

Schaeffer Lecture 3

February 13, 2023

3A: 1931-1938

Edith Rachel Merritt Seville

- Christian parents—Irish-English ancestry
- father's grandparents came from Ireland in 1844 (settled in Pittsburgh)
- mother's ancestors came from England early 1800s—settled in Pennsylvania then Ohio
- mother Jessie Maude Merritt b. 1874
- married Walter Greene 1894
- served with China Inland Mission (CIM); founded 1865 by Hudson Taylor
- 1895 first child (boy) died at birth; three weeks later Walter died of TB
- Jessie went to Toronto Bible College determined to serve CIM
- 1899 completed school and moved to Shanghai
- survived the 1899 Boxer Rebellion where hundreds of missionaries were murdered, including 58 from CIM and 21 of their children
- never intended to remarry—wanted to devote herself to missionary work

- father George Hugh Seville b. 1876
- graduated Westminster College (PA) 1898
- loved languages including Hebrew and Greek
- taught Greek and Latin at prep school for two years
- called to serve CIM; attended seminary for three years (excelled in Hebrew)
- sailed for China in 1902
- met Jessie; George was persistent; they married in 1905 (same year Hudson Taylor died)

- Edith was their fourth child born in China (1914); Wenchow, Chekiang Province (200 miles south of Shanghai); three older siblings were Janet, John, and Elsa; John died at 8 months
- Edith described as “precocious and strong-willed”
- lived in the missionary compound; learned Chinese language and culture; had a Chinese nursemaid called “Amah”
- by the time she was one, her older sisters were in boarding school
- nicknamed “Mei Fuh”—*beautiful happiness*
- Sam Wellman: “She was a fierce little evangelist”
- walked with Dixon Hoste as he prayed for the missionaries (she was 4 years old)—early on she saw the results of faithful prayer
- traumatic experience of passing by a Chinese pagoda where unwanted baby girls were left to die

- 1919 family returned from China with the expectation of returning in a year; the trip from Shanghai to the west coast took a month by ship
- George worked for CIM editing *China's Millions* magazine
- became pastor at a Presbyterian church in Newburgh, NY; Edith joined Girl Scouts and YWCA; she excelled in math, science, and English but did poorly in Latin (to George's disappointment)
- George was friends with Robert Dick Wilson and J Gresham Machen (Princeton professors)
- several relocations, including two years in California and two years in Toronto before relocating back to Germantown
- Edith became a passionate apologist when they moved to PA; her sister Janet had lost her faith in college; she began reading conservative theology like Machen and Wilson
- graduated high school in 1932 (age 17)
- one month later, met Fran at First Presbyterian Church
- her family home was close to the lot where Fran heard Anthony Zeoli preach just two years earlier
- Edith began classes at Beaver College for Women in the fall of 1932 (home economics)
- started meetings for the League of Evangelical Students
- Edith left college without a degree in order to marry Fran in 1935
- her experience at CIM would be influential later on: adapting to the culture you're trying to reach

Machen and Westminster

- 1881-1937; taught at Princeton 1915-1929
- 1921: *Origin of Paul's Religion*
- 1923: *Christianity and Liberalism*
- 1925: *What is Faith?*
- 1930: *The Virgin Birth of Christ*
- strong defender of historic Christianity against modernism
- 1923: Auburn Affirmation: about 10% of Presbyterian clergy deny inerrancy
- two of the Auburn signers are later appointed as trustees to Princeton; whereupon Machen would declare that the Old Princeton was dead
- Westminster founded in 1929 by Machen, Robert Dick Wilson (1856-1930), Oswald Allis (1880-1973), R.B. Kuiper (1886-1966), Ned Stonehouse (1902-1962), Allan MacRae (1902-1997), Cornelius Van Til (1895-1987), Paul Woolley (1902-1984)
- independent seminary—no denominational ties; allowed for professors of different denominations to teach; tried to remain neutral on eschatology and libertarianism
- all three eschatological schools were represented at this time
- 1933: Machen starts the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions; subsequently tried and expelled by NPC
- 1936: OPC is formed
- died of pneumonia while speaking in North Dakota (1/1/1937); buried in Baltimore

Back to Fran

- preparing to leave for college Fran was still conflicted about “disobeying” his parents to pursue the ministry; dad bluntly said he didn’t want a minister for a son
- Fran prayed for affirmation and made the decision to go—whereupon his father angrily stormed out but told Fran he’d pay the first half-year; his father would later become a Christian but this was a decisive moment for Fran to follow God’s leading
- Sept 1931 enrolled at Hampdon-Sydney
- friend drove him 300 miles in his own car
- Fran was a Yankee in a southern school—and a working class kid among the rich
- placed in the jock dorm where the students were openly hostile to ministry students
- roommate named Snerp – big and mean; at one point they came to blows and Fran proved to be a “big little man”
- nicknamed Philly
- showed concern both for his studies and for fellow students
- often helped his drunk dorm mates to their rooms on Saturday night with the stipulation they attend church the next morning
- started a prayer group in his dorm – kept it short
- his favorite professor taught philosophy and used to engage with him in spirited debates
- dated girls at a nearby teacher’s college but he proved to be too “serious” for them (even the serious ones)
- January 1932 befriended a black janitor (Johnny Morton); taught Sunday school for Mercy Street church in nearby Five Points; ministered to Johnny in his illness and visited his grave after he died
- summer 1932 back home to work for the summer and met Edith at a church meeting where a Unitarian was speaking; Fran stood up to offer a mild defense but Edith stood up and refuted him from Machen and Wilson
- that night they discovered their mutual interest in truth—they had “met on the battlefield”
- during the next three years they wrote each other almost daily; Edith saw greatness in Fran and wanted to be his companion in life and ministry
- yet, both were prepared to part ways if they determined it was God’s will
- besides writing letters, at Edith’s suggestion started reading the same devotional to maintain a spiritual connection—a practice they continued until Fran died
- Edith encouraged Fran to read Machen and to apply to Westminster
- earned meals by working in the cafeteria; may have helped incite a food fight on one occasion
- president Student Christian Association
- ran hurdles for the track team
- became president of the literary society and debated
- member of the Ministerial Association

- joined the Kappa Nu fraternity but resolved afterward never to join another secular organization
- 1935 March applies to seminary; receives a scholarship that helps defray expenses
- 1935 April Machen on trial
- 1935 June graduated magna cum laude (BA degree)
- straight-A student, second in his class
- honored for being the most outstanding Christian on campus
- 1935 July married Edith Seville (George officiated)
- their marriage combined Fran's working class background with Edith's cultural refinement
- both had a deep interest in foreign missions
- the Sevilles approved by the Schaeffers were divided—Frank approved, but Bessie was mean to Edith
- summer 1935 camp counselors in Michigan (working with children); spent two weeks driving to Michigan in Fran's Model A
- 1935 George was forcibly retired from CIM; Edith foregoes her senior year in college
- 1935 fall begins study at Westminster Philadelphia
- Van Til was Schaffer's biggest influence; CVT wrote strongly against Barth; Barth was a topic of discussion at Westminster and later at Faith
- Edith as partner in seminary—supporting them with her work learning everything Fran was leaning (except perhaps Hebrew)
- Edith was an avid reader who only needed three hours' sleep each night; she would spend much time writing letters to family and supporters of L'Abri, as well as books later on; Fran described their books as a unit to be read together
- 1936 division in the NPC → Machen forms OPC
- Schaeffer later laments the tone of the separation
- two principles: purity of the church and love between Christians (not all Christians left the NPC—only a fraction went to the OPC)
- the problem for those who stayed was *compromise*; the problem for those who left was *bitterness* toward their brethren
- separation was important but the doctrine of scripture was the watershed
- Fran later expressed gratitude for the decision to leave: "I personally would not belong to any denomination where there was no hope of recovering the bureaucracy or the seminaries for Jesus Christ."
- 1936 summer camp in NH; here Fran receives news that Machen and McIntire had been defrocked; Fran immediately resigns from the NPC
- Harold Ockenga was a speaker at the camp; Fran would later express disappointment that he didn't leave the NPC for the OPC
- fall 1936: Edith is pregnant and Fran is hospitalized with appendicitis; they have a \$75 hospital bill and no money to pay; Edith prays for financial help and gets it

- 1937 January Machen dies unexpectedly
- 1937 OPC GA minority splits off to form a new church and seminary
- Faith Theological Seminary and the Bible Presbyterian Church (Wilmington, DE)
- FTS included: Alan MacRae (1902-1997), Carl McIntire (1906-2002), Laird Harris (1911-2008), Roy Brumbaugh, Fred Paist
- 25 students
- Fran left with the split; he was turned off by the cold orthodoxy (and tendency toward hypercalvinism) that he saw at Westminster
- his premillennial view saw the issue in terms of inerrancy—literal reading of Rev 20
- those who left Westminster were also committed to steering away from “worldly” activities like drinking, cinema, and dance (this was only a few years after Prohibition had been repealed in 1933; the issue of Christian witness was their concern over and against libertarianism)
- the new denomination was less committed to CVT presuppositionalism and more inclined to verificationism
- Fran’s summer break was spent purchasing and renovating housing for the arriving students and staff; FTS opened fall 1937
- George Seville joined the faculty to teach Greek (remained 17 years); Jessie led a wives’ prayer meeting
- June 1937 Priscilla born but wasn’t breathing and had to be resuscitated
- 1938 Schaeffer graduates (again with straight A’s); first ordained minister: moved to Grove City PA for first pastorate (350 miles west of Philadelphia)
- Edith’s English roots were in this part of PA
- Schaeffer’s working class background would be advantageous for relating to his congregations
- everyone was asking the same questions—just in different languages
- he determined to preach to the whole congregation—wanted to state the truth plainly in the language of his listeners

3B: GWIT Sections 3-6

§ 3 – how historic Christianity differs

chapter 1 – personality

- in a system of theology, all the parts must relate together
- Christianity as a system that has the answers basic to all men; Christian answers stand up to the test of both rationality and real life
- man’s first basic need is to understand his own identity
- God as personal “on the high order of the Trinity”—and the source of man’s personality
- “before the creation of anything, there was real love and real communication”
 - elsewhere (and I can’t remember where exactly) Schaeffer argues more explicitly for the Trinity as a necessity of God having relationship with his creatures (i.e., *relationship* is an intrinsic property of God, as is love)

- personality (like ontology and life itself) is not an inherent property of the universe—these point us back to a Creator who must exhibit these properties
- “The two alternatives are very clear-cut. Either there is a personal beginning to everything, or one has what the impersonal throws up by chance out of the time sequence.”
- if personality is by chance, then it is merely an illusion
- “Only some form of mystical jump will allow us to accept that personality comes from impersonality.”
- “metaphysical magicians”—men like Teilhard de Chardin who reject the only explanation that fits their own experience
- J Huxley—“man functions better if he acts as though God [were] there.”
- Ibsen—take away a man’s lie and you take away his hope
 - we might put it this way: when man feels compelled to act *as if* God were really there, he shows how determined he is to suppress the truth in unrighteousness
- “If the world is what these men say it is, then man (not only individually but as a race), being unfulfillable, is dead. In this situation man should not walk on the grass, but respect it—for it is higher than he!”
- in the absence of God, “Love will mean facing the problem of pushing the button that destroys the human race. . . . [it is] a love resulting in that which should destroy.”
 - consider where we are today (2023) with the globalist agenda to drastically reduce or eliminate the human race as a “plague” upon the planet—which idea goes back through Erlich (1960s) and even further back to Malthus (18th century)—we really are prepared to destroy the race in order to save the “grass”
- Schaeffer summarizes our two choices: creation by an intrinsically personal God, or John Cage’s ‘devilish din’

chapter 2 – verifiable facts

- man created in God’s image should have the capacity for verbalized communication
- God to man (and vice versa), man to man, man to himself
- “propositional communication” implies the possibility of verifiable facts—not just in religion, but also history and science
- the Bible is not a theological textbook—it is set in the context of history
- “unity over the whole field of knowledge”—God has spoken about himself, man, history, and the universe: both “upstairs” and “downstairs” are covered
- true communication does not mean total communication—man is finite
- “Created in his image, we are rational and, as such, we are able to, and intended to, explore and discover further truth concerning creation.”
- even the unbelieving scientist can arrive at new knowledge, but he cannot understand its true nature
 - the “new theology” has an inadequate epistemology (in fact, when followed to its conclusion, it has none at all—as we said last time, there is a failure to communicate when objectivity is removed)
- “modern theology . . . is no longer open to verification”
 - hence we’re seeing Schaeffer begin to build his case for *verificational* apologetics as a stark contrast to the purely subjective mystical theology

- as an aside, consider where this leaves us today: you've almost certainly encountered an assortment of people (in or out of the church) who hold to their mysticism on the basis of "personal experience" and blind faith; they have disconnected themselves from any truth outside of themselves
- man—when asked to suspend his powers of reason—becomes less than man in his fallenness
- "On the side of God's infinity there is a break between God and the whole of his creation. . . . on the side of personality, man can know God truly, though he cannot know God exhaustively."
- personality does not equal finiteness—hence personality can be infinite in the Creator even as it is finite in the creature; the new theology tries to claim that we must know God exhaustively or not at all (thus removing personality from God)
- in this chapter Schaeffer brings back "the line of anthropology"—the dividing line between man and God; "it is not a brazen heaven over our heads which cannot be penetrated"; God's communication breaks through the line so we can know him truly
- three possibilities with respect to communication: (1) total inability to communicate; (2) total communication with exact understanding; (3) mixed communication—true but not exhaustive
- modern man has no "universal" for love even though he knows it's important
- "love existed between the persons of the Trinity before the foundation of the world"
- God's eternal love is therefore the basis of love on the level of the creature; "The word and act of love has crossed the line of anthropology downward."
 - once again we can see how the image of God in man is still operative even though it is totally distorted: concepts like *love* and *justice* are in the heart of man
- "It should be obvious by this time that Christianity and the new theology have no relationship except the use of a common terminology with difference meanings."
 - and doesn't this put us into the first category of communication—total failure? we are using the same *words* but speaking totally different *languages*, thereby giving the *illusion* of communication—and yet frustrating all efforts to find a meeting of minds (the problem of failed communication is "hidden" by the use of the same words)

chapter 3 – dilemma of man

- "Modern man is desperately struggling with the concept of man in his dilemma"
 - what is the default view of the humanist? man is *basically good* and *morally perfectible*; hence we can build a paradise on earth (with enough effort); my way of expressing it is "man on the up escalator"; stems from the Darwinian view of the inevitability of improvement; of course, this is a same view that paradoxically leads to genocide and suicide (violence is a feature not a bug)
- two explanations for man's dilemma: moral cause and metaphysical cause (man is too small—and he has always been this way)
- the new theology says man has always been fallen—there is no answer to the problem of evil

- Camus *The Plague*: fight the plague and fight God; refuse to fight the plague and become antihumanitarian
 - is this a true moral dilemma for the Christian? what about the humanist?
- the new theology doesn't solve the dilemma
- no guilt in the modern theology—only guilt feelings; therefore no personal antithesis at the point of justification
- “Justification means to be acquitted from true guilt and no longer to be condemned.”
- here Schaeffer warns against the dangers of taking up common cause with those in the new theology; the new theology has an implicit or explicit universalism—which is “naturally related to what their system is.”
- modern thinkers: man as determined: chemical, psychological, sociological factors; man is “programmed”
- man as machine is less than fallen man
- “[Man] could so act by choice because he was created to be different from the animal, the plant and the machine.”
- “Take away the first three chapters of Genesis, and you cannot maintain a true Christian position nor give Christianity's answers.”
 - it is interesting to notice that naturalistic science and neo-orthodoxy have the same objective—to remove that essential portion of scripture that explains how we ended up with such a mess

chapter 4 – God's answer

- “There is no law behind God moral absolutes rest upon God's character.”
- man is “morally significant in a significant history”—a recurring theme that man has a part in shaping history
- the Bible's answer to Camus' dilemma:
 1. the God who is there is a good God
 2. there is hope for a solution to man's dilemma
 3. there is a sufficient basis for morals
 4. there is an adequate reason for fighting wrong
- “If I live in a world of non-absolutes what criterion do I have to distinguish between right and wrong so that I can know what I should be fighting?”
 - here's where I will channel Alinsky for the answer to Schaeffer's question: just tear down the system, whatever it happens to be at the moment; nothing is worth keeping; “progress” is achieved through the revolution
- Schaeffer answers: “The Christian is the real radical of our generation, for he stands against the monolithic, modern concept of truth as relative.”

chapter 5 – how do we know

- making sense of the world: the existence and form of the universe and the “mannishness” of man
- the abnormality of the present world cannot give a full answer to meaning, but both are important for knowing that the Bible is true

- proof consists of two steps:
- A. the theory must be noncontradictory and give an answer to the phenomenon
- B. we must be able to live consistently with our theory
- “The reason why modern men reject the Christian answer, or why they often do not even consider it, is because they have already accepted, with an implicit faith, the presupposition of the uniformity of natural causes in a closed system.”
- in other words, there only the universe—there is no God outside the universe with the ability to bring it into existence or influence its behavior
- “The existence of the external universe and its form and the ‘mannishness’ of man demonstrate the truth of the historic Christian position.”
- rationality, not rationalism: “rationality is needed to open the door to a vital relationship to God”—it “defines and provides a form for the whole” . . . “if we give up the rational everything is lost”

§ 4 – speaking historic Christianity

chapter 1 – point of tension

- what is communication? ideas passing from one mind to another
- language as an obvious obstacle to communication
- the burden is on the Christian to communicate in a way that he is understood—which means using the other man’s language; the problem is how connotation words have been redefined
 - here I’m thinking of Edith’s experience in China: adopting both language and culture; or we might think of Paul striving to “become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some”—1 Cor 9:22
 - not a compromise of the truth, but an accommodation to make true communication possible
- “As we turn to consider in more detail how we may speak to people of the twentieth century, we must emphasize first of all that we cannot apply mechanical rules. . . . Each person must be dealt with as an individual.”
- “Our communication to him must be in genuine love. . . . a genuine concern for the individual.”
- “This kind of communication is not cheap. . . . Genuine love . . . means a willingness to be entirely exposed to the person to whom we are talking.”
- hence the priority of treating every person as an image-bearer of God—“We are one flesh, one blood, one kind.”
 - by these statements we see that Schaeffer’s “apologetic” is both intensely *personal* and highly *vulnerable*—we are exposing ourselves and our faith to the unbeliever in genuine love
- “Every person we speak to has a set of presuppositions, whether he or she has analyzed them or not.”
 - as Schaeffer begins to explain his approach, notice that his use of “presupposition” is not merely referring to his own, but to the one he’s talking to—this is where he is looking for the point of tension
- “No non-Christian can be consistent to the logic of his presuppositions.”

- we notice that Schaeffer is presupposing the common ground of logic/reason—an assumption that, by his own admission, is no longer possible below the line of despair
- which of you haven't encountered an individual who seems totally at ease with the inconsistency of his beliefs?
- Schaeffer tries to bring it back to the real world: “Non-Christian presuppositions simply do not fit into what God has made, including what man is.”
 - but modern man, as the pantheistic mystic, is increasingly impervious to any attempt at using reason—he has made his home in the upper story of subjective non-reason (i.e., feelings and preferences)
- “When you face twentieth century man . . . you are facing a man in tension; and it is this tension which works on your behalf as you speak to him.”
- the starting point of Christian apologetics is with man and what he knows about himself; he is not in a vacuum; he is pulled between the real world and the consequences of his own belief system; “he cannot live in both places at once”
- “The more logical a man who holds a non-Christian position is to his own presuppositions, the further he is from the real world; and the nearer he is to the real world, the more illogical he is to his presuppositions.”
 - both situations are “illogical”—that is, inconsistent; there is no consistent way to unify reason and faith below the line of despair
 - here I want to propose “the insanity continuum”: on one extreme we have Denial and on the other extreme we have Psychosis; Denial is rejecting the objectivity of the real world as it presses against you, while Psychosis is a total break from reality into the illusion of your worldview (where nothing has to make sense)
- man is *lost* but he is not *nothing*—we must not see fallen man as less than the Bible sees him
- “The first consideration in our apologetics for modern man . . . is to find the place where his tension exists.”

chapter 2 – to the gospel

- there would be no communication at all with the modern man if he were consistent in his presuppositions—“in practice, you will find a place where you can talk”
 - and what if you can't? isn't the last option to walk away—to “agree to disagree”?
- while there is a place for conversation to take place, it is not neutral ground
- after finding the point of tension, the objective is to push him toward its conclusion—where he “ought to be” if he hadn't stopped short
- this process is not to be treated as an intellectual exercise—to do so is an act of cruelty
- “As I push the man off his false balance, he must be able to feel that I care for him.”
- “Pushing him towards the logic of his presuppositions is going to cause him pain; therefore I must not push any further than I need to.”
- you've pushed far enough when he is ready to listen to the gospel
- truth, real guilt, history: “Until he understands the importance of these three things, he is not ready to become a Christian.”
- find the area of his real interests and push him toward the logical conclusion

- you must allow him to ask any question he wants—we are not trying to impose a blind conformity; “we must be ready to receive blows . . . on the other hand, keep pressing him back, for he must keep answering questions, too.”
 - this becomes a critical presupposition as well—the mystic doesn’t think he has to explain his mysticism
- “taking the roof off”—to expose the unbeliever to the reality of the world we live in
- he sees his need from the truth of the external world and the truth of what man is; the scripture then shows him the nature of his lostness and the answer to it
- “This, I am convinced, is the true order for our apologetics in the second half of the twentieth century for people living under the line of despair.”
- the unbeliever must be shown that his belief does not answer the important questions
- in the west, we’ve been brainwashed into naturalism
- modern man’s “deadness” as a point of contact
- “The hardest thing of all is that when we have exposed modern man to his tension, he still many not be willing for the true solution.”
 - isn’t this where relativism takes us? when truth is relative, so is reason; cognitive dissonance is a feature not a bug; there is no reason it should bother us if there is no truth
- the one who rejects the truth is worse off, but this has always been true in evangelism
 - the alternative to “taking the roof off” is waiting for reality to come crashing through the roof and destroying the whole building; but even that kind of tragedy may create the opening to present the truth

chapter 3 – applying the gospel

- why do we do this? because Christianity is true
- do we believe it ourselves?
- pressing someone toward the conclusion of their beliefs will take longer than presenting the gospel; this reminds us that an investment of time is necessary
- “We must never forget that the first part of the gospel is not ‘Accept Christ as Savior,’ but ‘God is there.’”
- “The problem which confronts us as we approach modern man . . . is the problem of how to communicate the gospel so that it is understood.”
 - particularly difficult *in the church* where men have been hearing (and believing) an assortment of false gospels
- true Christian faith rests on the content, which is the finished work of Christ on the cross (a real space-time event); in this way, Christian “faith” is turned outward to an objective reality
 - here is where I bristle a little: Schaeffer is in the habit of saying “accept Christ” where it would be more fitting in the modern context to say “trust Christ”; conversion is not something mystical or subjective like “let Jesus into your heart” (expressions, I suspect, that come down to us from revivalism and decisionalism); the expression “accept Christ” has the effect of putting the sinner at the center of salvation
- “The call to Christian believing rests on God’s propositional promises.”
- Christian faith as an act of bowing twice: in the realm of *being* and the realm of *morals*

- four critical aspects of what it means to “believe on, to cast oneself on, Christ” (here Schaeffer redeems himself)
- 1. existence of God
- 2. personal moral guilt
- 3. substitutionary death of Christ in space and time
- 4. trusting in Christ not in works
- “My faith is simply the empty hands by which I accept God’s free gift.”
- after conversion, four aids to growth:
 1. Bible study
 2. prayer
 3. evangelism
 4. church attendance (by which I assume he means *membership*)

§ 5 – pre-evangelism

chapter 1 – commending the faith

- “There are two purposes of Christian apologetics. The first is defense. The second is to communicate Christianity in a way that any given generation can understand.”
- necessity of defense—Christianity is always under attack
- every Christian needs to answer questions for himself first
- young people in particular need to be trained to defend Christianity against the particular attacks of their generation
- children are being lost because parents, churches, colleges, missions don’t understand them and don’t know how to help them
- “We have left the next generation naked in the face of the twentieth-century thought by which they are surrounded.”
 - at this point recall Edith’s motivation to become an apologist in high school—because her sister Janet lost her faith during college
- our approach to apologetics should not reflect a “citadel mentality”—shut up from the world; we must be engaged with the world enough to understand its thought forms
- “Apologetics should not be merely an academic subject, a new kind of scholasticism. It should be thought out and practiced in the rough and tumble of living with the present generation.”

“So the positive side of apologetics is the communication of the gospel to the present generation in terms that they can understand.

“The purpose of ‘apologetics’ is not just to win an argument or a discussion, but that the people with whom are in contact may become Christians and then live under the Lordship of Christ in the whole spectrum of life.

“It is important to remember, first of all, that we cannot separate true apologetics from the work of the Holy Spirit, nor from a living relationship in prayer to the Lord on the part of the Christian. We must understand that eventually the battle is not just against flesh and blood.”

- the invitation of the gospel can only come after a sufficient base of knowledge has been built
- John’s “signs” as “space-time proofs”; we are not asked to believe until giving consideration to the available evidence
- “Knowledge precedes faith only that faith that believes God on the basis knowledge is true faith. . . .”
 - here we could add the admonitions to “count the cost” of discipleship (Luke 14:25-33)

chapter 2 – importance of truth

- proper understanding of truth precedes faith
- dangers of a Platonic view of man—which has the effect of separating body and soul
- true spirituality has three parts: who/what is there; how to have a relationship to him/it; entering into relationship
- “True spirituality cannot be abstracted from truth at one end, nor from the whole man and the whole culture at the other. If there is a true spirituality, it must encompass all.”
- “Christian truth is that which is in relationship to what exists and ultimately to the God who exists. And true spirituality consists of being in the correct relationship to the God who is there.” (first by justification, and then moment-by-moment)
- “God is there”—the God who exists—and not just the *word* god or the *idea* of god
- “As Christians, we must understand there is no word so meaningless as the word god until it is defined.”
- before having a relationship with God, I have to understand who I am
- what is the purpose of man? modern man has no answer
- “The God who is there is of such a nature that He can be loved, and I am of such a nature that I can love; and thus this first commandment, or basic purpose of man, is the very opposite of a nonsense statement. I know what man is, and I know who I am.”

§ 6 – personal and corporate living

chapter 1 – demonstrating the character of God

- “What is observable, both individually and corporately, is also included in Christian apologetics. . . . Christianity is not just a better dialectic.”
- hence we see again Schaeffer taking the direction of making Christianity something that can be *observed* and *evaluated* by those outside the faith
- “substantial healing”—the idea that, in every area of life, we expect to see real improvement even though perfection is not possible; *the effects are visible*
- “The world has a right to look upon us and make a judgment. We are told by Jesus that as we love one another the world will judge, not only whether we are His disciples, but whether the Father sent the Son. The final apologetic, along with the rational, logical defense and presentation, is what the world sees in the individual Christian and in our corporate relationships together.”

- yikes! the noise you hear is the sound of alarm bells going off at the Apologetics Control Center on the estate of the late Cornelius Van Til
- in this way, Schaeffer is integrating apologetics with life: not only what we say, and how we answer questions, but how we exhibit the love of Christ to the world
- is this consistent with the idea of doing good to those who persecute us?
- the Christian system begins with the existence of God: “you begin at the beginning, and you can go on to the end. It is as simple as that. And every part and portion of the system can be related back to the beginning.”
- “If we are unexcited Christians, we should go back and see what is wrong.”

chapter 2 – legal, but not only

- most non-Christians have no concept of absolutes—which means there are no absolutes in regard of law and morality; there can be no real boundaries
- the “legal circle” we have from the Bible frees us from “weigh[ing] all the results of our acts out to infinity”—i.e., law comes to us through *precepts* where our call is obedience with faith (we can therefore leave the results to God)
- the importance of the new birth cannot be overstated, and yet it is not the end but the beginning; we must learn to live out the Christian life