

## The Christian Society

by Stephen Neill

### DESCRIPTION:

In *The Christian Society*, one of the great Christian commentators of the twentieth century describes how the Church came to be a society. The past relationship between the missionary church and the pagan cultures it replaced is discussed alongside more recent delicate ecumenical relationships and the ongoing conflict between the church and atheism. Stephen Neill's perceptiveness as a historian is shown in his masterful summary of the church's story from the days of Jesus to his own time. Meanwhile, his experience as a missionary and ecumenist comes to the fore as he demonstrates how the unity of the church is integral to its place in modern society, and its power to create a society.

Throughout, his approach is empirical, and he considers 'all who have claimed the Christian name, without making preliminary judgements as to their orthodoxy or their standing within the general body of Christian people.' The result is a comprehensive depiction of Christianity as a social phenomenon that is as relevant today as when it was written.

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Stephen Neill was a towering figure of twentieth-century global Christianity, serving as a missionary and later as bishop in India, before working for the World Council of Churches in Geneva. His many publications included *A History of Christian Missions*, *The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861-1961*, and the never-completed *History of Christianity in India*.

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