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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

Abingdon Press is delighted to bring back into print *Abundant Living*. It has been one of E. Stanley Jones's best-selling books, has been translated into numerous languages, and has made a difference in the lives of more than one million people.

Originally published in 1942, *Abundant Living* was released in the middle of World War II. At that time, E. Stanley Jones was living in the United States and bringing the Christian Ashram movement (with Jesus Christ as the teacher) from India to the U.S. and Canada. The book's message that body, mind, and spirit must each be cared for in order to live a full life seems remarkably contemporary.

For this edition, the publisher has made some minor revisions but has also made every effort to retain E. Stanley Jones's voice for today's readers. The updates include spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and some language usage and references that would distract or confuse the reader. But there have been very few changes to content or style. Some references that were specific to the 1940s still have relevance for our time (e.g., the material on tobacco in week 20). References to humanity, no longer expressed as *men* and *mankind*, have been updated. Some references to God have been recast to avoid masculine pronouns. In the prayers, *thee*, *thou*, and *thine* have been changed to *you*, *your*, and *yours*. The term *African American* is used in this edition. A major effort to provide source citations where none existed was often but not always successful.

The publisher acknowledges with gratitude the efforts of Dean Merrill to keep the works of E. Stanley Jones available to readers in recent years.

FOREWORD

So Much the Better

I used to play racquetball three times a week. My favorite T-shirt bore these words: “The older I get, the better I was.” Aging is mostly another way of talking about “so much the worse.” For some special individuals, however, the more time passes “so much the better.” E. Stanley Jones is one of those few historical figures whose life and writings seem to get better—more rewarding, more relevant, more magical—the more time passes.

E. Stanley Jones (1884–1973) was a Methodist missionary most known for indigenizing Christian faith in Hindu culture. A preacher, evangelist, and best-selling author who gave away all his royalties, Jones was a prolific writer and speaker who preached more than sixty thousand sermons, twenty thousand more than John Wesley himself. Jones was also an early human rights advocate both in India and in the USA.

Jones went to India in 1907 as a missionary when just twenty-three years old, and stayed there for fifty years. Very early in his career, Jones urged Indian Christians to remain within their culture. He was convinced that Christianity could be truly indigenous in every culture. For example, we translate “Logos” as “Word,” as in John 1:1: “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word *was* God” (emphasis added). But God doesn’t think in “words.” God’s original “word” for dirt is the dirt. God’s original “word” for flower is the flower. God’s original word for “water” is the water. God’s original “word” for wind is the wind.

God’s original “word” for Truth is Jesus. In Jones’s theology, God speaks the language of incarnation. Since there are no words outside of languages, if God speaks in “words,” what language does God speak? God speaks the language of love, the language each of us hears. And the mission of Jesus, helped by the missionary, is to speak Jesus in every language of the world.

The foundation of faith, Jones believed, was not the superiority of Christianity but the supremacy of Christ. When you think of E. Stanley Jones you think of one thing: Jesus. Jones didn’t talk or write about Christianity or about being a Christian. He was all about Jesus, or what he called the “treasure” of Jesus. The kingdom of God is not a geographic domain with set boundaries and settled decrees, but a set of relationships in which Christ is Sovereign.

In Jones’s theology, what made paradise paradise was not pearly gates or golden pavement. Not crystal fountains or jasper walls. Not endless buffets or perpetual Bible studies. Jesus makes paradise “paradise.” Jesus’ paradise calls all of us not to “settle down” in our dwellings or our religious systems or our routines, but to “settle in” to a new paradigm of living. In fact, Jesus leaves us more unsettled than settled, and Jones left his contemporaries unsettled with his non-goring of sacred cows. E. Stanley Jones’s Jesus takes us where we’ve never been, by paths we’d never take, even as he calls us to go further.

While Jesus is the head of the church, Jones insisted that he is not the church's private property nor can he be held hostage by it. Jesus belongs to the world. Jones presented Jesus as a universal Christ, belonging to all cultures and races and the answer to *all* human need. In his first book, *The Christ of the Indian Road* (1925), Jones made this point clear with a threefold approach for the embodiment of Jesus in all cultures.

First, E. Stanley Jones held his lectures (not sermons) in public halls, a neutral ground for non-Christians. After a lecture he would reserve the next two hours for interactions with the audience, and would answer any question anyone chose to pose.

Second, Jones sponsored Round Table Conferences at which he positioned himself as a learner and receiver, willing to be changed and open to conversion himself. At these Round Table conversations, representatives of different faiths, including agnostics and atheists, would be invited to share what their faith or lack thereof meant to them in experience. "Tell us all what you have found through your faith," Jones would sincerely ask. "What does it do for you in your everyday life?"

Third, Jones believed that each culture must write a fifth gospel—"the gospel according to . . ." He symbolized the incarnation of faith in indigenous culture by taking a Sanskrit word and baptizing it for religious purposes. In Sanskrit, for example, *Ashram* means a place of withdrawal from the everyday world of work, or it can mean a place of intensified experience, including the most intense "experience" of all—PRAYER. In every Jones Ashram, Jesus became the guru or teacher.

E. Stanley Jones's life and service in India brought him into contact, and ultimately into a close friendship, with Mahatma Gandhi. As Gandhi worked out his own version and vision of protest—both against the British rulers of his country and the divisive caste system of his own countrymen—Jones offered Gandhi the example of Jesus as a possible model to follow. Jones suggested to Gandhi that the gospel of the kingdom defined options of love and suffering as ways and means to the end of peace and justice. Gandhi is famous for his quotation "I would suggest, first, that all of you Christians . . . must begin to live more like Jesus Christ." The quotation could just as easily have come from Jones himself, since he believed the same thing.

Mahatma Gandhi's idiosyncratic fusion of slices of Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity proved a powerful beverage for the Indian people. But Gandhi founded much of his nonviolent resistance movement upon what he learned from his Methodist friend's Jesus-centered messages. Gandhi took to heart the teachings that Jesus offered in his Sermon on the Mount, his parables of love and forgiveness, his morality of turning the other cheek, of loving one's enemies. Satyagraha transformed and ultimately freed India from its oppressors and its own oppression.

Shortly after Gandhi's assassination in 1947, Jones was asked by the Methodist Publishing House to write a book about his friendship and relationship with Gandhi. Reluctant at first, and after great hesitation, Jones finally produced his version of a biography that he called "an interpretation." These were Jones's firsthand reflections on the nonviolent yet confrontational campaigns of Gandhi and how Gandhi's strategies in a Hindu culture reflected the teachings of Jesus.

Even though E. Stanley Jones was “the Billy Graham of his day,” as someone called him, or “the most important missionary force in Christian history since the Apostle Paul,” as another person celebrated him, *Mahatma Gandhi: An Interpretation* went over like a sack of stale bread. It bombed. Sales were nil, and the feedback was deafening in its silence. Jones felt that the publication was his least successful book, and its messages completely ignored. In 1948, messages about the civil rights of all individuals, regardless of race or class, were not exactly welcomed.

A few years later, a recent graduate of Crozier Theological School and a doctoral candidate at Boston University was looking up some references about Mahatma Gandhi and happened upon E. Stanley Jones’s unsung volume. As he read about Gandhi’s commitment to a nonviolent, yet noncompliant form of protest, this young pastor and civil rights leader found a basis for forming his own resistance to abuse and oppression. The book that Jones deemed his greatest failure was pulled from the stacks of a theological library and then had enthusiastically penned in its margins “THIS IS IT!” by a single student: Martin Luther King, Jr.

You can still see King’s marginal notation in the Martin Luther King Library in Atlanta, where the full handwritten sidebar reads: “This is it! This is the way to achieve freedom for the Negro in America.” The backstory of how one of Jones’s worst-selling and least-known books (Jones’s books sold 3.5 million copies and were translated into thirty languages) became the inspiration for the civil rights movement was revealed by King himself after a convocation where he was honored by Boston University just before leaving for Sweden to receive the 1964 Nobel Peace prize.

When King was introduced to Jones’s daughter Eunice Jones Mathews at a reception following the convocation, King immediately started singing the praises of E. Stanley Jones, but not for Jones’s nominations for the Nobel Peace Prize. “E. Stanley Jones was a very important person to me, for it was his book on Mahatma Gandhi that triggered my use of Gandhi’s method of nonviolence as a weapon for our own people’s freedom in the United States.”

King had been very familiar with Gandhi’s concept of Satyagraha and had studied Gandhi’s method of nonviolence for years. But not until he read Jones’s treatment of Gandhi did it click with him that nonviolence could be the primary vehicle for civil rights reform in the United States. Dr. King formed and formulated the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott and the nonviolent resistance model of the early civil rights movement in part by what he read in a “failed” book by an author who thought that no one was interested in what Gandhi had done in India thirty years earlier. The book Jones considered his biggest failure turned out to be one of his greatest successes, and its impact is still being felt today.

Jones found the Christian movement absorbed in the ding-dong of doctrinal debate and the ping-pong of denominational scuffling and shuffling. He left it focused on Christ.

Jones found a religion where the church was a collection of objects—rules,

regulations, rituals, resolutions. He left it a communion of subjects—saints and sinners together around a common table.

Jones found evangelism a dirty word and an embarrassing presence. He left it an enchanted word and a compelling presence.

Jones found a church that was all about the harvest. Jones left it planting seeds, and seeing evangelism as “seedtime.” It’s a rare and special gift when seedtime and harvest are one season.

Jones found a gospel either social or personal. He left it a whole gospel, a total way of life.

Jones found a theology where the “human” was sinful and shameful. He left it where the “human” is what Jesus came to show us how to be.

Jones found the kingdom of God an inward and mystical concept. He left it as Christ’s alternative to all the isms, was-isms, or ism-isms of the world.

Jones found Christianity colonialist and westernized. He left it more localized and globalized.

Jones found a church where Jesus was little more than a cultural veneer, a lifestyle accessory at worst, a values choice at best. He left it where the name of Jesus is what made the church’s heart sing and its mind dance.

One of E. Stanley Jones’s granddaughters, Anne Mathews-Younes, likes to quote her grandfather’s ritual affirmation that it does not take much of a man or woman to be a Christian, but it takes all of them that there is: “It doesn’t matter how much you’ve got; it matters how much God’s got of you.” God had enough of E. Stanley Jones to change, not just the face but the very heart of humanity.

Leonard Sweet
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AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

Everyone may and can live abundantly. The business of life is to live and to live well and adequately and abundantly. But this age knows almost everything about life except how to live it. It is not enough to know *about* life—we must know *how to live* life. “I have lived through everything except life,” said one disillusioned son of this age. We can pick life to pieces and explain its constituent parts and then fail miserably to put it together again in such a way that it becomes a coordinated, harmonious whole. We are long on analysis and short on synthesis.

The reason is not hard to find. We have dissected life and desiccated it in the process. We have picked the flower of life to pieces, petal by petal, and have lost its beauty in the procedure. We have handed the body over to the doctor, the mind to the psychiatrist, and the soul to the minister, treating these three parts as separate entities. They are not separate. Life is a whole. You cannot affect one part without affecting all three.

Doctors vary in their estimate of the percentage of people who pass on mental and spiritual sickness to their bodies. In a group of doctors at a medical school, a psychiatrist said that 40 percent of the cases that came to their clinic were mental and spiritual in origin. But the surgeons present insisted that the percentage was probably 60 percent. A pastor friend of mine, while being examined by a very able doctor, remarked, “Doctor, I wish I had the equipment for dealing with people that come to me as you have for dealing with those who come to you.” The doctor replied, “Forty percent of the people who come to me should not have gone past you.” While he put the percentage at 40 percent, an outstanding neurologist put it at 80 percent, and another able doctor put it at 85 percent, with only 15 percent physical. The American Medical Association officially approves of the statement of Dr. C. Raimer Smith in *Hyeia* (June 1931), that the percentage is about 50/50.

Here, then, we have estimates varying from 40 percent to 85 percent of people who are passing on their mental and spiritual sicknesses to their bodies. But what of those whose mental and spiritual disharmonies have not yet affected their bodies in any obvious way? The human body is often very tough. It can resist and throw off not only microbes but also noxious mental and spiritual attitudes. Although these mental and spiritual disharmonies may not break the body, they do disrupt the personality and render it ineffective and unhappy.

A successful management engineer, a man who takes hold of sick businesses and puts them on their feet again, said to me that 95 percent of the difficulties in a sick business are not in the business, but in the persons concerned: They get snarled up in their lives and pass on their inner snarls to their outer circumstances. They cannot get along with themselves and hence cannot get along with others. The spirit dies out of the business, for there is no real cooperation. The business cannot be straightened out until the persons are straightened out. Hence this man often sits till past midnight talking with executives and heads of departments on how to get oneself unsnarled. As they talk, they are driven to the necessity of religion, the need of some higher Power to believe in and

get resources from in order to win release and victory. When I quoted the above to the personnel man of Bethlehem Steel, he thoughtfully replied, "You are absolutely right in saying that 95 percent of the difficulties in business are in the persons concerned. I've found it so." Dr. Irving Fisher, the economist, claims that of 5,000 failures in business that were investigated as to cause of failure, 2,500 were found to be personality failures. These 2,500 were sufficiently obvious to be traceable, but what of the personality failures so hidden that they could not be traced? They are nonetheless devastating.

Then what of those who, while not at open war with themselves and not failures outwardly, are nevertheless living under par? Someone has described the sharecroppers as "submarginal people living on submarginal land." But the submarginal people are not all on submarginal land; many of them are in the fashionable suburbs of our great cities—dwarfed souls living in mansions. "I have learned how to make money, but I have not yet learned how to live," said a very successful businessman with a sigh as the organ recital in his home came to an end—a recital that had momentarily lifted him up out of himself. He had accumulated physical resources to meet any outer emergency, only to find that life had reached behind his physical armor and had dealt him a staggering blow on the inside. There he had no resources with which to protect himself; he was unprotected at the vital spot.

But perhaps my readers are about to throw up their hands, saying, "Don't open our wounds any further. We know them too well, and they are now raw and sore. Tell us how they may be healed. Tell us how."

That last statement echoes a letter I received: "I don't know how to find God in the way that he gives me spiritual uplift and strength. How . . . how do I find that?" Note that she says she wants to find God as something beyond a concept or belief; she wants to find God as a working way to live, as Someone who gives strength to live by.

This book will attempt to put the "How" into abundant living. The "ladders" I shall use have grown out of thousands of personal interviews I have held with baffled and defeated souls in the West and in the East. The ladders have been corrected and added to by the American Ashrams, where for two weeks groups of 150 selected people entered into a corporate disciplined quest for abundant living.

The arrangement of this book will follow the one used in *Victorious Living*, to which it is a sequel. Since that writing I have been led to see, in a clearer way, the intimate connection between states of mind and soul and physical health, and have tried to expound that connection in my book *Is the Kingdom of God Realism?* This book is intended to be the applied side of that one. I take the background of that book and apply it here for daily living.

As in *Victorious Living*, I try to supply a threefold need. First, there is the need for a daily devotional book to be used in the Quiet Hour, a page a day. Second, I have gathered up the discussion into units of a week, one subject having at least a seven-day treatment. This makes it possible for the book to be used in study groups on a weekly basis. Third, I have written it as an ordinary book that can be read straight through. In other words, I have carried one theme, "abundant living," right through, beginning at

the lowest rung of the ladder and going on to the application of the theme to the social relations of life.

If I begin far down and make my lathstrings low, the mature Christian must be patient with me. For I am persuaded that we who have lived out our lives in a Christian atmosphere do not realize how utterly illiterate are many otherwise intelligent people when they are faced with the problem of the meaning of the Christian faith and how to get hold of its power. I start where the “pagans” live—many of these “pagans” are inside, as well as outside, the church.

The socially minded must also be patient with me if I begin with and lay a great deal of stress on the personal in the first part of the book, for life begins with the personal. Later I will deal with the social, perhaps too much for some to follow. Not that I would separate the personal and the social, for they are one; but for purposes of treatment I begin with that which comes first. Perhaps my position can be summed up in these words: “Christianity that doesn’t begin with the individual doesn’t begin; Christianity that ends with the individual, ends.”

One word of caution before we start on our quest. This book is dealing with abundant living in its total phases—physical as well as moral and spiritual and social. In dealing with the physical, it recognizes the function of the science of medicine and surgery in producing health. The techniques given here for healthful physical living are not intended to supplant but to supplement the work of doctors. If it is true that we pass on our mental and spiritual sicknesses to our bodies, it is also true that the body passes on its ailments to the mental and spiritual. They intertwine. If, therefore, some of my readers are in doubt as to whether their ailments are rooted in the mental and spiritual or in the physical, it might be well to have a thorough physical checkup by a competent doctor. They may discover a physical basis for their under-par life and lack of contagion. We believe that God heals the body in one or more of these ways: (1) by medicine; (2) by surgery; (3) by scientific nutrition; (4) by climate; (5) by mental suggestion; (6) by deliverance from underlying fears, resentments, self-centeredness, and guilts; (7) by the direct action of the Spirit of God upon our bodies; and (8) by the resurrection. Some ailments may have to wait for that final curing, the resurrection, for we live in a mortal world where the body is bound to break down sometime. In that case, we can not merely bear the infirmity, we can use it. We can take it up into the purposes of our lives and transmute it into character and achievement. If, therefore, you have a bodily infirmity, you have these alternatives: God will cure you through one or more of the first seven ways; or, if not, God will give you power to use it, and to make it contribute until the final cure in the resurrection.

But this preface must not end on the physical, for the purpose of this book is abundant living in the total person and in the total society.

E. Stanley Jones

WE BEGIN THE QUEST

Genesis 1:1-3; Matthew 28:20; John 1:1-5

Life can never be abundant unless it has abundant resources. It is obvious that no organism can expend more in energy than it takes in from without. Just what does “the without” consist of: physical nature and human society only? Or is there a third dimension in addition to “the within” and “the around”? Is there an “Above”? Many have decided that there is no “Above.” At least, there is none they can contact; so they have short-circuited life to “the within” and “the around.” But, to their dismay, they find that “the within” and “the around,” instead of offering resources to abundant living, offer resistances to it. “The within” is clashing, and “the without” is contradictory. The resources are in reverse, pulling the other way.

Someone has said, “If we haven’t that within us which is above us, we will soon yield to that which is around us.” We become circumstance-conditioned and circumstance-fed, and grow weak and anemic on the fare. And if we turn within for our resources, we find the well is dry. Harvard professor William Ernest Hocking, speaking as a philosopher, says: “Man comes up to a certain point and then finds he hasn’t resources in himself to complete himself, so he remains incomplete and frustrated.”*

There ensues what an able and earnest man described as “a sense of cosmic loneliness. I am not sure,” he continued, “whether my doings have anything cosmic back of them, whether I am working with anything significant, or just working meaninglessly, alone with no one to back my work or care.” An atheist has been described as “a man who has no invisible means of support.”

“A sense of cosmic loneliness”—that is the frigid thought that lays its cold hand on our hopes and our endeavors. Can it be lifted and the sense of a warm, living, cosmic Presence—who is with us and for us—take its place? If so, then that would hit the spot: the central spot. For if the central spot is empty and meaningless, then all of life turns empty and meaningless with it. But if that central spot is full and meaningful, then all of life turns meaningful with it.

O warm, living, cosmic Presence—if there be such a Presence in this inscrutable universe—help me as I begin this quest for you and your resources. I shall need your help even to inspire me to begin the quest, for I am not sure at all that you are there. I am only sure of this—that Something beyond myself ought to be there. So I begin. Help me. Amen.

* Published source unknown.

IS THERE A COSMIC PRESENCE?

Job 10:20-22; 23:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:16-19

We began yesterday with the question of whether a cosmic Presence is in the universe, and we ended by saying that Something ought to be there. If there isn't anything there, then we have no framework of reference, no star to steer our little boat by; we are tossed from wave to wave of inane and meaningless existence, with no star and hence no harbor. We are beginning to see the result of losing God; if we lose God, then we lose the meaning out of life, the bottom drops out of it. For if there is no God to give worth and meaning and goal to life, then we are only animated bubbles that rise to the cosmic surface, glisten in the sunlight for a brief space, and then burst, leaving a nasty wet spot on the surface of things. And it is all over. Or, to change the figure, "Life is a fretful child that must be played with until it falls asleep." If there is no God, we go through loud days that have no meaning and no end, a weary round of nothingness.

We know now that, if we lose our sky, we shall soon lose our earth. An artist said of his nature paintings, "I can get the picture right, if I get my sky right." If you can get hold of God, or God gets hold of you, then the sky is right and everything falls into its place, the whole thing meaningful.

Someone has said, "Man has never been the same since God died. He has taken it very hard." He has. For life has become hard, since the sky has turned to brass. "I sometimes wish that God were back," said a wistful soul.

A modern man of insight reported a dream: "I thought," said this friend, "that I saw you standing on a hilltop and we, a great host of us, were crowding around eagerly waiting for what you might say. We could see your lips framing the word, but no sound came. We tried to help you by calling out the word your lips were sharing; but we also were dumb! And that word was. . . ." Was it God?

O God, if there be a God—I still have to say that—help me to get this matter clear. For my sky is overcast. In the words of the Breton fisherman: "O, God, thy sea is so great and my boat is so small." I need a star to steer by. Let the clouds open and let me see—really see. Amen.

GOD FADING OUT

Genesis 27:35-36; 31:53 (Moffatt); 32:24-30

How has God faded out of the mind of this age? Well, the age, like thoughtless children, believed that the toyland of material wealth was a sufficient world; then God faded out, smothered by preoccupation. As a prosperous New Yorker and his wife came to the small town where they had grown up, he said to her complacently, “Well, that’s where we came from, dear.” And she replied with an unexpected answer: “Yes, and I am just wondering where we got to.” She felt the emptiness amid the plenty.

A certain Professor Summer put it this way: “I never consciously gave up a religious belief. It was as if I had put my beliefs into a drawer, and when I came again to look for them the drawer was empty.” The thing has happened to this generation that happened to the three generations of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jacob could say, “my father’s God, the God of Abraham, the Awe of Isaac” (Gen. 31:42 Moffatt).

God was God to Abraham; he had ventured forth with God, his “Friend,” who was intimate and firsthand and real. But in the next generation, God was not “the God of Isaac,” but only the “Awe of Isaac.” God had faded and become secondhand. Still Isaac stood in “Awe” of his father’s God. In the third generation—in Jacob—the result of this gradual fading of God began to be shown in the decaying morals of Jacob; moral rottenness appeared. He stole his brother’s birthright. He was ready to take the main chance without regard to God.

The same things have happened with us: Our forebears had firsthand experience of God through the evangelical revival of the nineteenth century. The next generation clung to the church for their fathers’ sake, but God was only the “Awe”—the afterglow of a fading faith. The third generation is reaping the result of a fading faith, which is producing decaying morals and a decaying civilization. Our loss of God is working out in moral decay. We are going to pieces morally, for we have gone to pieces religiously. We have lost God and have thus lost the basis of morals.

Jacob met God on Jabbok’s banks in his midnight wrestle and emerged a new man (Gen. 32). Unless we, like Jacob, find a moral renewal in finding God, we are done for.

O God, I know that with the loss of you some chord has dropped out of my symphony. Life has lost its music. But now I see further; I see that I have no basis for action, no moral world that makes sense without you. I must find you again, as Jacob did. Amen.

WE CANNOT LIVE BY A NO

Deuteronomy 32:20; Mark 4:40; 11:22; Hebrews 10:38-39

We saw yesterday that if God goes, then the basis of our moral universe is gone. A lie detector has shown that only 3 percent of employees in department stores were honest in character; only 5 percent of tellers in banks were dependably honest if there were no outer measures for checking fraud. Suppose we double the percentages of the “lie detector”; nevertheless, a nation living on this narrow margin of moral reserves is drawing too heavily on its resources and nearing moral bankruptcy. Before the war, our crime bill could have paid our national debt in two years. Our moral basis is decaying. We must get God back. But can we?

I think we will, for the half-gods that have taken the place of God are letting us down. If reason cannot lead us to God, then disillusionment may drive us there, or sorrow may yet “toss us to his breast.” But is there any hope of a reasonable faith? Can we be believers with the consent of our whole beings, including our minds? I think we can, for the situation is clearing for the modern person.

Humanity is beginning to see that we cannot live, as we once thought, on the denial of other people’s faith. The generation of people that lived on denials soon found themselves disillusioned even with their disillusionments. They had “three sneers for everything and three cheers for nothing.” And they soon found they couldn’t live by sneers; to live by sneers is poor fare. If we should walk to the table each day and look over the food and then turn away in high disdain, we could get away with this disdainful attitude for awhile, but only for awhile. In the end, hunger would bite us and drive us to affirm something about food and to act on our affirmation. Both physically and spiritually, we are positive beings and cannot live on a negation. We cannot live by a no; we must live by a yes. And that yes must be God, or it will let us down.

The future of the world is in the hands of believers, for the nonbelievers cannot act. They are suffering from “the paralysis of analysis.” They can only deny.

O God, I come to you for clearer light. The light is dawning—I now see that without you my universe tumbles to pieces. With you it makes sense; my sums come out right. Help me to find you—the Key. Amen.

COULD THE UNIVERSE HAVE HAPPENED BY CHANCE?

Job 38:31-33, 36; 42:1-6

The situation is clearing for the humanity. We see more and more that we must affirm some yes about the universe, and that yes may be God. For how could this universe come by chance into a cosmic orderliness, which stretches from the molecule to the outermost star and controls everything between? And how could this orderliness just happen to stay by chance through millions of years? That would be a stark materialistic miracle—universal chaos by chance gives birth to universal order! The one who believes that must spell “chance” with a capital C and mean by it, God. How long do you think it would take for you to throw up a font of type into the air and have it come down by chance into a poem of Browning? I asked a printer that question and he replied, “Both you and the type would wear out first.”

Someone has figured out the odds it would take for the world to have happened by chance, and the figures go round the world thirty-five times. “A preposterous figure,” says Dr. Millikan the scientist. Sir James Jeans refers to the analogy that it would take a hundred million years for a hundred thousand monkeys, pecking at random on a hundred thousand typewriters, to happen by chance upon the plays of Shakespeare.* And then, after they had happened upon the arrangement of the letters, they wouldn’t know what the letters meant!

When I pick up a book and see that there is intelligence in it (that sometimes does happen!), then I know that behind that book is an intelligent mind expressing itself through that intelligence. When I look at the universe, I find that it responds to intelligence; it can be intelligently studied. Intelligence has gone into it, into its very structure. The simple conclusion must be that behind that intelligence, which is built into the structure of things, is an intelligent mind, and since that built-in intelligence seems to be universal, I will have to spell it in capitals: a Universal Mind.

O God—I say the word now with more confidence—I begin to see you; help me to act as though you are. You are beginning to come into my intelligence. Help me this day to take you into the rest of my life. Amen.

* *The Mysterious Universe* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1932), 18, 21.

THE INTELLIGENT OUT OF THE NONINTELLIGENT?

Psalm 14:1; Isaiah 8:19-20; John 14:8-11

Yesterday we began to see how impossible it would be for the nonintelligent to bring forth the intelligent. “Out of nothing, nothing comes,” is the universal law. But here is intelligence; you and I have it. Did that intelligence come out of the nonintelligent? If so, that is a materialistic miracle. Nature brought forth something it didn’t have. Again, you and I have purpose; we choose. Did that purpose come out of a nonpurposive universe? That too would be a materialistic miracle. As someone puts it: “Do we see the inkpot determine to write a Bible? Do the stones decide to come together to form a Taj Mahal? If one does not believe in God, one is forced to believe in miracle, the very thing the nonbeliever condemns in the believer.

Suppose in the end I find that there is no God, that belief in God was all a mistake. Then I would not regret having held to a God, for life works better with this hypothesis. My life sums come out better; the results are superior. The universe is meaningful, and my life is happier. Moreover, I would rise up in the end and confront the universe and say: “Well, I thought better of you; I thought there was Intelligence, and now I see that there is none. I thought there was Purpose; now I see that the universe is purposeless. You have let me down. I am superior to you, for I acted on a higher hypothesis than you could sustain. I have thereby been superior. I cannot regret that I was.”

A professor of electrical engineering, after passing through agnosticism to faith, put it this way: “If anyone could prove to me scientifically that this thing I have found is not true, I would still have to believe it, for the universe wouldn’t make sense without it.” He was profoundly right.

The universe does not make sense without God. As Voltaire says: “If there were no God, we would have to invent one to keep people sane.”*

O God, I am being hemmed into a faith in you. Life is closing in on me and forcing me to faith. Faith is becoming inescapable. And yet I would not escape, for escape would be escape from sanity, from the Open Door. Help me to enter. Amen.

*In Bertha Conde, *What’s Life All About?* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1930), 23. https://archive.org/stream/MN41780ucmf_5/MN41780ucmf_5_djvu.txt, accessed April 14, 2014.

GOD IN THE UNEXPLAINED GAPS?

Isaiah 25:9; 40:28, 31; Malachi 2:10

While the matter of God is clearing, doubts still linger. Has not the doctrine of evolution made God unnecessary? Is not the whole thing being worked out by resident forces? Isn't science filling up more and more of the unexplained gaps in nature—gaps into which we used to put God?

We made a mistake in trying to put God into the unexplained gaps, for science has come along and has filled these up. Then God was gone! Instead of putting God into the gaps, we should have put God into the intelligence, the order, the dependability, the very process, for there God belongs. That intelligence, order, and dependableness cannot get along without God! The universe is orderly and dependable, because God is an orderly, dependable God. God works by law and order instead of by whim and notion.

About evolution—When you say that “resident forces” are capable of producing the universe, we ask: How could resident forces move toward intelligent ends without being intelligent? Toward moral ends without being moral? You smuggle God into the process and then say God is not necessary! But God would be as necessary for evolution as for a once-for-all creation. Which takes the more intelligence: to strike a billiard ball straight into the pocket at one stroke, or to strike a ball, which in turn strikes another, and that another, and that another, until the last one goes into the pocket? Obviously, the latter stroke. God seemingly creates something, which creates something, and the whole thing moves on to a moral universe in which you and I stand, not pushed from behind by blind forces, but beckoned to from before by ideals—a universe of moral freedom, where our evolution is in our hands; we can go up or down according to choice. The framework has been created in which the greatest thing in the world can emerge by choice: character.

O God, I begin to see the school, the framework in which I have to win or lose the battle of life. The framework is hard, unbending, exacting, but I am grateful; for while the rules of the school are strict, they are working for one end—my character. Help me obey and help me to win. Amen.