

Foreword

‘All the wisdom of believers’, wrote Calvin, ‘is comprehended in the cross of Christ.’ It is thus a particular pleasure to commend this series of meditations, from a former colleague on the faculty of the Reformed Theological College, on the sufferings of the Saviour. This volume is excellent throughout, yet it seems to have three especially significant virtues.

It provides us with solid *instruction*. In addition to more than thirty years teaching systematic theology, Frederick Leahy spent a lifetime in the ministry of the Word. In these pages, preacher, pastor, and theologian come together in a happy unity. No words are wasted. There is nothing of the frothy and insubstantial. Here is satisfying truth, painstakingly quarried and crafted for the needs of God’s people. A judicious selection of gems from the writings of others provide further enrichment and stimulus to thought.

This is a work which gives full play to a disciplined and sanctified *imagination*. Some of his past students may be surprised at such a choice of words, since Professor Leahy’s adamant rejection of speculation in the formulation of doctrine has become legendary. Yet the Bible is more than a catalogue of abstract propositions and the task for the preacher is surely to mediate the truth through all the powers of his renewed personality. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones was right to complain that ‘we have all become so scientific that there is but little room left for imagination. This, to me, is most regrettable because imagination in preaching is most important and most helpful...what it does is make the Truth lively and living’.

Lastly, these studies recall to us the neglected art of *meditation*. We are too apt to hurry past the cross, to undervalue, in spite of ourselves, the supreme mystery of the ages by a shallow assumption that we know it all. We don’t and never will. But we need to take time to learn as much as we can. We need to ‘behold’, to ‘survey’, to ‘stand and stare’. In rereading these chapters, I found myself more than once compelled by emotion to stop -- and then to worship. I cannot help feeling that this is exactly how they were written and the that the

author's chief desire is that each of us who reads should be brought to gaze in fresh understanding and gratitude upon 'the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me'.

EDWARD DONNELLY

Principal
Reformed Theological College
Belfast,
Northern Ireland