

# THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY.

---

VOL. XXIII.

APRIL, 1919.

No. 2.

---

## OLD TRUTHS FOR A NEW AGE.\*

### I.

*Heb. 13, 8:* "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

IN CHRIST, OUR ETERNAL HIGH PRIEST, DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS:—

A deluge of wrath and terror has swept over the earth these last four years and has left in its wake a terrible mass of wreckage and ruin. Thrones and dynasties have been toppled over, and the very foundations of society shattered. Confusion, anguish, and despair have taken possession of vast numbers of souls. We now see fulfilled the prophecy of Christ regarding the latter days: "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." As a result, the cry for reconstruction is heard all over the world, reconstruction of all the things and institutions that determine man's relations to his fellow-men and the relations of nations towards nations. More significant still, reconstruction is called for in the relation of man towards his Maker. The religions of the past, Christianity included, we are told, have utterly failed to achieve their purpose and their promise, and are now things of the past. A new religion is needed.

Thus is the gauntlet thrown down to all who are determined to cling to the old Christ and His Gospel. The charge and the challenge must be met. Are we prepared to do so? We are. And our answer to both, the charge and the challenge, is made in the words of our text:—

*"JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TO-DAY, AND  
FOREVER."*

Calmly and boldly we declare the old Christ and the old Gospel of Christ efficient and sufficient for the true purposes of religion and the high and glorious purpose of God's Church on earth until the end of time.

---

\* A series of addresses delivered during the first week in Lent at the Lutheran Noonday Services at the American Theater, St. Louis, Mo.

What gives us such assurance? First of all, the unassailable fact that the war, whatever other changes it may have wrought, has effected no change either in God or in the moral nature and character of man. But if the war has worked neither of these changes, how, then, can the way of salvation and sanctification for man be other now than it was before the war and has been ever since the fall of man? Or are we to believe that all who have lived and died until now have gone down to perdition, that the true way of salvation has never yet been revealed unto man?

We all have, indeed, heard men say that the dreadful war had shattered their faith in the love of God, in His holiness and justice, yea, in His very existence. We have heard men cry out: "Who, in view of all the terrible sufferings that have come upon unnumbered millions of human beings, can still believe in a God of love as preached by the Christians? or, in view of all the violence and injustice perpetrated on earth, believe in a God of holiness and justice as taught by all the religions on earth?" But, my friends, do not these men, by their very outcry against all that they term moral wrongs, prove the truth of the Psalmist's declaration that he is a fool who says, "There is no God"?

How were it possible for them to be horrified and tormented by what they denounce as moral wrongs, incompatible with love, holiness, and justice in God, if they had no moral sense, no moral consciousness? And how could there be in man any moral sense and consciousness if there were no God and no accountability of man to his Maker and Lord? If no God there were, no moral standard could there be for man to judge by. Then should man be free to follow his own desires and impulses. No moral wrong could man discern. Might would indeed be right, and silly nonsense it would then be, were it possible, even to speak of sin, crime, iniquity, and vice.

What, then, does the outcry of men against God's love, holiness, and justice, because of the terrible sufferings inflicted upon so many human beings by the war, prove? The frightful blindness and perversity in natural man wrought by sin, the awful power of Satan over those who are in bondage unto him, and the unimpeachable truth of St. Paul's declaration that the Law of God, and hence all done by God in confirmation of the Law, excites in sinful man only wrath against God, but does not lead man truly to know and acknowledge Him.

Surely, God's hand was in this war. Surely, the rulers of this world, charged with causing the war, were only His executioners, the

instruments of His will. Surely, the terrible war was a divine visitation, a crushing manifestation of His inviolable holiness and justice, an overwhelming outpouring of His terrible wrath against the sin and idolatry of mankind. What blindness and perversity in man not to see this! What awful power of Satan over man to keep him from seeing this! What shocking malice which turns the most tremendous demonstration of God's justice and just wrath into an argument against His holiness and justice, and even against His existence! Who, as he contemplates this saddest of all spectacles, is not reminded of the lamentation of the Lord over Israel in the days of Isaiah: "Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more; the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint"?

It is no new religion the present generation needs; its prime need is true and full preaching of the old and immutable Law of God, that it may come to know itself truly in God's sight, may understand rightly God's holiness and justice, and may learn to murmur, not against the Lord, but against its own sin and iniquity.

They who cry for a new religion never knew and understood God and His holy Law. This is evident from the fact that the new religion suggested by them is found, on analysis, to be substantially nothing else than the old pagan and pharisaic formula of self-salvation through the Law—man's own deeds. God is indeed love, but for that very reason the supreme, comprehensive, and all-pervading demand of God in His holy Law is nothing else or less than perfect love. The prerequisite of obedience to the Law of God is a pure heart. But how shall sinful man change his own moral nature? how lift himself out of spiritual corruption into spiritual purity, out of spiritual death into spiritual life?

And how, then, shall the Law of God or any religion of Law save any man, since no law effects in man any moral change, invests him with no spiritual power or life? Mark you, no law, the Law of God included, effects in man a moral resurrection or reformation. The Law, as St. Paul clearly states, has but one effect on sinful man: "It killeth," and this by bringing him to a knowledge of sin and his own inability to throw off the bondage of sin. Necessary as is the preaching of the Law for man's realization of his own miserable condition, yet can the Law save no man.

For this reason we, with all confidence, join St. Peter in declaring to-day, as he did nearly 1900 years ago: "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" than the name of Jesus. Man, who cannot save himself, surely cannot create for himself a Savior, or, what is saying the same thing, a saving

religion. If salvation is to come to man, it must come by the mercy of God, and hence by Him whom He has given to be the Mediator between God and man. Salvation can come only by one able to satisfy God's justice in our stead. More powerfully than anything else in our time the terrible World War has proclaimed to all the world God's inexorable righteousness and wrath. Let no man delude himself with the belief that there is any possibility of escaping the wrath of God, unless he be clothed with perfect righteousness. No sin, be it ever so small, can or will God condone or connive at. And who should secure for us renegade and impotent creatures perfect righteousness but He who, being the Lord of the Law, could for us place Himself under the Law? Who else but the Lord of life could of His own free will and power give His life a ransom for the redemption of our life forfeited through sin? Who else but the same Lord, the incarnate Son of God, could for us enter the lists with the powers of sin and hell, vanquish them, and thus secure for us deliverance from their power, and lift us from the death in sin to the life in and with God? Dead in sin by nature, how shall any religion save us, that is not a religion of power, a religion giving us to possess the righteousness and forgiveness which alone can deliver from the Law of God, the curse and guilt of sin, a religion resurrecting us from spiritual death and filling us with the life of God!

A religion that does no more than teach us a way of salvation will leave us in all the spiritual bondage, misery, and woe in which we are caught by nature. We cannot save ourselves. We must have a Savior who truly saves us. None other is there than Christ. But Him we know to be such a Savior. Him we know to have wrought full and free redemption for all the world. And Him we know to be lifted up above the heavens, ruling with eternal and infinite majesty over all the powers of earth, heaven, and hell, forever manifesting the power of His resurrection, the power of His saving and sanctifying grace, through His Gospel and His Sacraments.

This we know because with St. Paul we are able to say: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." And so we shall hold fast to the old Christ and the old Gospel of Christ. So with all boldness we declare that as before the war, so now, too, there is no other means whereby the Church can fulfil its glorious mission on earth than by the preaching of Christ and Him crucified.

Christianity has not failed; the war has not proved the Gospel of Christ a failure. But what the war should have brought home to

all men is the sorrowful fact that man possesses the woeful power to resist the Spirit of God operating through the Gospel of Christ, and thus to frustrate God's good and gracious will — his salvation.

To all the children of men we cry out: Beware of contempt of Christ and His saving Gospel! Beware of hardening your hearts against the power of God's grace! And to the children of God, the Church of Christ, we say: Be on your guard against all who would seduce you from Christ and His pure Gospel! Guard also against the neglect of your high mission! Conscious of possessing in the Gospel of Christ the one and only means of saving men from sin, death, and everlasting perdition, and of making men into genuine servants of justice and peace, purity and love, must not the experiences and observations made during these latter dismal days have aroused every disciple of Christ to a most profound realization of the great and grave responsibility resting upon us all to devote ourselves with all zeal and energy, with intrepid courage and never-wearying self-abnegation to the fulfilment of the Master's command, to the carrying of His Gospel into every home and every heart throughout the world? Oh, the joy of bringing to sinful men peace of conscience, solace of soul, the hope of eternal life, the power and freedom of loving God, and rejoicing in the doing of His holy will! Oh, the joy of knowing oneself redeemed through Christ, and then to be able to say with imperturbable confidence: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever"!

Oh, that the Lord in mercy would grant us all to behold and embrace in Christ our Savior, and thus to rest our souls on this glorious truth as on an impregnable rock: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." Amen.

## II.

*Rom. 14, 17—19:* "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men. Let us, therefore, follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."

IN CHRIST BELOVED: —

The cry for reconstruction of religion and of the Church which we noted yesterday as one of the results of the war, must compel the thoughtful and religious mind to make searching inquiry into the true purpose of religion and the true character of that Church which Christians proclaim founded, upheld, and fostered by God

Himself, and the only Church which before God has the right to exist, and which will surely continue until the end of time, against which, in the words of Jesus, the gates of hell shall not prevail.

That Church in Holy Writ is designated as the Kingdom of God, and it is to a study of

### *THE TRUE CHARACTER OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD*

we shall devote to-day's noon-hour.

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Note the contrast. Immediately you perceive that St. Paul declares the kingdom of God to be not what many in our day would make us believe it to be—an institution that deals only with earthly things, labors only for the betterment of the relations of men toward men and the conditions under which they must spend their earthly life, a kingdom of social and economic justice, as it has been termed by some. Very important it is that we should distinctly understand that this it is which the kingdom of God is not.

This, let me point out, does not mean that the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth does not inevitably result in a betterment of man's conduct toward his fellow-men and hence of all social conditions under which men live on this earth, so far as these are shaped by the action of man. But it does not mean that the kingdom of God has for its prime or exclusive purpose political or social, industrial or economic improvement. Socialism, also Christian Socialism, is not the embodiment or substance of Christianity.

Strange that men, despite the clear words of Holy Writ, do not see this. Stranger still that despite the lessons of the war men can blindly and boldly call for the kingdom of God, the Church, to be modeled after the war work done by the Y. M. C. A. and other, similar organizations, that is, limited in its endeavors and activities to the alleviation of physical suffering, supplying men's temporal wants, improving their temporal conditions, in short, to the exercise of brotherly love.

Have we not all come to see that the prime cause of the terrible World War were those inseparable Siamese twins of evil, rationalism and materialism? And what else but proud and heathenish rationalism is it that bids men cast aside all Christian dogma, mystery, and faith! What else but barbaric, dehumanizing materialism which commands us to ignore and deny the stupendous truth enunciated by Jesus in those well-known words, "What shall it profit a man, though he should gain the whole world, and yet lose his soul?"—

to ignore the paramount issue for man as a moral creature, how to get right with God and secure the salvation of his immortal soul! O yes, we know how powerful is the appeal for a kingdom of social and economic justice, and the promise of a paradise restored here on earth, to the carnal mind and the dupe of Satan. Corrupted and enslaved by sin, men love sin, and it is not that they desire to get rid of. That they love with all their heart and cling to it with desperate passion. Their sole desire is to escape the dire effects of sin. Hence they want heaven on earth, a carnal heaven at that, and not a religion which calls for repentance of sin, for humility and self-abnegation, for patient endurance of sufferings, and the carrying of the cross after Jesus. Have we not the most powerful proof for this in the crowds of Jews and Gentiles flocking to Christian Science, which denies all sin, declares man a part of God, and promises to all men relief from all physical suffering through the riddance of what by an incomprehensible contradiction is called error of mind?

Again, my friends, note that the definition of the kingdom of God given by St. Paul in our text takes no cognizance of any visible and external organization, such as Romanists, Greek Catholics, Episcopalians, and others would have us believe it to be. The kingdom of God may and does result in, and work through, an organization such as is known to us and called by us the Church; yet in its essence the kingdom of God is nothing but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

The kingdom of God, note well, is not the product of any man or human agency, but of the Holy Ghost. Of necessity, therefore, it is a spiritual body. It concerns itself not with any merely external thing. It deals solely with the soul of man, with man's relation to his God. Its object is to bring to men righteousness, peace, and joy, and only as men come to possess these by the Holy Ghost are they incorporated in the kingdom of God. They only, then, are the kingdom of God who by the Holy Ghost possess righteousness, peace, and joy.

And now, what is that righteousness, peace, and joy which, imparted to man by the Holy Ghost, make him a member of the kingdom of God? The Church of Rome would have us understand the righteousness presented here and elsewhere as the gift of the Holy Ghost to be nothing more than power for righteousness, and hence, in the end, the righteousness which is the result of the fulfilment of God's Law by man himself through the power of the Holy Ghost. But who that has read St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans knows not that St. Paul most distinctly and emphatically

declares it not in the power of even him who has been regenerated and renewed by the Holy Ghost to fulfil God's Law, and thus secure for himself that righteousness which alone can satisfy God's justice and effect reconciliation of man with God. Does he not confess concerning himself: "The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do," and then cry out: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Yet does he immediately after this bitter lamentation declare: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Why? Because "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth"; because, "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." For this reason he declares that "to him that worketh not, but believeth that God justifieth the ungodly, to him faith is counted for righteousness." None but perfect righteousness can satisfy the God of perfect righteousness. That righteousness no man can attain by efforts of his own. That righteousness, however, Christ has wrought for us by His voluntary, vicarious obedience and suffering. That righteousness is offered to all mankind as a free gift in Christ and by His Gospel. And it is that righteousness we come to possess through the faith in Christ engendered in us by the Holy Ghost. With that righteousness is given us peace with God and therefore, too, joy in the Lord. Thus are we made members of the kingdom of heaven, justified, reconciled, free and happy children of God.

The kingdom of God is then surely God's creation, the product of the Holy Ghost, not of man, neither wholly nor in any measure whatsoever.

They who by the Holy Ghost have been made members of God's kingdom are indeed commissioned by the Lord to provide for the external ministration of the means by which the Holy Ghost does His glorious and gracious work; yet is it the Holy Ghost only who performs the marvelous and miraculous work of leading men to faith in Christ, implanting them in Christ.

But some one might say: Until now you have entirely ignored the words of St. Paul in which he declares him acceptable unto God and approved of men who in these things serves Christ, and his exhortation: "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." Does not St. Paul, after all, by these words declare the essential thing in God's kingdom to be service rendered unto Christ and our brethren? Nay, he does not. But he does declare such service inseparable from righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Mark you, none



but the recipients of the Holy Ghost and His gifts of righteousness, peace, and joy can render acceptable service unto God or Christ. For how could any service be acceptable to God that does not proceed from true love and fear and trust in Him? But how is it possible for men to truly love, fear, and trust in God who have not come to know and acknowledge, honor and worship Him according to His true being, His holiness and righteousness, His grace and mercy; who still, being unreconciled to Him in their hearts, are animated by nothing but enmity against Him; who still are under His curse and wrath?

But inseparable is true service of Christ and fellow-man from the faith in Christ, whereby the Holy Ghost makes us possessors of righteousness, peace, and joy, because the redemption wrought for us by Christ includes also the redemption from the love and bondage of sin. Converted to faith in Christ, we are truly redeemed unto God and restored to the true love of God. Converting us unto Christ, the Holy Ghost takes possession of our soul, becomes its master. We therefore, cannot but follow in the footsteps of our Lord and Savior. Our desires now are all Godward. And loving God, we cannot but love our fellow-men, since this is the will of the Lord revealed unto us. Thus does righteousness of life always and inevitably follow the righteousness of faith. Believers in Christ, we are constrained to make evident in all our life the righteousness, peace, and joy which are ours through the Holy Ghost, constrained to manifest in all our life our new mind, the Christ-mind, and so constrained to follow after the things which make for peace and for the edification of our brethren. Hence can we not but be benefactors of mankind, the enemies of all that is evil and hurtful, the promoters and fosterers of all that makes for the glory of the Savior and the temporal and eternal good of mankind.

Behold, then, the ineffable glory of the kingdom of God, its true character, mission, and purpose! Learn to distinguish well between its real essence and the mere outward form of its appearance, between the kernel and the shell in which it is embodied. Permit not your mind and heart to be diverted from that which is for you of paramount importance. Seek first and above all your soul's salvation, righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Then will your life surely prove itself acceptable unto God and approved of men, for then, impelled by the Holy Ghost and your new spiritual nature, you will inevitably and resolutely give heed to the apostle's admonition, and follow after those things which make for peace and the upbuilding and betterment of your fellow-men. The hope of the

world is the kingdom of God and its expansion. No other force there is that can purge mankind of the leaven of selfishness, malice, and wickedness, and sweeten it with the leaven of true piety, brotherly love, sincerity, and truth.

O Lord, in mercy make and keep us all members of Thy Kingdom of Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost! Amen.

### III.

*Gal. 6, 6. 7:* "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

IN CHRIST BELOVED:—

What is there in a name? Ofttimes very much. Have you ever examined the names of the various denominations? If so, then you have discovered that not a few refer to the peculiar polity of the respective Churches. Significant, by comparison, is the fact that the Church of the Reformation called itself the Evangelical or Gospel Church. Thereby the Lutherans, as they were called by the Romanists, proclaimed to the world that the paramount issue for them, and between them and Rome, was not any question of church-government, but the true content of Christ's Gospel. More specifically stated, the question was as to Christ's answer to that prime question in all religion: How does sinful man get right with his God? or, to use the term employed by St. Paul, How is the sinner justified before God? The answer given by St. Paul in Rom. 3 we all know: "There is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. . . . Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the Law." Ever since its birth the Lutheran Church has clung to the name Evangelical, that the world might know that the prime issue for which it stands is still the pure Gospel of Christ and the cardinal Gospel-truth that we are restored to divine kinship and the heritage of eternal life by the grace of God alone, by faith in Christ alone.

In opposition to this doctrine the Roman Catholic Church has ever maintained that man is justified and saved, not by God's grace alone, and hence not by faith in Christ alone, but by faith *and* man's own deeds, done through the power given him by faith in Christ.

Moreover, the Romanists have ever charged the Gospel-teachings

as maintained by the Lutheran Church to be equivalent to the preaching of license, freedom to sin; the absence of all necessity for good works on the part of the believers, must lead to loose and vicious living, thus making a mockery of the Law of God.

But just as little as liberty otherwise means license and anarchy, so little does the perfect spiritual liberty, given us by faith in Christ, spell, or lead to, moral license and spiritual anarchy.

There is a necessity for all Christians, not despite, but because freemen of God they are through faith in Christ, to be intent on doing God's will, sowing not unto the flesh, but unto the Spirit.

It is this St. Paul presents to us in our text, and it is this we mean to study to-day. Our theme reads:

*THE NECESSITY OF A CHRISTIAN'S BEING EVER INTENT  
ON SOWING NOT TO THE FLESH, BUT TO THE SPIRIT.*

Stern words are these St. Paul addresses to the Christians of Galatia: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Startling and strangely contradictory these words might appear to him who had, in the preceding chapter, read these words by the same apostle to the self-same Galatians: "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. . . . Christ is become of no effect to you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace," unless he had also carefully noted the subsequent declaration of St. Paul: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything, but faith which worketh by love." Does the apostle by these last words revoke what he had said before, and thus deny salvation to be by faith alone? Nay; but he does bring out this fact that there is no such thing as a living faith in Christ which is not active by love.

St. Paul had good and valid reason for warning the Galatians against their allowing themselves to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage through the false belief that, after all, one must be justified by the Law, by one's own obedience to the Law. And he had equally good and valid reason for addressing to them the stern admonition contained in our text. History has furnished abundant proof how hard it is for men to grasp and hold fast the fundamental truth that Christ has wrought for us a perfect liberty from all the Law of God and all the curse and penalty of sin, and that this liberty is ours, a free gift of God, if we but by faith accept Christ as our Mediator and Savior. Likewise, experience shows that there

is a positive and constant danger of Christians' being seduced into a misinterpretation of the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, thereby making it a cloak of license, a cover and excuse for indifference to a godly life. Whether or no the Galatians had succumbed to such temptation, the apostle, like a good soul-shepherd, sets before them the whole truth in Christ, and warns them against all pitfalls and self-deception.

Saved by grace, and grace alone, it yet remains true that whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Whatsoever a man soweth he soweth either to the flesh or to the Spirit. And he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, while he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. These are the facts and this the immutable law of God.

But here arises the question: Can any one who is still an unregenerate child of the flesh sow otherwise than to the flesh? Certainly not. That is why we read in the Scriptures that whatsoever cometh not of faith is sin. It is only the living faith in Christ, engendered in man by the Holy Ghost, which enables him to be active in love and sow unto the Spirit; and love only is acceptable service to God, the fulfilment of His Law. He that hath not the Spirit of Christ, declares St. Paul, is none of His.

But what about him who, regenerated by the Holy Ghost, has entered into the liberty of Christ? He is, indeed, free from all the Law and every blot of sin in God's own sight, restored to all the rights of kinship and to eternal life. He has salvation as a free gift, and can in no wise earn it by deeds or sacrifices of his own. But such a one is also freed from the love and dominion of sin. He is, as St. Paul says, a new creature in Christ. He has a new mind, the true child-mind, love for God. Such a one is filled and governed by the Spirit of Christ. True to his new nature and mindful of his relation to God, he cannot do otherwise than sow to the Spirit and be intent on doing so. Were he to do otherwise, he would commit the very sin of Adam and Eve, wilfully cast away the liberty given him through Christ, wilfully return, as to the service of Satan, so also under the bondage of Satan. For whom a man wilfully serves, his slave he makes himself.

But why, then, this very earnest and impressive admonition addressed to Christians? The answer was given by St. Paul to the Galatians in these words: "For this I say, then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye do not the things that ye

would." While the unconverted man is all flesh, the Christian is not all Spirit. The flesh still clings to him and forever wars against the Spirit. Hence is the Christian constantly beset by the danger of being overpowered by the flesh and led into doing that which as a redeemed and sanctified child of God he would not. Hence the Christian life is and must be an unremitting struggle against the flesh. And because there is a possibility and danger of the Christian's tiring of this struggle, growing weak and giving up the fight against the flesh, he needs, as constant spiritual refreshing and strengthening, so, too, continual admonition and warning.

Redeemed unto God and led by the Spirit, we can and must fight against the flesh, all temptation and all sin, and can and must sow unto the Spirit. We can and must live unto God. We can and must serve the Lord in holiness and righteousness. We can and must be diligent in good works and eager to grow richer and stronger in every Christian virtue. True children of God, we can perform our child-duty, and must find therein our joy. And since the Law of God reveals unto us the will and pleasure of our heavenly Father, we, though no longer under the Law, cannot but follow it as our divinely given guide, the revelation of our Father's holy will. Life for us is seedtime. Like unto the Master, life for us can only mean service and sacrifice. Our one aim in life must be to glorify our God and Savior, to manifest the power of His redeeming and sanctifying grace in all our character and conduct, and to win for Him ever more souls who with us shall praise Him for His righteousness and His mercy, worship and honor Him as the one Lord over all. Loving God, we must also love our neighbor, seek to have God's will done in him, by his conversion unto Christ, and through him, by the sanctification of his soul. We must walk in the footsteps of Him whom we extol as our Redeemer and our Lord. We must endeavor to have His life, love, and power reflected in our own.

Therefore, sowing unto the Spirit means vastly more than mere decency in conduct and making charitable donations. It means the consecration of one's whole life to Him who, as St. Paul says, died for us that we who live should not live unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again.

You are not saved by your deeds, your character, conduct, and life, but only by faith in Christ. He that hath not this faith can sow only unto the flesh, and of the flesh will he reap corruption, which means temporal and eternal ruin and woe. Of such Christ says that they will be cast into the outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And the more selfish, carnal, and vicious

the life the slaves of the flesh have led, the greater will be their punishment in eternity.

By the Law will all men be judged. For this very reason only the believers in Christ will enter into eternal life, since no perfect righteousness is attainable to man except that wrought for all the world by His vicarious obedience and suffering. Yet, as the servants of the flesh will be punished in the measure of their malefactions, so will the servants of the Spirit be rewarded in the measure of the seed sown by them to the Spirit.

Let no one, therefore, delude himself with the thought that he is or can be a child of God and enter life everlasting if he have not a faith active in love, if he be not intent always on sowing to the Spirit!

And now, my friends, let me ask, How has it been with you? Have you by the grace of God accepted Christ in true faith as your Savior and Lord, become a new creature, led by the Spirit? And have you always, by the power given you through the Spirit, fought determinedly and persistently the flesh and its lusts, and always been intent on sowing to the Spirit? Have you always sought to glorify God in all your life, to reproduce in all your life the life of the Savior? Has life here below been for you a seedtime for eternity, and can you confidently look forward to a rich reaping in heaven?

O the glory and joy of a life truly spent as a seedtime for eternity! God give us a living faith in Christ, and grant that we be ever eager to prove our faith by a life of loving service and self-denying sacrifice for God and all our fellow-men! Amen.

#### IV.

*Matt. 22, 29:* "Jesus answered, and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God."

IN CHRIST BELOVED:—

The world has been "marred, muddled, and lacerated" not by the war alone. The war, in fact, was itself only an effect, not a cause. Back of the war, as its true cause, lies that destruction of all genuine religion, faith, and morality wrought by the two evil forces which dominated the pre-war age—materialistic science and rationalistic philosophy. You know what havoc they had wrought even within many Christian Churches, how they had undermined all faith in the Bible and all divine authority, and caused men, like Pontius Pilate of old, to ask with a sneer, "What is truth?" You now behold what wreck and ruin they have wrought in the world politically, industrially, economically, and socially.

Such is the destructive force of error; and rationalism is error. Very pertinent, therefore, to these days is the study to which Jesus invites us by the words of our text, addressed, as they were, to the rationalists of His day. It is

*THE STUDY OF THE POISON OF ERROR; ITS CAUSE AND ITS CURE.*

The words of Jesus are a crushing charge, a damning denunciation. They were hurled into the teeth of certain of the Sadducees. Indignantly would these men have resented any insinuation that they were not honest seekers after truth. Yet were they rationalists, who refused to accept any teaching upon authority not comprehensible to their reason. Thus they denied the resurrection of the dead. On this occasion they had come to Jesus to demonstrate the untenability of such a teaching and belief. They told Him of a woman who had been married to seven brothers in succession, and then asked Him: "In the resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven?" Jesus' answer was given in the words of our text. Very bright and logical they thought themselves to be, but Jesus convicts them of ignorance, of stupid and rebellious pride. His charge Jesus presses home with these words: "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying: I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." What, then, did Christ declare to be the cause of error in the Sadducees? Presumptuous pride, manifesting itself in the neglect of a careful study of the Scriptures and humble acceptance of its plain teachings, and in the limiting of God's power to the measure of their own little minds. And that is the cause of all error in religion.

However true it may be that men hunger to know the truth in all things, it is equally true that the carnal mind is enmity against God, proud in its own conceit, and unwilling to submit even to the authority of God. Of Adam and Eve, the first errorists, we are told that they, too, had the desire of knowledge. Yet was it none the less a rebellious desire, in that they wanted to know what they believed God to have hidden from them. And with that desire, we are told, went the desire to be like unto God. This is the common trait of all men, born flesh of the flesh, of all errorists. They refuse to humble themselves under God, to be satisfied with His mere Word, and to take their reason captive under that Word. Your ration-

alistic, infidel scientist, even though he call himself a theologian, frankly admits this. Very blandly he tells you that he will accept nothing on authority, that for him nothing can be truth unless established and verified to the satisfaction of his own reason. He will not even allow that God is able to perform any miracles, because, if he were to do this, he would find himself compelled to admit that God is beyond the reach of his reason in that He can do things outside of the laws of nature established by Himself. Is it not the same conceit and self-deification we find in the Pope, who arrogates to himself the exclusive right of interpreting the Word of God, and hence defining all divine truth, thus, in effect, usurping the authority of God within the hearts of his followers, and making them all his servile slaves? Is it not the same pride, which has caused the many deplorable divisions in the Evangelical and Protestant Church, since nothing else is the cause of these many divisions but the refusal to accept the plain words of the Scriptures in their natural, literal sense, and the insistence that, since God had given us reason as well as the Scriptures, it is right so to interpret, or rather, as St. Peter puts it, to wrest the Scriptures as to make their teachings conformable and palatable to reason? Examine whatever division in the Church of Christ you will, always you will find the cause to be the pride of carnal reason, which, with respect to the Bible as a whole or some teaching of the Bible, refuses to humble itself under God, and, in the words of St. Paul, balks at taking reason captive under the obedience of Christ.

Nor need I refer you to others. Examine yourself, and always you will find your reason rising in rebellion against the authority of God, against accepting of His Word that which your reason cannot rhyme or fathom. All divine revelation, every article of our Christian faith is a mystery, incomprehensible to human reason. Hence may it not surprise us to see every article of our Christian faith assailed in turn and rejected by those who lift their own reason above God.

Yet, what greater folly is there than the pride of human reason setting itself up against God and His Word as the judge of what is true and can be, and what not! Was it not this which Jesus impressed on the Sadducees when He said to them: "Ye know not the power of God"? Must not sane reason itself perceive how inane is the attempt of man to explore the mind of God, the deep things of the Spirit of God, as Paul calls them, to explore heaven and earth, and through his own reason divine the way of salvation decreed by God in the hidden chambers of His heart, or to measure the infinite power of God, and hence determine with the little plummet of his



own created mind what God may do or not do! Presumptuous pride, blind enmity of the carnal mind is the cause of all error in religion and of all division in Christ's Church. Unless you clearly perceive this fact, there is no hope for you to escape from error, and to become a helper in the removal of error. No cure can be effected unless the malady be first rightly diagnosed and understood. But having diagnosed the disease, what is the cure?

Jesus' answer is given in the words of our text: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." No one will question that these words of Jesus are applicable to all who have been caught in error. What is the cure prescribed here by the great Teacher of Truth? First of all, that we ponder well and learn to acknowledge humbly and unqualifiedly the infinite power of God, great beyond all the power of human comprehension. Secondly, that we then learn to bow our proud minds in humble submission under the self-revelation of God, His holy Word, study it diligently and carefully, and accept with implicit faith what therein we found taught, and as therein taught.

It should not seem a hard thing for any one to overcome the pride of reason. What mysteries are there not within the world within which we move, which, despite all study and research, no human mind has ever been able to explain! What mysteries are there not within ourselves, which make a mockery of all the pretense of human learning and wisdom! Again, who that has carefully studied history has not only come to see that a higher power than that of man shapes the destinies of men and of nations, but also found himself compelled to exclaim with St. Paul: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Yet it is not in the power of man to throw off and successfully to resist the pride of reason, as little as man can rid himself of original sin or the enmity against God which exists in every mind of man born flesh of flesh. How, then, shall that pride be overcome and be kept in captivity?

You may have noticed that in dissecting Christ's answer to the Sadducees, I reversed the order followed by Christ. This was done merely for a clear setting forth of the two parts of the answer. Significant it is that Christ first charged the Sadducees with not knowing the Scriptures. Therein is taught us a most valuable and necessary truth. God only can wean us from the pride of reason. God only can give us that humility which truly acknowledges, adores, and worships His infinite power, and hence bows itself under His

authority and Word. And this God does only by His Word, the Scriptures. By no other means has He promised us His grace; by no other means has He promised us the gift of His Holy Spirit, who alone can effect in us the mighty spiritual change from carnal pride and rebellion to godly humility, to cheerfully submissive faith.

Therefore, would you escape error, and remain free from error, free from all carnal and presumptuous pride, then put yourself under the influence of the Spirit, and bury your soul in the Holy Scriptures. There is no other way, even as Jesus declared that there is no other way to come to the Father except by Him, and again: "The words that I speak, they are spirit and life."

By the words of our text Christ binds us to the Scriptures, if we would know the truth and escape error, and binds us to acknowledge and accept no revelation or authority in religious or spiritual matters outside of the Scriptures. To the Sadducees Jesus did not say: "You have failed to consult the high priest, the Sanhedrin, or some other human authoritative interpreter of the Scriptures." Nor did He bid them wait for some Mrs. Eddy with her "Key to the Scriptures"; neither did He bid them place themselves *en rapport* with departed spirits through some spiritist medium. Nay, He upbraided them simply for not knowing the Scriptures, because they had not sat down to a reverent, diligent, and careful study of the Scriptures.

No guide, no interpreter, is needed for the Scripture. Its words are plain, simple, direct. Study its clear passages, and in the light of these you will soon come to a sure understanding of those more difficult. All essential truths are presented in the Bible in language simple enough for any ordinary mind to understand with certainty. What is needed is that we study the Bible, study it with diligence and care, and with all humility, always keeping before our mind the infinite power and wisdom of God, and hence not permitting reason either to lift itself up above the Word of the Lord or in any way to wrest it.

This is the way to escape from, and keep clear of, error, to come to the knowledge of the heavenly truth, which alone saves and sanctifies sinful man. And this is the only way in which a truly God-pleasing and blessed union within the Church of Christ can be brought about. Christ corroborates this in those words known to you all: "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

If sincere in your desire for your soul's freedom and salvation,

and sincerely desirous for the greatest blessing to come upon all your fellow-men, then flee error by adhering in humility and fidelity to the Scriptures, and then seek to persuade all men to join you in humble and sincere submission to the inerrant and infallible Word of God. O Lord, enlighten us with the light of Thy grace, and fill us with the power of Thy Holy Spirit that from all error we may remain free, and persevere in the way of truth unto the end. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## V.

*John 18, 36. 37:* "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then would My disciples fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is My kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art Thou a king, then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that, I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice."

IN CHRIST BELOVED:—

Who that has ever seen the famous painting by Munkacsy of the scene recorded in our text can forget it! What a dramatic scene it is! Face to face we see the representative of the mighty Roman Empire, embracing the whole then known world, and Him who the night before had brought down on His head the sentence of death by the highest court of the Jews, the Sanhedrin, because under oath He had declared Himself the Son of the living God. What a humiliation for Him who is the Lord over all, "the Lord, our Righteousness," as Jeremiah called Him, to be haled before the tribunal of a mere creature, and a pagan infidel at that, upon the charge of conspiracy and rebellion against the established civil powers! Lowly and meek is Jesus in His outward appearance, proud and grim Pontius Pilate. Yet is there that in Jesus which impressed even His stern pagan judge with the fact of His being a truly mysterious and a truly majestic personage. Oh, if Pontius Pilate had only known who it was that stood before him, how quickly he must have abandoned the rôle of the judge!

It was a serious charge the Jews preferred against Jesus. It was a mightier issue Jesus brought to the fore when to Pontius Pilate He said: "My kingdom is not of this world." Pontius Pilate did not grasp the import of Jesus' answer, as is evident from his sneering reply, "What is truth?" And how different the history of these past nineteen hundred years would have been if the nations, rulers, and statesmen of this world, and proud and ambitious ecclesiastics had either not failed to grasp the true import of these words of Jesus or

not wilfully and maliciously bid defiance to the injunction made by them.

And still these words are of momentous significance for mankind. Still the history of the world will be shaped and the fate of nations and individuals determined for better or for worse, as statesmen and churchmen either abide by, or violate, the truth and principle enunciated by Jesus in these words.

Worthy of the most profound contemplation are these words of Jesus by all men, in all places, and in all ages. Let us now consider them under the heading:

#### *THE FACT AND ITS PRACTICAL APPLICATION.*

Most distinctly Jesus in His answer to Pontius Pilate declares Himself a king with a kingdom here on earth. Yet does He with strong emphasis declare His kingdom not of this world. Therein lies His refutation of the charge brought against Him by the Jews and the protestation that the kingdoms of the world need not fear Him and His kingdom, because of its fundamentally different character. No interference is there by His kingdom with the kingdoms of this world in their legitimate sphere, even though they exist within the same territory and number among their subjects the same individuals. Pontius Pilate was merely mystified by the declaration of Jesus. St. Paul tells us the reason why, when he says that spiritual things must be spiritually discerned.

You are conversant with the kingdoms of this world or, as we should say, civil governments. You know their origin, their purpose, the means properly employed by them, and the results they achieve. Do you, from the words of Jesus spoken to Pontius Pilate, perceive how essentially different in all these things is the kingdom of Christ from the kingdoms of this world?

The kingdoms of this world are the creations of men. Of His kingdom Jesus declares Himself the sole Creator. The purpose of the kingdoms of this world is limited to the things of this world, to the outward conduct of men toward men, the temporal welfare of all, as determined by the enjoyment of equal justice, equal rights, and equal opportunities. The purpose of Christ's kingdom is embodied in Himself and His message of truth. It is to bring men back to their heavenly Father and all the happiness, freedom, and holiness contingent on, and secured by, a right relation of man to His Maker. Clearly does this appear when alongside of Christ's words in our text you place that other declaration of His: "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." The kingdoms of this world are reared by, and

rest on, physical force. His kingdom Christ declares to be the product of His witness, the truth taught by Him, His Word. "Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice." Elsewhere He said: "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." Behold, then, the wonderful power exercised by Him through His Word and the wonderful change effected thereby in sinful man. By nothing but His Word, the truth, does He rule, sustain, expand His kingdom. His subjects hear His voice, render Him willing, joyous obedience in all things. He that hath not the Spirit of Christ, says St. Paul, is none of His. They that are His are ruled by His Spirit, are of one spirit, one mind. Therefore they rejoice in doing His will; therefore is the life of Christ reproduced in them; therefore, in the words of St. John, they one and all are priests and kings in God's sight. Powerfully does Jesus stress the fact that all employment of physical force and every appeal to it is excluded from His kingdom. "If My kingdom were of this world, My disciples should fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from hence." Not of this world is His kingdom; it is not only distinct and separate from all civil governments, it is essentially different in origin, character, purpose, the power by which it is ruled, and the means by which it gains its ends. It is a spiritual kingdom, and hence in no way interferes with the kingdoms of this world, in no way trespasses upon their sphere, is in no sense a rival of them or in opposition to them. And operating in an entirely different sphere, it does not come under the jurisdiction of civil government.

This is the momentous fact set forth by Jesus in His answer to Pontius Pilate.

Now for the practical application of this momentous truth. Keeping in mind the circumstances under which Jesus addressed these words to the pagan Pilate, what a powerful appeal we perceive them to be for the winning of his soul! "I am the King and the Prophet of Truth, Pontius Pilate. He that is of the truth heareth My voice. Only they enter the kingdom that is not of this world, and hence are saved from this world, saved unto the glory and freedom of kinship with God, unto eternal life, who bow their souls under the scepter of My Word. Pontius Pilate, will not you accept the truth, submit to the power of the truth witnessed by Me?" That was the appeal Jesus made to Pontius Pilate. That same appeal He now makes to you.

Again, considering the circumstances under which Jesus spoke these words, does He not command Pilate to keep his hands off the King and the kingdom not of this world, to beware of trespassing on

a sphere outside of his legitimate jurisdiction, and thus becoming guilty of an abuse of his power and gross sacrilege?

And does He not by these same words cry out to all the civil powers of the earth: Beware of confounding and commingling State and Church!? What God hath ordained to be kept asunder do not you attempt to bind together. Let neither institution claim or exercise authority over the other, neither interfere with the other, neither be used against the other.

The student of history knows how little heed civil powers have given to this exhortation of Jesus. Pontius Pilate did not permit himself to be deterred from dipping his unholy hands into the blood of Jesus. His innocence he confessed and hypocritically washed his hands of the murder of Jesus; yet for policy's sake he decreed His crucifixion. Rather a mockery of all justice and the murder of an innocent man than that he should incur the enmity of the populace, have his own crimes shown up, and his position jeopardized. And how many the disciples of Jesus that have been cruelly persecuted and brutally done to death on the charge that their faith, despite their acknowledged pure and innocent lives, made them enemies of the human race, a menace to society and to the existing government! And have not civil governments down to the present day, even in so-called democracies, either sought to dominate the Church and make it subservient to its purposes,—think of all the state-churches still in existence,—or else to persecute and crush the Church of Christ, especially when the Church has refused to turn traitor to its King and His Word of Truth, to prostitute its organizations, influence, and means to unholy ends, and to permit the State to meddle with what lies wholly outside of its legitimate sphere and solely within the peculiar sphere of the Church, within the sphere of man's relation to his God?

Nor have there been wanting enemies of Christ, proud and ambitious ecclesiastics, who, having managed, by the perversion of Christ's Gospel, to make themselves autocratic lords over Christ's Church, turned the Church into a veritable kingdom of this world, arrogated to themselves the sovereignty and power of civil government, compelled the civil rulers to become their servants and slaves, to furnish the means for the external needs of the Church, and to wield the sword against all whom they had pronounced heretics and, as such, a menace to society. They, too, made a mockery of the words of Christ: "My kingdom is not of this world." Indeed, the history of the world runs red with the blood shed by statesmen and churchmen through the violation of these words of our Lord.

We Americans glory in our Federal Constitution and particularly over the embodiment, in the First Amendment, as a fundamental law of our land, the complete separation of State and Church. And nothing there is in our Constitution we should prize more highly, nothing which should evoke within us a greater love for, and a deeper loyalty to, our country.

But, my friends, you are certainly cognizant of the fact that there are hosts of men and powerful organizations in our country that stand committed to principles and endeavors in direct conflict with Christ's declaration: "My kingdom is not of this world." Men and organizations there are that openly advocate union of State and Church, demand for their own Church the support of the State and the suppression by the State of those who hold not what they define to be the truth in Christ.

And other men and organizations there are that demand that the confession of Christ as the Lord of our nation be written into the Preamble of our Federal Constitution, and that the law of Christ be proclaimed as the supreme rule of our country. Every day we hear anew of their desperate efforts to have their own religious convictions forced upon all the people by civil enactments. And men and organizations there are that would force purely religious organizations into the performance of work entirely within the province of the State, or would have them deprived of all constitutionally guaranteed liberty because of their refusal to fall in line with those who are intent on yoking together State and Church, or making the kingdom of Christ a kingdom of this world, either through a false subserviency of the Church to the State or the usurpation of the power of the State in the interest of the Church.

Therefore I say unto you: Heed well the words of Jesus: "My kingdom is not of this world," and heeding it, use all your power and influence against every effort made to confound and commingle the kingdom of Christ and the kingdoms of this world.

Ignore not the personal appeal Christ, by the words of our text, makes to you as He made it to Pontius Pilate. Seek first the kingdom of God, knowing that thus only shall you become freemen of God, citizens of the one commonwealth that passeth not away. Be loyal to the King of Truth, to His kingdom, and to the truth He has given you in His Word. Loyal to Him, you cannot but be loyal to our great and beloved America, to its democracy and its liberties, and, above all, to the basic principle of a complete separation of State and Church.

God bless our country, all its people, and all entrusted with the

high responsibility of administering its laws and employing its great powers for all that makes for equal justice to all and the temporal happiness of all. God prosper His kingdom of truth in our country and in every nation of the earth! God give us all to lay hold on and retain the freedom wherewith Christ has made us sinners free, and ever to enjoy unabridged the glorious liberties founded upon the complete separation of State and Church! God grant that one and all we may on the last day be found members of the kingdom which is not of this world, and hence shall also not pass away with this world, but shall endure through all eternity, the kingdom of perfect bliss and ineffable glory, the kingdom whose impregnable foundation is the blood of the Son of God shed for the redemption of all mankind on Calvary! Amen.

New York, N. Y.

REV. WM. SCHOENFELD.

---