyond, may it not be that the eagerness for new life and for more light will be passed on, in and through the germ cell, and result in the dawning of a new day for mankind, and the emergence of a new type of men and women far transcending what we are now – indeed, as different from us as we are different from the apes?

This is the prospect we ought to have in our minds, a biological prospect, a divine prospect, one in line with the



intention of God's purpose in and through us. Its birthplace will lie in our desires. Let us once desire it and be eager for it, and surely it must come! This eagerness for what lies beyond in the will of God and as yet unrealized in human life is at the least akin to what inspires Paul's eighth chapter to the Romans. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God ... and we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

There is surely here a dynamic conception which lies very closely to the thought we are trying to develop. A similar thought, charged with the grandeur of the present and the unpredictable glory of the future, lay in the mind of John as he wrote his first Epistle. "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be." Bernard Shaw in his series of plays, "Back to Methuselah," sets out in order what he believes to be the springs of new life. They are desire, imagination, will, and then the fruit of them all, creation. "You imagine what you desire; you will what you imagine; and at last you create what you will."<sup>14</sup> So the tentacles of our lives run not only into the past and the present, but out into the future, which as yet has no form, but is germinal in us. We are big with its promise insofar as we are willing to become instruments of the eternal Light, for it is through us and our like that the Light breaks out on to new levels hitherto unreached.

## *The Moral Life and the Growing Light*

Our thought seems naturally to be led on from this point to that of the moral life. This must mean for us much more than either “Nay, nay,” or “Yea, yea.” Primitive societies invented the taboo as the speediest and surest means of keeping order. “Thou shalt not” is a mighty weapon of control in communities where the level of individual attainment is not conspicuously high. The pseudo-primitives of our own time have adopted the method of overthrowing all taboos in a mistaken idea of the nature of liberty. The one is the method of “Nay”; the other is the method of “Yea.” Neither way belongs to the ideal morality. This lies in the harmonious blending of “Yea” and “Nay” for the sake of the highest life we know.

No one can exactly prescribe for us what that life is, or what our own moral life ought to be. As children of the light we have to discover these things for ourselves, guided by the light within, and those moral injunctions which belong to the religion of the light. “While ye have the light, believe on the light, that ye may become sons of light.”<sup>15</sup> “Walk as children of the light.”<sup>16</sup> “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.”<sup>17</sup> “Ye are the light of the world ... let your light shine before men.”<sup>18</sup>

It is hard to put such moral injunctions as these alongside any system of negations, and yet such a thing has been often attempted. With how much loss who can measure? What we need to have is a moral dynamic, and a dynamic morality. Jesus has been described as the most “unmoral” man who

ever lived. What is meant is that he ventured to run counter to official and popular opinion, dissenting from such social regulations as he knew were limitations to the best development of the spirit of man. His was a dynamic morality. In similar spirit, Siegfried, in Wagner's "Ring of the Nibelungs," cleaves in two the spear of Wotan, the symbol of traditional and imposed morality, with the sword of his own forging, "Nothung" – Need! We can, indeed, only interpret morality, and forge for ourselves an ideal morality, as we do so in the light of man's need – the need not of this or that aspect of his nature abstracted from the rest, but of his total manhood.

Moreover, it is impossible to judge the truth about his manhood and its needs unless we see him against the background of God's purposes, and in relation to the fullest development of the light within him. This naturally involves the idea of growth. We must apply the theory of evolution, therefore, to our system of morals as we have to do to everything else in this world of ours. The final and complete system fully corresponding with man's total needs has never yet been seen on earth, except perhaps in the case of rare individuals. Meanwhile we have but one test to apply to all attempts at working out a moral system: does it set out to serve man's total needs; or to put it in another way, does it foster and encourage the growth of the light within him?

### ***"Keep Close to the Light!"***

The test for all personal morality is contained in the teaching of Jesus. "The lamp of the body is the eye; if, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if

thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness.”<sup>19</sup> Immorality, then, is nothing short of the putting out of the light. What that may imply we get from a hint given to us by Carlyle, when he asserts that the completely immoral man could know nothing at all. Could we imagine a man in whom the moral lamp was completely out, we should have one in whom the intellectual lamp was completely out also!

How true this may be in respect likewise of religious belief we gather from the example of Macbeth. He gave himself up to deeds of darkness; and so we find at the end of his career that the lamp of belief has died out of him.

“Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more; it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.”<sup>20</sup>

### ***The Loving Task of Keeping the Light Burning***

If we assert that there can be no fixed and unalterable standard of morality, that does not mean that there is nothing of value to be found in codes, traditions, laws and conventions. They come to us out of past experience: men have lived by them, and as we come “to the Spirit that gave them forth” we shall find light in them for ourselves. “Thy word is a lantern unto my feet: and a light unto my path.” But true morality, nevertheless, is always an affair of the inner being: it has to do with the light of the soul. This light

within is the “joyful light of the holy glory of the everlasting Father,” and the moral endeavor is directed to the maintenance of this sacred and holy light within us. Naturally this is not a laborious task. It is a labor of love. If we are to believe with Dante that it is “Love which moves the sun and the other stars”; that whereas we speak of natural forces, of energy, we ought rather to speak of love; that the world is because God is love, and loves the world, then we know that Paul was right, and that all human activities must be rooted and grounded in love, and not least the moral life.

### *The Hope of Reviving the Light*

Turning back again to Macbeth, to that moment in his life when he realizes that he has destroyed the treasure of his soul by sin, and confesses it in words of despair:

“I have put rancours in the vessel of my peace  
... and mine eternal jewel  
Given to the common enemy of man.”<sup>21</sup>

We are bound to ask whether there is any hope for a soul that is thus steeped in self-induced darkness. Can its lamp be relit? Is there any “Promethean heat, that can (its) light relume?” The answer is that it does happen here and now, in our midst: and there are modern religious movements which are testifying to the fact. No matter how deeply sunk we are in sin, whether in depravity and infamy like Macbeth: or whether our sins are those subtle deceits with which respectability often entangles us, yet God can work in us. Nor do we have to seek far for the liberating power: it is nigh us, on our lips and in our hearts. Conversion would not

otherwise be a possibility. It is God who worketh in us “both to will and to work, for his good pleasure.”

### *Light about Us*

Here let us note one striking accompaniment to the experience of conversion or of deep religious experience in general which has a certain bearing on our general subject, namely, the sensation of light. When Jesus was baptized and the heavens opened, was he conscious of a light around him? In the case of many experiences of illumination and conversion it has been so. At the Transfiguration both Jesus and his friends were enveloped in light. So also were the waiting disciples at Pentecost; and Paul experienced a light “above the brightness of the sun” in his conversion on the Damascus road.

A beautiful example of this experience is given in a story written around the life of Harriet Tubman, that heroic Negro woman who was the means of rescuing from slavery so many of her fellow-sufferers by the famous “underground railway,” and “never los’ a passenger.” She had a longing to escape, but felt hopelessly hemmed in. This is how her experience is described:

“‘I don’ know de way, I don’ know de way!’ A fresh wave of despair and bitterness swept over her. She buried her face in her hands.

“And then a strange thing happened – a new brilliance seemed to flood the cabin, fairer than the brilliance of the fire, a light that grew and grew into a shimmering, silver intensity. Just as the light seemed

too great to bear, Harriet heard a voice clear as a bell, but deep, saying again the quieting, familiar words which long ago as a child she had learned. 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' A sense of peace and comfort seemed to pass over her like a rising tide."<sup>22</sup>

Such visual experiences, as well as similar sense impressions, the hearing of voices, or the heightening of the sense of smell as with Fox, are frequent accompaniments of vivid interior experiences of the breaking of the light.

### ***The Light in Prophecy and Art***

We turn now to where the light shines in prophecy and in art. We link the two together because it often happens that the prophet is poet and so artist too, and the great artist can scarcely avoid being a prophet also. As Professor Gilbert Murray has said about "The Trojan Women" of Euripides, "Like many of the greatest works of art, (it) is something more than art. It is also a prophecy, a bearing of witness." This prophetic factor in art deserves greater recognition than it has had. It has seemed natural enough to religious people to recognize the inspiration of the prophets, and it would never have been difficult for them to agree with the judgment which Jesus passed on John Baptist, and by implication on the whole line of prophets, "He was the lamp that burneth and shineth."<sup>23</sup>

Prophecy has been to them what it was to Peter, "a lamp shining in a dark place."<sup>24</sup> They may even have gone so far as to admit that the light shines in great statesmen and other

“men of light and of leading.” But somehow they have failed to apply their doctrine of the Inner Light to include the inspired artists. If we have a calendar of Saints (as we may well have, for there is no reason why we should not reverence the light in men), it is time for us to include amongst the Saints some of the great musicians, poets, dramatists, painters, and sculptors. If ever we could say of human beings that they were “in the life,” it could be said of some of these artists and seers.

How shall we explain their existence, their genius, and the work they have done? W. J. Turner, the English musical critic and poet, has done it for us in language which any Quaker might readily make his own. He claims that the great element which is linked with life in all great art is imagination, whether in painting, literature or music, and passes on to declare that this imagination in man is the “power referred to in the lines: ‘In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.’ And we may be sure” (he continues) “that there can be no art unless the word is made flesh – in the forms of painting, literature, or music – and dwells among us. Why it should take these forms we do not know. We can only echo: Why the lily, the rose, the violet? Why the tiger, the elephant, the antelope? Why the moon, Venus, and the Stars? *Ecstasy clothing Himself in Forms.*”<sup>25</sup>

## ***Love and Light***

This is the picture we have been trying to set before our eyes. There is one life which is the Light of the world: of every part of it. The physical world owes its existence to that



indwelling light: so does the whole of the organic world: it is shed abroad in man's heart and is revealed in his moral life: it is the inner illumination whose outward manifestation we see in art. We have already suggested that we must think of the inner universal impulse as Dante did: the universe is moved by love. Mr. Turner presents to us a similar idea, using only the word Ecstasy in place of love. It is a thought of great value. There is in God an ecstatic joy in creation. A similar conception moved the writer of the Book of Wisdom:

“Thou lovest all things that are,  
And abhorrest none of the things which thou didst  
make;  
For never wouldest thou have formed anything if  
thou didst hate it.  
And how would anything have endured, except thou  
hadst willed it.”<sup>26</sup>

The artist works with a love for what he is doing, and an ecstasy in doing it, and so shares in the creative love and ecstasy of God Himself.

### ***The Great and the Good***

The question often arises as to the relation between morals and art. What we have already ventured to declare in regard to morals and life in general applies here. We may sum up our attitude in one general statement. The greatest works of art are great also in their moral content; they must be good if they are to be great. There is “virtue,” for example, in the music of Beethoven. But the soul that is darkened by iniquity

can create no art that is supreme: none of which it can be truly said that the word is made flesh in it.

### ***The Light of God***

We come now to the peak of our study, the point on which all our lines converge, namely, the thought of God. There is no light which is not drawn from the “fountain of life.”

Whatever illumination we have is in God’s light: “In thy light shall we see light.”<sup>27</sup> God is the “Father of lights,” and from Him comes “every good gift and every perfect boon.”<sup>28</sup>

Herein lies a challenge to much of our modern thought about God. For while many of us admit the existence of a kind of general power or energy in the world, a vital push or urge, we are not so ready to confess a belief in God such as the passages quoted above imply, namely, a living God, a God who wills and creates, who loves, and is our Father. In other words, at the very centre of our religion there is too often only a string of concepts about God, everyone of which refers to a “neuter.” Even if we alter our ground and confess to a belief in divine Fatherhood or Love, or in the divine Mind, or divine Guidance, the position is virtually the same. We are still amongst the neuters and the abstracts. Such concepts may be substitutes for God, but they are certainly not the equivalent of God. In all this range of neutral attributes we have lost the wonder of God, as Barth has reminded us. God is not an attribute, nor a string of attributes, no matter how noble we make them. The God of religion must be one with us, akin to us;

otherwise there is no possibility of our relating ourselves to God, and that sense of loving intimacy which has meant so much to religious souls will have been lost.

### ***God, the Source of All Our Lights***

Can we overcome the paralysis which has fallen on us in our thoughts about God? We are surely in a strange case. Let us examine it. Here focused in me, in this little microcosm of the human self, is the energy of the universe in all its known forms of manifestation. What boons and gifts of life are mine! How amazing each one of them is; whether it is my physical energy, the vital energy in me, the energy of my self-conscious mind or of my spirit. These are the treasures and the glories of human life, the forms which the inner light takes in me. Shall I not think of them all as flowing to me from one Divine Source? Here, surely, in me is a “breath of the power of God,” and a “clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty”<sup>29</sup>: my soul an “effulgence from everlasting light.”<sup>30</sup> Shall I not, then, acknowledge in that Source the highest qualities of universal life which are focused in me? Or am I to deny the qualities of mind and personality to that Source, and so imagine the whole as incomparably less than the part?

“What, my soul, see thus far and no farther? When  
doors great and small,  
Nine-and-ninety flew ope at my touch, shall the  
hundredth appal?  
In the least things have faith, yet distrust in the  
greatest of all?”

Do I find love so full in my nature, God's ultimate gift,  
That I doubt his own love can compete with it? Here, the parts shift?  
Here, the creature surpass the Creator, – the end, what began?"<sup>31</sup>

Am I further to imagine that the finest human qualities, as well as the whole range of values besides, are self-existent, self-created; unrelated to any purpose of the universe; drifting, accidental happenings; wisps and waifs of existence in a desert universe devoid of mind or will? When I have done this, and emptied my universe of everything which can possibly give it meaning, shall I then attempt to build up a religion for myself? On what? What is there left to build upon? No worship can long survive which bases itself upon the fact of human values, considered merely as human, for these will die out some day, and the light in man be extinguished. Unless, indeed, the "spirit of man is the candle of the Lord:" unless he shares in the life of the eternal God: unless God is the Life, and man lives because he shares in the life of God, there can be no religion.

### ***The Light, Immanent and Transcendent***

This means, in other words, that it is not enough for religion to think of God in vague terms as a kind of diffused inner light in things. We must go further and acknowledge that just as my mind is the focal light of my body, so God is the Light of the World, in the sense of being the focal light of the Universe. He is the living centre and source of life, mind,

personality, and love. God is not merely immanent, He is transcendent also.

This thought of God alone can satisfy thought, and alone can satisfy and explain our religious experiences. This is the God of whom Paul speaks, who is not only through and in us all, but is above all. This is the God of our intuitive apprehension, the God of our mystical life and of our moral endeavor. God is within us; He is also above us. We reach up towards Him. He comes down to us. We meet Him in that loving fellowship which is the heart of all vital religion.

### ***The Knowledge of God***

It is probably at this point that we can best say a word on the religious life. We have already reminded ourselves that we owe the power of knowledge entirely to the fact that we share in the universal light. This applies to all types of knowledge, from the lowest to the highest. At the highest we place the knowledge of God. To know God, however, means more than to have an idea about God; it means more than being intellectually aware of a Fact. I may, for example, be aware of the fact that another person is beside me, but that is not the same as knowing that person. Knowledge of other persons implies entering into a state of correspondence of an intuitive nature with them; we know them in the sense that we are knit with them. This is especially so when we love them.

It is this deep relationship of love between ourselves and the Lord of our life, the "Father of lights," that we mean when we speak of knowing God. It is all that we experience in

human relationship at its best raised to the level of the Eternal. In the religious experience we are “in the life,” In the sense of being at one with the Infinite Father of us all.

To declare a belief in the possibility of such a relationship must be a part of our witness. For the very idea that religion consists in such a relationship has slipped out of our consciousness. That probably accounts more than anything else for the fact that modern religion has so little rapture. There is a truth about religion which can only be expressed by such words as unity, meeting, relationship, correspondence. “I have met with the Seed,” wrote Isaac Penington. Of Moses it was written, “The Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.”<sup>32</sup> George Fox records the assurance which came to him once in a time of trial. “‘My love was always to thee, and thou art in my love.’ And I was ravished with the sense of the love of God, and greatly strengthened in my inward man.”<sup>33</sup>

### ***God’s Love Our Joy and Stay***

We must estimate the trials through which devoted souls have passed in the light of such testimonies. We who are merely spectators of their experiences see them go into dark places. That is the full story so far as we are aware. They go into prisons and experience suffering, as Paul and Silas did.<sup>34</sup> But could we be with them we should know that the darkness was external only. Their souls are not dark, but indeed are full of light. Even in the heart of their suffering they can rejoice. The reason is that they are companioned, though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

Those of us who have learned to wait upon the Lord know the experience which we call “guidance.” This is more than the mere indication of what is the right thing to do. To be guided is to go together with God, in loving companionship and in the dependence of filial love, into that place where it is right for us to go, and in accordance with His will. In this experience we do not lay our human judgment aside, but it is as it were amplified and reinforced by a loving judgment not our own. As we learn to use our own thought, and at the same time submit ourselves to the divine leading, we learn what it is to have a light about our path, and to have joy and confidence in following it.

### ***Man, Finite-Infinite***

The evidence for our belief in God, and for the authenticity of our religious experience, must always lie within our own soul. It is in our intuitive apprehensions, in those intimations which come to us of a life enveloping our life that we know that God is. Why we should be capable of this evidence, Francis Thompson makes clear. It is because man is a

“ . . . Swingin -wicket set  
Between  
The Unseen and Seen.”<sup>35</sup>

He is a being of two worlds, the world of sense and the temporal, and the unseen world of the eternal. Time and eternity meet in him.

“Universe in a span;  
Point  
Of the spheres conjoint.”<sup>36</sup>

So then in his religious experience he has experience of both worlds, and indeed he comes to know that the two are one. He learns that the distinction between the temporal and the eternal is not a valid one, the temporal being but the appearance in changing time of that which is constant in and through and above it all. He enters into eternal life here and now amidst the changing and the phenomenal.

### ***The Light in Jesus***

We are brought to the point where Jesus looms before us. The Fourth Evangelist saw in him the Light of the World: the Word made flesh, the manifestation in time and space of the eternal Logos. At what point, if any, does our belief touch his? Can we give an answer to this question which will not only do full justice to a historic fact, but will at the same time furnish us with the subject matter of a dynamic belief for our own times which we can with joy and enthusiasm follow and share?

The Evangelist saw every man as illumined by an inner light, the life of God in him. But in Jesus he saw that very Light which is the source of the illumination of all other human beings. He could not, therefore, think of him as he thought of other men; not even of the very best of men. Here in Jesus he saw the Lord of Life; very God in flesh. Here was in bodily form the Light from which all other lights were drawn. Jesus was not just one light amongst many. The Evangelist, in



other words, draws what is a vital distinction between Jesus and the rest of human kind.

It is in this sense that Jesus has been the object of worship in the Church. Christians have believed not merely that God was in him, but that he was God, to the extent, at any rate, that God could be revealed within the limits of human nature.

There is at least one difficulty about this position which presents itself to those who believe that God alone is the Lord of Life, the sole Light of the World; that the universe is throughout the organ of His self-manifestation, and that He is the eternal indwelling life and sustaining power of it all. If this belief is ours we have no need to suppose that God comes into the world in any special sense in Christ, any more than we need to believe that He comes in a special way on the successive levels of emergent evolution to account for the apparent miracles that happen. Wonder there is in every life, and every emergence of life. There is that which constantly calls out our spirit of worship. The whole earth is filled with glory; but the glory is that of the indwelling and eternally manifesting God. For the discerning eye the whole universe is in every deed the Burning Bush, and every place is holy ground. And so the wonder in the historic fact of Jesus, and of his actual life and power, can never be exhausted. As Charles Lamb once said, if he came where we were we could not help but kneel.

## *The Incarnation of God*

There is the risk of loss, however, if we confine the Incarnation of God to Jesus only. We know that in emphasizing this truth in regard to Christ, Christians have often in actual fact failed to give due thought to God's incarnation elsewhere in the universe; in unfolding nature, in mankind in the ordinary, in art and knowledge, as well as in the other wonders of the world. The effect of this has been an unhappy one, in making a gap between Jesus and the rest of the world. Would not any other attitude, however, diminish Christ, irrecoverably, by bringing him down too much to the level of ordinary life? What answer shall we give? Would it not be right to say that to see in the world at large, in all but the sin of the world, the constant evidences of the incarnation of God – the “everlasting transmutations of the Holy Ghost” – is not to diminish in any sense the manifestation of God in Christ? To see God everywhere does not prevent us from seeing Him transcendentally in one place in particular.

Furthermore, to see the one Light inhabiting all men, in no sense diminishes the mystery of Christ. Let us think of him only as a man – the man Jesus merely – and then let us answer if any way can be found to explain his appearance except as the junction in time and space of man and God: the meeting of the inner will of the universe as it were with the down coming Will of God: the immanence and transcendence of God in one moment of time: God's will and man's will made one.

Many men in these days are making a fresh approach to the study of Jesus drawn by the mysterious attraction of his personality and find themselves compelled to place him at the topmost pinnacle of human achievement, at the focal point in history, the point where God and man are seen at once, and to see in him the indicator of the inner meaning of the universal purpose. Kept strictly within the course of history, and the range of biological development; brought right into the process of evolution, we find that he is indeed the Light of the World! In this light we look downwards and understand the meaning of the amoeba, and lower still the meaning of the basic stuff of the universe: we look upward and find in him the way to the understanding of God. All life is redeemed. No part is trivial. The glory of God shines in and through it all, and the glory is focused in Christ. He is indeed throned in the universe in the glory of God and Man!

### ***The Full Meaning of the Light in Jesus***

The full truth about Jesus can never be known by any one mind. Philosophic thought, deep personal religious experience, poetic sensibility, wide knowledge of life, mystic power, are all required if we are going to interpret him at all. The experience of many must be brought to bear, and we have to beware lest we shut any door too soon and bar out an interpretation which does not exactly coincide with our own. Who amongst us can plumb alone all that there is in the divine Jesus; all of the wisdom and power of God, His love, and mercy? Who can interpret for us all that there is to

know of God's infinite intention and will in Jesus, or the response of the will of Jesus to God's will? Paul realizes the truth of this when he says, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!"<sup>37</sup> It is the poet who often helps us most in such a matter as this, as Whittier when he writes:

"We may not climb the heavenly steeps  
To bring the Lord Christ down ..."

God in Christ is warm and near. He is no distant heavenly potentate, unknown and unknowable in remote eternity, but here amongst us where we can see him and handle the Word of Life.<sup>38</sup> So Browning felt when he wrote of Christ,

"The Very God! think . . . dost thou think?  
So, the All-Great, were the All-Loving too."<sup>39</sup>

### ***The Failure of Humanism***

There is the risk of our making too little of Christ. This is the peculiar danger of humanism. Its method is to take man out of his setting in the universe and to try to understand him and legislate for him when thus abstracted. But this is a purely arbitrary process, and has little to commend it except perhaps for the attention it has drawn to man as man and to his needs. But humanism cannot even interpret man's needs aright, for it allows to him neither roots nor goal. It is

in fact only as we relate man to God: as we see him indwelt by God, that we have any hope of understanding him or of legislating for him.

To come back, then, to our thought of Christ, we cannot explain or understand him in merely humanistic terms. They are not high enough. But we can know him when we see in him the eternal Light of the World incarnated, and recognize in him the meeting place between God and man, eternity and time.

### ***Light and Darkness: Life and Death***

We come to our final point. The Light indeed shone in the world in Christ – all things of the Light were epitomized in him – and the darkness “apprehended it not.” But to all outward appearance the darkness prevailed. What are we to make of this paradox? Perhaps we should begin by hazarding that death is not the serious thing, ever, that we make of it; and next, that the main wonder of life, its utter miracle, is that light shines at all! The religious mind finds in this mere fact a cause for worship: the light shines.

We have tried to set before ourselves a picture of a dynamic world. Let us bear in mind that this demands from us the recognition that in such a world, characterized by growth, the opposite of growth will be possible, especially if the principle of freedom, a factor and a necessity of growth, is present, as we find in experience it is. We shall then expect to find, and we do find, every imaginable level of growth; and, furthermore, resistances and stresses inimical to growth.

In other words, light is set in antithesis to darkness: not a mere passive darkness, but one which is due to what is often the working of evil will. This much we know at least to be true in the world of human experience; and we can well believe that it is true of the whole universe. So then in the world of human endeavor, we know that the light has to be achieved, and it is not achieved except at the cost sometimes of blood. Our wrestling is not merely against flesh and blood, but against resistances that are even universal in scope. But on the other hand, as the writer of the Book of Wisdom says, "the world fighteth for the righteous."<sup>40</sup> "The world shall go forth with (God) to fight against his insensate foes."<sup>41</sup>

### *God in the Suffering*

This brings us to our last thought. It is one of vital significance. God is in the struggle. The tragic death of Jesus has more than a place in human history, and mere human significance. It has a place in the history of the Universe: nay more, it has a place in the history of God! But will not the objection be raised that there can be no history in the Eternal? God is forever "Now." He is. He has no past nor future. He does not strive, nor develop. He is the Absolute, and in Him all values are perfect from everlasting. All this we must admit. But that does not alter the fact that we are in a dynamic universe, that something within impels us to grow, to endeavor, to strive after the good; and that as we do so we encounter resistances, pain, even death, and have courage to meet these things. Has all this no meaning to God? Either it does, or else it has no conceivable meaning whatever. That is the position to which our thought drives us,

and it is just here where Christian thought comes to meet us. The great affirmation of Christianity is that God was in Christ, bearing the suffering, achieving in and through human nature the good, blazoning forth the fact of eternal creative love. As the darkness mounts over such a life as that of Jesus the light is not diminished but shines ever more unconquered and unconquerable. There is in him the Light of the world, eternal and inextinguishable.

### ***Our Ground of Hope***

We share in that life that was in Jesus. The light of the world is in us. We are finite-infinite: manifestations in time of the eternal. In so far as we seek the light, and give ourselves in service in and to the one Life, we find salvation, and justify the hope and optimism of the Christian message, “The darkness is passing away, and the true light already shineth.”<sup>42</sup>

## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> I John 1:5.

<sup>2</sup> Saul, Robert Browning.

<sup>3</sup> London Yearly Meeting Epistle, 1907.

<sup>4</sup> William Penn.

<sup>5</sup> *The Education of Henry Adams, An Autobiography.*

<sup>6</sup> *The Mysterious Universe*, Jeans.

<sup>7</sup> *Essays of a Biologist*, Julian Huxley.

<sup>8</sup> Sir Arthur Eddington has stated that the world must be looked at in two aspects, the metrical and the non-metrical. That which from the metrical aspect is physical energy, from the non-metrical is viewed as life, or mind, or personality. God is the non-metrical aspect of the physical universe.

<sup>9</sup> *The Republic of Plato*, Book VI, Lindsay's translation.

<sup>10</sup> *Philo Judaeus*, F. Drummond, Vol. I, p. 187.

<sup>11</sup> The Wisdom of Solomon (R.V.), Chap. 7, verses 24-27.

<sup>12</sup> The modern scientist suggests that the earth has been in the making a moderate multiple of a thousand million years,



and that man first made his appearance, say, 300,000 years ago.

<sup>13</sup> *The New State*, M. P. Follett.

<sup>14</sup> *Back to Methuselah*, Part I, "In the Beginning," G. Bernard Shaw.

<sup>15</sup> John 12:36.

<sup>16</sup> Ephesians 5:8.

<sup>17</sup> John 8:12.

<sup>18</sup> Matt. 5:14 and 16

<sup>19</sup> Matt. 6:22-23.

<sup>20</sup> Macbeth. Act. V, Sc. 5.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* Act. III, Sc. I.

<sup>22</sup> "*The Railroad to Freedom*," Hildegard Hoyt Swift.

<sup>23</sup> John 5:35. (R. V.)

<sup>24</sup> II Peter 1:19.

<sup>25</sup> *Orpheus, or The Music of the Future*, W. J. Turner.

<sup>26</sup> Wisdom 11:24.

<sup>27</sup> Psalm 36:9.

- <sup>28</sup> James 1:17.
- <sup>29</sup> Wisdom 7:25.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* 7:26.
- <sup>31</sup> *Saul*, Robert Browning.
- <sup>32</sup> Exodus 33:11.
- <sup>33</sup> Fox's *Journal*, year 1649.
- <sup>34</sup> Acts 16:19-34.
- <sup>35</sup> *Any Saint*, Francis Thompson.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>37</sup> Romans 11:33.
- <sup>38</sup> I John 1:1.
- <sup>39</sup> *An Epistle*, Robert Browning,
- <sup>40</sup> Wisdom 16:17.
- <sup>41</sup> Wisdom 5:20.
- <sup>42</sup> I John 2:8.

## About the Author

### *1932-34 John Hughes serves as acting Director*

When doctors in Britain advised against returning to Pendle Hill too soon, Henry Hodgkin recruited John Hughes, an Anglican priest turned Quaker working with the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, to serve as interim director. A steady and capable presence, Hughes brought “a vivid participation in art and music, charm of personality and brilliance as a lecturer.” His course on art and religion added an important new element

(Murphy, 1950, p. 39) [referencing an unpublished history of the first 20 years of Pendle Hill's history]

## About the Lectures

The William Penn Lectures started as a ministry of the Young Friends' Movement of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. In the beginning of the last century, "Young Friends" was the community of young adults from both the Hicksite and the Orthodox Philadelphia Yearly Meetings, which reunited in 1955. The Young Friends Movement began the lecture series "for the purpose of closer fellowship; for the strengthening by such association and the interchange of experience, of loyalty to the ideals of the Society of Friends; and for the preparation by such common ideals for more effective work through the Society of Friends for the growth of the Kingdom of God on Earth." The name of William Penn was chosen because the Young Friends Movement found Penn to be "a Great Adventurer, who in fellowship with his friends started in his youth on the holy experiment of endeavoring 'To live out the laws of Christ in every thought, and word, and deed; and that these might become the laws and habits of the State.'"

The first run of William Penn Lectures were given between 1916 and 1966, and are warmly remembered by Friends who attended them as occasions to look forward to for fellowship with our community, inspiration, and a challenge to live into our faith. The lectures were published by the Book Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting has granted Pendle Hill and Quaker Heron Press permission to reproduce the lectures as free ebooks.

Although it was [announced](#) in 1960 that the series would be discontinued several lectures were published in the early '60s. It appears that the lectures given between 1923 and 1931 were never published. If we come upon manuscripts of these lectures, we hope to publish them in future.

In 2010, the Young Adult Friends of PYM revived the series, officially launching the second run of the William Penn Lectures in 2011. [The series was renamed](#) the *Seeking Faithfulness* series in 2016, as part of the Young Adult Friends of PYM's concern for dismantling racism within the yearly meeting and the wider society. It no longer felt rightly ordered to have a major event named after a slaveholder. The [Seeking Faithfulness](#) series is hosted by the Young Adult Friends for the benefit of the whole yearly meeting community, and invites a Friend to challenge us all to explore new ways to practice our Quaker faith. The Seeking Faithfulness series seeks to nourish our spiritual lives and call us to faithful witness in our communities and throughout the world.