

Introduction to Evelyn Underhill,  
 “*Church Congress Syllabus No. 3:*  
 The Christian Doctrine of Sin and Salvation,  
 Part III: Worship”

KATHLEEN HENDERSON STAUDT\*

This short piece by Evelyn Underhill (1875–1941) appeared in a publication from the US Church Congress movement in the 1930s. It presents a remarkably concise summary of her major thought from this period.<sup>1</sup> By this time, she was a well-known voice among Anglicans. Indeed, Archbishop Michael Ramsey wrote that “in the twenties and thirties there were few, if indeed, any, in the Church of England who did more to help people to grasp the priority of prayer in the Christian life and the place of the contemplative element within it.”<sup>2</sup> Underhill’s major work, *Mysticism*, continuously in print since its first publication in 1911, reflects at once Underhill’s broad scholarship on the mystics of the church, her engagement with such contemporaries as William James and Henri Bergson, and, perhaps most important, her curiosity and insight into the ways that the mystics’ experiences might inform the spiritual lives of ordinary people.<sup>3</sup> The title of a later book, *Practical Mysticism: A Little Book for Normal People* (1914) summarizes what became most distinctive in Underhill’s voice: her ability to fuse the mystical tradition with the homely and the

---

\* Kathleen Henderson Staudt works as a teacher, poet, and spiritual director at Virginia Theological Seminary and Wesley Theological Seminary. Her poetry, essays, and reviews have appeared in *Weavings*, *Christianity and Literature*, *Sewanee Theological Review*, *Ruminate*, and *Spiritus*. She is an officer of the Evelyn Underhill Association, and facilitates the annual day of quiet held in honor of Underhill in Washington, DC each June. She has also published widely on the poet and writer David Jones, and is the author of three volumes of poetry, most recently *Good Places* (2017).

<sup>1</sup> On the Church Congress movement, see Robert Prichard, *A History of the Episcopal Church*, 3rd ed. (New York: Morehouse, 2014), 268–269.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to Christopher Armstrong, *Evelyn Underhill 1875–1941: An Introduction to Her Life and Writings* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1975).

<sup>3</sup> Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Spiritual Consciousness*, 12th ed. (Minneola, N.Y.: Image Books, 1990 [1930]).

everyday.<sup>4</sup> The 1920s and 30s mark the high point of Underhill's reputation as a scholar, spiritual director, and retreat leader.<sup>5</sup> She was the first woman to give the Upton Lectures in Religion at Manchester College, Oxford, published as *The Life of the Spirit and the Life of Today*.<sup>6</sup> Nearly every year from the mid-1920s until the late 1930s, she published a little book or two reflecting the retreats given that year. My own favorites among these are *The School of Charity: A Meditation on the Christian Creeds* (1934),<sup>7</sup> and *The Mystery of Sacrifice: A Meditation on the Liturgy* (1938).<sup>8</sup>

The following essay dates from the late 1930s, apparently part of a late attempt by the Church Congress movement to provide resources for Christian formation in the church. This is the period of Underhill's second major work, *Worship*.<sup>9</sup> The topic assigned for this publication was apparently "Sin and Salvation," and it is instructive to see how Underhill filters this theological question through the lens of worship. She connects the practice of worship to the theme of salvation by pointing out that worship is itself "the total response of man to the Creator." Because worship brings us into real relationship with God, it bears the experience of eternal life. Underhill was ahead of her time in advocating for eucharistic worship as the proper focus of parish worship. She commends the ministry of word and sacrament, and the participation of the laity as practiced in the typical parish church, but insists that people also need the engagement of all the senses in the experience of divine presence that the eucharist offers. Her liturgical theology is grounded in the mystery of incarnation that is at the heart of our faith. Also characteristic is Underhill's insistence here that the quality of the ministry of the word, necessary for the people's formation, relies principally on the quality of the priest's own life of prayer. This short piece is valuable as a compact exposition of most of the themes for which Underhill is best known in her retreat work and in her scholarship on liturgical theology and practice.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> London: E.P. Dutton, 1914.

<sup>5</sup> See Dana Greene, *Evelyn Underhill: Artist of the Infinite Life* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 98–119.

<sup>6</sup> London: Methuen, 1922.

<sup>7</sup> London: Longmans, Green, 1934.

<sup>8</sup> London: Longmans, Green, 1938.

<sup>9</sup> London: Longmans, Green, 1936.

<sup>10</sup> More information on Underhill, including current scholarship, can be found at the website of the Evelyn Underhill Association: [www.evelynunderhill.org](http://www.evelynunderhill.org).

*Church Congress Syllabus No. 3*  
The Christian Doctrine of Sin and Salvation,  
Part III: Worship

EVELYN UNDERHILL\*

*Definition of Terms.* Worship is that total response of the creature to the Creator, for which man was made: the only true relation in which he can stand to God. It is the complete fulfilment of the First Commandment, and, understood in its full significance, expresses the whole meaning of life. Thus, in so far as we can teach men, in this genuine sense, to worship, to dwell with awestruck delight on the holy Reality of God, and offer themselves to Him, we place them in the most favourable situation of all for the receiving of the saving power of Christianity. The essence of this saving power abides in the application of the creative love of God to the needs and sins of man; redeeming, quickening and transforming his enfeebled will and selfish desires by the action of grace, organizing him, and evoking from him a return current of active and disinterested love. On natural and supernatural levels, life only achieves reality in so far as it is centered on God and harmonizes with the character of God. And since it is through—though not always in—His worship, that this character is revealed to man, because here he acknowledges the supremacy of God, and is opened to and preoccupied with Him—so here forces operate which make for the purifying and harmonizing of his life, and here he is accessible to the divine attracting and transforming power. If then we regard Sin as primarily a wrong relation with God, a deformation of the will, an evasion of His call, and Salvation as the restoring of a right relation with God, a reformation of the will, a response to the call, we

---

\* Evelyn Underhill (1875–1941) was an English writer, pacifist, and mystic who has influenced and inspired many generations of theologians, church leaders, and spiritual directors. Educated at King's College for Women, London, she was the first woman to lecture to clergy in the Church of England, where she was also a much sought-after retreat leader. She was the author of over thirty books, including *The Mystics of the Church* (1925) and *The House of the Soul* (1929). Her feast day is celebrated in the Episcopal Church on June 15. This article was originally published in the *Anglican Theological Review* 21, no. 2 (April 1939): 119–131.

have in Worship a capital means of establishing that right relation, and subduing man to that reforming and enabling power.

Having said this, we must at once add that worship which is entered upon for this or any other self-interested reason defeats its own end. It is true that corporate worship, rightly orientated and balanced, can become a powerful instrument for awakening, teaching and transforming men; and also true that every act of worship, public or secret, is both expressive and impressive, and leaves the self other than it was before. But this subjective benefit of the worshipper must never be an aim; even where the benefit is sought for the loftiest reasons, and is of the most spiritual kind. The single aim of worship is God's Glory; the consecration of all life by dedicating it to His service and surrendering it to the operation of His Will. "Here we offer and present to thee ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice." It is upon this humble and costly self-offering and not upon the improvement of his own position, the stimulation of his own religious feelings, or the saving of his own Soul that the will and intention of the true worshipper is bent; because his animating motive is not self interest but awestruck and admiring love. At its height, such worship means the creature's adoring response to God's total demand, and its utmost contribution to His Glory. It is incompatible with the man-centred utilitarian religion which is often mistaken for Christianity.

This is the attitude which unselfs man, neutralizes egotism, restores his sense of proportion, and tunes him in to the supernatural: and the aim of that discipline which trains him to worship should be the nurturing of such a state of soul. Though penitence must be, for sinful creatures, an essential character of all true worship, its dominant theme is not *Miserere* but *Alleluia*. The humility it requires is the humility of self-forgetfulness, which unites us to the worship of heaven. So the ancient Cherubic hymn:

Let us, who mystically represent the Cherubim and sing  
the thrice holy hymn to the life-giving Trinity, now lay aside  
all earthly cares;

That we may receive the King of all things, who comes escorted  
by unseen armies of angels:

Alleluia! alleluia! alleluia!

How deeply refreshing and purifying to the soul is this self-mergence in the universal stream of worshipping love, where the values of

purity, abnegation and discipline are associated with adoration and joy. It is the business of ordered worship on one hand to train humanity for this supreme action, and on the other to give it an artistic and concrete embodiment; thus sanctifying by intention all the interests and activities of man's life. Such a hallowing of life by directing it to God, turning it into worship, is found on analysis to be the same thing as salvation; for then, says William Law, "everything thou doest is as a song of praise, or the common business of thy life is a conforming to God's Will on earth, as angels do in heaven."

*Christian Worship.* We can only agree that Christian worship is a vehicle of the saving divine power, in so far as we acknowledge that the essence of Salvation is the gift of Eternal Life: not merely of natural or even ethical well-being as such. It is something which comes from beyond the world first to rescue and then to transform humanity, and make men what they were intended to be—"partakers of the Divine Nature." The life of sacrificial love which it sets forth under symbols is the supreme life, not merely because men need love, but because God is love. Christian worship might indeed be defined as dramatized charity. Its theme is God's prevenient love and man's responsive and dependent love. Its charter is I John iv.19. Thus genuine Christian worship depends on and expresses Christian theology; and in so doing it offers us access to God and shows us what is our relation to God. It is the great means of teaching, both directly and by suggestion, the nature of God and man and the Plan of Redemption, as the occasion of its thanksgiving and adoration. It sets before man the vision of the Perfect, and brings him to the confession of his sin, inadequacy and helplessness over against the Perfect. More than this, at its fullest depth and range, it lifts him right out of his selfish preoccupation; and catches him into the great current of self-offering and consecration which—supremely declared in the Incarnation—is the law of the spiritual world. Thus it makes him not merely a beneficiary but a partner in the work of creative love; and thus brings him into that realistic communion with God which is eternal life. Its character is therefore dynamic, creative and bracing, rather than consoling. It is not an opiate, but a declaration of our call and our possibilities; announcing and mediating the action of God, but also demanding the action of man.

Since Christianity is a thoroughly historical religion, it follows that its worship is and must be historically conditioned; and that

ill-considered attempts to cut ourselves free from our past are more likely to result in impoverishment than in renovation. The general characters of that worship are, of course, directly traceable to the Judaism out of which it arose, and especially to the two great spiritual forces developed within Judaism—Sacrifice and Prophecy. From these descend the “sacramental” and the “evangelical” types of Christian worship. Though the working of history has unfortunately tended to place these two great forms of religious expression over against one another, and identified them with the Catholic and Protestant outlooks, they are, of course, complementary. There is no doubt that the full ideal of Christian worship, orientating towards God all aspects of human nature—soul and body, mind, feeling and will—, requires both; and that in the first creative period of the Church no more opposition was felt between them than between the Temple and the Synagogue Worship from which they arose. For the purposes of the present enquiry, however, it seems better to consider them separately.

A. It will hardly be denied that where its rightful balance and rhythm are preserved Eucharistic worship does represent what was from the first the distinctive corporate act of Christian devotion; with its rich suggestions and meanings, its transcendental and social implications, its remembrance of the Cross and declaration of the saving presence of Jesus, its demand on the self-offering of the worshipper, and gift of heavenly food. Round this sacred action more and more religious values have gradually clustered; and through this a direct appeal is made alike to sense and spirit, in terms which the most simple can appreciate and yet which the greatest philosopher cannot exhaust. Though historically conditioned creatures cannot lightly regard the claims of tradition, here we are concerned with something yet more fundamental than tradition; however venerable may be—indeed are—the historic credentials of Eucharistic worship. We are concerned with a method of embodying and expressing spiritual realities in and through sensible signs, which is peculiarly adapted to the needs and capacities of the human creature, himself a spirit held tight in a sense-conditioned world; and is moreover particularly congenial to an incarnational religion, which declares God revealed to man in and through earthly and visible things.

If formal corporate worship is to achieve its aim, two contacts are needed: one as towards God, the other as towards men. On the

manward side, the act or method of worship must be such that all can take part in it, live in it, do it; and not merely be spectators of it. This is the acid test of ceremonial worship, and here it too often fails. On the Godward side, its reach and its suggestion must exceed man, and thrust out into the supernatural. It must never lose the "taste of the Infinite"—the awestruck sense of a transcendent yet personal Reality. Much "simple worship" fails here. On the whole, and in spite of certain obvious dangers attached to it, sacramental and especially Eucharistic worship seems best to satisfy these requirements. In the "holy spotless immortal life-giving Mysteries of Christ" the visible and invisible, natural and supernatural, personal and corporate aspects of religion are brought together or expressed in a way that meets the needs of our mixed human nature; because, uniting and giving expression to the average religious instincts, they also embody the deepest spiritual truths. Moreover, the Eucharist does what it declares. It really offers a real oblation: it really associates the worship of earth with that of heaven. It really consecrates the bread and wine offered, and in them really gives the worshipper the Food of Eternal Life. So that here from beginning to end we are concerned not only with statement but with action, not only with symbols but with realities. All the ancient liturgies are full of the idea that something positive is accomplished in Eucharistic worship. The soul is brought near to actual sources of salvation, it does something and something is done to it. Man offers under tokens himself and his life and goods; is hallowed and lifted up with them, and fed with the life of Christ.

All this is implicit in the service; but too often it is slurred by our manner of presentation. We seem to need a fresh emphasis on what is done, which shall bring out the organic relation or meaning of the great sequence of acts which compose the liturgy; and which shall knit the congregation together in a single concerted movement of self-offering, praise and consecration. Moreover in this sequence of acts, closely associated as they are with our Lord's life and passion, and leading up to His self-giving under humble sensible signs, the Christian ideal at its highest is put again and again before the heart and mind; and binds men together in loving recognition of God's claim and enabling power. "In the Eucharist," says Huvelin, "Christ eternalizes the act of sacrifice, the act in which He has loved us most. The contemplation of this divine self-giving humbles, purifies and enlightens man."

It is to be noted that such Eucharistic worship has been, again and again, a determining factor in the development of the saints, and not only those of Roman Catholic obedience. It means or should mean for every soul taking part in it penitence, self-offering, affirmation, intercession, adoration, communion and enhancement of life; and all these great spiritual realities experienced as a member of the Church, a close-knit corporation of dedicated and believing men expressing by symbolic deeds and words their response to God. Thus the Eucharist sums up and reiterates the very course and content of salvation; not as a doctrine, but as an action involving body, soul, spirit, and affecting the whole man. Such worship is both social and personal. It requires the love and prayer of every soul taking part and brings each one into a fresh and real relation with God which overflows to affect the active life and is expressed in deeds of service. The faithful communicant is sanctified, attuned to God, as the culmination of a series of concrete acts driving home the great historical and spiritual truths which the Eucharist shows forth. Yet he comes, not merely as an individual, but as part of a sacrificial society, the Body of Christ, self-offered for the saving purposes of God: and it is by this self-loss in the life of the body that his own life receives new meaning and power.

The question here then is, how best to use this priceless spiritual material so that its full energy shall be available for the Glory of God and transformation of men. Obviously the starting point will be the giving of right teaching about the Eucharist and its celebration, in such a way as to emphasize its organic aspect. Here the Liturgic Mission, which has come into existence during recent years, offers a valuable method of approach: linking evangelism with worship, and stressing the truth that the Christian Eucharist is not merely a devotion for the fervent but a great social-spiritual act, in which—though God is the real doer of all that is done—all have a part to play in the one action of the Living Church; and that this action has a cosmic significance and avails, not merely for the devout persons taking part in it, but for the whole world. In order that this may be driven home, it is essential that the ceremonial, music, etc., should be really congregational, and not such as requires professional performance. Where the congregation becomes an audience, little spiritual work is done and little power is given; for expression-work is essential to the awakening and development of the religious sense.

The Parish Eucharist, with simple music which all are expected to sing, and culminating in the general communion of the people,

seems best to meet modern requirements here. An introit psalm, and another in its ancient place before the Gospel, will stress that Biblical character of the liturgy which is often lost. Some ceremonial emphasis should be laid upon the Offertory, as one of the great moments of the service; representing the self-offering of the Christian with all he has, in union with Christ under the symbols of bread and wine. Some offering should be made by every person present, as an essential part of every Eucharist. At the intercession, the particular needs of the parish, and of individuals desiring prayers should be brought before God, thus giving expression to the homely and intimate side of Christian worship. All this leads up to the great central act of worship in the Sanctus and Consecration, and is completed by Communion. This is a type of corporate worship which, as experience proves, can be made both attractive and deeply impressive to all taking part in it. It opens paths of discharge for reverence, love and wonder, and is a real vehicle of spiritual power. Here we worship as members of the family, the Household of Faith, and share the family duties and privileges; taking part in an act of worship which involves the consecration and hallowing of the whole of life, bringing it to the altar and thus giving dignity and meaning to all secular as well as religious activities. But careful teaching is essential if this result is to be obtained and the full saving power of Christianity experienced.

*B.* Thus described, Eucharistic worship seems to demonstrate its superiority. Nevertheless it is exposed to certain spiritual dangers, of which perhaps the worst are those of formalism and of monotony; and, regarded as an instrument of evangelism, always needs to be supported by adequate teaching. Here the prophetic strand in Christian worship enters as a most necessary corrective; the ever fresh declaration of God's Being and God's Word, the spontaneous expression of faith, the ethical demand and ethical response. The Standard and the Model are set before the mind, and reinterpreted in the context of modern life; and thus the sluggish will is stirred to that effort which is an essential condition of the full working of grace in the soul. Hence the mixture of Scripture-reading, preaching, prayer and song, which is ultimately derived from Synagogue worship, and constitutes the usual Sunday service of the Protestant Churches—though it may easily lose all spiritual quality and regarded as a complete act of worship leaves many vital factors unexpressed—has great religious value. It can unite all those who take part in it, tune them in to the Supernatural, and

produce in them a state of religious receptivity. The docile and attentive listening to the Word, though not strictly speaking an act of worship, does yet entail a corporate waiting upon God, a concentration upon spiritual realities, in which the powerful force of group-suggestion reinforces the religious appeal, breaking down barriers and making all taking part in it of one heart and mind.

Preaching, says Will, "not only brings the congregation into the presence of God but gives it, together with the sense of religious solemnity, that of Christian solidarity . . . each member of the congregation who opens his heart to the revelation, will perceive his neighbour's faith inflamed along with his own. The fire on each separate hearth will unite with all the others; till like a single flame upon an invisible altar, all this sacred ardour rises to God in one collective prayer." Plainly, where preaching is thus considered and rises to this prophetic height, it can and does become a real disclosure of the Supernatural, a stimulus to religious fervour and a genuine vehicle of saving power: yet only in so far as it points beyond itself, driving home those great spiritual lessons and demands which are implicit in sacramental worship, relating them to everyday life, and leading the congregation on to self-oblation and praise. Its achievement of this is at least partly dependent on the spiritual capacity of the preacher, through whom God's Word is given. Only so far as he is himself a loving spirit, whose life is based on communion with God, can he hope to set other spirits on fire.

Sacramental and liturgical worship is, on the contrary, comparatively independent of this personal factor. In it the voice of the Church, the Spirit-filled Body, speaks. It is her action, the offering of her sacrifice, prayer and adoration, exceeding while it embraces the separate action of all the individuals taking part. This is the chief reason why the prophetic strand in institutional worship can never be sufficient alone. A further reason is that, whilst it makes a direct appeal to the mind, will and heart, it leaves little for the senses to do. Expression-work is practically confined to the hymn singing which is usually strongly developed in connection with this type of religious practice. This falls short of the full requirements and possibilities of an incarnational religion, which proclaims God self-given in and through sensible things; and by including soul and body, spirit and sense—sight, taste, touch, movement—in our response to Him, unites, sanctifies and energizes for His Service the whole man. "Two tables," says Thomas à Kempis,

“are set on either side in the spiritual treasury of Holy Church. One is the table of the holy altar . . . the other is the table of the laws of God containing the holy doctrine, instructing man in the right faith, and leading him into the inward secrecies which are called *Sancta Sanctorum*.” Both are necessary; each, rightly used, enriches and interprets the other; through each God’s grace and power are poured out, and through each, man can respond in loving worship. The Church’s problem then is how best to use these two great supernatural instruments for the glory of God and the redeeming of human life.

*Other Practical Points.* It must not be forgotten that the parish church is itself a religious instrument of great importance. Its existence witnesses to worship, and is indeed an act of worship; for it means God and nothing else. It is a place dedicated to the Supernatural; a little enclave in which we can or should find

The silence of eternity  
Interpreted by love.

Here the personal life of communion with God can be learnt and deepened, and the strengthening and pacifying power of Christianity experienced. Every parish priest has a great responsibility in respect of his church. It should be a spiritual home, always open, where everything is done to create a favourable atmosphere for communion with God; and here the chief factor will be the attitude and practice of the priest. If the clergy make a habit of praying in their own churches, the people will learn to do the same. The increasing noise and pressure and the diminishing privacy of modern life make such places of refuge of great importance for the life of the spirit and development of the spirit of worship. For the same reason, the revived practice of Retreats and Quiet Days, cutting off for a time all sources of distraction, concentrating mind and will upon a period of uninterrupted communion with God, and giving opportunity for intensive training in prayer, are of great value in the deepening of the spiritual life and teaching worship. The deep corporate silence, which is the outstanding feature of a good Retreat, together with the sense that here at any rate God’s call and attraction take precedence of everything else, constitute an effective devotional technique which brings many souls to an entirely new realization of His presence and power. The Church

has here a method of which as yet she has hardly realised the full possibilities, which can be adapted to all types of soul and stages of development, and appears to be peculiarly suited to the times in which we live.

Next, the invitation to worship—if it is to transform man in his wholeness and bring him into communion with God—must be addressed to every level and aspect of his nature. We need not, then, be afraid of its popular and spontaneous expression: or even of those outbursts of revivalistic worship which have proved under appropriate conditions their life-changing power. We must be willing to translate our hunger for God into terms of homely or romantic emotion, and to make a considerable use of pictorial, dramatic and poetic material—not always of the best quality—in our efforts to bridge the gap between the unseen and the seen. It is true that the simple and child-like, released from the critical action of the mind, may quickly degenerate into the silly. But this is no argument for an arrogant rejection of all those images of Christian truth and love—the Crib, the Mother and Child, the Saviour, the Cross—and all those devotions centred on the humanity of Christ, which have proved their attractive and transforming power. It only means that, whilst avoiding the vice of fastidious piety and humbly accepting our creaturely status, we must take at least as much trouble to maintain the standards of good taste and common-sense in the Church as we do in the home.

Finally, on its subjective side, which is here our special concern, the ultimate test of worship must be its fruits—in other words, its overflow into everyday life, and specially its effect upon character. If it has really brought man into God's presence, and mediated to him the divine saving power, the result must be humbling, purifying and strengthening. It will mean a genuine increase in the dynamic virtues of faith, hope and charity, transvaluating all human values: and expressed, not only in the adoring ascent of the mind and heart to God, but also in an ever-widening love and interest extended to the world, an effort to co-operate in some way and degree in that redeeming work which is declared in the central act of Christian worship.

*Conclusion.* The traditional worship of the Church has developed under historical pressure as the vehicle of imperishable spiritual truths; and as such, has a priceless value. Nevertheless a certain readjustment to changing conditions, and the constant influx of fresh ideas and enthusiasms are needed as a defence against formalism and stagnation. As in other great human arts, here there will always be

a certain tension between stability and novelty; and spiritual health and effectiveness depend on striking the right balance between them. Fresh approaches to God and fresh disclosures of the Spirit are to be expected and welcomed. Nevertheless our modern anxiety to press forward and our illusory sense of separation from the past, make us unduly inclined to neglect in religion the lessons of history, and treat the spiritual discoveries of our predecessors with less respect than they deserve. In the attempt to meet "modern needs" the unchanging character of supernatural truth is often forgotten; and the transcendental note, the absolute demand inseparable from real worship are lost. Here liturgy, rightly used and interpreted, has an irreplaceable office as a means of conserving, representing and making operative the mighty realities of faith. Even where it seems to its hurried critics to be stiff, archaic and lifeless, they will find a determined effort to make these dry bones live better than the attempt to make a new body without bones. This means patient, expert and persuasive teaching on the spiritual realities which our forms of worship express, including both its social and its personal implications, and together with this the training of individual souls in the life of discipline and prayer; for only where the congregation contains at least a proportion of mature men and women of the Spirit, will corporate worship develop its full possibilities as a vehicle of saving power.

*Points for Discussion*

- (1) Christian redemption, says William Law, "on the one side is the heavenly divine life offering itself again to the inward man that had lost it. On the other side, it is the hope, the faith, the desire of this inward man, hungering and thirsting, stretching after and calling upon this divine and heavenly life." In what way can Christian worship best give expression to this truth?
- (2) Discuss the theology of sacrifice as expressed in the Eucharist and its value as a vehicle of the saving power of God.
- (3) What should be the relation between the sacramental and prophetic elements in institutional religion? Are attempts to combine these in a single service advisable, or should they be kept distinct?
- (4) Where the emphasis is on Eucharistic worship, how can the need for an intimate and popular type of corporate devotion best be met? Should the Mission Service be retained and developed? Or can any of the non-liturgic experiments of the

historic Churches—e.g. the Roman Catholic devotions centred on the reserved Sacrament (Benediction and the Forty Hours) or on the Passion (Stations of the Cross) or the homely Russian services of praise and intercession called *molyben*, be adapted to our parochial life?

- (5) In what way can worship be an instrument of evangelism towards those still outside the influence of the Church?
- (6) The stylized worship of the Churches only has reality in so far as it represents the true relation of all life to God. How can we make this great truth operative for the transformation in Christ of our whole economic, social, intellectual and personal activities?

#### *Recommended Books*

Yngve Brilioth, *Eucharistic Faith and Practice*

Fernand Cabrol, *Liturgical Prayer*

Florence Converse, *The House of Prayer*

W. H. Frere, *The Anaphora*

Romano Guardini, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*

A. G. Hebert, *Liturgy and Society*

A. G. Hebert, Ed., *The Parish Eucharist*

F. Heiler, *The Spirit of Worship*

F. C. N. Hicks, *The Fulness of Sacrifice*

E. O. James, *Christian Myth and Ritual*

William Law, *The Spirit of Prayer*

E. R. Micklem, *Our Approach to God*

Michael Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*

William Temple, *Nature, Man and God*

Evelyn Underhill, *Worship*

Friedrich von Hugel, *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion* (two vols.)

Robert Will, *Le Culte*

Members of the Church Congress may borrow these books, one a month, from the Church Congress Library, 12 West Eleventh Street, New York.

Introduction to Samuel M. Shoemaker,  
“*Church Congress Syllabus 47:*  
Personal Evangelism”

IAN MARKHAM\*

Samuel Shoemaker was an authentic Anglican evangelist. In this article, he identifies a besetting sin of the church in every age, namely, our propensity to advocate for evangelism, but never do it. He is especially critical of the priest who fails to be personally involved in evangelism. His article provides an interesting taxonomy, focusing on what he calls “spiritual work with individuals” or “personal work.” Then we have a step-by-step process (an “interview”) described, much of which is wise—be authentic, recognize one’s own imperfections, and speak from a place of love (which involves listening most of the time), make sure you are willing to say the word *sin*, make sure that there is a “Christian decision,” and finally provide strategies for subsequent discipleship.

Naturally there are differences between his time and ours. Our technological, Internet age would probably want some recognition that the interview might come in stages—it might start on social media (as Facebook friends) and then move to a meeting. It is “man” throughout; this is definitely before inclusive language. The theological assumptions are binary: there is no Rahnerian recognition that the Holy Spirit is already at work in the life of the “pagan” (as Shoemaker talks about the interviewed person at one point). The psychological and sociological contexts are ignored. For example, best pastoral practice invites us to recognize that intimate conversations might expose areas of deep complexity that require psychological expertise; a person abused as a child who finds it difficult to forgive the abuser will need to be referred for specialist help. In addition, there is no social

---

\* Ian S. Markham is dean, president, and professor of theology and ethics at Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria, Virginia. He is the author of many books, including *Do Morals Matter?* (2006); *Understanding Christian Doctrine* (2006); *Against Atheism* (2010) and, with Oran Warder, *An Introduction to Ministry* (2016).