

[PDF] The Everlasting Man

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Books Details:

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Author:

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Description:

What, if anything, is it that makes the human uniquely human? This, in part, is the question that G.K. Chesterton starts with in this classic exploration of human history. Responding to the evolutionary materialism of his contemporary (and antagonist) H.G. Wells, Chesterton in this work affirms human uniqueness and the unique message of the Christian faith. Writing in a time when social Darwinism was rampant, Chesterton instead argued that the idea that society has been steadily progressing from a state of primitivism and barbarity towards civilization is simply and flatly inaccurate.

"Barbarism and civilization were not successive stages in the progress of the world," he affirms, with arguments drawn from the histories of both Egypt and Babylon.

As always with Chesterton, there is in this analysis something (as he said of Blake) "very plain and emphatic." He sees in Christianity a rare blending of philosophy and mythology, or reason and story, which satisfies both the mind and the heart. On both levels it rings true. As he puts it, "in answer to

the historical query of why it was accepted, and is accepted, I answer for millions of others in my reply; because it fits the lock; because it is like life." Here, as so often in Chesterton, we sense a lived, awakened faith. All that he writes derives from a keen intellect guided by the heart's own knowledge. --*Doug Thorpe*

Review I've reread this book after ten years and found it just as astonishing a work as I did the first time around. Chesterton is a consummate apologist, combining a sincere reverence for his subject matter with a devastating sense of humour and a true generalist's erudition. He has a wonderful ability of taking accepted secular dogmas, turning them completely on their heads, and in the process making Catholic dogmas, rejected for their lack of congruence with modernism, look sensible and enlightened. This polemical mastery is one of the enduring qualities of *The Everlasting Man*. --A Customer

This is a book that everyone ought to read two or three times at least. It is a crime that such nonsense as *Conversations With God*, or better but still relatively shallow introductions to comparative religion like *Religions of Man*, seem to be better known. Here you will find a description of Christianity and its relation to other faiths strong and fine as aged wine. I don't know of anyone who writes with this much class in the modern world. Having ordered the book for our college library, I tried not to mark it too much, but found myself putting ink dots on paragraph after paragraph of material I wanted to quote. He rambles a bit, but I think there is more wisdom, humor, and insight in a single page of this book than in whole volumes that are better known in our days. --David Marshall

Everlasting Man had a decisive role in one of the most important conversions of the this century. C.S. Lewis described reading it in 1925 when he was still an atheist: "Then I read Chesterton's *Everlasting Man* and for the first time saw the whole Christian outline of history set out in a form that seemed to me to make sense . . . I already thought Chesterton the most sensible man alive; apart from his Christianity; Now, I veritably believe, I thought that Christianity itself was very sensible; apart from its Christianity." (Surprised by Joy p.223) When asked what Christian writers had helped him, Lewis remarked in 1963, six months before he died; "The contemporary book that has helped me the most is Chesterton's *The Everlasting Man*." (God in the Dock p.260.) --Fr. Phil Bloom (hfs@brigadoon.com)

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