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DEDICATION

To my dearest 'girls'—
Rachel and sweetest Arianwen,
Sarah and my darling Nina—
trusting that the Lord will enable us all
in our short lives in this world to
'shine like stars'.

PHILIPPIANS 2:15



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book could never have been written without the help of numerous people. The embryo of the book was a talk on Mrs Lloyd-Jones which I gave at a Christian ladies' conference some years ago. Mrs Elizabeth Catherwood—with her late husband—was kind enough to break into a holiday in Wales to spend a number of hours with me in order to answer questions about her mother, Mrs Lloyd-Jones, and to share certain 'family details'. When I first broached the matter of writing a biography of their mother, both Mrs Catherwood and her younger sister, Ann, were very enthusiastic about this and gave freely of their time on a number of occasions. Much of the information concerning their mother which they shared with me could only have been known by those within the Lloyd-Jones 'nuclear family'. I am deeply indebted to the kindness and hospitality shown to me by these two Christian ladies, and to the encouragement which they gave me. I shall always cherish the memory of time spent with them. Their willingness to share very personal details concerning their mother has, I trust, meant that this book is much more informative and richer in detail than would otherwise have been the case. I am, however, only too conscious of the fact that the pen—or computer, these days—is unable to recreate 'the touch of a vanish'd hand, / And the sound of a voice that is still'. I hope that however feebly I have drawn the portrait of the subject of this book, her daughters will recognise the main features, and that their prayer, which is mine too, will be answered: that the *life* of their mother should be a great blessing to others.

Grandparents have a special relationship with their grandchildren. I wish to acknowledge my gratitude to Bethan Lloyd-Jones' grandchildren for sending me their abiding memories of their grandmother. The Christian world owes an incalculable debt to Iain Murray for the many informative, and spiritually enriching and edifying biographies which he has written of various Christian preachers and leaders. His two-volume biography of Dr Lloyd-Jones has been an invaluable source of information on various matters, and I am profoundly grateful to him for giving me permission to use some of the material which he was able to gather from Dr and Mrs Lloyd-Jones while they were still alive. Christopher Catherwood—Mrs Lloyd-Jones' eldest grandchild—filled out Iain Murray's biography with his *Martyn Lloyd-Jones: A Family Portrait*. The book was a pleasure to read, and supplied certain information on Mrs Lloyd-Jones which I have incorporated or to which I have alluded. Similarly, Fred Catherwood's *At the Cutting Edge*, an autobiography by Elizabeth's husband, contains further information about Mrs Lloyd-Jones which has found its way into the present book.

Numerous friends of the subject of this book gave generously of their time and supplied additional information which greatly helped me in my writing. I wish to acknowledge especially the help given by the following: Mair Davies (wife of the late Revd J. Elwyn Davies) and her daughter, Mrs Sian Nicholas; Revd Vernon Higham and his wife Morwen; Ceinwen Swann (wife of the late Revd Derek Swann); Eluned Thomas (wife of the late Revd John Thomas); and Majorie Thomas (who attended Bethlehem, Sandfields when Dr Lloyd-Jones was the minister there).

Mrs Lloyd-Jones had a 'gift' and ministry of letter writing. I am very grateful to the Revd Basil Howlett for allowing me to borrow letters which Mrs Lloyd-Jones sent to the Westminster Fellowship of ministers during her years of widowhood. These letters reveal her deep affection and regard for the ministers to whom 'the Doctor' gave himself so unsparingly over the years, and the enormous sense



of loss which she continued to experience as a widow. I am also grateful to Awel Irene, niece of the late Mari Jones, for giving me letters and photographs which had belonged to her aunt. I would particularly like to thank Matthew Evans for the enormous help he was to me, in procuring copies of original photographs. He saved me miles of motorway and a tremendous amount of time.

Other friends helped in the writing of this book in different ways. Mrs Enid Jones kindly provided a translation of passages from the biography of Evan Phillips, Mrs Lloyd-Jones' grandfather. Glenys Davies spent many hours translating Welsh letters into English, both on her own and with me at the National Library of Wales. Her husband Gwyn—formerly a Church History lecturer at Wales Evangelical School of Theology—also saved me from one glaring historical inaccuracy in my very first chapter! I shall always be indebted to Glenys for her hard work, and shall treasure the memory of the warm hospitality and fellowship which she and her husband extended to me.

I was so glad to have met Dafydd Ifans, who—Boaz-like!—just *happened* to be in the part of the National Library of Wales where I was working on one of the days I spent there. Dafydd had catalogued all the material belonging to the Lloyd-Jones family, and saved me weeks— or even months—of work in identifying relevant material! Diolch yn fawr, Dafydd.

Certain people supported this project with their prayers. In particular, Graham and Anthea Weale maintained a prayerful interest in the book from the time that I began until it was completed, as did Ann Davies of Bala. My church family at Freeschool Court, Bridgend, will never know how much I was encouraged by their enquiries as to the progress of the work and by their assurance of their prayers for me: 'I thank my God every time I remember you' (Philippians 1:3).

I am deeply indebted to the following at Christian Focus: William Mackenzie (Senior), Willie Mackenzie, Marina Macrae, together with all those whose service for the Lord 'behind the

scenes' has meant that the work of moving from manuscript to published book has been a joy and labour of love. Christian Focus has indeed been a wonderful publisher with which to work.

I would indeed have failed if I had not acknowledged my thanks to Dr Rebecca Rine for the numerous helpful recommendations and suggestions which she made. In particular she guided me through the mine-field created by the fact that the U.K. and the U.S. are 'two nations separated by a common language' and thus saved me from employing expressions which may have bewildered American readers. No one could have asked for a more engaging and helpful editor.

Last—but certainly not least—I am profoundly grateful for the help provided by members of my family. My sister, Mrs Susie Humphreys, supplied some material and proposed helpful changes. And what shall I say of my dear husband Stephen? My gratitude and love for him are inestimable. His phenomenal memory has saved me an enormous amount of work and time. I am so thankful for his constant encouragement, his many suggestions and the support he has provided throughout. Without him this book would never have seen the light of day. My daughter Rachel, and her husband Thibault, my son Robert and his wife Sarah, and my youngest son, Roman (David), all urged me to press on when I needed encouragement to persevere.

I am grateful to all the aforementioned for their help. Any inaccuracies or infelicities of style are mine.

Most of all I acknowledge my continual dependence upon the Lord, and wish to record my humble thanks for all His wondrous love and aid.

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

2 CORINTHIANS 9:15



PREFACE

Bethan (pronounced Beth-un) Lloyd-Jones loved her God, her husband, her family, her ‘church family’, her friends and so many other people with whom she came into contact and whose lives were touched by her fragrant Christian character. She, ‘being dead, yet speaks’ through her godly example.

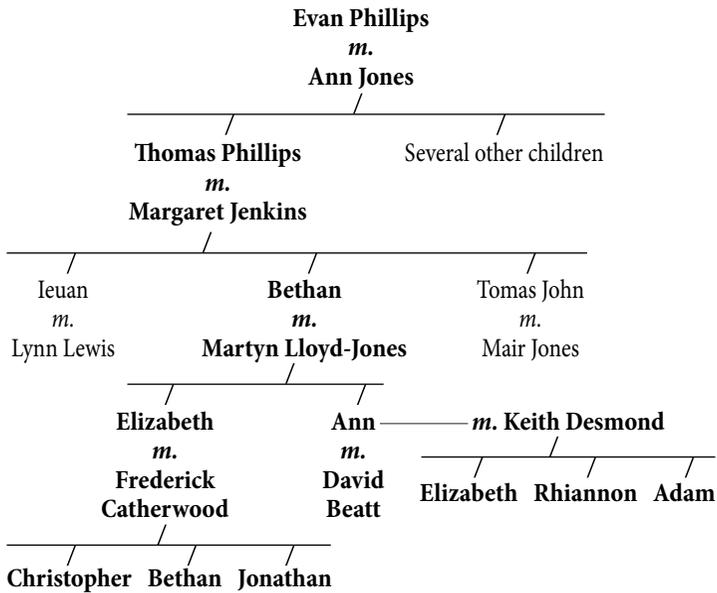
You may wonder how this book ever came to be written. I was asked some years ago to speak at a Ladies’ Day Conference on the subject, ‘The profile of a godly woman’. My own inclination was to choose someone from the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries but my husband suggested that I speak on Bethan Lloyd-Jones, a suggestion which immediately struck a chord within me. Thus began a journey of research into her life, the end result of which is the book that you now hold in your hands. I trust that the life of such a lady may challenge and encourage you, to the extent to which it did me, to live a life consecrated to the Saviour and to his service.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a crowd of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him ... so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

HEBREWS 12:2–3

FAMILY TREE – PHILLIPS

selected family members





PROLOGUE: A SMILE IN PLACE OF TEARS

A wife of noble character who can find?

PROVERBS 31:10

*If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice
can be too great for me to make for him.*

C.T. STUDD



Giving ... to God

One morning, after breakfast, when he was preparing to go out on one of his long journeys, the room looked so bright and cosy that a sudden depression seized me at the thought of its emptiness when he was gone, and the many anxious hours that must pass before I should see him again. Some tears would trickle down my cheeks, in spite of my efforts to restrain them. Seeing me look so sad, he said, very gently, 'Wifey, do you think that, when any of the children of Israel brought a lamb to the Lord's altar as an offering to him, they stood and wept over it when they had seen it laid there?' 'Why, no!' I replied, startled by his strange question, 'certainly not; the Lord would not have been pleased with an offering reluctantly given'. 'Well,' he said tenderly, 'don't you see, you are giving me to God, in letting me go to preach the gospel to poor sinners, and do you think he likes to see you cry over your sacrifice?' Could ever a rebuke have been more sweetly

and graciously given? It sank deep into my heart, carrying comfort with it, and, thenceforward, when I parted with him, the tears were scarcely ever allowed to show themselves, or if a stray one or two dared to run over the boundaries, he would say, 'What! crying over your lamb, wifey!' and this reminder would quickly dry them up, and bring a smile in their place.¹

—Susannah Spurgeon

The influence for good of the preaching and written ministry of C.H. Spurgeon—in being used both to bring people to faith in Christ and then to nurture that faith—has been incalculable. But behind his remarkable ministry was a devoted woman who was willing, as the above quotation makes clear, to make sacrifices—‘giving up her lamb’—for the work of God’s kingdom.

In many ways, the ministry of Martyn Lloyd-Jones bears comparison with that of Spurgeon. The influence of his powerful evangelistic and expository preaching; his extensive travels and labours in the cause of Christ; his fearless commitment to biblical truth: in all these areas there are striking similarities, as well as some significant differences, between ‘the Doctor’ and Spurgeon. The subject of this book, however, is not Dr Lloyd-Jones but his wife: for, just as Susannah Spurgeon ‘gave up her lamb’ to the Lord, so, throughout her married life, did Bethan Lloyd-Jones. There are women as well as men in the gallery of the great heroes of faith; although not placed in as prominent a position for all to see, their service has been invaluable in God’s kingdom.

The wife of Dr Lloyd-Jones was such a woman. Her portrait has long been hidden in a part of the gallery known only to her family and certain close friends. Their humility and proper modesty have been such that there the portrait might well have remained in relative obscurity. But a life so devoted to the honour of Jesus Christ and to the glory of His name—a devotion which often shone through in the little and unseen things—is a witness to the

1. Spurgeon (1962), 418.

power of godliness and has much to teach us. It is for this reason, with the full agreement of her daughters, that I am placing her portrait in a 'public place'.

In his definitive biography of Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Iain Murray noted that the Doctor 'lived in several worlds at once'.² To a greater or lesser degree this, of course, is true of all people—Mrs Lloyd-Jones included. It is inevitable that immediate family members will have the privilege of seeing aspects of someone's personality, character, interests, likes and dislikes that are denied to those outside the family circle. Close friends will also know things about a person that mere acquaintances can never know. In writing of someone who is survived by those who knew them intimately, there will always be the danger that a biographer will leave the reader with a somewhat different impression of the subject from that of those who knew the person well. This can be so even in those cases, such as the present, where the immediate surviving family members—in this instance, Mrs Lloyd-Jones' two daughters—have freely shared information, some of which was hitherto known only to the family. I am acutely aware that a biography can never take the place of the person herself, and this is certainly so in the present case: a portrait, after all, is not the same as the living person. But portraits—and biographies—serve a unique purpose. One may, for example, study aspects of a character's face in a portrait gallery in a way that would be singularly inappropriate when sitting across from the living person!

Godliness is something more easily seen 'fleshed out' in a real person than studied in the abstract. For this reason, whatever deficiencies there may be in the 'word portrait' which I have painted—and for which I now crave the reader's indulgence—I put it in a public place that the reader may worship the God of all grace who produced such a fragrantly godly life, and be stirred to emulate those whose faith we are called to follow.

2. Murray (1990), 754.