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Call of the New Day
to the Old Church



· Charles Stelzle ·



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The Call of the New Day To the Old Church

By

CHARLES STELZLE

*Author of "The Gospel of Labor," "American
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Author's Preface

KEEN observers of the trend of things tell us that the signs point towards a "revival of religion." Men are interested in religious themes, but it is clearly manifest that the subjects discussed and the books being read regarding religion are very different from the purely devotional subjects which interested them a decade ago. They are just as devoted as were those of an earlier day, but the expression of their devotion has changed. Men in the street, in hotel lobbies, in trains, in the shops and stores are talking about the vital problems of the day in the terms of religion. It would be a mistake for the Church to insist that they shall use the terminology which served its purpose for another generation, and that they must have the same kind of spiritual experiences. The men of to-day must be permitted to express their religious aspirations in their own way. They will do so anyway. It is simply a question whether the Church will be broad enough to accept these thoroughly consecrated Chris-

tian men, or whether they shall feel compelled to seek a home elsewhere.

While it would be unfortunate for the Church were it to fail at this critical period in its history, it would be equally disastrous for those who are impatient for progress were they to leave the Church at this stage. There is no doubt that those who would accomplish the biggest things in behalf of the people can best do them through the Church, even though they may just now be forced to fight an array of conservatism which at times seems appalling. The same reactionaries are to be found in other organizations and institutions. The democratic form of government within the Church makes it easier to fight them here than anywhere else.

CHARLES STELZLE.

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I

THE CHANGING EMPHASIS OF THE GOSPEL

EACH new situation in the history of the Church demanded a strong emphasis upon some forgotten or neglected truth contained in the old gospel. When the Church hid the doctrine of "Justification by faith," Martin Luther was raised up to become the prophet of his day, declaring with defiance that "the just shall live by faith." Later, John Calvin proclaimed the illuminating truth of "the sovereignty of God." But the pendulum soon swung so far to one side that it required John Wesley to emphasize the doctrine of "the free will of man," in order to balance the movement of the Church. Then, when men seemed again to forget the Almighty, Charles G. Finney thundered out "The law of God," and they fell upon their faces and, dry-eyed, cried out for mercy. The last great period in the progress of the Church came when Dwight L. Moody, with tears streaming down his cheeks, pled "the love of God," lifting

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thousands into the Kingdom and setting in motion countless movements for bettering the world.

It will be noted that in every case when reform came to the Church, it proceeded from within, not from without. The gospel of Jesus is big enough and broad enough to meet every requirement. When men set themselves in opposition to revealed truth, progress may be retarded, but it is never halted. But the pathetic fact remains that, when men of God appeared in every period of the Church's progress, they met their greatest opposition, not from those outside the Church, but from those within. Jesus accused the Jews of His day of always having stoned the prophets which were sent unto them. Paul summed up his opinion of the people to whom these messengers of the Almighty were sent when he declared that the world was not worthy of them. Luther, Wyckliffe, Knox, Savonarola, and a long list of others of more modern times, were compelled to withstand the opposition of those whose comprehension of the significance of the Kingdom of God was exceedingly narrow. Often, as somebody has said, these saints were first ostracized, and then canonized.

God seems to have been compelled at various times to rebuke the dominant Church by organizing another in order to carry out His plan for the redemption of the world. When the Protestant Episcopal Church appeared to fail in its great opportunity, He gave the world John Wesley, who organized what afterwards became known as the Methodist Episcopal Church. When the latter Church lost its grip upon the masses, William Booth came out and established the Salvation Army. And, to-day, in spite of the fact that the Salvation Army disregards all of the sacraments and many other things which the Church counts sacred, who will dare say that the Salvation Army is not of God?

When any church gets to the point where it believes that it has a monopoly of all the truth or all the Christianity in the world, it has reached a perilous period in its history. The Jews were extremely proud of their heritage, but Jesus reminded them that God could "raise up from these stones children unto Abraham." It required a distinct revelation from heaven to convince even large-hearted Peter that "God is no respecter of persons, but he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him."

Let us not forget that even at best the

world makes progress only through vicarious sacrifice. Life is continuous only as it adapts itself to changing environment. To hold steadily and defiantly to the old order as the new surrounds us is fatal in every sphere. The Church is governed by the same principles of growth which apply everywhere else.

Some time ago the editorial staff of a well-known magazine seriously discussed the question, "Is there any further need for the Church?" Practically every man who participated in this conference was a churchman. Some of them had given a good part of their lives to its work. But they felt that the Church had arrived at a very critical period in its history. It was a question whether the Church was equal to the modern situation.

While the Church has undoubtedly furnished the original inspiration for most of the Christian activities of the present day, these activities are no longer confined to the Church, and the organizations which are carrying them on have needlessly become rivals of the Church. These "rivals" are actually disinherited children of the Church. Or else the Church does not know her own children. The very principles advocated by the Church have been given such wide applica-

tion that the Church itself has become startled by their significance, and often it has apologized for them, or repudiated them altogether, with the statement that the Church has nothing to do with such matters.

As Bishop Charles D. Williams says : " The Church does not recognize these movements as essentially religious. They seem to her secular, outside her province. The Church often muzzles the mouths of the prophets lest they offend the sources of munificence and check the streams of bounty upon which it depends. This is an offense not only to the spirit of democracy, but to the new conscience of the age. The Church preaches, for the most part, the minor moralities of purely personal conduct, technical pieties and ecclesiastical proprieties, while the age is seeking the larger righteousness of the Kingdom of God, which is ' human society organized according to the Will of God.' God forbid that I should discredit or belittle the work the Church is doing for the relief of the distressed and the enlargement and enrichment of lives that are narrow and meagre in their interests and opportunities. But she deals too exclusively with the symptoms of our social disease and unrest and does not touch their causes.

“She sends out her corps of Red Cross nurses to minister to the wounded in our unequal economic and industrial conflict, but she does not address herself to the *causes* of the strife. She pours oil and wine into the wounds of the half-dead traveler on the Jericho Road, but she does not lend a hand to rid that road of thieves and robbers, or to reform the system which inevitably produces thieves and robbers. Yet the situation is not wholly discouraging. The Church is bound to become more hospitable to the new spirit of religion. More and more prophets are heard in her pulpits, pleading for and proclaiming the larger righteousness of economic justice and social equity, as distinguished from the narrower righteousness of merely personal respectability. The great movements of reform and reconstruction are seeking a home and centre about which they may organize and unify themselves. And there is none other like the Church, if the Church will only take them.”

Throughout the entire Church there is a growing restlessness among its ministers, especially among the younger men who have been brought into touch with present-day problems. This restlessness is due less to

theological considerations than it is to sociological conditions. Many of these ministers have resigned their charges to become leaders in social work, either local or national, while hundreds of strong men who might otherwise have entered the Christian ministry have become allied with broader sociological movements. Some of these men have taken this step after having experienced keen disappointment because they felt that they could not carry on their life's work through the Church. They have not lost faith in the Church as an institution, but they no longer have confidence in certain institutions of the Church.

The reactionary element which is now in control in the Church has sneeringly said that men of this type are "socialists" or "anarchists," and that the Church is better off without them. They said the same thing about Jesus two thousand years ago. It has often happened that men have been driven into radical positions because of the intolerance of this reactionary group, which, apparently, hasn't the remotest idea what socialism or anarchy mean.

But the real menace to the Church of Jesus Christ to-day is not the radical, whether his radicalism be theological or sociological.

The real menace is the smug, self-satisfied person who is quite content with things as they are, and who wants no change of any kind which will compel him to readjust himself to meet the modern need.

Jesus Christ was a Revolutionist. He disregarded altogether the ecclesiastical aristocracy of His day and the social aristocracy of His period. Neither had they any use for Him. The latter scorned Him because of His poverty and lowly origin, while the former crucified Him because He dared tell the truth. His message was disturbing. It unsettled things. When His disciples preached it they were brought before the Sanhedrin upon the charge that they were proclaiming a doctrine which was turning the world upside down. These accusers were right. This Gospel which Jesus gave the world will continue to turn the world upside down until it is turned right side up.

To keep the Church clear-eyed and open-minded is a great necessity. Were the Church to insist that God has ceased to reveal Himself and His purposes for the world, it would at once mean stagnation. God is revealing Himself anew day by day, in His dealings with men and with nations. There are prophets of God in the twentieth century

just as surely as there were in the first or the centuries preceding it. It cannot be that the Bible is a closed book, and that God has ceased to speak through men simply because a church council decreed it. God is writing new chapters every day.

Men are speaking for God in the twentieth century. Their inspiration may not be accepted for a century or two—or longer. But this was also true of some of the men who wrote the Bible which we now accept as inspired. But here's the point—God is still speaking. And if God is still speaking He is naturally giving us fresh revelations of Himself and His purposes. This must mean a larger life for the Church. God's revelation will not be hampered by traditions, no matter how sacred. The Church is capable of infinite expansion—even to the utmost of its opportunities as shown in God's new revelations. It behooves us to keep out of the way of the Church's progress—to say the least. Better still, it is a privilege to learn God's will and obey it. To keep in line with God means growth. To oppose His will means annihilation.

II

ELEMENTS AFFECTING THE CHURCH'S GROWTH

FOR one hundred years the Protestant Church in the United States had been making steady progress. In 1800 seven persons out of every hundred were members of the Church; in 1900 there were twenty-four. With every decade there has been an increase in membership. But from 1900 to 1910 the Church barely kept pace with the population. The growth of population during this period was twenty-one per cent. The increase in the Protestant Church was also twenty-one per cent. For one hundred years the Church had steadily outdistanced the population. For ten years it has been a tie. What will the next decade produce? Some people are getting comfort out of the statement that the Church is "holding its own." But where in God's word is the Church commanded merely to hold its own? Isn't it true that we are commanded to conquer the world? If we are failing in

this, can it be said that we are true to the commission entrusted to us ?

In defense of the Church it is often remarked that the comparative falling off in its membership is due to the coming in of great masses of immigrants—"a million a year," has been the cry of home missionary agencies. As a matter of fact the percentage of foreign born people in the United States is no greater to-day than it was fifty years ago. The constant percentage of foreign born during all of this period has been just about fourteen. But suppose it were true that there are large numbers of immigrants in our country to-day, upon whom the Church is making practically no impression? We have been saying that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. But when the immigrant moves in the Church usually moves out, thereby admitting that its Gospel is effective for the foreigner only when it is exported through foreign missionary societies, and that it is non-effective in a highly developed Christian country, where it should be at its very best. Is the Church ready to make this confession ?

"Men are not preaching the old-time religion ; therefore the Church is losing its grip," we are told. This isn't true. Thou-

sands of ministers are preaching what is known as "the old gospel," but they aren't making much of an impression on the modern situation. There must be another reason for the failure. Prince of preachers that Dwight L. Moody was, he was completely defeated when he attempted to conduct an evangelistic campaign on the lower east side of New York twenty years ago. And yet the people in the tenements are hungry for religion.

Neither is it a question of preaching "the new gospel" of the liberal theologian. If this were true, then the Unitarian and the Universalist churches would be crowded with workingmen. The old-fashioned gospel is much more appealing to workingmen than the new. There isn't the least doubt of this. But actually, it isn't a question of theology at all. It is a more inclusive proposition.

For ten years the evangelists have been telling us that we are on the verge of a great spiritual awakening. But it is significant that it was after an unusual propaganda through costly evangelistic commissions that the Church experienced its worst slump in recent years. There are a few evangelists who through their peculiar personalities are making remarkable appeals to the people.

But the question is often raised whether galvanizing the Church into a semblance of spiritual power can have permanent value. Whatever may be said regarding the methods of the evangelists in question there is no doubt that frequently great good is accomplished in individual lives. But the fact that so very many always return to the old life seems to indicate that the message of the evangelist was not comprehensive enough to permanently enlist these earnest men and women who sincerely desired to live the Christian life.

The appeal of the average evangelist is too narrow. If he were more sympathetic towards a larger, fuller gospel, which might be preached by those who stay after he goes, it would make the task less difficult, but usually the evangelist goes out of his way to ridicule and completely discredit a social message which would really make his own work more effective. He makes it almost impossible for the minister to discuss with the new converts the social aspects of the Gospel, with the result that many of the men and women who were enthusiastic for service when they came into the Church soon drift out, because they cannot all teach Sunday-school classes, or serve as deacons or

elders, or remain inactive in Bible classes. If the evangelist cannot himself preach a full-orbed gospel, he should not object to others preaching the message that he neglects.

The Church is being severely tested in the cities. From 1900 to 1910 the cities of 25,000 and over increased fifty-five per cent. Can it be said that church membership in these cities also increased fifty-five per cent? By no juggling of figures can this increase be established. The tendency of the population to move towards the city is one of the marvels of modern times. One-tenth of the population in the United States lives in the three cities of New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago. One-half the population of New York state lives in New York City. One-fourth the population of this country lives upon one four-hundredth of the total land area. The cities of agricultural Canada are growing even more rapidly than those in the United States. The cities of Europe and Asia are also swelling their population figures in phenomenal fashion.

But as populations and problems in the city increase, the churches move steadily out. We contend that the Church has the only solvent of the social problem, but in a situation which demands its direct and immediate

application, we seem to grow suddenly pessimistic regarding its actual effectiveness, or we quickly deny that our Gospel was intended to be used to cure modern social ills, except by indirection.

Without the slightest compunction we sell down-town church property, made valuable by reason of what the neighbors did through the payment of taxes and the general improvement of property, and appropriate it for the building of fine churches in other parts of the city. We seem to forget that the community has a stake in the church which never paid taxes and scarcely made an attempt to benefit the people in the neighborhood in any practical way. We fail to recall that a church is relieved from paying taxes on the principle that it is performing services to the state which is at least equivalent to the amount of the taxes it should pay. We talk about the problem of "the down-town church," whereas the emphasis should be placed upon the down-town problem of *the* Church. For the problems that face us here must not become the concern of a single church, nor of the churches which happen to be situated in the down-town district. They must be attacked by the entire Church.

We become enthusiastic about solving the city's problems by shifting the tenement poor onto the farm. But every such attempt will result in failure. It is flying into the face of inexorable law. If it were possible to start towards the farm a thousand thin blooded tenement house men, they would meet on the way an equal number of husky farmers' boys who had failed to make good. If these do not succeed, or if they are dissatisfied with the farm, how can it be expected that the men of the tenement will succeed? The city must solve its own problems. The country has troubles enough of its own.

It is said that there are in some middle Western states nearly one thousand abandoned churches. This is due, in a large measure, to the loss of population, but there is a steady decline of interest in religious matters in the country. The social and economic problems of the city are being forced upon country people. These problems are seriously affecting the life of the Church. The country church must become the centre of the lives of the people. Either the country minister will become the leader of the people, or the people will have an increasing disregard for the Church. This does

not mean that the minister needs to know more about farming than the farmer. But there are ways in which the minister may direct his people so that they will become better farmers. Poor farmers will always be poor supporters of the Church. The prosperity and continuance of the country church depends upon the prosperity of the farmer and his fidelity to the soil.

III

SOCIAL PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE CHURCH

THE per capita consumption of intoxicating liquor in this country has increased from five gallons in 1850 to twenty-three gallons in 1912, in spite of the activities of temperance and prohibition societies. This increase has been a steady one, and is not due to any abnormal cause, as, for example, the sudden release of a large quantity of liquor from the bonded warehouses. What is it that makes the saloon attractive? It cannot be attributed to the "low-browed brutes" who run saloons. Low-browed brutes are not very attractive to anybody. One reason why saloons are attractive is because they are democratic institutions. Also, they are very human affairs. The bartender and the saloon-keeper find jobs for their patrons. They give sound advice concerning a great many every-day affairs. They are the centres of political influence. They provide various kinds of recreational features.

The saloons are social centres, in a very important sense. There are many evils connected with them, and these must not be overlooked, but an utter disregard of the elements that are good will weaken the attack upon an institution which has a tremendous grip on the average man. The Church needs to recognize the distinct social and economic value of the saloon, and it must address itself specifically to meet the influence which the saloon has created for itself. A negative program with reference to the saloon will never permanently close it up. The Church must be more than "Anti"—it must be positive and constructive. We are always tremendously concerned about shutting up things. Isn't it about time that we gave some thought to opening up something that will help solve the recreation problem?

In forty years the population in this country has increased one hundred per cent. During the same period the number of divorces granted has increased seven hundred and fifty per cent. We grant more divorces than any other civilized country on the globe. We grant one divorce to every twelve marriages; in some states one to every four marriages, as over against one divorce for every twenty-two marriages in

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Switzerland, one to every thirty in France, one to every forty-four in Germany, and one to every 400 in England. Is it conceivable that the Church can remain indifferent to a condition that is breaking down our national life as the divorce evil is doing? It must not be supposed that the evil is altogether due to immorality, for surely Americans are not more immoral than Europeans. There are social and economic reasons for the divorce evil which we cannot ignore. Its solution will depend upon a broad, comprehensive study of the entire situation. The Church must have an important part in this investigation.

It would be a vain thing to attempt even to approximate the number of prostitutes in the United States. A few cities have succeeded in wiping out their "red-light" districts. This hasn't abolished the social evil, not even in these cities, although it has accomplished a great deal of good. Most of the women simply went to other cities where they continued to carry on their trade, or else they moved into the residential districts. It will not help in the final solution of this problem merely to shift the responsibility onto some other town. When will the churches have the courage to face this situation?

Our method of dealing with so-called

“fallen women” is most unjust, in view of our treatment of the “fallen men” who in most instances are directly responsible for the condition of the women. But aside from this, we regard these women as creatures of an inferior order. We assume that they must always have been different in their very natures from our own daughters and sisters. This does not necessarily follow. Harsh as it may seem, practically none of our children are altogether immune from the horrible influence of the social evil. We sing most tenderly about the “wandering boy,”

“Once he was pure as morning light.”

What about the “wandering girl”? The chances are that the “wandering boy” was largely responsible for her present situation.

But when she desires to “come home,” we imagine that the only suitable place for her is an institution or a mission. And we wonder why she rebels against going there until she has reached the extreme point in her degrading experience. We do not seem to realize that usually this woman was once open-hearted and generous, full blooded and affectionate, and that these very virtues—perverted—were what drove her into a life of shame. A cold, formal institution, where she

will be stared at by "benefactresses," and patronized, doesn't appeal to a woman of this type, no matter how low she may have fallen. It will be worth while remembering in the genealogy of Jesus given by Matthew, there were some women of rather "shady" reputation. These were signally honored by God in spite of their doubtful careers. While we accept the theory that God will receive any sinner, no matter how he may have fallen, we are not quite ready to be so generous ourselves.

Some day the Church will revise its attitude towards "fallen women." And this means that individual church members will do so. Not merely by resolution but by conduct. Furthermore, we will inquire more closely into the causes of the social evil. While the economic situation is not altogether to blame for it, we will be prepared to say, frankly, that a girl who earns only six dollars a week will have a tremendous struggle to live a virtuous life in a big city, where the temptation to do the other thing is so alluringly and so persistently presented. We will insist that working women shall receive a fair wage. We will take a greater interest in her home, and the conditions which may drive her into the street or into places of

questionable amusement. We will think it worth while to remember that she has certain recreational needs which must be satisfied. We will see to it that public recreational centres are freed from every evil influence, no matter who conducts them. The Church will do this through her chivalrous men, who will fight for the girl who needs strong champions and wise friends.

The industrial situation is becoming increasingly complex. The development of Socialism in every part of the world is full of significance. There are to-day about 30,000,000 Socialists in Europe and America. In 1888 the Socialists in the United States polled 2,000 votes. In 1914 they polled over a million votes. Socialism cannot be bluffed out or laughed out. The only way to eradicate Socialism is to wipe out the conditions which have given rise to Socialism. To many men and women Socialism has become a religion. They are ready to sacrifice as much for "the cause" as is the case with Christian missionaries.

The conflict in the industrial world has recently developed a new aspect which is giving serious concern to some observers. On the one hand we have national employers' associations which will not recognize work-

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ingmen through their trade unions. At the other extreme are the Industrial Workers of the World, who will not make bargains with employers because they say they have nothing in common with them—their interests are so totally different that they decline to make any kind of a contract with the bosses. Meanwhile, these groups of radical employers and radical workingmen are both playing into the hands of the Socialists.

The trade unionist knows full well that when he is deprived of membership in the labor union, there is only one alternative for him, namely, Socialism. And thousands of trade unionists are pouring into the ranks of the radicals because of the attitude of some employers of labor towards the trades union. Entire national organizations of labor have openly committed themselves to the philosophy of Karl Marx. There will no doubt be a final terrific conflict between the men and the bosses if present tendencies continue. But it will not be between the Manufacturers' Association and the labor unions. It will be between the Manufacturers' Association and the Socialists. The writer is neither a Socialist nor a prophet, but he ventures the assertion that in this conflict the Socialists are sure to win.

What should be the attitude of the Church towards these movements? Let it be said with definiteness—the Church must not become the advocate of any particular social system. It is the business of the Church to preach the fundamental principles of Jesus, applying them to present-day problems in a perfectly fair but fearless fashion. But the Church must be broad enough to include all those whose lives are dominated by the Spirit of Jesus, and who are seeking to bring in the Kingdom of God, no matter what their economic beliefs may be. There are many men outside the Church to-day who would be within, had they not been made to feel uncomfortable because of their personal convictions regarding the economic situation and its permanent betterment. They are Christian men. There is no doubt of this, if one may judge them by their fruits and their spirit. And these must be the final test.

There is a phase of the industrial situation which suggests grave questions. A recent study of how one thousand workingmen spent their spare time demonstrated the fact that the men who were most indifferent to the Church were not those who worked long hours and thus were too tired to go to

church, but those who worked only eight hours per day, and not at all on Saturday afternoons. In other words, the most intelligent, highest grade workers were not attracted by the Church. In every comparison between the Church and all other agencies, the Church always suffered, when these workingmen made their decision.

The real "problem of the workingman" for the Church to consider is not so much the low-waged, long-houred worker, but the highly skilled artisan. This is the man who is becoming interested in other movements which are to-day challenging the Church for supremacy in the hearts of the people. He is the man who is tied up to the trades union. It is in the trades union that the battle of the workers must be fought out. And in the trades union, too, will the best of the laboring men make their decision as to what shall be their attitude towards the Church. The Church simply cannot neglect the opportunity to secure a hearing in the labor hall. The powerful organizations of labor, with their frequent, orderly, and businesslike meetings, local, state, and national; and the nearly three hundred weekly and monthly newspapers which are read diligently by the workers and their families,

present a remarkable avenue of approach to millions of men who are not at all interested in the Church. They are not opposed to the Church—they are simply indifferent. But this is really worse than if they openly fought the Church.

IV

THE IMPERATIVE CALL TO THE CHURCH

WHAT does the Church most need to-day? It isn't more money. The Church is not dependent upon money. It was most powerful, considering its numerical strength, when it had practically no wealth. When Jesus sent out His disciples to conquer the world He told them not to bother with money. In those days the Church was a great revolutionary force. Its leader was without headquarters. His disciples were wanderers and outcasts from society. They lived in caves and catacombs. But they were slowly undermining the immorality and heathenism of the period.

The Church needs some money to carry on its work under present conditions, but money threatens some day to become the curse of the Church, just as it has proven to be the curse of many another institution. Money may tone down its message. It may tie up its best activities. The kind of money

that is of greatest value to the Church is that which comes from those who can least afford to give it. This money will be a greater blessing than that which was earned by the sweat of another's brow rather than by the sacrifice of the one who gave it.

Money has undoubtedly been a blessing to the Church, but it has been the money which it gave away. The increase of its riches has not been the cause of its increasing influence, where that influence has made itself felt for good. Money given to missions and hospitals and schools undoubtedly made the service rendered easier to give, but the workers who served unquestionably gave more abundantly than those who contributed cash for buildings and equipment. And the best of that service would have been given anyway.

It isn't more members. The actual power of an organization is never determined by mere numbers. Gideon's band of a few hundred was far more effective than the army of thousands of half-hearted soldiers. That minister who said that they had been having a great revival in his church—not because so many had been added to the church, but because a good many had been getting out, spoke a solemn truth.

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We have made it too easy to get into the Church. Not that any sincere person should ever be denied admission, but we have urged church membership upon many who might otherwise have taken the whole thing more seriously if they had been made to realize the real significance of church membership. We have made it a thing much too cheap. We have made it appear that to be a church member was all that was required of men, so far as the Christian life is concerned. The result has been that to-day we have millions in the Church who not only add nothing to its power, but whose lives are stunted because they never exercise the virtues which should be peculiar to the men and women who are members of the Church.

It isn't more ministers. The theological schools are crying out for students. The Boards of the Church are pleading for recruits. But the Church doesn't need more ministers in this country. There are now about 200,000 of them. If it is merely a question of numbers, then the Church and its agencies for enlisting and training ministers might better cease their efforts. What is needed is not more ministers but better ministers.

It isn't more religion. There was a lot of

“religion” among the Israelites when Jeremiah protested against their iniquity. And when they said to him, in substance: “Did you ever see a more beautiful service, and a greater number of burnt sacrifices being offered upon the altar, and a larger number of meetings presided over by cultured priests?” Jeremiah denounced them even more vehemently. And when he would not cease from his protesting they put him into prison. When Paul visited Athens he told these worshippers of 30,000 gods that they were “altogether too religious.”

You may pick a man out of the gutter, scrape off the mud, and find a Methodist, a Baptist, a Presbyterian or an Episcopalian ready to fight for his “religion.” The “old time religion” may or may not be a good thing. But the fact that it’s old doesn’t necessarily make it good. There have been many things done in the name of religion which were actually the work of the devil. Religion—pure and undefiled—is a wonderful thing. But to be merely “religious” doesn’t help matters much. Often it has simply a hardening effect.

It isn’t more sociability. To be cordial and free from snobbishness is a most excellent thing, even for the Church. But the Church

isn't suffering to-day because it hasn't enough oyster suppers and ice-cream festivals. It has an abundance of clubs and classes. It often has reception committees and the minister and his helpers greet the stranger at the door. The Church furnishes social life for millions, and in this particular it is performing a valuable service. On the whole, the Church isn't failing as a social institution. Sometimes, it is feared, this part of its work is greatly overemphasized. The danger is that its social work may swamp much else that is still more valuable.

It isn't more philanthropy. The Church has always been the centre and promoter of philanthropic work. It was the organizer of hospitals when others permitted the sick to suffer and die. It cared for little children when the world had not yet learned to appreciate the value of "one such little one." In every land and to all the people, wherever suffering was found, there the Church has given freely that burdens might be lightened and care made easier to carry. But what the Church needs most just now is not to increase its philanthropic work, for others have learned from the Church how to minister to the needy.

What does the Church need most? It

needs money, but it must be clean. It needs members, but they must be true. It needs ministers, but they must be strong. It needs religion, but it must be pure. It needs sociability, but it must be sincere. It needs philanthropy, but it must be tempered by justice.

But more than all these *it needs men and women who are ready to pay the price of discipleship*. More than all these it needs persecution because it dares go contrary to the accepted order of things—when these things are wrong. Nothing would make the Church grow in influence quite so much as to be persecuted for righteousness' sake.

The Church needs more of the masculine touch. There are millions of men in the Church, but they have been content to allow the women to dominate the Church until it has been almost completely feminized.

The brotherhoods of the American Protestant Churches have literally dug their graves with their teeth. Instead of being inspired by Mazzini's call, "Come and suffer," they were fooled by the swan song, "Come and eat."

It was almost pathetic how the Church sighed "It is done," when these brotherhoods were organized. Now all the problems

of the Church would be solved, it believed, for had not the men of the Church said that the women had been faithful long enough—they themselves would do the work in real man fashion? But even while they yet spoke the women were lined about the walls of the banqueting halls, with trays and towels in hand, feeding these valiant soldiers, who took it all out in songs and speeches and sandwiches.

Scarcely a single national brotherhood has made good. Here and there a local organization has accomplished a fine piece of work, but even most of the local brotherhoods have flattened "tires." Some are still being thrilled by inspirational addresses delivered by spellbinders who are great favorites on such occasions, but who never get within a thousand miles of the real task. They know the latest jokes and they work out great schemes, which are propelled by hot air; but nothing happens.

Meanwhile, the women are still standing round with their trays and their towels, smiling good-naturedly at the guests of the evening, and they still look foolish and embarrassed when the funny man of the crowd offers the usual vote of thanks "to the ladies, what would we do without them?"

Quite right; sometimes we men don't know what to do with them when they come to us full of enthusiasm for some new church enterprise; but what would we do without them when we "fall down" on the whole thing ourselves—what would we do without them?

But that isn't the real question; the most important question is this: What is to become of us? The women can run the church, and maybe the church will continue to do the kind of work it (or she) has been doing for many a year; but what will become of the men who consider that they have done their full duty when they have permitted the women to wait on them at the brotherhood "banquet"?

The men constitute just one-third of the membership in the churches to-day. The fact of the matter is, however, the men who are in the churches are, for the most part, middle-aged and old men. The young men are not being won or held by the Church. What will happen when the middle-aged men become old men and the old men die off?

Doesn't the trouble lie in the fact that our churches do not make a big enough appeal to men? Aren't we too much afraid

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of putting up to men a real man's job? Must we forever be silent about the hard things that the Church should be doing? What if a few men, or even many men, should be driven away, even from the banquet? The best and strongest will remain, and it may be a good plan to build upon these the foundation of a great superstructure which will stand the test of time.

Here is a chance for the poorest of men to have a part in building up the Kingdom of God upon earth, and the rich man need not be left out. If the Church is to win the strong men who are to-day offering themselves for hard tasks in other fields, the Church must appeal to the heroic in men. Real men like to do things that demand sacrifice. And when such men are enlisted in the great cause for which the Church stands, then the success of the Church is assured, for even the other kind will follow the strong leaders in the Church.'

The Church has been emphasizing the importance of individual salvation. It is time that we talked more about social salvation. We have been saying that we must "build up the Church." We ought to be more deeply interested in "building up the peo-

ple." It is well to declare that the individual must be saved. But the individual can be saved only as he helps save society.

The time has come for a great new crusade in the name of the Church—a crusade which will have as its slogan these words: "He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it." Some of us have been thinking only of what we could get out of our religion. Jesus thought only of what He could put into it. This is the basis of His teaching. This is the philosophy of His religion. He came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister." He came to give His life a sacrifice for men. "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you," He told the disciples. This commission is also given to twentieth century Christians. The social message of Jesus means sweat and blood and sacrifice and suffering.

Institutional work is a very small part of the social gospel. Mere sociability is even less typical of what it implies. The social gospel includes economic justice. It means that underfed women and overworked men must get a square deal. It means that there shall be a more equitable distribution of profits in industry. It carries with it the spirit of true brotherhood and democracy.

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The Church must not remain in ignorance of vile sanitary conditions and bad economic relationships. It must study these questions with an open mind and then strike at them with a closed fist. The Church must find out why so many people die of contagious but preventable disease. In former days men said that great epidemics were visitations of divine Providence. To-day they charge it up to the Board of Health. The Church cannot remain out of the fight for health and life. It is too late for the Church to say that it has nothing to do with men's bodies—that it is its business simply to save men's souls. If the Church does not care for men's bodies, which it has seen, how can it care for men's souls which it has not seen? If Jesus thought it worth His time to heal men's diseases, isn't it worth our while to prevent diseases? And doesn't this mean an interest in sanitation and pure food and good housing? One does not get very far along in the study of social problems before one runs upon a moral principle. Such work *is* religious. It isn't a thing separate and apart. It is vitally related to the deepest spiritual experience.

The Church has needlessly alienated sincere social workers because it scorned

what these men and women were doing in behalf of suffering mankind. The social workers have become impatient with the Church because its leaders have ridiculed their efforts. The average social worker does not insist that he has offered the people a substitute for religion. He is content if he can supplement the efforts of the religious worker. That distinctively spiritual work has not been done in some social settlements is no argument against the settlement or its workers. The settlement is purely a socialized institution, organized primarily for social purposes. Its function is social, just as that of the public school is educational, and that of the Church moral and religious. And yet any one of these may take on the functions of the others, and whether or not it is wise to do so, and to what extent it is to be done, must in all fairness be left to the judgment of the director. If the Church insists that the social settlement must take on the functions of the Church, then by the same token the settlement may insist that the Church must take on its functions. In a peculiar sense the Church may emphasize spiritual, social and educational work. No organization can do this with greater ease or better grace. To the extent that the Church will do this, to

that extent will the Church enlarge its power and influence and service.

Some there are who seek to justify their indifference to the social situation by the Scripture: "I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." It is unfortunate that they have narrowed this wonderful text to a mere theological definition. What does Jesus crucified signify, if it does not mean service and sacrifice and suffering? The exponents of social service might well take the cross as an emblem of their philosophy, for it is more nearly typical of what they believe than any other symbol. The deepest meaning of the cross finds its expression in unselfish devotion to all the needs of men. This is the creed of the social worker. It must increasingly become that of the Church.

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