

An Urgent Call to Earnest Prayer

The following appeal was issued from Washington by Bishop Earl Cranston, in behalf of the Board of bishops of the Methodist Episcopal church:

"To the Ministers and People of the Methodist Episcopal Church:— In the Divine ordering of events it has been given to American Methodism to develop and occupy the world parish claimed by the daring faith of John Wesley when Methodists were a despised people. The Methodist Episcopal church, now firmly planted on every continent of the globe, must therefore recognize at this crucial period in human affairs her honorable and responsible relations to all races and conditions of mankind. The tenure of her own spiritual life and leadership is at stake in her attitude toward this sacred obligation. From the beginning Methodism has conceived of the kingdom of God as a universal brotherhood founded in the spirit and teaching of Jesus Christ, with God as the One Father, love as the supreme law, and all people and peoples eligible on equal terms to all its benefits for time and eternity. Whatever obscures this vision of the kingdom of God bars the way to its glorious realization. The prayer, "Thy kingdom come," has therefore ever been the first petition on all human tongues consecrated by the hallowing of the Father's name. But now, to the horror of angels and of men, the vision is for the time lost by the one continent that has been beyond all others sanctified by the blood of Christian martyrs, and the voice of God silenced in the councils of its embittered nations. Europe is engulfed in unutterable woe, and the world is filled with an agony of dread. Christian soldiers are daily passing in multitudes to judgment with the blood of fellow Christians on their hands. On every wind the wails of widowed mothers and orphaned children are mingled with the groans of mangled and dying men.

"Under such conditions your chief pastors can be no longer silent, nor can they meet their duty by a perfunctory exhortation to formal prayers for Divine interposition. Not until we realize that, beneath all that appears, this war, with its awful carnage, is but a struggle for commercial supremacy, can we understand how alien to hereditary dynasties is the thought of the universal brotherhood of man. Every tradition and every instinct of imperial sin is in constant friction with the rule of Christ. The jealousies and hatreds of kings and peoples are not born in heaven. Let victory rest where it may after millions of brave hearts have ceased to beat, the vassalage of human souls to material wealth and power will remain the sure harbinger of other wars, of increasing deadliness as suborned science adds to the machinery of destruction, unless God shall mightily intervene by unseen forces, whose strategies we may not discern, but whose existence and efficiency we dare not doubt. What we do know is that willing, loving, obedient hearts are the conductors of these divine forces in human affairs. There are enough praying souls in America to call down a truce on every battle front if once they felt the agony of Christ-like intercession. That our country is as yet free from the madness of the strife, should the more move us to importunate and unceasing petition that God will make His voice to be everywhere heard again on land and sea. Only thus, at such a time, can we witness our faith in God and our love for men. Only

thus can we restrain among our own people the latent spirit of war that is already conjuring every untoward incident abroad into an intended insult at our flag. Only thus can we subdue the rising resentment of our own hearts against unjust foreign criticism of our nation at this crisis in its history. So the Spirit of our Lord pleads with us by every consideration of peace at home, as well as of humanity the world over, to follow Him into the Gethsemane of prevailing prayer. Somewhere the song of the angelic host must still be heard. Somewhere the sun of peace must continue to shine, while Europe is in eclipse. From somewhere must blow the kindly currents that shall cool the fever of hate and revenge that is consuming our brothers beyond the sea.

"Therefore, your chief pastors have commissioned me, as their voice to the Church, to call every member of our communion to sympathetic fellowship with the Savior of men in His unceasing intercessions with the Father in behalf of His erring children, and in the soothing of the angered hearts of men unto patience and compassion toward all their neighbors, to the end that the rulers and peoples now at war may cease to kill, and learn to love as children of the One Father in heaven.

"Not once a day only, nor merely when convenient, but in our every thought of God, in every pang that comes with tidings of fresh horrors, in every secret prayer for self and home and country, as well as in every public service, every session of Sunday school and Epworth League, alone or in companies, let the cry of our hearts incessantly ascend for the peace of Europe and the world. Let prayer be added to prayer and petitions be multiplied, until their volume of faith and fervor, mingling with like incense rising from the altars of all the church, shall fill the sky, and charge all the overhanging atmosphere with love and peace and good will, to be wafted, by the compassionate currents that flow ever from God's loving heart, to the healing of the deadly hurts of His people. Let us teach the little children to pray for God's other little ones left fatherless, and many of them homeless. Surely there are woes enough to draw hot tears from every eye and outbreathing prayer from the dumbest soul.

"Yes, yes, overlay the land with the blessed calm that prayer alone can bring. We want not preparedness for war, but preparedness for God, and His peace, for the sheltering of our nation. We have a Christian president, and about him in council are men who pray. Let our united faith also support their constant appeal to God for patience and poise and wisdom amid the storm of conflicting advices by which they are beset. Their only refuge, our only refuge, Europe's only hope, and humanity's only hope, is in God. Therefore, pray, pray, pray without ceasing!

"From the answering heavens already comes the Voice: God will walk in glory upon the fields plowed by the shells of battle, sown with the bodies of the dead, and watered by the blood of those gone forth. And the harvest will be God established in the hearts of living men. Not since the time of the martyrs has there been such faith as will be. Amen!"

THAT FURNITURE

For twenty years the metropolitan press has never let the slightest opportunity go by to take a hard jolt at Mr. Bryan whenever they could devise means to do so. His motives have always been impugned and this policy it seems will last as long as



TWO HARVESTS

—De Mar in Philadelphia Record.

the former secretary remains in politics. The smallest pretext has given rise to the derogatory stories, many of which have tended to place doubt in the minds of faint-hearted supporters. The best answer which could be given as to the success of the defamers, is the wonderful personal popularity of the Commoner which has grown with the years. The latest attempt to belittle him has come in the shape of sarcastic articles about his having taken the desk and chair used by him in the state department. The first article accused him of taking them without giving any return for their value, which was a libel pure and simple. When it was explained that Mr. Bryan left his check for the amount it would cost to duplicate them, the antis were ready with the story that any one would be glad to pay \$350 for the chair in which Seward sat and other "bunk" of the like. The truth of the matter is, the purchase of the old furniture has been a custom since the time of Washington. Whenever a secretary left the office he bought what furniture he cared to take and never until Mr. Bryan happened to want his desk and chair did the papers see fit to think it a crime. This incident, though of no importance whatever, in the larger scheme of things, is just a miserable part of the miserable effort to discredit. Who has been the moving spirit behind these efforts? The answer is simple. It is the dishonest politicians who forever will be afraid of an honesty like Mr. Bryan's. — Kearney (Neb.) Times.

BRYAN, PREACHER

During the hour of union service of Kearney church at Chautauqua park on Sunday morning, William J. Bryan gave quite another revelation of himself, not as a political orator or platform lecturer, but as a preacher of the Christian faith, and it is not fulsomness nor exaggeration to say that a better, more convincing, or more powerful plea for religion and right living has never been heard in this city. His subject,

that of a new lecture which he has recently taken up, was "The First Commandment." How many will ask, "What is the first Commandment?" Few really know, or remember. It is: "Thou shalt have no other gods but me." Finally crystallized, at the conclusion of the address, Mr. Bryan interpreted this simply to mean that man shall not place himself before God, because all of the false gods that men worship are simply that man's different phases of their own lives and characters.

Against the living God which all men should acknowledge, Bryan placed nine false gods, three on the top shelf, three on a middle shelf, and three on the bottom shelf. The three false gods on the top shelf he described as Gold, Ambition, Fashion; on the middle shelf, Ease, Intellect, Travel; on the bottom shelf, Chance, Passion, Drink. Worship of the first three gods might result in some good, indirectly and unintentionally; worship of the middle three was merely useless, and not productive of any good whatsoever; while the bottom three were destructive and vicious, the very bottom of the ladder in the descending scale of the false gods.

Yet all of these were simply different masqueraders of one false god, Self. The conclusion, therefore, was that there are really two commandments instead of ten: The first, "Thou shalt have no other gods," etc.; the second, "thou shalt not worship self," or that we shall not place ourselves first before God.

Much more could be said of this very remarkable, logical, convincing and irrefutable "brief" of the doctrine of God and the faith of the Son of God, but this brief editorial reference is merely an acknowledgement of the courtesy extended by Mr. Bryan and of the masterful defense of Christianity—not only in Christianity as a faith and a hope, but Christianity as a very vital thing individually and in the great world-aggregate.—Kearney (Neb.) Hub.