

THE BOOK OF SAINTS  
THE MODERN ERA

# THE BOOK OF SAINTS THE MODERN ERA

AL TRUESDALE, Editor



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*Gratefully dedicated to Esther, love of my life, who has tirelessly edited  
this and the four earlier volumes of The Book of Saints*

+++

*Deep appreciation is expressed to Richard Buckner, theological editor  
for the Foundry Publishing, who has patiently monitored  
development of each volume of The Book of Saints.*

*Whoever belongs to Christ must go the whole way with him.  
He must mature to adulthood: he must one day or other walk  
the way of the cross to Gethsemane and Golgotha.*

—Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, OCD [Edith Stein],  
*Essential Writings*, p. 125; died at Auschwitz-Birkenau, 1942



*Faith means to see and to risk accepting Christ not only as the greatest  
teacher of truth that ever lived, but as Truth itself. . . . He demands not  
only that we consent intellectually to the correctness of his proclamation  
. . . but that we feel with all our natural instinct for right and wrong,  
with heart and soul and every cell of our being, its claim upon us.*

—Romano Guardini, *The Lord*, chap. 12

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# INTRODUCTION



In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as the modern era advanced, eminent secular prophets arose to announce the coming demise of the Christian faith. They declared that by courageously deploying humankind's recently acquired powers of objective reason, investigation, organization, and technology, humanity had come of age. Human beings should subsequently abandon their infantile belief in God. Until the tattered rags of religion had been cast aside, and the regal robes of atheism and human autonomy donned, personhood and community would remain severely restricted.

Heralds of liberating human autonomy included philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-72), who "discovered" that when people think they are worshipping God, they are in fact erroneously projecting their own perfectible human essence onto a fictional cosmic figure. Claim your alienated essence, he proclaimed. Standing nearby, Karl Marx (1818-83) announced that religion is an enslaving opiate administered to industrialized laborers by wealthy capitalist overlords. They use religion's fictional assurance of a better life in heaven to lull workers into accepting unjust exploitation of their labor. On another rise, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) stood ready to expose religion's nasty little secret. Long ago Judaism and Christianity successfully deceived the noble class into accepting a Judeo-Christian "ethic" peddled by lamentable weaklings and social failures. Reversal of the deceit requires the death of the fabricated "God" who authored it. Émile Durkheim (1858-1917), father of modern sociology, benevolently recognized some of the "benefits" of religion but then proceeded to "reveal" that its essence is corporate social or communal consciousness, not God as religious people believe. Now that the truth is out, humankind must dispense with the misidentification and then work to develop its marvelous communal potential. Then from the heights,

the commanding voice of Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) announced his discovery that religion is a universal neurosis that developed and crippled the human race early in its history. Once its source is exposed and honestly confronted, the neurosis can be therapeutically cured. Health, not sickness, can be humankind’s noble future.

However, the obituary for Christianity announced by these secular oracles turned out to be grossly premature.

Insightful representatives of apostolic Christian faith began to rebut the secular prophets. The seers had dismantled straw men that responsible Christians had never championed. Against the boasts for secular humanism, perceptive Christian leaders insisted that what it means to be a person is inextricably bound up with the faith of Christianity. Affirmation of humankind’s high estate can endure for a time perhaps after faith has been extinguished, but gradually it, too, will be lost. The secular prophets had actually dispensed with the guarantor of human value—Christian revelation. “The health of the [human] spirit,” Christian thinkers maintained, “depends on its relation to truth, to the good and the holy.” Apart from that, “the spirit sickens” (Guardini, *End of the Modern World*, 177).

The secular prophets did not foresee the explosive growth of Christianity in Communist China and its attraction for many Chinese intellectuals—despite bursts of government-initiated persecution, and challenges endemic to church growth.<sup>1</sup> Neither did they foresee the resurgence of Orthodox faith in Russia, the growth of the church in Africa and South America, revival currently sweeping through churches in Communist Cuba, and the overtly confessional voices of scientists such as Francis Collins, Susan Steinmetz, Alister McGrath, and John Polkinghorne.

Perhaps equally important, secular prophets failed to anticipate the emergence of scores of informed and articulate spokespersons for the

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1. It is difficult to determine the number of Christians in China, because there is no official count. The Pew Research Center estimated 67 million in 2010. The CSGC (Center for the Study of Global Christianity) includes growth by unofficial conversions and puts the figure at 106 million in 2010. Sarah Eekhoff Zylstra, “Made in China: The Next Mass Missionary Movement,” *Christianity Today*, January/February 2016, 20.



Christian faith who have taken the measure of modernity and refined and fortified their faith by making requisite adjustments. Among their number are biblical scholars Elisabeth Fiorenza and Richard B. Hays; church historians Mark Noll, Philip Jenkins, and George Marsden; theologians Nancey Murphy, George Weigel, and J. I. Packer; sociologists Christian Smith, Peter L. Berger, and Alan Storkey; philosophers Roger Scruton and Alvin Plantinga; and public intellectuals Ross Douthat and Eric Metaxas. Not one of them wishes to obviate modernity's achievements, but neither have they found in modernity any reason to abandon the "faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude v. 3, DRA).

As we move toward whatever succeeds late modernity, the Christian faith will face new challenges. These may include subtle political and technological ideologies that subvert human community and personhood; developments in the natural, social, and cognitive sciences; demanding encounters with other religions; difficult questions about our understanding of human sexuality; stewardship of the environment; and how to make the Christian faith both indigenous and faithful in countries where the church is growing rapidly. Whatever the challenges, we may be confident that the covenant of faith between Christ and his church will "stand fast," even if the world "holds it for scandal or folly" (Guardini, *Lord*, 443).

Christians from whom readings in this volume have been selected have borne vibrant witness during the period of declared human autonomy. Selecting entries has been difficult, largely because of publication restrictions, an almost limitless array of worthy candidates, and the goal to be as ecumenical and global as possible.

This volume is enriched by the inclusion of prayers written or suggested by the Very Reverend Frank F. Limehouse III, former dean of the Cathedral Church of the Advent, Birmingham, Alabama. He is recognized as a stalwart, orthodox pastor-churchman who in his years of ministry has faithfully proclaimed the apostolic faith in often unfavorable ecclesiastical and cultural contexts. Listening to his sermons and counsel, one can always expect to hear the sure and joyous promise of justification by grace through faith alone.

A brief biographical sketch of each late modern saint precedes readings drawn from his or her works. Each reading is followed by a prayer (sometimes a hymn) and Scripture references<sup>2</sup> for reflection.

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2. Scripture references in boldface identify verses quoted or paraphrased in the readings and prayers.

# ABRAHAM KUYPER

## [1837-1920]



Abraham Kuyper was one of the most influential Reformed theologians of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A gifted Christian apologist, he challenged aggressive European secularism and developed a Christian worldview that demonstrated the political and social importance of the Christian faith. He drew upon the Reformed doctrine of common grace—the grace given to all by which God’s sovereignty extends over all life. God’s lordship “cannot be restricted to the walls of the church or within the Christian orbit” (Kuyper, *Common Grace*, preface). Only as obedient use of common grace occurs, including constructing the social order, can humankind approximate the social and political image of God.

The son of a Dutch Reformed Church clergyman, Kuyper received his theological education at Leiden University under liberal theologians. After receiving his doctorate in 1862, he became minister of a rural congregation in Beesd, where he encountered the fervent Reformed faith of some laypersons lacking Kuyper’s educational refinements and rejecting his liberal theology. Slowly, the fervent faith of these laypersons led Kuyper to Christian conversion and to embrace a Reformed faith that replaced his theological liberalism. He became a champion of reform in the Dutch Reformed Church and in Dutch society.

In 1872 under Kuyper’s guidance, a new Christian newspaper, *The Standard*, appeared. It became a major force for Reformed Christianity. Kuyper was instrumental in forming the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP), which opposed the secularist tide in the country. He became a member of parliament in 1874 and prime minister in 1901. He played an important role in establishing the Free University of Amsterdam (1880) and served there as professor of theology. In 1886 he and many of his orthodox colleagues were expelled from the Dutch Reformed Church. They in turn formed the Reformed Church in the Netherlands.

# 1

The Lord God is the overflowing Fountain of all that is good! Whoever confesses this, is serious in this confession and lives accordingly, has spiritually arrived. . . .

. . . Faith can never expect too much. No matter how much you have already received, there is always more ready to well up. It is never exhausted; one outflow crowds out the other. Even if you have been saturated [with] the good things, that super overflowing Fountain still continues to well up. . . .

Understand well. The good that wells up from this Fountain is a good for your whole person, both body and soul. . . .

. . . Out of that Fountain flows grace and that one rich grace takes on various forms of satisfaction and justice, of reconciliation and holiness. . . . Out of it flow all refreshing love, all lifting up out of the desperation of the soul, and every comforting recovery from anxiety and a fearful heart.

ABRAHAM KUYPER, *THE ASCENT OF THE SON—  
THE DESCENT OF THE SPIRIT*, MEDITATION 7

*O LORD, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, Divine Fountain of Life from whom all good things flow and apart from whom we can do no good thing, we humbly beg that you give to us a lifesaving thirst for the water of life that you in your mercy give without payment, that we “may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,” through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

THE VERY REVEREND FRANK F. LIMEHOUSE III; COL. 1:10, NIV



**FOR REFLECTION:** Pss. 36:5-9; 95:1-6; 96:1-9; Matt. 5:1-12; 6:30-33; Luke 12:13-34; **Eph. 2:10**; Phil. 2:12-13; **Col. 1:10**; 3:1, 12-17; Heb. 13:15-16; 1 Pet. 4:1-7; 1 John 3:17

## 2

The proper work of the Holy Spirit includes *creation* and *re-creation*. With reference to *creation*, the Holy Spirit kindles and sustains natural life. He gives to each person existence and talents. With reference to *re-creation*, the Holy Spirit grants eternal life, which is salvation, regeneration. To every person born anew from above, the Spirit also gives all the gifts necessary for sanctification.

The Holy Spirit evidences the same character in *creation* as he does in *re-creation*. In *creation* he quickens life in that which is created by the Father through the Son. In *re-creation* he quickens those called to redemption by the Father through the Son. Just as in *creation* the Spirit touches the creatures with life, so in *re-creation* the Spirit enters a believer's heart and makes it his temple—comforting, animating, and sanctifying. The more natural and tender the contact, the more beautiful and glorious the result. Whether in *creation* or *re-creation*, the Holy Spirit is the agent of all life and therefore worthy of all praise and adoration.

ABRAHAM KUYPER, *THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT*, VOL. 1, CHAP. 3, SEC. 9

*O HOLY SPIRIT, Sustainer and Redeemer, we your unworthy servants do give you most humble and hearty thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all people. We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. Amen.*

ADAPTED FROM "THE GENERAL THANKSGIVING," DAILY MORNING PRAYER:  
RITE I, IN BCP



**FOR REFLECTION:** Gen. 1:1-2; Rom. 1:1-6; 1 Cor. 2:10-14; 6:9-11; 2 Cor. 3:3, 18; 5:16-21; Eph. 3:14-19; 1 John 3:24

## 3

Among the divine works of art the Holy Spirit produces, the sacred Scriptures stand first. It may seem incredible that the pages of a book should excel the Spirit's work in human hearts, yet we assign to the Scriptures the most conspicuous place of all. Its parts are not isolated and incoherent but form a complete whole. They are not a disparate collection of beautiful and glittering ideas, but the reflection of divine life.

The difference between divine and human life gives Scripture its uniqueness. What all other writings lack is found here—namely, perfect agreement between the life reflected in divine thought and what the Word accomplishes by renewing our minds.

Holy Scripture is like a diamond: in the dark it is like a piece of glass, but as soon as light strikes it, it begins to sparkle. So the Word of God, apart from divine life, is valueless. It comes alive as Scripture *only* in its dependence upon divine life. Scripture is like a fragrant flower that refreshes us only as the flower and our organs of smell intersect.

ABRAHAM KUYPER, *THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT*, VOL. 1, CHAP. 4, SEC. 12

*BLESSED LORD, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.*

“PROPER 28,” THE SEASON AFTER PENTECOST, COLLECTS: CONTEMPORARY, IN BCP



**FOR REFLECTION:** Deut. 6:4-9; Josh. 1:8; Pss. 1:1-3; 119:105; Isa. 55:11; Matt. 24:35; Luke 24:1-12; John 5:30-39; 7:37-38; Rom. 15:4; 2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 4:12-14; 2 Pet. 1:21



## 4

The Bible always flashes truths born of divine life. Not all parts have equal importance. But as a whole, the Scriptures portray him who is the brightness of God's glory and the image of his person. They aim to highlight Christ and provide context for knowing him.

Unless enlightened by the Spirit, readers of the Scriptures will be annoyed because the Bible contradicts their world. But when the Spirit enlightens the Scriptures, a child of God recognizes and welcomes the portrait of Christ that greets him. He is in holy harmony with the world from which Christ greets him.

The Scriptures do not flash series of unconnected thoughts that confirm our subjective prejudices. Instead, the Word of God is the Holy Spirit's instrument used for awakening and cultivating the life of God in us. The Spirit regenerates through the testimony of the Word.

The Scriptures and the operation of the Holy Spirit never contradict each other, for the Spirit prepared the Scriptures. They are the fountain of living water, which, when opened by the Spirit, spring up to eternal life.

ABRAHAM KUYPER, *THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT*, VOL. 1, CHAP. 4, SEC. 12

*ALMIGHTY GOD, whose eternal word in Holy Scripture contains all things necessary for our salvation, enlighten us by your Holy Spirit to welcome with eternally grateful hearts the portrait of our Savior that greets us, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.*

THE VERY REVEREND FRANK F. LIMEHOUSE III



**FOR REFLECTION:** Luke 4:14-18; John 3:5-8; 4:23-24; 6:63; 14:16-17; Rom. 8:5-11, 26; 1 Cor. 2:11-15; 5:1-5; Eph. 1:13-23; 5:1-10; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 John 4:13

## 5

The world contests our desires and efforts to be “near to God.” To achieve unbroken fellowship with God, many have withdrawn to a hermitage. This might have succeeded if by withdrawing they could leave the world behind. The fact is that we carry the world in our hearts. There are no monastic walls so thick but Satan is able to breach them.

Apart from the world, human life is abnormal. Life becomes narrow, and human nature is restricted to narrow dimensions. There is no imperative task at hand, no vocation in the public realm, and no exertion of all one’s finite powers. Conflict is largely avoided.

Being near to God amid our busy earthly vocations yields its greatest blessedness when cultivated over against sin and the world. “Nearness to God” becomes an oasis. Those who can most clearly testify to God’s nearness are those whom the world has tried most strenuously to draw away from God. Nevertheless, they continue to have regular rendezvous with God.

ABRAHAM KUYPER, *TO BE NEAR UNTO GOD*, CHAP. 1

*ALMIGHTY AND EVERLASTING GOD, peace you give to us, not as the world gives do you give to us: In the midst of the busyness of this broken and transitory world, hear us when we cry out for your nearness, that our weary souls may return to your rest, where we may be still and know that you are God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

THE VERY REVEREND FRANK F. LIMEHOUSE III



**FOR REFLECTION:** Ps. 73; Matt. 5:14-16; 9:9-13; 25:14-30; Luke 5:29-32; John 14:27; 17:15-19; Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 6:10-20; James 2:1-13; 1 Pet. 2:11-17