

**THE PERSON AND PLACE  
OF JESUS CHRIST;  
THE CONGREGATIONAL  
UNION LECTURE FOR 1909**

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The Person and Place of Jesus Christ; The Congregational Union Lecture for 1909 by P. T. Forsyth

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THE PERSON AND PLACE OF  
JESUS CHRIST

# THE PERSON AND PLACE OF JESUS CHRIST

The Congregational Union Lecture  
for 1909

BY

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PRINCIPAL OF HACKNEY COLLEGE  
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*"Morality is the nature of things."* — BUTLER

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## ADVERTISEMENT

BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION  
OF ENGLAND AND WALES.

THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION LECTURE has been established with a view to the promotion of Biblical Science, and Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature.

It is intended that each Lecture shall consist of a course of Prelections delivered at the Memorial Hall, but when the convenience of the Lecturer shall so require, the oral delivery will be dispensed with.

The Committee promise to continue it only so long as it seems to be efficiently serving the end for which it was established, or as they have the necessary funds at their disposal.

For the opinions advanced in any of the Lectures, the Lecturer alone will be responsible.

CONGREGATIONAL MEMORIAL HALL,  
FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON.

775405

## PREFACE

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I WILL beg leave to plead that these pages are lectures and not a treatise. The handling rests on a system, but it is less systematic than suggestive in form. Some repetition also may perhaps be tolerated on this ground. The same may, I hope, be borne in mind in regard to the style. Most of the discourses were in part delivered to an audience, which may account for features that would be less in place if only meant for the eye. The spoken style admits for instance of inflections and emphases which made sufficiently clear a sentence that may have to be read twice. It admits also of more ease and intimacy at times, of personal references and spiritual applications foreign to the remoter and more ambitious idea of a treatise. Moreover the position I take up makes the personal religion of the matter the base of the theology.

I cannot hope to have made every suggestion on such a theme as obvious as it should be in a press article. It is a subject in which the writer must rely much on the co-operative effort of the reader, and must chiefly court the student. The merchant of these goodly pearls must be seekers; and without even divers they cannot be had.



If it came to expressing obligations the foot of each page would bristle with notes and references. But that also is foreign to the lecture form, and especially to the form of lectures which made a certain effort to be as popular as the subject and its depth allowed. Besides, an apparatus of the kind would have given to the book an aspect of erudition which its author does not possess. It is not meant for scholars, but largely for ministers of the Word which it seeks in its own way to serve. It does not extend the frontiers of scientific knowledge or thought in its subject. One or two references I have given. But had they been multiplied there are some names that would have incessantly recurred. And especially those of Rothe, Kähler, Seeberg and Grützmacher—without whom these pages would have been lean indeed. In certain moods, as one traces back the origin of some lines of thought or even phrases of speech, the words come to mind, "What have I that I have not received?"

Those who read to the end will find that the writer agrees with the opinion that the British attitude to criticism must be above all critical. The service rendered to Christianity by the great critical movement is almost beyond words. And there is a vast amount of foreign work which duly and practically recognises the fact, without surrendering the note of a positive Gospel. But it is a misfortune to us, which is also almost beyond reckoning, that most of the translated works are those of a more or less destructive school. For extremes are always easier to grasp and to sell. It should also be added in fairness that many scholars of the negative side possess the art of putting things; in high contrast with the style of their deeper opponents, so

amorphous often both in matter and mode. The misfortune to the partially educated in this subject, who only read English, is great; especially as the popular impression is produced (and sometimes pursued) that all the ability and knowledge are on one side. Certain nimble popular journals live on the delusion; and they have not so much as heard whether there be alongside of brilliants like Wernle or Schmiedel giants like Kähler or Zahn. It would not be too much to say that the latter two are among the most powerful minds of the world in the region—one of theology, and one of scholarship. Yet in this country, and certainly to our preachers, they are almost unknown.

It may be useful to add that the lectures were undertaken ten years ago, that the lines of treatment were being then laid down in the writer's mind, and that in the choice of his subject he took counsel with none, met no request, and even had to put aside suggestions of subjects which it would have been valuable to follow. The Congregational Union, under whose auspices the lecture stands, simply asked the present writer to be the next to deliver it. The Union neither prescribed nor suggested subject or point of view. And responsibility belongs entirely to the author to whom was given so free a hand.

