Frederick Fyvie Bruce FBA (12 October 1910 – 11 September 1990), usually cited as F. F. Bruce, was a Biblical scholar who supported the historical reliability of the New Testament. His first book, New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable? (1943), was voted by the American evangelical periodical Christianity Today in 2006 as one of the top 50 books “which had shaped evangelicals”.1

Early life

Bruce was born in Elgin, Moray, in Scotland, the son of a Christian Brethren (Plymouth Brethren) preacher and educated at the University of Aberdeen, Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge and the University of Vienna, where he studied with Paul Kretschmer, an Indo-European philologist.2

Career

After teaching Greek for several years, first at the University of Edinburgh and then at the University of Leeds, he became head of the Department of Biblical History and Literature at the University of Sheffield in 1947. Aberdeen University bestowed an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree on him in 1957.3 In 1959 he moved to the University of Manchester where he became Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis.4 He wrote over 40 books and served as editor of The Evangelical Quarterly and the Palestine Exploration Quarterly. He retired from teaching in 1978.

Bruce was a scholar on the life and ministry of Paul the Apostle and wrote several studies, the best known of which is Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit (published in the United States as Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free). He also wrote commentaries on many biblical books including Habakkuk, the Gospel of John, the Acts of the Apostles, Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Epistles of John.

Most of Bruce’s works were scholarly, but he also wrote many popular works on the Bible. He viewed the New Testament writings as historically reliable and the truth claims of Christianity as hinging on their being so. To Bruce this did not mean that the Bible was always precise, or that this lack of precision could not lead to some confusion. He believed, however, that the passages that were still open to debate were ones that had no substantial bearing on Christian theology and thinking. Bruce’s colleague at Manchester, James Barr, considered Bruce a “conservative liberal.”5

Personal views
Bruce was in Christian fellowship at various places during his life, though his primary commitment was to the Open Brethren among whom he grew up.[8] He enjoyed the fellowship and acceptance of this group, though he was very much a maverick in relation to his own personal beliefs. He never accepted a specific brand of dispensationalism[2] usually associated with the Brethren, although he may have held a Historic Premillennialism[8] akin to George Eldon Ladd[9] and he was also an advocate of the public ministry of women[10] – something that many Plymouth Brethren would still disapprove of today.

Honours

Bruce was honoured with two scholarly works by his colleagues and former students, one to mark his 60th and the other to mark his 70th birthday. Apostolic History and the Gospel: Biblical and Historical Essays Presented to F. F. Bruce on his 60th Birthday (1970) included contributions from E. M. Blaiklock, E. Earle Ellis, I. Howard Marshall, Bruce M. Metzger, William Barclay, G. E. Ladd, A. R. Millard, Leon Morris, Bo Reicke, and Donald Guthrie. Pauline Studies: Essays Presented to Professor F. F. Bruce on his 70th Birthday (1980) included contributions from Peter T. O'Brien, David Wenham, Ronald E. Clements, and Moisés Silva, C. F. D. Moule and Robert H. Gundry contributed to both volumes.

Bruce was elected a Fellow of the British Academy, and served as President of the Society for Old Testament Study, and also as President of the Society for New Testament Study.

Selected writings

Books

- *The Epistles to the Colossians and the Ephesians* (New International Commentary on the New Testament) Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1957. [title may be incorrect; Bruce wrote the Colossians commentary, and E.K. Simpson wrote the Ephesians commentary; see the 1984 replacement below entirely by Bruce]
Articles

- Colossian Problems: Part 4: Christ as Conqueror and Reconciler,
- annual Rylands lectures at the John Rylands Library, Manchester (published in Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, vols. 43–60; including "Galatian problems", 5 pts, and "St Paul in Rome", 5 pts.)

References

8. AntiChrist Comes First at the Wayback Machine (archived 16 February 2005)
10. see http://answers.net.nz/Other/bre.3.htm for a criticism of Bruce for supporting Women’s Ministry based on a review of one of his articles

Further reading
It was established in 1904 as one of two chairs endowed by Enriqueta Rylands in that Faculty which was founded in that year.[1] From 1997 to January 2016 the professor was Professor George J. Brooke[2] (since his retirement Professor emeritus). YouTube Encyclopedic. 1/1. Views: 60 245. ✪ The Extra Biblical Evidence for the Historicity of Jesus Christ. Transcription. Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester. 71 (2): 3–38. ; p. 35. ^ George Brooke, research profile; University of Manchester (The). Basis of this page is in Wikipedia. Text is available under the CC BY-SA 3.0 Unported License. Prof Montefiore said Kipling wrote The White Man's Burden in 1899, urging America to administer imperial practices in the Philippines and its sentiment was "completely unacceptable now and fairly unacceptable then". A spokesman for the students' union said: "We understand that we made a mistake in our approach to a recent piece of artwork by failing to garner student opinion at the start of a new project." The spokesman added it would introduce "relevant and meaningful" art across the building in the coming months and the painting of Angelou's work...