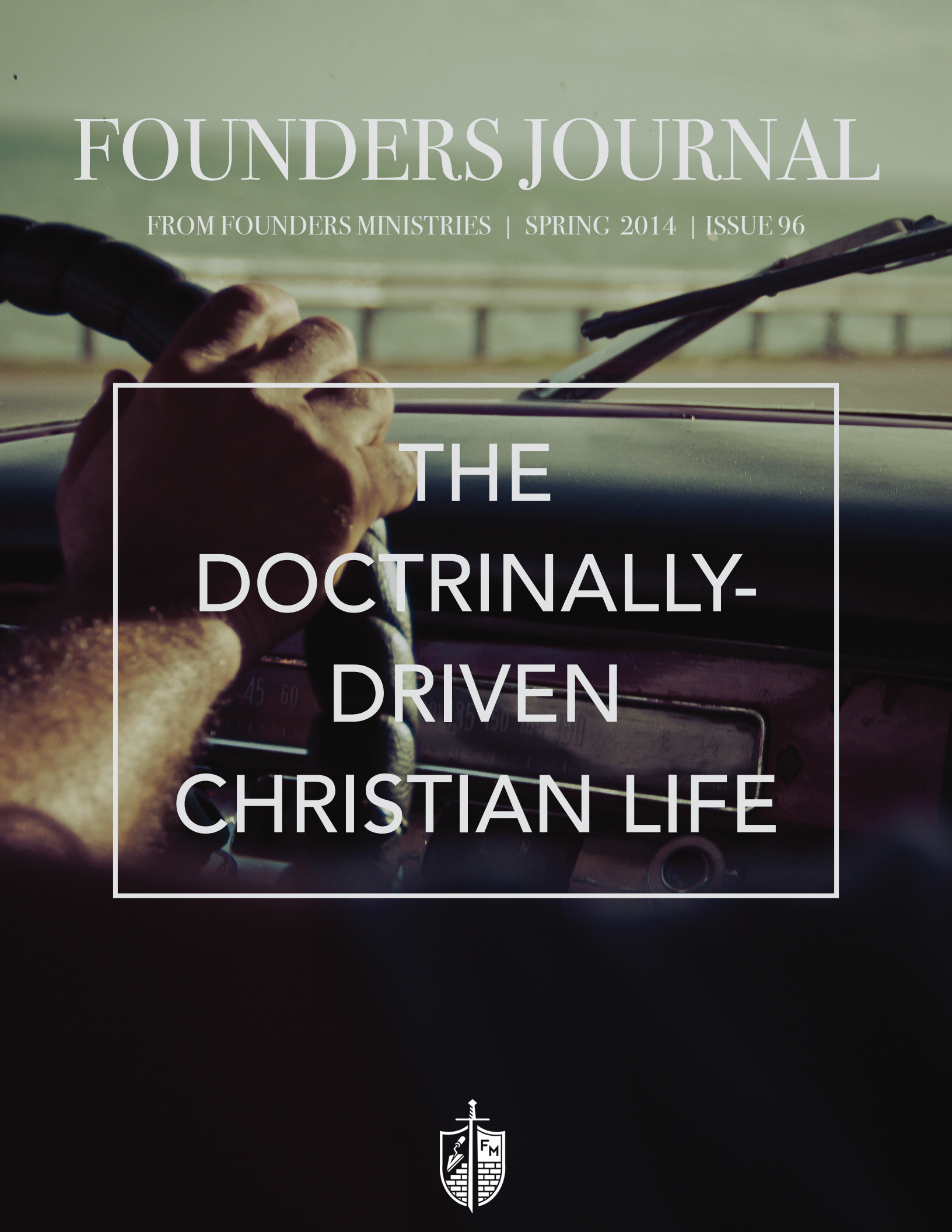


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THE DOCTRINALLY- DRIVEN CHRISTIAN LIFE



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Doctrinally-driven Piety among Nineteenth Century Baptists

Editorial Introduction

Tom Nettles

In a pamphlet published by the Baptist General Tract Society in 1852 entitled *The More Excellent Way*, John L. Dagg (1794–1884) wrote, “No religion is of divine origin, in which spiritual knowledge and spiritual affections are not united.” This theme drove Dagg’s writing ministry from beginning to end. He always wrote to edify the saints, to glorify God, to press truth on the mind in a way that begged for transformed affections, and, also, to challenge the unbeliever with the infinite danger and moral turpitude of not pursuing a saving knowledge of the triune God. A clear illustration of this is the statement of his intent given in the preface to his *Manual of Theology*. “In preparing it, my aim has been to present the system of Christian doctrine with plainness and brevity; and to demonstrate, at every point, its truth, and its tendency to sanctify the heart.” In the first book, the first chapter, the first sentence, Dagg wrote, “The study of religious truth ought to be undertaken and prosecuted from a sense of duty, and with a view to the improvement of the heart.” He continued, “When learned, it ought not to be laid on the shelf, as an object of speculation; but it should be deposited deep in the heart, where its sanctifying power ought to be felt.” In closing his discussion of the blessings of grace, dealing with the subject of the Christian’s daily warfare, Dagg caressed his cherished theme again in saying, “It is therefore our duty, that we may grow in grace, to cherish the holy affections, which arise heavenward, and to mortify the carnal affections, which are earthward in their tendency.” [303] Duty, to Dagg, was a beautiful word and arose from a proper evaluation of the excellence and worthiness of an object. That one perceives the pressing nature of duty, therefore, means that one has a perception of the moral excellence of spiritual things and is thus driven by moral oughtness commensurate with the goodness of the object. After a lengthy exposition and defense of the doctrines of grace, Dagg summarized some of the spiritual benefits of a hearty reception of those truths by proposing this scene: “The full salvation, as it comes forth from the triune God, in its completeness, and perfect adaptedness to our wretched and lost condition,

becomes the object of our admiring delight, and calls forth our joyful ascriptions of praise.” [338]

Dagg’s words echoed a theme that had been set for decades in Baptist theological culture. The First London Confession of 1644 placed the beginning of piety in the work of the Spirit in granting faith. Such Spirit-granted and Spirit-driven faith would instinctively embrace the Bible as its guide and all of its doctrines as the most exalted and desirable truths for mental contemplation.

That faith is the gift of God wrought in the hearts of the elect by the Spirit of God, whereby they come to see, know, and beleieve the truth of the Scriptures, & not only so, but the excellencies of them above all other writings and things in the world, as they hold forth the glory of God in his attributes, the excellency of Christ in his nature and offices, and the power of the fulnesse of the Spirit in its workings and operations; and thereupon are inabled to cast the weight of their soules upon this truth thus beleaved [XXII].

Richard Fuller (1805-1876) joined with this same witness expressing an aspect of this commitment to the excellence and worthiness of biblical revelation and Christian truth at the first Southern Baptist Convention meeting in 1846 in Richmond, Virginia. Fuller preached from Haggai 2:7 on “The desire of all nations shall come.” He couched the concept of desire in its threefold nuance of expectation, wants, and happiness. Every nation and every religion witnesses to the expectation of a redeemer planted in human society and conscience by God’s clothing of Adam and Eve, Abel’s sacrifice of blood, and Noah’s post-deluge sacrifice of clean animals. Every want of the human soul will be finally unmet outside the full redemption of the Messiah, the God-man Jesus of Nazareth. And happiness, because “the mind of man can rejoice only in truth, and Christ is ‘the truth.’” Men’s affections “can only be satisfied with objects worthy of it, and Christ alone proposes those objects” that fix the heart and without which “the passions wander in unrest and pining through creation, fretting themselves with things gross and sensual, whose possession only stings us into a consciousness of our immortality, and whose best gifts are only a pleasing degradation.” But God is the life of the soul and “Christ alone reveals this Being, and reinstates us in his favor and love.” When Christ as the incarnate Word, the “Invisible steps forth upon this scene of visible things, on such a mission and in such a form, must not our hearts yield, melt, love, worship, adore.” This vision of the surpassing beauty and glory of Christ in His redemptive mission, prompted Fuller to press the corresponding “duties and the solemn responsibilities which the subject charges home upon us all.” Obedience to the Great Commission, an unalloyed intention to preach Christ, and confidence in the purpose of God grip one’s soul in light of the truth that Jesus indeed in the “Delight of all nations.” Considering,

therefore what God has promised and “how intent and busy is the whole Trinity in the grand scheme of salvation, what difficulty can move us?” Christ is enthroned, and His throne is forever and ever, “all the resources of the universe are in the hands of the ascended Jesus,” and our every desire is consummated in the contemplation of His mysterious incarnation, His covenantally secure death, His victorious resurrection, and His final visible subjection of all things to himself when “the pealing chorus of a renovated world shall answer back the thundering acclamations of the skies, and every creature which is in heaven and on the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them shall say, Alleluia! The Lord omnipotent reigneth; Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.” Truth and affection finally are united with no inconsistencies remaining.

Just as concerned about the sanctifying influence of Christian truth and its magnetic beauty, Charles D. Mallary (1801-1864), a pastor, educator, and first corresponding secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention published a book with the Southern Baptist Publication Society in 1860 entitled *Soul Prosperity*. Following Jonathan Edwards, as Dagg himself often did, Mallary noted, “A ready, active, and sweet discernment of the beauty and glory of divine things constitutes an important element in what we understand by soul prosperity.” He went on to assert that such discernment is “an essential part of spiritual knowledge, and is necessary to our progression in a heart-affecting acquaintance with the word of God.” [18] According to Mallary, soul prosperity must begin in regeneration for in it all spiritual life is given us and necessarily and relentlessly drives us toward the conformity of our souls to the image of God. “There must be a deep, and thorough, and radical change in our moral natures.” [8] Showing his oneness with Dagg on this concept, Mallary gives a poetic flourish to the rise and eventual consummation of soul prosperity as initiated by regeneration. “That sweet, celestial music of the faculties which moved on so harmoniously in Adam’s breast, but was broken and ruined by the fall, strikes up again its notes in the bosom, not indeed in a perfect strain, yet in humble imitation of the primeval song, giving pledges of improving melody through future years, and of perfect harmony to be regained in the mansions of the blessed.” [8] So with the doctrines of divine sovereignty, Mallary joined Dagg in seeing them as a powerful source of soul prosperity. Acknowledging that these truths were “too superficially considered by many of God’s people” he claimed that the doctrines surrounding God’s sovereignty, “especially in the bestowment of the saving benefits of His grace,” would lead to the “highest attainments in solid, masculine, well-proportioned piety.” He then quoted the texts of Daniel 4:35; Isaiah 46:10; Psalm 76:10; Acts 4:27, 28; John 6:44; Romans 9:18; Ephesians 2:8; Ephesians 1:11; Ephesians 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:9. All of these he labeled as “sanctifying instructions of the word of God.” Then he summarized their teaching as clearly demonstrating “that God is the uncontrolled sovereign of the universe; that the very wrath and rebellion of His creatures are employed by Him to accomplish His fixed and immutable decrees; that guilty, hell-deserving sinners are absolutely dependent on His unmerited favor for pardon and salvation; that, in bestowing eternal life on this man or on that, He is not controlled by the will or works of the creature, but by His

own free, sovereign, gracious pleasure; and that His saving blessings are bestowed through Christ, according to His stable and everlasting purposes.” Having given this formidable barrage of doctrinal summaries, Mallary wrote, “These things are revealed for us to study, to believe and love, and that in thus doing our soul may prosper.” [295]

Dagg, Fuller, and Mallary would agree with perfect unanimity that any doctrine, including the doctrines of grace, separated from its full context in the whole of revealed truth will not accomplish the purpose of carrying us forward to spiritual maturity. “Mutilated, fragmentary doctrines,” Mallary noted, “make but fragmentary Christians, and when, urged with blind zeal and dogmatic violence, often tear churches and communities into fragments.” [298]. These doctrines, therefore, must be set in the context of the entire spectrum of biblical revelation so that we might see the full light of truth and not merely stare at the band of violet. No matter how incomprehensible God’s sovereignty may be or how mysterious his particular predestining love, all of it is “perfectly consistent with human accountability.” [298]

That is one of the reasons that this issue of the *Founders Journal* holds interest for our readers. Jared Longshore has done a study of Dagg’s *Manual of Theology* and his *Manual of Church Order* with a view of showing how the whole of each is designed to lead us to greater devotion, purer practice, and more complete holiness. The doctrinal treatise describes the ways of God with men in creation, revelation, providence, and redemption. None of the truths is given for mere mental challenge but for moral change and heart devotion. The description of church order focuses on God’s intent to give His people a community in which they have a constant source of admonition, designated means, as well as concrete opportunity to express love for God and love for neighbor and brother.

Another 19th to early 20th century figure, little known in our century, Thomas Lewis Johnson (1836-1921) had a distinguished career as a preacher and a missionary after having spent twenty-eight years as a slave. He was ten years old, under the yoke, when Richard Fuller preached at the first formal meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, and, in the sermon just consulted, presented with justifiable pathos, in prophetic intuition, and with lamentable irony a word concerning the dilemma of slavery. Having just called the newly formed convention to an earnest, sacrificial, and energetic commitment to world missions, he turned on the auditory and said, “Nor is it only the heathen at a distance; among ourselves how many thousands of the sons of Ethiopia are stretching out their hands, and how have they been neglected.” Then in the dark tones of a sober warning, Fuller continued, “My brethren, let us awake to our responsibility ere the wrath of God wake us to sleep no more, and the cry which goeth up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth attract his righteous indignation.” [3:280] Johnson, converted through the witness of a black man, freed by the war, and called to ministry, studied in England at Spurgeon’s College and served as a missionary in the Cameroons. Spurgeon’s influence on Johnson was quite remarkable. Jared Skinner, with excellent research and composition, has given permission to

publish his results in this journal. Skinner included some encouragement for more historical work to be done on this fascinating figure, but I have limited the presentation mainly to some brief biographical information about Johnson and his relationship with Spurgeon in particular. Between 1882 and 1909, Johnson's autobiography, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave* went through seven editions. Surely, as Skinner insists, his life should call for some careful attention. Hopefully readers of the *Founders Journal* will find more reason to admire the mysterious sovereignty of God in bringing about, in one life, a movement from a hopeless and helpless enmeshment in slavery to the freedom of Christian faith, the fulfilled opportunity for theological education and ministry on three continents.

Though Dagg and Mallary lived in the South during its days of defending slavery and would have little cultural context for expecting a slave to accomplish all that Johnson did, they would bow in gratitude to the divine grace that could take a former slave and make him a prime example of soul prosperity, and one in whom spiritual knowledge and spiritual affections were united.

That heart devotion, practical ministry, and firm grasp and commitment to doctrinal purity and knowledge may vibrantly co-inhere is the real desire of every soul born of God. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus in the Son of God?" (1 John 5:3-5). C. D. Mallary suggested a prayer that might be given earnest consideration—in spirit and intent if not exact content—as we seek to make progress in the vital necessity and joyful journey toward soul prosperity. I give this as a prayer for the spiritual good that might be done by this edition of the *Founders Journal*.

You that dwellest in pure and glorious light, and are the source of all true light and wisdom to your creatures, shine graciously upon my dark mind, and guide aright my present meditations. Holy Father, condescend to favor me with right apprehensions of your blessed word, that in its light I may clearly see what constitutes my highest prosperity; and give me right apprehensions of my own spiritual state, that I may know whether I have ever been made a partaker of this precious and ennobling benefit. If hitherto I have been deceived as to my true condition, and have been crying Peace, peace, when there is no peace, drive far away this awful delusion, and grant me true repentance, and a free pardon for all my aggravated offenses. But if, through the riches of Your grace, my feet have been rescued from the paths of sin and folly, and set in the right way, if I have been blessed with joy and peace in believing, and a scriptural hope of everlasting life, I would humbly and gratefully acknowledge Your favors

vouchsafed to a sinner so vile and unworthy. Still does it become me to mingle my hearty thanksgiving with lowly and contrite confession. Since first I knew Your goodness, I have grieved Your Holy Spirit, broken my solemn vows, and often fallen, I fear, into sinful declensions. For the sake of Your well-beloved Son, my gracious Mediator, who bore my sins in His own body on the tree, pardon all my wanderings, and grant me grace that I may return with established purpose and renovated love to Your delightful service. May my present investigations be made eminently subservient to my spiritual good. Grant unto me heavenly discernment, that I may rightly test the reflection that may pass under my review, and so strengthen me that my mind and heart may retain, for their reproof, instruction, and comfort, whatever may be true, excellent, and improving. Grant unto me a meek, submissive, and teachable spirit; and as a newborn babe may I desire the sincere milk of the word, that I may grow thereby. Guard me against all error, guide me into all truth, establish me in every holy virtue, and fit my soul with true prosperity for the Redeemer's sake. Amen.

Doctrine According to Godliness

The Spiritual Purpose of John L Dagg's Manual of Theology

Jared R. Longshore

As Francis Scott Key stood captive on a British ship watching the “rockets red glare” and receiving inspiration for the *Star Spangled Banner*, John Dagg lay beneath those “bombs bursting in air” in what he called, “a fearful night.”¹ It was a scary night indeed in Baltimore, September 13, 1814, and although “the dawns early light” of the 14th would result in “the stars and stripes still floating in the breeze,”² John Dagg and his fellow soldiers had no idea the story would go that way. Dagg tried to sleep underneath the “roar of cannon and bombs,”³ but was awaked three times to prepare for a battle that never came. In the heat of a battle like this one, two things become abundantly clear: first, there is such a thing as good and evil; second, life in this world is very temporary. Dagg would later become a theologian and these two truths served as pillars for his study of religion: man is both *moral* and *immortal*. To put it in the words of Dagg himself, “That men are immortal and under a moral government, by which their future state will be made happy or miserable, according to their conduct in the present life, are fundamental truths of religion.”⁴

If human beings are moral and immortal then any study of the divine must have ramifications on their life. First, if they are moral then they study God as their judge. Any discoveries made of this moral judge's character or judgments ought to greatly affect their behavior. Second, if human beings are immortal, then their study of God and response to Him holds eternal consequences. Dagg's vision of theology shows us that doctrine and life are inseparable and the former informs the later. Dagg's *Manual of Theology* was written on the premise that the spiritual life is shaped by theology because the very nature of divine truth necessitates a moral response from human beings. Certain aspects of Dagg's doctrine will be analyzed with a view to their impact on spiritual life.

First, theology is done by means of revelation. In order to learn truths about God and the ways of God one depends on revelation. Dagg pointed out, “We need information respecting that unseen world and the right method of preparing for it, and no other knowledge can be so important to us as this. Can it be that we have no means of acquiring it?”⁵ One’s own conscience and the conscience of others serve as revelation, though they are scarred by the fall. In addition, the natural course of this world speaks to us of the divine. Yet these three sources do not compare to the final source: the Word of God. Yet for our purposes what is critical to see is that each of these sources of revelation are sources of God’s revelation. God is the One who has written His law on the heart of humanity.⁶ He is the One who has created this world, ordered its events, and breathed out His holy Scriptures. Therefore, since the divine moral governor of the world has communicated to moral beings, those moral beings have an obligation, *a duty*, to attend to that revelation. Thus the very nature of revelation requires a spiritual life of study or heeding of the Word of God.

Second, theology at its core is the study of God Himself. The central information that God reveals in His word is information about Himself. Yet humans are not instructed merely to know facts about God without being affected in the heart. None can engage in the study of the divine with the detachment characteristic of some biographical study. In such a case the nature of the historical figure does not require that the study be done in love. On the other hand, the nature of God insists that the one who seeks to know Him does so in love. Dagg makes it clear that love is not only a result of knowing God but must be the manner of heart while the study of theology is being executed.

It is not necessary that we should enter into a formal demonstration that God exists, or a formal investigation of his attributes, before we begin the duty of loving him. We already know enough of him for this; and to postpone the performance of the duty until we have completed our investigations, is to commence them with unsanctified hearts, and in rebellion against God.⁷

Dagg continues to show the attributes of God, which consist not only of natural attributes such as omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence; but consists also of moral excellencies like goodness, truth, justice, holiness and wisdom. Since these moral attributes of God are so beautiful, one cannot truly know God in His holiness without a change of moral perception. The nature of God, therefore, insists upon the study of theology being done in love. To the extent that it is done so, it will be profitable; but to the extent it is not, it will fail.

If, from what we already know of God, we admire and love him, we shall desire to know more of him, and shall prosecute the study with profit and delight; but, if we have already shut him out of our hearts, all our

intellectual investigations respecting him may be expected to leave us in spiritual blindness.⁸

Third, theology is not merely the study of God's attributes but includes the study of God's will and works. Whereas the study of God Himself requires love, the study of God's will and works motivates joy and delight in the spiritual life. The reason for this is that God's work in creating and sustaining the world is a manifestation of His own holy character. Thus the nature of God as *existing* necessitates love, but the nature of God *manifested* results in delight. Dagg clarifies,

In the existence and attributes of God a sufficient foundation is laid for the claim of supreme love to him; but, for the active exercise of the holy affection, God must be viewed not merely as existing, but as acting. To produce delight in him, his perfections must be manifested.⁹

Therefore, what God commands to be done in this world and what God actually does in this world are both manifestations of His holy goodness to be looked upon with joy. God's work in creation and providence testify to His glory, when His work is seen He must not only be acknowledged, but treasured.

Fourth, theology includes the doctrine of mankind in relation to God. The Scriptures make clear that God created man good yet man fell into sin by breaking God's command. Human sin is not merely a failure to reach our own potential or a wronging of our neighbor, but an offense against holy God. If this aspect of the nature of human sinfulness is not properly seen then the correct response of the spiritual life will not occur: "In order to sincere repentance toward God, it is indispensable that we should understand that we have sinned against him. Men do not usually compare their actions with his righteous law, but with the actions of other men."¹⁰ Dagg shows that humanity has fallen into sin resulting in a state of depravity, condemnation and helplessness. This accurate knowledge informs our practice of repentance. Since mankind is depraved, condemned and helpless then repentance is not a hearty try to do better or a pulling oneself up by the bootstraps. Rather,

Genuine repentance is a deep-felt and abiding sense of sin, a condemnation of ourselves before God on account of it, a turning away from it with abhorrence and loathing, and a fixed purpose of soul never again to commit it, or be at peace with it. This sense of sin drives the soul to Christ.¹¹

Here again it proves true that one cannot engage in theology detached from spiritual life. One cannot faithfully study the sinfulness of humanity without the proper result of repentance.

Fifth, the study of theology does not leave mankind hopeless in sin but instructs that a Savior has come named Jesus Christ. Dagg speaks to both the person and work of Christ. Christ, in His person, is both human and divine. He has always existed in glory with His Father, yet He was

made flesh, for He “did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant.”¹² Christ then was resurrected and ascended in exaltation into heaven to sit on His glorious throne. Christ then stands as the mediator between sinful man and holy God as a prophet, priest and king. Such an extraordinary revelation as this requires a spiritual response in the life of moral humans, for,

We have contemplated the divinity of Jesus Christ, not merely in these transient outbursts which occurred while he was on earth, but in the full demonstration which has been given since he ascended to heaven, and the impression on our hearts ought to be strong and abiding.¹³

Since a study of Christ reveals Him as the salvific mediator between God and man then the appropriate response in one’s spiritual life is faith.

Sixth, theology speaks not only to the nature of God the Father, which necessitates love; or God the Son, which necessitates faith; but also the nature of God the Spirit, which necessitates a spiritual life of dependence. Dependence is the appropriate response to a theology of the Spirit for the Spirit is revealed as “the sanctifier and comforter of God’s people.”¹⁴ Dagg emphasizes that the Holy Spirit is a person distinct from both the Father and the Son. He also shows that the Spirit is a divine person along with the Father and the Son. When both the work and personhood of the Spirit are rightly understood, one cannot help but respond in dependence upon this blessed comforter, for “No believer, who has any just sense of his dependence on the Holy Spirit, for the divine life which he enjoys, and all its included blessings, can be indifferent towards the Agent by whom all this good is bestowed.”¹⁵

Seventh, the very nature of saving grace prompts a spiritual life of humble gratitude. Dagg goes to great lengths to show that grace is undeserved favor from God to man. He speaks of the covenant of grace, the blessings of grace, and the sovereignty of grace in an effort to illustrate the unworthiness of man to receive such kindness from God. The previous theological revelation of mankind’s sinfulness and depravity serves to show the immensity of God’s grace, “That salvation is entirely of divine grace, may be argued from the condition in which the Gospel finds mankind. We are justly condemned, totally depraved, and, in ourselves, perfectly helpless.”¹⁶ Also, once grace is rightly understood then other aspects of theology, such as faith, can be more fully comprehended, “Faith renounces all reliance on our own works, all expectation of favor on their account; and asks and receives every blessing as the gift of divine grace through Jesus Christ.”¹⁷ Thus leading to the appropriate response, “When salvation is so received, all boasting is effectually excluded.”¹⁸ Dagg expounds the true grace of God by highlighting justification, adoption, regeneration, sanctification, perseverance, and perfection. He explores the full riches of God’s grace by instructing on election, particular redemption, and effectual calling. Such a thoroughly Calvinistic understanding of God’s grace promotes a response of humble gratitude for it knocks out the pillars of pride men stand upon:

The doctrine of grace is the remedy for self-righteousness. It is a remedy which the unholy heart greatly dislikes, but if once received, it proves an effectual antidote to the evil. It slays all self-dependence, and lays the guilty sinner prostrate at the feet of mercy.¹⁹

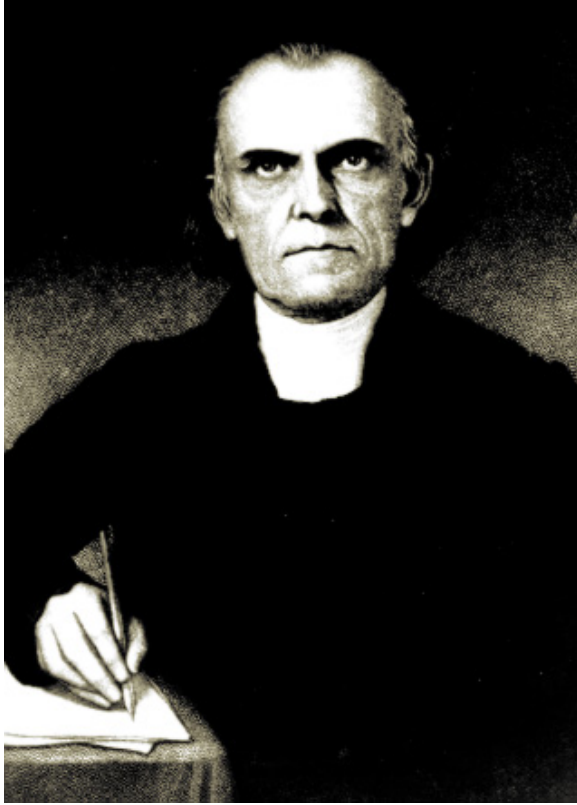
Eighth, no theology is complete without the study of the future world, which by its very essence mandates a spiritual life of preparation. Dagg states it plainly,

Every man knows that the time of his continuance on earth is short and uncertain and while fully assured that he must leave this world, and that the time of his departure is just at hand, to make no inquiry concerning the world to which he is going, or to disregard authentic information concerning it, and the means of obtaining happiness there, is folly in the extreme.²⁰

Dagg teaches that a full doctrine of the future world includes the immortality of the soul, resurrection, the last judgment, heaven, and hell. In light of the moral judgment that is coming to all, the eternal torment of hell, and the eternal pleasure of heaven; the spiritual life of those who study such a doctrine ought to be transformed by the study. This study does not produce people who are so heavenly minded they are no earthly good. Rather, “the motives to holiness, and to diligence in the pursuit of it, are drawn so abundantly from the future world, a knowledge of that world is of great importance to all men.”²¹ This final aspect of theology serves as a magnificent seal to the argument sustained throughout: theology by its very essence shapes the spiritual life. Dagg, full of experiential religion, even presses his reader at the end to apply the theology presented throughout,

Reader, what are your prospects in the future world? Have you received the love of the truth, that you may be saved? Does the truth as it is in Jesus enter your heart, with sanctifying power? Are you daily striving, by a holy life, to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.²²

In conclusion, Dagg argues that the spiritual impact of theology is apparent from the nature of the study itself, as well as the nature of those doing the study. Theology cannot be done apart from the spiritual practice of the heart and no spirituality can be faithfully exercised apart from a robust theology. Theology in all of its various aspects informs and shapes the spiritual life. The nature of revelation requires a spiritual life of diligent study. The nature of God Himself requires such a pursuit be done in love. God’s will and works move the heart to delight in the glory of God manifested. Human sinfulness cannot be examined apart from a heart of repentance. The nature of the person and work of Christ demands a spiritual life of faith while the Holy Spirit leads one to a life of dependence. The sovereign grace of God when truly understood will result in humble gratitude, and the study of the future world mandates a spiritual life of preparation.



John L. Dagg

¹ Dagg, J.L. *A Manual of Theology* (reprint. Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Pub., 2009), 16.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 17.

⁵ Ibid., 18.

⁶ Ibid., 19.

⁷ Ibid., 43.

⁸ Ibid., 44.

⁹ Ibid., 96.

¹⁰ Ibid., 140.

¹¹ Ibid., 139.

¹² Philippians 2:6-7 (ESV).

¹³ Dagg, *A Manual of Theology*, 231.

¹⁴ Ibid., 241.

¹⁵ Ibid., 235.

¹⁶ Ibid., 259.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 337.

²⁰ Ibid., 340.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 379.

Obeying Together

The Shaping Influence of John Dagg's Manual of Church Order on the Corporate Christian Life

Jared R. Longshore

The Christian life is not to be lived in isolation, but community. When the Spirit fell upon the church at Pentecost in Acts 2 “*there were added* that day about three thousand souls” (emphasis mine).¹ This group of new believers was added to the church that “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”² The writer of Hebrews reminds believers that a corporate spirituality is not optional, saying, “let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some.”³ Yet God has given much more than a mere command to live in Christian community, He has given instruction on how that community is to be ordered. Since He has done so, Christians must make a diligent search into the commands of their Lord with hearts ready to obey.

Church order and the ceremonials of religion, are less important than a new heart; and in the view of some, any laborious investigation of questions respecting them may appear to be needless and unprofitable. But we know, from the Holy Scriptures, that Christ gave commands on these subjects, and we cannot refuse to obey. Love prompts our obedience; and love prompts also the search which may be necessary to ascertain his will.⁴

Dagg’s *Manual of Church Order* highlights important principles concerning the corporate aspect of Christian spirituality. These principles will be addressed under three headings: the public obedience of the church, the nature of the church, and the leadership and practices of the church.

The Public Obedience of the Church

The public obedience of the church consists in both baptism and discipline. Dagg presented baptism as a Christian ordinance of perpetual obligation. Matthew 28:19–20 showed that “the

commission was given, just before Christ ascended to heaven, and was designed for the dispensation which was to follow.”⁵ He demonstrated that the meaning of the verb *baptizo* is to *immerse*. Dagg used tables of examples that show the usage of *baptizo* in Scripture as well as classical Greek literature. He concluded, “After thoroughly examining the collection of examples, we find that they fully establish the meaning to immerse.”⁶ He confirmed this result with biblical examples of baptism where the context supports immersion, and an argument that immersion clearly signifies the death and resurrection of Christ. To those who claim that baptism is merely a ceremony and therefore need not be followed in such detail, Dagg replied, “Baptism is indeed a ceremony; but it is a ceremony of God’s appointing.”⁷

Next, Dagg showed that baptism is an act of *Christian* profession, the proper subjects being those who have repented and believed. The wisdom of God is seen in establishing baptism as the act of Christian profession:

The profession of renouncing the world, and devoting ourselves to Christ, might have been required to be made in mere words addressed to the ears of those who hear; but infinite wisdom has judged it better that it should be made in a formal and significant act, appointed for the specific purpose.⁸

Dagg cited Romans 10:10 showing the need for Christian profession and the argued that the placement of baptism in Christ’s commission (Matthew 28) proves it is the ceremony of profession. As such, it is evident that the proper subjects of baptism are those who have repented of sin and trusted in Christ.

The corporate aspect of baptism is seen in that it is not only a public profession of an individual’s faith, but a prerequisite to local church membership. Baptism is a matter of obedience and it is the initial act of obedience in the Christian life.

It stands at the head of the way. In this act, the believer gives himself to God, before he gives himself to the people of God... The members of every Christian church must profess subjection to Christ. They cannot walk together in obedience to his commands, unless they are agreed on this point. As profession is necessary to church-membership, so is baptism, which is the appointed ceremony of profession.⁹

Since baptism is a clear command of Christ, it is necessary that a Christian obey his Lord before he joins the community that will obey together.

Dagg shows that Christian obedience marks the beginning of the church as well as the disciplined life of the church, “The churches should labor incessantly, to promote brotherly love in their members, and increased devotion to the service of God.”¹⁰ This labor of love is seen as the members of the church encourage one another to do good works using the means of both the

Word of God and prayer. If certain ones in the community refuse to live in obedience to Christ's commands then the church is to exclude them from membership. The life of corporate obedience requires discipline and though the way is difficult, the stakes could not be higher, "when discipline leaves a church, Christ goes with it."¹¹

This first aspect of church order demonstrates that the Christian life is one of public and corporate obedience. This community is made up of those who have submitted to Christ in baptism and honor Christ by striving to live holy lives. God in his wisdom has instituted both baptism and discipline as means to display the obedience of the church to the world. These practices of public obedience are a joy to those who take God at His word; but for those who think them unsophisticated, "they must leave the pleasure of obedience to those, who think it no humiliation to tread where they find the footsteps of their Lord and Master. Though Christ's yoke is easy, it is still a yoke; and pride and false delicacy may refuse to wear it; but love can make it welcome and delightful."¹²

The Nature of the Church

Dagg continued by illuminating the nature of the church, which requires explanation of both the local and universal church. Any Christian seeking to live a healthy corporate spiritual life must grasp the necessity and distinction of the local and universal church. By careful exegesis Dagg marks out the important qualities of each, helping believers to live in obedience to God and unity with one another.

Dagg defines the local church very specifically as "an assembly of believers in Christ, organized into a body, according to the Holy Scriptures, for the worship and service of God."¹³ Similar to his careful analysis of *baptizo*, Dagg shows that "The Greek word *ekklesia* denotes *an assembly*."¹⁴ Two strong supports undergird this claim. First, the use of the word by classic Greek authors reveals the meaning of *an assembly*. Second, when the word is used in reference to Christians who would be to spread out to assemble, the plural form is used.¹⁵ Yet the local church must not only be an assembly, but an organized and independent assembly. By organized, Dagg means that members were clearly marked and distinct from non-members. This is seen both in that a number of people "were added" to the church in Acts 2:41, as well as the clear distinction between the church and unbelievers in 1 Corinthians 14:23. The local church is independent, for Dagg explains, "No intimation is anywhere given that the acts of one church were supervised by another church."¹⁶ In light of this vision of the church, every Christian ought to join a local assembly of believers, organized according to the word, for the purpose of worship and service. Such a corporate commitment by no means weakens one's spirituality, but rather, "Union tends to strengthen our faith, and warm our devotions."¹⁷

Christians not only belong to a local church but they also belong to the universal church. Although the word church is often used in the singular to refer to a local church, it is also used in the singular to refer to the universal church.¹⁸ The universal church “is the whole company of those who are saved by Christ.”¹⁹ Members of the universal church make their selves known to the world by their profession of faith in Christ and their holy lives. Although there is no external organization of the universal church, there is a spiritual union that marks this company of believers. Dagg proclaims that the universal church “is in progress of construction, and will be completed at the end of the world, after which it will endure for ever.”²⁰

Learning about the nature of the church reveals the principle that the Christian life is not a solitary life. Christians are called to belong to a local community of believers who assemble for the purpose of worshipping God. In that local community, they will experience the love of the body of Christ, resulting in them being held accountable and encouraged in their walk with the Lord. Christians also belong to the universal church, which is being built up by Christ. As a part of the universal church, they link arms with others outside of their assembly and join in the joyful responsibility of standing as a witness to the gospel of the kingdom.

The Leadership and Practices of the Church

The Word of God plays a central role in the leadership of the church. Dagg explains, “The ministers of Christ are a separate class of persons distinguished by a special divine call to preach the word.”²¹ These ministers are a distinct class because they have been called to a unique service. Dagg clarifies the nature of their work, “The special service for which the ministry is designed is the preaching of the word.”²² For a man to engage in this work, he must be called by God and should have that call recognized by a group of ministers as well as the church. When a minister engages in his work he may serve a local church, but he serves the universal church as well,

As true ministers are members of Christ’s spiritual body, so their ministry is intended for its benefit: — “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” Their office pertains to the spiritual, universal church, of which they are all members. The ministry of some of them may have a relation also to local churches, placed under their special charge; but they serve in these for the good of the whole body of Christ.²³

Local churches are to “choose, from among the ministers of the word, bishops or pastors to teach and rule them.”²⁴ The churches should also choose deacons who assist the pastors and minister to the physical needs of the congregation.

Dagg highlighted the practices of public worship and communion, showing that the death and resurrection of Christ stand at the center of the life of the church. Communion, also called the Lord's Supper, is a ceremony instituted by Christ that is to be continually practiced by the church. This institution serves as "a memorial of Christ, a representation that the communicant receives spiritual nourishment from him, and a token of fellowship among the communicants."²⁵ Each local church is to observe this practice when assembled publically and it ought to be received by those who have professed faith in Christ and been baptized. Dagg held that "the first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath, and is specially appropriate for the public worship of God."²⁶ Consulting the Decalogue as well as the practice of the church in the New Testament, Dagg concluded that the first day of the week is the designated time for the church to assemble and worship the risen Christ. Showing how the Bible is central not only to the leadership of the church, but also to the worship of the church, Dagg wrote, "In public worship, we not only address God in prayer and praise, but we honor him by reverent attention to his word."²⁷ Examining the leadership and practices of the church helps one to see the importance of both the Word of God and the Word made flesh, in the life of the Christian community.

Conclusion

In conclusion, John Dagg's *Manual of Church Order* displays a much-needed point in our day: the Christian life is a corporate life. This corporate spirituality is shaped by many principles from Dagg's work: First, baptism reveals that the corporate Christian life is not a private life but a public life. Second, discipline emphasizes that the corporate Christian life is not one of disobedience but obedience. Third, the nature of the church implies that the corporate Christian life is not one of irresponsibility but accountability. Fourth, the leadership of the church insists that the corporate Christian life is not led by the opinion of man, but the Word of God. Fifth, the practices of the church illuminates that the corporate Christian life is not focused on the things of man, but on the person and work of the Savior Jesus Christ.

¹ Acts 2:41 (All Scriptures quoted in English Standard Version).

² Acts 2:42.

³ Hebrews 10:24–25.

⁴ John Dagg, *Manual of Church Order* (Harrisonburg, VA: Gano Books, 1990), 12.

⁵ Ibid., 14.

⁶ Ibid., 35.

⁷ Ibid., 66.

⁸ Ibid., 71.

⁹ Ibid., 95.

¹⁰ Ibid., 270.

¹¹ Ibid., 274.

¹² Ibid., 68.

¹³ Ibid., 74.

¹⁴ Ibid., 75.

¹⁵ See: Galatians 1:2; 1 Corinthians 16:1,19; 2 Corinthians 8:1.

¹⁶ Ibid., 83.

¹⁷ Ibid., 94.

¹⁸ See: Ephesians 1:22; 3:21.

¹⁹ Ibid., 100.

²⁰ Ibid., 137.

²¹ Ibid., 241.

²² Ibid., 243.

²³ Ibid., 246.

²⁴ Ibid., 263.

²⁵ Ibid., 209.

²⁶ Ibid., 232.

²⁷ Ibid., 240.

News

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“Let the Dear Man Come”

*C. H. Spurgeon’s Influence on Thomas Lewis Johnson
(1836–1921), a Freed Slave, Former Student and
Forgotten Missionary¹*

Jared A. Skinner



Thomas Lewis Johnson ca. 1877 as a Student at the Pastor’s College²

Introduction

In his own lifetime, “pioneer missionary,” Thomas Lewis Johnson, earned the respect and admiration of nearly all who knew him.³ During the course of his life, Johnson became each of the following: a firsthand witness to the hardships of slavery in Virginia; a pastor of churches spanning from Denver to Chicago; a student of C. H. Spurgeon (1834–1892) at his Pastor’s College; a missionary to the Cameroons of Africa; an itinerant evangelist; a supporter of the anti-slavery movement; and a tireless spokesman for African missions. While he did not seek fame and popularity for their own ends, Johnson’s appearance as a black man in a predominantly white British context, along with his compelling life’s story, helped him become an admired subject of public curiosity. Despite Johnson’s many accomplishments, Johnson remains largely unknown in the present day. This is a perplexing and impoverishing loss, for his life and varied contacts and interests put him in a strategic role at a formative period of cultural and denominational history. Hopefully this historical gap can be traversed with some fitting attention to Johnson. The purpose of this article is to explore Johnson’s relation with C. H. Spurgeon and point to some of the areas of influence that the great Victorian Baptist preacher had on this former slave from the southern United States.

After a broad summary of Johnson’s early life and ministry in order to supply the context for Spurgeon’s place in the storyline, Johnson’s time at the Pastor’s College will be investigated to demonstrate how Spurgeon personally, and through the college faculty, had a molding influence on Johnson. This will be illustrated in specific cases of evangelism, preaching, piety, and missionary activity. This section will compare selections of Spurgeon’s literary works with some evangelistic portions of Johnson’s autobiography. Johnson’s own testimony concerning the ways that Spurgeon influenced him will objectify what is apparent in the different subjects discussed. A fourth section will be devoted to Johnson’s relationship with Spurgeon.

Summary of the Johnson’s Early Life and Ministry

According to his own autobiographical account, Thomas Lewis Johnson was born into slavery in Virginia on August 7, 1836.⁴ Johnson’s maternal grandfather had been captured out of Africa into slavery, and both his grandmother died when Johnson’s mother, “was quite young.”⁵ Her surviving brothers and sisters were, “sold when she was thirteen years old,” further splitting the family up. Johnson’s father, whom he describes as an “octaroon,” meaning he was “one-eighth negro blood,” was a “free man,” and attempted, without success, to buy Johnson and his mother out of slavery.⁶ He died when Johnson was nine. Though, according to Johnson, “He left money for me to purchase my freedom when I became a man,” the money, “got into other people’s hand,” and never found its way into Johnson’s possession.⁷ Johnson recalls seeing many of his young slave friends taken from their families and sold away to new owners.⁸

Johnson's conversion came through an evangelistic encounter with, "a coloured man in the street, named Stephney Brown."⁹ Brown proclaimed to Johnson, "the simple gospel," telling him, "go to God, and say: 'Lord, have mercy upon me, a hell-deserving sinner, for Jesus' sake.'"¹⁰ Johnson heeded Brown's admonition later that evening, recounting that "I went into the dining room, fell down upon my knees, and said: 'O Lord have mercy upon me, a hell-deserving sinner, for Jesus' sake.' Then I became very happy."¹¹

When the first shots of the American Civil War were fired in 1861 in Ft. Sumter, SC, Johnson was laboring as a slave in Virginia. Johnson quickly found himself close to the center of the military turmoil. His master's oldest son enlisted in the Confederate Army, and Johnson was selected to accompany him as a cook and assistant.¹² During the war Johnson met his future wife, Henrietta Thompson, who was "maid to Mrs. Cooper, wife of General S. G. Cooper, Inspecting General of the Confederate Army, and sister of the great General [Robert E.] Lee."¹³ They were married "in the midst of the warring days," in 1863.¹⁴

After the war, Johnson travelled to New York where he hoped to start a new life free from the prejudices and challenges he faced as a slave in Virginia. He eventually found work there as waiter, but to his disappointment, he recalls, "I soon found there was as much prejudice against my race in New York as there was in the South."¹⁵ Discouraged by unexpected hostility towards blacks he experienced in New York, Johnson moved to Chicago in September of 1866, where he eventually connected with Rev. Richard DeBaptiste (1831–1909), pastor of Olivet Baptist Church, where Johnson and his wife became members.¹⁶ In Chicago, Johnson supported himself by managing the "downstairs pantry," of a local restaurant¹⁷ and working other "odd jobs."¹⁸

Johnson and his wife had been living in Chicago for nearly three years when DeBaptiste, who had become a spiritual mentor for him, presented Johnson with a potential opportunity to pastor a small church in Denver, Colorado. One natural stipulation for the arrangement, however, was that Johnson, who was still only a layman, would have to be ordained. On April 15, 1869, a council of ministers in Chicago examined Johnson and ordained him after judging him to be fit to enter pastoral ministry.¹⁹ After some initial reluctance, Johnson decided to accept the call to the pastorate in Denver.²⁰

Johnson's pastorate in Denver was a formative experience accompanied by many of the natural challenges that often face inexperienced pastors. Despite the enjoyment he and his wife experienced there, he never could fully escape his missionary calling to Africa. His mind was often preoccupied with thoughts like "one day I must go to Africa, the land of my fathers, to preach the Gospel to my long-benighted people."²¹ After three years in Denver, Johnson and his wife returned to Chicago where he hoped to receive training eventually to go to the mission field. On the recommendation of DeBaptiste, Johnson moved from Chicago to Springfield, IL where he spent "nearly a year," preaching in an "old Theatre." During this time, he came into contact with a English man named E. Stroud Smith, who "belonged to England, but had been in

America for many years.”²² Smith and his family befriended Johnson, began attending his Sunday school, and “kindly offered their services,” which the Johnsons, “gladly accepted.”²³ The Smiths, however, soon left Chicago to return England.

About that time, Johnson’s burden for Africa continued to grow heavy. Though he had apprehensions about the challenges and dangers of missionary life, he recalls that he “could not lose sight of Africa,” and that “there was something which kept Africa continually before me with its great need of the Gospel.”²⁴ Johnson’s burning desire to bring the gospel to Africa moved him to seek out avenues for reaching the continent of his ancestors. Johnson sought out information about going to Africa with the support of the American Baptist Missionary Union, but to his disappointment, he discovered that “it had no stations in Africa.”²⁵ He was equally disheartened by that fact that “there was no missionary organization among the coloured people for sending their own people to the land of their fathers.”²⁶ Finally, in February of 1876, Johnson received a word of hope from England by way of his friend Stroud Smith. He had a contact in Manchester, William Hind Smith, who was willing to take the Johnsons into his home so that Johnson would be afforded “a course of study before going to Africa.”²⁷ Johnson accepted the invitation, and on August 19, 1876, he and his wife left their home in Illinois and sailed for England.²⁸

Johnson as a Student at the Pastor’s College

When the Johnsons arrived in Manchester, Hind Smith, true to his word, welcomed them into his home and made inquiries about places of opportunity for Johnson to study. He eventually contacted C. H. Spurgeon, famed pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, to see if Johnson could be admitted as a student to his Pastor’s College. Spurgeon replied to Hind Smith’s enquiry in the form of a post card. It simply read, “Dear Mr. Hind Smith,—Yes, let the dear man come—C. H. Spurgeon.”²⁹ To be sure, Johnson’s unusual background and humble beginnings did nothing to hurt his chances for being admitted to the Pastor’s College. Tom Nettles points out that “Spurgeon never rejected a student on account of meagerness in education or culture as long as he was convinced that the student’s call was from God and his zeal deeply ingrained.”³⁰

Johnson first reported to the Pastor’s College on December 3, 1876.³¹ Peter Morden rightly recognizes the vast influence of the college he was entering. He remarks that Johnson’s acceptance to the school—not only as “one of the first black men to study at Spurgeon’s,” but also as a former slave from the American South—truly validates, “the global reach of the college.”³² Similarly, the uniqueness of Johnson’s presence at the school should not be overlooked as a testimony to his own significance as a student.

Johnson encountered some challenges during his earliest days at the college. He recounts how, “a short time in college,” made him conscious that “I had not been fully aware of my own ignorance,” and how, “each day there were subjects, questions, and words of which I knew nothing.”³³ Providentially, Johnson was soon able to “thank God” that “every student was a friend and a brother” to him.³⁴ He also received considerable help through the “kindness and patience of the Professors,” who, “with all my darkness,” patiently worked to assist him.³⁵ Johnson especially received care and attention from “Professor Fergusson,” who “took such pains to instruct,” him, even welcoming him into his home where, “His dear wife and daughters all took a deep interest,” in Johnson’s welfare.³⁶ He even received encouragement from Spurgeon, who promised Johnson that “if other channels,” of support for Johnson’s aspirations to reach Africa with the gospel, “failed,” he could confidently, “depend on him to do his part.”³⁷

“Look at him, brethren, I see in him an ‘Andrew Fuller!’”

The account that Johnson gives of his first attempt at preaching in the college, illustrates the extent to which he was admired in the eyes of the faculty, while similarly demonstrating the mercy that he and others like him were shown by the school’s professors. Before Johnson had traveled from America to Britain, he was given a gift which had served countless Baptist ministers on both sides of the Atlantic before him, including Spurgeon: a three-volume set of the works of leading eighteenth century Baptist theologian, Andrew Fuller (1754–1815). Johnson recounts of the time he invested studying those three tomes of Fuller, “I read these works diligently.”³⁸

When the time came for Johnson to prepare and deliver a sermon before his classmates, he “made use of some expressions,” from Fuller to communicate a point, of which he reasoned, “I could not say the thing better myself.”³⁹ Johnson felt some level of comfort using Fuller, because, he suspected, “I thought that the book, being old, no-one would detect it; the students would be sure to be taken up with the new books.”⁴⁰ Unbeknownst to Johnson, one individual in the classroom did “detect” the less than honorable method he used during his sermon preparation—the instructor of the course, “the ever vigilant Professor Rogers.”⁴¹ Rather than publicly exposing Johnson for his sin—and more devastatingly, forcing him to face the College’s penalty for plagiarism—Rogers extended grace to Johnson. When Johnson finished delivering his sermon, Rogers let the American know he had been found out without making the discovery of his crime public knowledge to the rest of the class: “If Mr. Johnson, who is forty years old, and having no advantages, can study the English Grammar—(Hear, Hear)—it shows what he is capable of. Look at him, brethren, I see in him an ‘Andrew Fuller!’”⁴² While his fellow students applauded the professor’s commendation of his sermon, Johnson, overcome with guilt for his sin—and no doubt, embarrassed at having his offense uncovered by a teacher he greatly respected—recalls, “I sat looking into the fire in the grate and studied ‘fireology’ for the remainder of the sermon class.

My sin found me out.”⁴³ The episode, humiliating as it was, became a spur towards Johnson’s sanctification: Like so many other experiences during his time at the Pastor’s College, it allowed him later to say, “This was indeed a great help to me.”⁴⁴

The Influence of Spurgeon’s College on Johnson

An individual studying Johnson for the first time who only consults the work of the handful of scholars, who write about him, might conclude that Johnson’s time at the Pastor’s College is of, at best, marginal importance. This oversight can be easily avoided if one simply takes seriously Johnson’s statements about his time at the college: “I regard my connection with the Pastors’ College as the turning point in an important passage of my life’s history, for which I feel continually grateful.”⁴⁵ Johnson suggests of the connection between his victories on the mission field and his studies at the school, “I am sure that I never could have so well succeeded in the African Mission, or in Evangelistic work at home, had it not been for the training and fraternal helpfulness of the Pastors’ College, with its many advantages, and I shall remember in all my work how that I gathered strength and wisdom from the faithful tuition so kindly given me; and it has been my endeavour to show that this kindness has not been vainly bestowed.”⁴⁶ Readers of these words who value Johnson’s opinion of what *he thinks* influenced him, should find it difficult to overlook his school days at the college. One might convincingly argue from these words, that Spurgeon’s greatest influence on Johnson came through the College.

Johnson’s Relationship with Spurgeon: “Thank God He is My Friend”

Like the vast majority of students at the Pastor’s College, Johnson never enjoyed being in the company of Spurgeon’s intimate inner circle of friends and confidants (nor does he ever suggest he felt entitled to such a rare privilege). It would be incorrect, however, to conclude that because Johnson was not one of Spurgeon’s closest of friends, that the famous preacher did not consider the former slave a friend at all. In fact, Spurgeon warmly referred to his American student as “My black friend, Mr. Johnson.”⁴⁷ Admittedly, the amount of time Spurgeon and Johnson spent alone in each other’s company—like the majority of students at the college—was, in all likelihood, minimal. Even so, it remains beyond question that Johnson cherished every moment with Spurgeon whenever opportunities for fellowship with the pastor were presented to him. Interestingly, Johnson’s first attempt to meet Spurgeon ended in unexpected disappointment. While Johnson was still staying with William Hind Smith in Manchester, he travelled to London in response to an invitation to meet with the secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, Rev. C. Bailhache. After his meeting with Bailhache, however, Johnson decided to take a detour from his returning journey back to Manchester. He took a “bus” to Spurgeon’s estate in hopes to meet the

pastor he so greatly admired. When he arrived at Spurgeon's home, however, it was late in the evening, and he laments how he discovered that the great preacher "was not at home," and how he "thought nothing of the distance when going but it was weary and alarming work returning."⁴⁸ Upon leaving Spurgeon's estate, Johnson suddenly became aware that it had become "quite dark" outside, which caused him concern, being his, "first night in London."⁴⁹ Despite his troubling realization, Johnson was able to return to Manchester safely. The disappointment of missing Spurgeon on this occasion, however, did not sour the sweetness of the moment when Johnson finally did meet the acclaimed preacher:

I was not in College very long before I met Mr. Spurgeon. I had been very anxious to speak to him. His first words set me at ease, but his sympathetic kindness was beyond my highest hope. He took me by the hand, asked me a few questions, and wished me success. The fear all vanished, and I felt I had been talking to a dear loving friend. I at once fell in love with dear Mr. Spurgeon. I know not how to express my feelings about this first meeting, and can only say that I felt so happy in his presence, and so at home with him, that I could not help saying, "Well, thank God he is my friend."⁵⁰

Johnson goes on to marvel at Spurgeon's ability to make almost anyone he came in contact feel welcome, "It was so like Mr. Spurgeon to make everyone happy with whom he came in contact, be they 'home born or a stranger within the gates.'"⁵¹ Johnson's initial encounter with Spurgeon, as well as his continuing relationship with him, greatly impressed and encouraged Johnson. Similarly, Spurgeon's authenticity and approachability outside of the pulpit gave Johnson a greater respect for what the preacher proclaimed while in it:

I believe it often happens that one reads a sermon or an address, or a book, and there comes a desire to meet the author. But in some cases after meeting the author the sermons and books are not so highly prized, for there is such a difference between the author and the production. It was otherwise in the case of Mr. Spurgeon, for had you met him anywhere or under any circumstances, in the street, in his home, in his study, or in the vestry of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, you would have recognized the agreement between the man and his works.⁵²

It is not unlikely that Johnson's own personal history as a slave in the American South may have endeared him to Spurgeon's heart. Spurgeon's hatred of slavery was not a secret to the public. Concerning Spurgeon's opinion of the relationship between slavery and the American Civil War, Nettles observes that though Spurgeon, "considered America a glorious country in many ways," his disgust for the institution of slavery saw him write without blushing of how it would be better that "North and South should be rent asunder and the States of the Union shivered into a thousand fragments, than that slavery should be suffered to continue."⁵³ One can imagine how it

may have warmed Spurgeon's heart to think of Johnson, a firsthand witness to the institution for which the Victorian preacher held so much contempt, receiving quality ministerial training from his Pastor's College.

These encounters Johnson shared with Spurgeon only deepened his admiration for the preacher. More importantly, they demonstrate one of the ways in which Spurgeon helped to sustain Johnson's call to take the gospel to Africa. By Johnson's own admission, Spurgeon's promise that he could "depend on him to do his part," was a welcome comfort that freed him to focus upon the task of fulfilling his calling, rather than worrying about how he it would be supported.

Spurgeon's Influence on Johnson's Piety, Preaching, Evangelism, and Missionary Activity

One of the areas where Spurgeon's influence on Johnson becomes especially visible is in his evangelism. This is true of Johnson's autobiography, where in the middle of his own life's narrative, he occasionally breaks out into spontaneous evangelistic exhortations to his readers. Johnson is an interesting author, but a less than prolific writer, which makes his autobiography's success appear all the more impressive. The prose of Johnson's book, which Michael Haykin calls, not unfairly, "a bit higgledy-piggledy in places," occasionally wanders off into random peripheral details that are not strongly connected to the central storyline.⁵⁴ This is likely one of the reasons scholars like Jeffery Green describe *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave* as "a somewhat rambling autobiography."⁵⁵ While Johnson's style may come across as rambling, in at least some of these instances, there is purposefulness behind his seemingly sporadic digressions.

One these evangelistic excursions in *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, occurs after Johnson describes his own conversion. He begins by asking his reader, "Dear Reader, have you stolen away to Jesus? Has He liberated you from spiritual bondage?"⁵⁶ Johnson continues, putting before his reader variety of evangelistic texts, declaring,

His promise and encouragement are found in the words, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."—Rom. x. 13. Have you ever called in faith? See verse 10. If you have not, then God help you, as you look upon these words, to say, 'I will, God helping me.' Let every worldly engagement wait, and every secret plan go, and take God at His word. Doubt not our blessed Lord for a moment when He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."—Matthew xi. 28. "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37. Stop and think of what the Lord has done for you.⁵⁷

Not only does Johnson exhort his potential unconverted readers to trust in Jesus, but in other places, he also entreats his Christian readers to consider supporting the cause of taking the gospel to his beloved Africa. In one such section where Johnson is explaining the struggles of his earliest attempts to teach himself how to read, he again drifts away in one of these excurses. He quickly moves from the description of his first efforts at trying to read, to the topic of slavery, and then writes, “When, thirty-eight years afterwards, I went to Africa, I found that on comparison the condition of the plantation negroes in America was but little better than that of the heathen in Africa. But ‘How shall they hear without a preacher?’ Rom. x., 14.”⁵⁸ He continues with a plea for his reader, “Dear Christian reader, will you not do something to send the Gospel to Africa—poor, long neglected Africa, the land of my fathers?”⁵⁹ These types of evangelistic appeals do not fill every page of Johnson’s autobiography, but there are enough of them to draw the reader’s attention away from his broader story when they appear.

For some, these sections in Johnson’s autobiography may come across as annoying interruptions in his narrative. However, those who are familiar with Spurgeon should be less surprised by this detour on the part of his pupil. In his book *All of Grace*, Spurgeon offers more than a few evangelistic exhortations that appear eerily similar to Johnson’s. In one place, he entreats, “Oh dear reader, receive the Lord Jesus into your soul, and you shall live forever! ‘He that believeth in Him hath everlasting life.’”⁶⁰ Similarly, in his book *Around the Wicket Gate*, he writes, “Dear reader, will you have Christ now? Jesus invites all those who labor and are heavy laden to come to Him, and He will give them rest.”⁶¹ These types of exhortations are typical of many of Spurgeon’s writings, and are patently characteristic of his evangelistic works. As such, it is not surprising that Spurgeon’s evangelistic fingerprints appear on the literary handiwork of his adoring student.

Spurgeon’s Impact on Johnson as Missionary

Like Johnson, Spurgeon himself possessed deeply held convictions concerning the task of global missions. He hoped that many students from his Pastor’s College would prayerfully consider foreign missions as a lifelong calling. Spurgeon’s hope for producing future missionaries from within the college’s student body is displayed clearly in his book, *Lectures to My Students*. He observes that while “Our existing pulpits [at home] are tolerably well supplied,” with preachers, “Hundreds of millions have seen a missionary only once in their lives, and know nothing of our King. Shall we let them perish? Can we go to our beds and sleep while China, India, Japan and other nations are being damned? Are we clear of their blood?”⁶² He goes on to insist that a man called by God should only pursue other avenues of ministry after first considering missions: “We ought to put it on this footing—not ‘Can I prove that I *ought* to go?’ but ‘Can I prove that I *ought not* to go?’ When a man can prove honestly that he ought not to go, then he is clear, but not else.”⁶³ Though Spurgeon played an important role in Johnson’s missionary success, Johnson’s

passion for missions, particularly for Africa, was something he already carried with him when he first arrived at the Pastor's College. Nevertheless, Spurgeon's own commitment to missions can have only cultivated Johnson's already burning desire to bring the gospel to Africa.

Some of the greatest impacts Spurgeon made on Johnson's missionary endeavors came from the encouragement and support he showed him. The following account shows well the type of encouragement Johnson received from Spurgeon during his time at the college:

In the first week of January, 1877, I had Mr. Spurgeon to myself for quite half an hour, when I laid before him my history in brief, telling him of my journey to England through providential arrangement; of my health, which at that time alarmed my friends in London, and of my desire to go to Africa, and of the unfavourable outlook. He told me to make myself perfectly happy, for if other channels failed I could depend on him to do his part. I returned from that visit with thankfulness to God in my heart, and with gratitude for that honoured servant of His who was so kind to me.⁶⁴

For Johnson, who came with his wife to England all but empty-handed and with few personal contacts, the assurance from Spurgeon that he would, "do his part," to help an American, was surely an incredible relief. After all, Johnson's burning desire to bring the gospel to Africa would mean little if he possessed no financial resources or prospects to take him there. Before Johnson, along with his wife and the Richardsons, left to pursue their missions work in Africa, the members of the Metropolitan Tabernacle held a farewell gathering for them. The account of the event was published in the November 1878 issue of *The Sword and the Trowel* and informs the readers, "MESSRS. JOHNSON AND RICHARDSON, AND THEIR WIVES...WILL VERY SOON BE ON THEIR WAY TO AFRICA TO PREACH THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL AMONG THOSE OF THEIR OWN RACE."⁶⁵ It then goes on to record a flattering commendation of the Johnsons, lauding that "During their stay with us they have endeared themselves to us all, and have won a very high place in our esteem by their genuine piety, their unaffected simplicity, and their sincere desire to qualify themselves for their great work."⁶⁶ It continues, praising the Johnsons as exemplary Americans: "We never remember having met with any of their countrymen in whom we had such unbounding confidence as in these good men." The publication closed by saying that "though they go forth from us to a distant land they will always abide in our kindest memories. May the Baptist Missionary Society find in them able heralds of the cross, and may Ethiopia soon stretch forth her hands unto God."⁶⁷ He closes his comments, by remarking that while the prospect of future missionaries going to lands like Africa is encouraging, the "Christian Church, must TAKE CARE TO PROVIDE THE MEANS FOR THEIR SUSTENANCE."⁶⁸

Johnson's and Richardsons set sail for Africa, they visited Spurgeon and his wife, Susannah in their home, where all three families enjoyed a heartwarming time of fellowship, before exchanging tearful goodbyes. Susannah, records the account in her book, *Ten Years of My Life in Service of the Book Fund*: "A very pleasant and memorable time we spent together, their Pastor encouraging them in the work to which they ha devoted their lives, and their love and sympathy overflowing to him and to me (then very sick in return)."⁶⁹ During the visit, Susannah writes, "at the request of my dear husband, they sang to me some the strange sweet songs of their captivity, and all who heard these plaintive melodies sung in the Tabernacle at their farewell meetings will agree with me that sweeter, yet sadder melodies could scarcely be imagined."⁷⁰ When the singing ended and the time of fellowship drew to a close, she recalls that "not a dry eye was in the little company."⁷¹ For Johnson, who included Susannah Spurgeon's retelling of the even in his own autobiography, this special farewell with the Spurgeon's was an additional encouragement.⁷²

Spurgeon's encouragement to Johnson while he was still only an aspiring missionary was, without question, important to his success he later enjoyed in Cameroon. His influence on Johnson, however, did not subside during his former student's time on the mission field. Johnson continued to correspond with Spurgeon during his time in Africa. A section of the August 1879 issue of the *Sword and the Trowel*, entitled "Messrs. Johnson and Richardson in Africa," records that "we have received news from our couloured friends." After a detailed report of Johnson's earliest work at "their new station, Bakundu, Victoria, Cameroons," it goes on to press its readers to support the Johnsons, saying, "If any friends wish to help them they need not send money, as that is of no use where they are, but they require clothes for the naked population, cloth, prints, buttons, cottons, thread, medicines, etc., for barter and use, and books, slates, pencils, etc., for their school of one hundred and six boys."⁷³

In March of 1879, tragedy struck the Johnson when his beloved wife, Henrietta, "fell victim to a fever," from which she never recovered. When word reached Spurgeon that Henrietta had passed away, he published the sobering news in the *Sword in Trowel*, lamenting, "our beloved friend, Mr. Johnson, sends us a very touching account of the illness and death of his dear wife."⁷⁴ Spurgeon included the news, hoping to invoke, "the heartiest sympathy and prayers," of the Members of the Metropolitan Tabernacle who, "made their acquaintance," of the Johnson during their time in London.⁷⁵ To be sure, this type of support from Spurgeon had a profound influence on Johnson's emotional survival during the tragedy.

Spurgeon's Influence on Johnson's Preaching

Spurgeon's influence on the evangelistic spirit of Johnson's preaching appears with the same clarity and force that it does in his writing. Daniel H. Peterson agrees with the historical

consensus on Johnson, the preacher, describing him as “a moving speaker in the simple, heartfelt manner of his mentor Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834–1892).”⁷⁶ Spurgeon’s passionate evangelistic preaching is revered by his strongest admirers and even conceded by some of his harshest critics. A selection from Spurgeon’s Sermon, “Compel them to Come In,” which Iain Murray suggests is, “possibly more used in the conversion of people than other which he preached,”⁷⁷ forcefully illustrates the zeal and concern for the lost that comes out in his preaching: “I exhort you to flee to Christ. O my brother, dost thou know what I know of him... I thought that Christ was cruel and unkind. O I can never forgive myself that I should thought so ill of him... I should be worse than a fiend if I did not now, with all the love and kindness and earnestness, beseech you to ‘lay hold on eternal life.’”⁷⁸

While it will be admitted that Johnson’s preaching did not match Spurgeon’s eloquence it never lacked the London preacher’s passion for the souls. The reports from newspapers, journals, and personal accounts concerning the speaking engagements Johnson took, during his numerous tours to rally support for African missions, contain similar stories telling of him urging, “all present to enjoy the freedom of soul offered by the Lord Jesus Christ.”⁷⁹ Some of these reports, which contain the similar types of glowing reviews, are scattered throughout Johnson’s autobiography. They routinely contain statements making claims like “Rarely has the Gospel been preached in such a forceful way,”⁸⁰ and, “our brother has been the means, in God’s hands, in leading hundreds to the Saviour.”⁸¹ One account of an occasion in 1886 where Johnson spoke at a “special meeting for policemen and their wives,” recalls him giving a “very earnest address” in which he “dwelt much on the importance of making sure of salvation—not merely hoping but *knowing* we are on the right road.”⁸² The description continues, recounting that Johnson “pleaded earnestly with any who might not have decided for Christ to take the words of Isaiah liii. 4–6 for themselves.”⁸³ It then concludes with following assurance: “We trust the hearts of many were touched, and that we may be stirred up to look more earnestly than ever for Christ.”⁸⁴ Spurgeon, who insisted that every pastor should be a “soul winner” and that the task of evangelism is “more profitable than the pearl-fisher’s diving or the diamond hunters searching,” would have been likely pleased with these types reports of his student.⁸⁵

In the same way Johnson exhibited the type of evangelistic zeal Spurgeon brought to the pulpit, he also adopted other characteristics of his preaching. In fact, Johnson had begun to take on some of Spurgeon’s traits before he ever listened to him preach on Sundays at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. During his first pastorate in Denver, Colorado, Johnson was given book of Spurgeon’s sermons, in which he “found so many and valuable and helpful truths set forth so beautifully,” that he found it difficult not to incorporate them into his own preaching.⁸⁶ Johnson began to be so accustomed to using Spurgeon’s sayings and expressions in his preaching, that to avoid plagiarizing, he started prefacing each one with a disclaimer of how it belonged to Spurgeon. His sermons became repeatedly interrupted with caveats such as, “and Mr. Spurgeon says”—and ‘again Mr. Spurgeon says.’”⁸⁷

Spurgeon's Influence on Johnson's Piety

Spurgeon's influence on Johnson began to be felt by Johnson before he ever set his American feet on the steps of the Pastor's College. Again, during his first pastorate in Denver, Colorado, Johnson was given another book, this one from the "Bible Publication Society," which made profound spiritual impact on him: *The Preachers Prayer*, by C. H. Spurgeon. Johnson writes of the book's influence on him, "I remember no book that I possessed at the time, apart from the Bible, [that] gave me such assistance." The message of Spurgeon's book produced a spiritual breakthrough in Johnson's soul, in which he discovered the correlation between weekly labor in the prayer closet and spiritual victories in the Sunday pulpit: "It told me that if I wished to reap in the pulpit I must plough the closet. The preacher must go from prayer to the pulpit."⁸⁸ Johnson applied the lessons he learned from the little book and as an old man could look back and rejoice, "Oh, how often since then have I felt the presence of my blessed Jesus with me when I have gone from prayer to the pulpit."⁸⁹

A Man of General Renown

To be sure, when comparing Johnson's accomplishments alongside of those of some of Spurgeon's other students one could mistakenly conclude that Johnson's life is of relatively minimal importance. There is substantial evidence, however, that Johnson was valued and respected in the eyes of his peers during his lifetime. The commercial success of Johnson's autobiography may provide clues. *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave* went through seven editions in Johnson's life, between 1882 and 1909.⁹⁰ According to Jeffrey Green, that "surely makes Johnson the most publicized Black in Britain," during that era.⁹¹ It was considered a success by many of the readers Johnson hoped to target, including Baptists. *The Baptist Messenger* printed a positive endorsement for the book and called Johnson, "one now known and esteemed by many thousands of Christian people."⁹² Johnson's friendships, associations, and experiences with influential figures, including Spurgeon, may provide similar insight into the extent of his renown. On one occasion, Johnson's testimony to the hardships of slavery elevated him high enough to be placed in the audience of at least one member of the Royal Family.⁹³ The event, held on August 1, 1884, the "Great Anti Slavery Jubilee Meeting,"⁹⁴ commemorated the "50th anniversary of the abolition of slavery within the British Empire."⁹⁵ On that day, Johnson spoke against slavery, while sharing a platform with Edward VII (1841–1891), the Prince of Wales, who was, just seventeen years later, crowned King of England.⁹⁶ Interestingly, Johnson had years before this occasion, while he was still enslaved in Richmond, Virginia, seen Edward during a visit the royal made to America. As a freeman, he recalls of that day, when, while still a slave, he

had first seen Edward, “It seemed to me that if I could only see the Prince and tell him how I longed to be free, he would purchase me, and give me my liberty.”⁹⁷ On another occasion, Johnson and his second wife, Sarah, also in 1884, enjoyed the similarly impressive company of “the conquered King Catewayo,” (1826-1884)⁹⁸ of the Zulu nation, while he was exiled in London.⁹⁹

Similarly, it could be easy to become familiar with Johnson’s life story, and yet miss the greatness of the things he accomplished, considering the humble roots he came from. To be clear: Johnson was born a slave in Virginia. Though completely illiterate and without any hopeful prospects for education, he worked tirelessly to teach himself how to read, often at the risk of great peril to himself. While some freed slaves in the South, never left the communities—let alone states—from which they were formerly enslaved, Johnson, during his life, lived in three different continents and traveled extensively across the United States and much of the British Isles. Johnson’s life illustrated the biblical truth of divine grace that God has chosen those “who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom” (James 2:5).

¹ I would like to thank Dr. Thomas J. Nettles for including this paper in the *Founders Journal*, and Erik Smith, who read an early draft of the paper and offered some much appreciated feedback. The title, “Let the Good Man Come,” comes from a reply Spurgeon wrote on a postcard to William Hind Smith, a respected Y.M.C.A affiliate in Manchester. Hindsmith welcomed Johnson into his home upon his initial arrival in England. Concerning Johnson’s admission into the Pastor’s College, Spurgeon happily wrote, “Dear Mr. Hind Smith,—Yes, let the dear man come.” The account can be read in full in Johnson’s autobiography: Thomas L. Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave: Or, the Story of My Life in Three Continents*, 7th ed. (Bournemouth, England: W. Mate and Sons, 1909), 86.

² Thomas Lewis Johnson, ca. 1877, photograph, Library, Spurgeon’s College, London. Judy Powels, the Librarian of Spurgeon’s College, graciously provided this student portrait of Johnson.

³ Jeffrey Green, “Johnson, Thomas Lewis (1836-1921),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography: From the Earliest Times to the Year 2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 327.

⁴ Johnson introduces the date of his own birth with the qualification, “according to the information received from my mother, if my reckoning is correct.” Thomas L. Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave: Or, the Story of My Life in Three Continents*, 7th ed. (Bournemouth, England: W. Mate and Sons, 1909), 1.

⁵ Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, 1.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Johnson describes one such instance in disturbing detail: “One day we saw John, who was much older than the rest, with a small bundle in his hand, saying good-bye to his mother, while a white man stood waiting in the hall for him. His mother and mine, with others, were crying, and all seemed very sad. I did not know what to make of it. A vague fear came over me, but I did not know why. We heard that the man who took John away was a ‘Georgia Trader,’ or slave dealer. Whenever we saw a white man looking over the fence as we were at play, we would run and hide, sometimes getting near our mothers, ignorantly thinking they could protect us. But another and again another of us would be taken away. All this showed to us the difference—the great difference—there was between the white and coloured children.” Ibid., 2.

⁹ Ibid., 15.

¹⁰ Ibid., 16.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., 29.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., 38.

¹⁶ Ibid., 55.

¹⁷ Perry R. Duis, *Challenging Chicago: Coping with Everyday Life, 1837–1920* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 262.: “Within a few years, he had climbed through the serving ranks to become the headwaiter. Only a few years out of slavery, Thomas L. Johnson was greeting the Marshal Fields [1804–1906], the George Pullmans [1831–1897], and others among Chicago’s commercial and industrial elite.”

¹⁸ Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, 56.

¹⁹ Ibid., 64.

²⁰ The name and brief description of the church Johnson pastored in Denver is listed as “Zion Baptist Church (col’d) Rev. T. L. Johnson, pastor, cor. L and Araphoe” in S. S. Wallihan and T. O. Bigney, eds., “Denver Directory,” in *The Rocky Mountain Directory and Colorado Gazetteer, for 1871: Comprising a Brief History of Colorado, and a Condensed but Comprehensive Account of Her Mining, Agricultural, Commercial and Manufacturing Interests, Climatology, Inhabitants, Advantages and Industries, Together with a Complete and Accurate Directory of Denver, Golden City, Black Hawk, Central City, Nevada, Idaho, Georgetown, Boulder, Greely, Colorado City, Pueblo, Trinidad, Etc.* (Denver, CO: S. S. Wallihan and Company, 1870), 299.

²¹ Ibid., 74.

²² Ibid., 76.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., 77.

²⁵ Ibid., 78.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 80.

²⁸ Ibid., 81.

²⁹ Ibid., 86.

³⁰ Tom Nettles, *Living by Revealed Truth: The Life and Pastoral Theology of Charles Haddon Spurgeon* (Ross-shire, Scotland: Mentor, 2013), 358.

³¹ Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, 88.

³² Peter Morden, *C. H. Spurgeon: The People’s Preacher* (Farnham, Surrey, UK: Crusade for World Revival, 2009), 127.

³³ Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, 88.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., 90.

³⁸ Ibid., 94.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 93

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ C. H. Spurgeon, *Speeches at Home and Abroad*, ed. G. H. Pike (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1878), 186.

⁴⁸ Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, 86.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 88–89.

⁵¹ Ibid., 90.

⁵² Ibid., 89.

⁵³ Nettles, *Living by Revealed Truth*, 505.

⁵⁴ This quotation comes from a private conversation I shared with Michael Haykin.

⁵⁵ Jeffrey Green, *Black Edwardians: Black People in Britain 1901–1914* (New York: Frank Cass Publishers, 1998), 223.

⁵⁶ Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, 19.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 14.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ C. H. Spurgeon, *All of Grace: An Earnest Word With Those Who Are Seeking Salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, n.d.), 26, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/spurgeon/grace.pdf>.

⁶¹ C. H. Spurgeon, *Around the Wicket Gate: Or, a Friendly Talk with Seekers Concerning Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ* (New York: American Tract Society, 1890), 29.

⁶² C. H. Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2010), 229.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, 90.

⁶⁵ C. H. Spurgeon, *The Sword and the Trowel: A Record of Combat with Sin and of Labor for the Lord*, ed. C. H. Spurgeon, vol. 5 (Grace Ebooks, n.d.), 507, http://grace-ebooks.com/library/Charles/20Spurgeon/CHS_Sword/20and/20Trowel/CHS_Sword/20and/20Trowel/20Vol/205.PDF.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 5:507.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 5:508.

⁶⁹ Susannah Thompson Spurgeon, *Ten Years of My Life in the Service of the Book Fund: Being a Grateful Record of My Experience of the Lord's Ways, and Work, and Wages*, 2nd ed. (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1886), 73.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 73–74.

⁷¹ Ibid., 75.

⁷² Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, 104–07.

⁷³ C. H. Spurgeon, *The Sword and the Trowel: A Record of Combat with Sin and of Labor for the Lord*, ed. C. H. Spurgeon, vol. 6 (Grace Ebooks, n.d.), 636, http://www.grace-ebooks.com/library/Charles/20Spurgeon/CHS_Sword/20and/20Trowel/CHS_Sword/20and/20Trowel/20Vol/206.PDF.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 6:18.

⁷⁵ Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, 19.

⁷⁶ Daniel H. Peterson, “Exodus and Ethiopia,” in *Setting Down the Sacred Past: African-American Race Histories*, ed. Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 179.

⁷⁷ Iain H. Murray, *Spurgeon v. Hyper-Calvinism: The Battle for Gospel Preaching* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1995), 97.

⁷⁸ C. H. Spurgeon, “Compel Them to Come In,” *The Spurgeon Archive*, accessed November 12, 2013, <http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/0227.htm>.

⁷⁹ “The C. P. A in Scotland” *On and Off Duty: A Monthly Journal for Policemen*, no. 15 (November 1884): 246.

⁸⁰ Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, 234

⁸¹ Ibid., 245.

⁸² “Up and Down the Country,” *On and Off Duty: A Monthly Journal for Policemen*, no. 33 (1886): 76.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ C. H. Spurgeon, *The Soul Winner: Advice on Effective Evangelism* (Ross-Shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 1992), 152.

⁸⁶ Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, 69.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Jeffrey Green, “Thomas Lewis Johnson (1836–1921): The Bournemouth Evangelist,” in *Under the Imperial Carpet: Essays in Black History 1780–1950*, ed. Rainer Lotz and Ian Pegg (Crawley, England: Rabbit Press, 1986), 60.

⁹¹ Ibid., 67.

⁹² This endorsement from *The Baptist Messenger* is found in an advertisement section for, “New Missionary Books,” in *The Missionary Herald of the Baptist Missionary Society* (May 1, 1885): 146.

⁹³ Green, “Thomas Lewis Johnson (1836-1921),” 60.

⁹⁴ Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, 158.

⁹⁵ Green, “Thomas Lewis Johnson (1836–1921),” 60.

⁹⁶ Johnson, *Twenty-Eight Years a Slave*, 158–169.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 27.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 25.

⁹⁹ Green, “Thomas Lewis Johnson (1836–1921),” 60.