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WILLIAM J. JONES, *Editor*

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## EDITORIAL

FROM one of our exchanges<sup>1</sup> comes the word that, "During his visit to India, Dr. Mott paid an unhurried visit to Mahatma Gandhi. *Young India*, the weekly paper edited by Mr. Gandhi himself, has published a record of the conversation between them."

Believing that recent conditions and events in Indian student life, missions, and national affairs are traceable, in large part, to false conceptions of Christianity, we are quoting portions of the reported conversation, and commenting thereon. All of the quotations are taken directly from the magazine just cited, the italics being ours.

"They talked about several things, the general political situation in the country, Dominion Status v. Independence, . . . , and the like. At last the doctor asked Gandhi the question: "What do you consider to be the most valuable contribution that India can make to the progress of the world?" "Non-violence", replied Gandhi, "which the country is exhibiting at the present day on a scale unprecedented in history. . . ."

"What, then, is the contribution of Christianity to the national life of India? I mean the *influence of Christ as apart from Christianity*, for, I am afraid, there is a wide gulf separating the two at present", asked the doctor."

"Aye, there lies the rub", replied Gandhi. "It is not possible to consider the teaching of a religious teacher apart from the lives of his followers. Unfortunately, Christianity in India has been inextricably mixed up for the last one hundred and fifty years with the British rule. It appears to us as *synonymous with materialistic civilization and imperialistic exploitation by the stronger white races of the weaker races of the world.* . . ."

"Dr. Mott: "Do you, then, disbelieve in all conversion?""

"Gandhi: "I disbelieve in the conversion of one person by another. My effort should *never be to undermine another's faith but to make him a better follower of his own faith.* This implies belief in the truth of all religions, and, therefore, respect for them. . . ."

"Dr. Mott: "Is it not our duty to help our fellow beings to the maximum of truth that we may possess, to share with them our deepest spiritual experiences?""

"Gandhi: "I am sorry I must again differ from you, for the simple reason that the deepest spiritual truths are always unutterable. That light to which you refer transcends speech. It can be felt *only through the*

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<sup>1</sup>The *Student World*, October, 1929.

**DOING THE WILL OF GOD**

LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER

**A**S it is true that God made the uttermost sacrifice in the death of His Son, it is equally true that His uttermost desire is that the knowledge of that sacrifice shall be proclaimed to all for whom it was made. In other words, the supreme purpose of God is to be realized in the missionary cause. This great fact is revealed in the Scripture and confirmed in every human experience; for the individual who is fully adjusted to the cause of Missions is invariably refreshed with the dew of Heaven, and the church which gives world-wide evangelization the first place in interest, prayer, and gifts, is without fail enlarged with all of the riches of divine grace. Missionary activity is not, then, a mere optional thing with the Christian; it is the one all-important objective and without it he is abnormal in God's sight and deprived of the Father's blessing. Interest in world-wide evangelization is distinctly foreign to the natural heart. It is supernatural. God alone loves the lost and it is only as His love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Spirit which is given unto us, that we will ever experience a genuine desire for the salvation of men. Love is the first and all-important fruit of the Spirit, which the Spirit creates in the heart that is adjusted to Him. Adjustment, then, is the key to all blessing in experience and service and this is something which presents a practical issue. That issue may be stated in the searching question: "*Am I willing to do God's will?*" When God's will is accepted as the final and abiding authority, His power is set free to enrich the life and to accomplish those good works which He has "before ordained that we should walk in them." This adjustment to God's will is not only the key to the riches of divine realities in this life, but is an important feature in the life to come.

When we have entered heaven by His grace, and have gained the larger vision and understanding of that sphere, we shall look back over our pilgrim pathway on the earth and have either joy, or regret, as we contemplate the life we have lived. There is a life of no regrets. It consists in having done the will of God. The divine plan and purpose will be recognized through all eternity as that which was God's very best for us.

To be yielded to Him is to allow Him to design and execute the position and effectiveness of our life. He alone can do this. Of all the numberless paths in which we might walk, He alone knows what is best. He alone has power to place our feet in that path and to keep them there, and He alone has love for us that will never cease to prompt Him to do for us all that is in His wisdom, power, and love to do. Truly the life is thrice blessed that learns to yield to the will of God.

Nothing could be more misdirected than a self-directed life. In our creation God has purposely omitted any faculty, or power, of self-direction. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23). It is the divine

plan that the element of guidance shall be supplied in us by God Himself. One of the results of the Adamic fall is the independence of the human will toward God; however, man is most spiritual and most conformed to the design of his Maker when he is most yielded to the divine will. What greater evidence of the fall do we need than that we must struggle to be yielded to Him? How much we feel we have gained when we can say, "Thy will, not mine be done"! It is because our daily life will be helpless and a failure apart from the leading of the Spirit, and because the Spirit has come to do this very work, that we can not be rightly adjusted to Him, or be spiritual, until we are yielded to the mind and will of God.

A yieldedness to the will of God is not demonstrated by some one particular issue; it is rather a matter of having taken the will of God as the rule of one's life. To be in the will of God is simply to be willing to do His will without reference to any particular thing He may choose. It is electing God's will to be final, even before we know what He may wish us to do. It is, therefore, not a question of being willing to do some one thing; it is a question of being willing to do *anything*, when, where, and how, it may seem best to His heart of love. It is taking the normal and natural position of childlike trust which has already consented to the wish of the Father even before anything of the outworking of His wish is revealed. This distinction can not be over-emphasized. It is quite natural to be saying: "If He wishes me to do something, let Him tell me and I will then determine what I will do." To a person in such an attitude of heart He reveals nothing. There must be a covenant relationship of trust in which His will is assented to *once for all* and without reservation. Why should it not be so? Might not our reluctance sometimes be stated in the words, "I know thee, hard taskmaster"? Is *He* a hard taskmaster? Is there any hope whatsoever that we of ourselves might be wise enough to choose what is best if we keep the directing of our lives in our own hands? Will the Father, whose love is infinite, impose upon His child? Or will He ever be careless?

We make no promise that we will not sin or violate the will of God when we yield to Him. We do not promise to change our own desires. The exact human attitude has been expressed in the words: "I am willing to be made willing to do His will." Let it be stated again that this question, so simple in itself, instantly becomes complicated when related to any concrete issue of obedience. It is the question only of the will of God in the abstract in which we have the assurance that in every detail He will work in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight. He will work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

We may experience long waiting to ascertain what His will may be; but when it is clearly revealed, there can be no room for debate in the heart that would not quench the Spirit.

The highest motive for yielding to the will of God is not the mere desire for victory in life, or for power, or blessing. It is that we may live the sacrificial life which is the Christ life. Sacrificial does not mean painful; it is simply doing Another's will. Some pain may be in the path;

but the prevailing note is *joy*, and the blessing of the heart is *peace*.

All of this bears most vitally on the missionary enterprise. Those who are right with God, and who, therefore, experience His mind and love, will be given the heart-interest in this all-important service and will be placed where He would have them serve for Him.

"If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God" (I John 3:20, 21). But no heart can be uncondemning which consciously withholds its all from Christ. So, also, we abide in His love only when we keep His commandments (John 15:10). And His supreme command, which is in agreement with His supreme purpose, is that His own, whom He has sent into the world even as the Father hath sent Him into the world, shall go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

While all Christians are appointed to missionary activity, the locality and precise form of that service is to be worked out in each case by the immediate and personal leading of the Spirit of God. Some Christians will be called to the foreign field and some to serve at home. Christ alone will determine in each and every case, but His guidance and decision cannot be realized until a complete surrender to His will has been made. In any case, the same missionary zeal, missionary vision, and missionary training is required. If it is on a foreign field the need of thorough preparation is obvious. If the individual is called to service at home, there is likewise the same need for thorough preparation, since the church at home must have intelligent leadership and be given intelligent missionary development if she fulfils her part in sustaining the work abroad. Is not the present deplorable shrinking and retrenching on the part of many missionary societies chargeable to pastors who are indifferent in heart and disgracefully ignorant concerning the one great project which more than all else is committed to them and which is the supreme objective of God in this age? How remiss, too, a ministerial training is which places the study of missionary work and preparation for that service among the least important of its studies.

The personal responsibility is very simple indeed. Let the individual Christian first surrender everything to God and then depend upon His leading, and God will guide in the path which is according to His own infinite love, wisdom, and grace.