



## Charles Henry Mackintosh

Of all the groups of Christian believers that developed in the English-speaking world in the nineteenth century, the one which produced the greatest number of gifted writers was the Brethren. Of their founder himself, John Nelson Darby, over fifty substantial volumes were published. But of all this notable group of writers, the one whose works have been most frequently printed is C. H. Mackintosh, generally known as C.H.M., which is all that appeared on the title pages of his major writings.

C. H. Mackintosh was born in October 1820, at Glenmalure Barricks, County Wicklow, Ireland, the son of the captain of a Highland regiment. Mackintosh was converted at the age of eighteen through the letters of a devout sister, and the prayerful reading of J. N. Darby's *Operations of the Spirit*. When he was twenty-four years of age, he opened a private school at Westport, but it was not long before he concluded he must give himself entirely to the ministry of the Word of God, in writing and in public speaking. Soon thereafter he felt led to establish a periodical, which he continued to edit for twenty-one years, *Things New and Old*.

Mr. Mackintosh took a great interest in, and actively participated in, the great revival of 1859 and 1860. He died on November 2, 1896, and was buried in Cheltenham Cemetery, awaiting the resurrection morn.

Now that more than one hundred years have passed since his death, it is difficult to come upon much factual detail concerning his own personal life. He was a man of a much milder spirit than J N Darby, and breathed an atmosphere of deep devotion, and a love not only for Christian believers but for lost souls. He had a gracious spirit, avoiding conflict as far as possible.

Mr. Mackintosh's fame rests primarily upon the work, *Notes on the Pentateuch*, beginning with a volume of 334 pages on Genesis, and concluding with a two-volume work on Deuteronomy extending to over 800 pages.

Another series by Mr. Mackintosh also was frequently reprinted, under the general heading of *Miscellaneous Writings*, seven volumes, totalling over 2500 pages, and most of it still definitely worth reading.

Let me especially call attention to Mr. Mackintosh's excellent comments on Evangelization, which seem to be remarkably up-to-date in this time when we are witnessing so much world-wide evangelization. In volume 4 is a very thorough, illuminating, and sensible discussion of ninety pages on the Great Commission of Luke 24: 44-49. His statements at the very beginning are refreshing to read:

"Our divine Master called upon sinners to repent and believe the gospel. Some would have us to believe that it is a mistake to call upon persons dead in trespasses and sins to do anything. "How," it is argued, "can those who are dead repent? They are incapable of any spiritual movement. They must first get the power ere they can either repent or believe."

What is our reply to all this? A very simple one indeed--our Lord knows better than all the theologians in the world what ought to be preached. He knows all about man's condition--his guilt, his misery, his spiritual death, his utter helplessness, his total inability to think a single right thought, to utter a single right word, to do a single right act; and yet He called upon men to repent. This is quite enough for us. It is no part of our business to seek to reconcile seeming

differences. It may seem to us difficult to reconcile man's utter powerlessness with his responsibility; but "God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain." It is our happy privilege, and our bounder duty, to believe what He says, and do what He tells us. This is true wisdom, and it yields solid peace. ... Our Lord preached repentance, and He commanded His apostles to preach it; and they did so constantly.

Because many are teaching otherwise, one rejoices to see the author's emphasis on the need for genuine repentance. In volume 3 there is a section of eighty-six pages with the general heading, "Papers on Evangelism," in the midst of which is a long and excellent commentary of Acts 16: 8-31. A few lines from these rich pages:

"We increasingly feel the immense importance of an earnest, fervent gospel testimony everywhere; and we dread exceedingly any falling off therein. We are imperatively called to "do the work of an evangelist," and not to be moved from that work by any arguments or considerations whatsoever ....We observe, with deep concern, some who were once known amongst us as earnest and eminently successful evangelists, now almost wholly abandoning their work and becoming teachers and lecturers.

This is most deplorable. We really want evangelists. A true evangelist is almost as great a rarity as a true pastor. Alas! alas! how rare are both! The two are closely connected ....We are perfectly aware of the fact that there is in some quarters a strong tendency to throw cold water upon the work of evangelization. There is a sad lack of sympathy with the preacher of the gospel; and, as a necessary consequence, of active co-operation with him in his work ....We have invariably found that those who think and speak slightly of the work of the evangelist are persons of very little spirituality; and on the other hand, the most devoted, the most true-hearted, the best taught saints of God, are always sure to take a profound interest in that work ....But I find in the Gospels, and in the Acts of the Apostles, that a quantity of most blessed evangelistic work was done by persons who were not specially gifted at all, but

who had an earnest love for souls, and a deep sense of the preciousness of Christ and His salvation."

In the midst of these papers, our author discusses what I think is very rare in his writing, his own participation in the great revival in 1859 in Ulster.