

WHAT THE ATHEISTS WANT

It is well to be forewarned concerning the program of atheism in its most recent developments. If the following demands of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism should win national support, there would be little left in this great country to live for. They say:

"The United States not being a Christian nation, and its Godless constitution requiring a secular government, the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism demands:

- "1. Taxation of church property.
- "2. Elimination of chaplains and sectarian institutions from public payrolls.
- "3. Repeal of laws restricting the rights of atheists and enforcing Christian morals.
- "4. Abolition of the oath in courts and at inaugurations.
- "5. Nonissuance of religious proclamations by chief executives.
- "6. Erasure of the superstitious inscription, 'In God we trust,' from our coins, and the removal of the church flag above the national flag on battleships.
- "7. Exclusion of the Bible as a sacred book from the public school.
- "8. Suppression of the bootlegging of religious instruction during school hours.
- "9. Secularization of marriage, with divorce upon request.
- "10. Repeal of anti-evolution, anti-birth control, and censorship laws."

Atheism is not a new idea recently discovered; it is no more modern than the so-called "Modernism" in religious belief, but there have appeared some recent developments that should be kept in view and resisted strongly.

One such feature is the eagerness with which atheism adopts evolution as a theory of the origin of the world and mankind. It offers a scholarly and agreeable front by which they can dispose of God. Perhaps there never was a time within the Christian era when there was more atheism being taught in higher institutions of learning today. It is an alarming condition, and bodes great ill for future days.

The drift of certain government toward atheism is alarming; especially countries that have been dominated by Catholicism, such as Russia, Spain and Mexico; and we are told, in sections of Asia, where the old religions are giving way to modern educational forces, there is a tendency to drift toward a denial of God and all true revelation of a divine origin.

Another feature of this movement is the increasing use of money and organization to forward its cause. It is the custom of the age to organize and seek for large financial backing, and atheism proposes to use such resources as youth movements in colleges and high schools for the denial of God and His Word, in addition to the organization named above.

Perhaps the Psalmist had some such development in mind when he recorded the solemn warning of the second Psalm: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His anointed, saying, 'Let us break their bands asunder, let us cast away their cords from us.' He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak to them in His wrath and vex them in His sore displeasure." When God arises to perform these great judgments, then the people who live in the world may well tremble at the dawn

of each new day, for it is no small matter, when the Almighty God speaks to mankind in His wrath, laughs at their impotence and futile rebellion, and vexes them in His sore displeasure.—The Wesleyan Methodist.

STANDING IN THE GAP

"And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it."

As it was in the days of Ezekiel, so it is today in the church. The people (church members), the prophets (pastors and teachers), the priests, (intercessors), and the princes (church officials) have neglected the things of God and turned aside to the things of the world. Love of money, love of pleasure, love of praise, love of ease, and love of self have crowded out the power of God. "A gap—a breach" has been made and the enemy is coming in like a flood.

Who will stand in the gap? Abraham stood in the gap when God revealed His purpose to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah because their sin was very grievous. Every prayer was answered. When Abraham stopped praying the judgment of God fell upon the city. Even then God remembered and delivered Lot. In judgment God remembers mercy because His children pray.

Moses stood in the gap at a time when God's wrath was kindled against Israel because of their idolatry, and again when they murmured against God's servants. As a result "the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto the people," and again the Lord said, "I have pardoned according to thy word."

Samuel stood in the gap many years when the people lost the ark of Jehovah; and afterwards turned away from God and desired a king like the nations round about them; and again when king Saul disobeyed God, and spared Agag and the best of the sheep. It was then Samuel "cried unto the Lord all night."

Elijah stood in the gap caused by the worship of Baal on the part of king Ahab, his wife and the people. For three and a half years Elijah stood alone in the breach until God answered by fire and His enemies were destroyed. Then His people fell on their faces crying out: "The Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God."

Job stood in the gap for his whole family when they spent their time feasting. He rose up early in the morning and offered burnt offerings unto the Lord according to the number of them all; for Job said, "It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually."

Where is an Abraham, or a Moses; a Samuel or an Elijah, or a Job who will stand in the gap today? "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him."—Great Commission Prayer League.

PERSONAL WORK

A ten minutes' heart-to-heart talk may mean more than a thirty minutes' sermon, to which the person is giving a little attention, because it is addressed to others as well as to himself. Henry Ward Beecher once said: "The longer I live the more confidence I have in those sermons preached where one man is the minister and one man the congregation.—Selected.

SPIRITUAL POWER

At this time of year when we have been celebrating the Day of Pentecost, our thoughts run naturally to the upper room of Jerusalem where believers were gathered in obedience to their Lord's command to "wait for the promise of the Father"—that baptism which Jesus had assured them they were to receive "not many days hence." And the blessing came, definitely, punctually, gloriously, as the Master had said it would, "and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

Seeking for Power

We often hear people say they are seeking for power. They want power to do this or that. There is a great deal of useless seeking for power. There is a school of evangelists who have much to say about seeking "power for service." They teach people to seek the Holy Spirit as the endowment for service. While it is true that the gift of the Holy Ghost does give power for service, it is also true that no one gets "power for service" while seeking it as such.

The great hindrance to service is sin in the heart. That is what makes men weak in character and effort. The man who is strong for God is the man who gets rid of this factor of weakness. Many want "power" who do not want the death of the "old man." Now the "old man" loves to have us talk about "seeking for power" if we will only consent to let him live. But God cares more for what we are than for what we accomplish. He is seeking holy character. He wants that first of all. He delights to dwell with him that is of a lowly and contrite heart. He takes the Holy Ghost in full possession of a cleansed heart to produce the highest results.

The Power of Love

The thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians tells us that the highest form of power is the power of love—perfect love. It is not the tornado or the tempest, as God showed Elijah, but the still, small voice that has the highest power.

So many people are seeking "power" in order to make themselves great. They want to be great reservoirs full of a subtle kind of electricity. But what God wants is empty channels—hearts cleansed from sin—through which He can pour His power upon the world. People think of "power" as a gift away up on a mountain top which they seek to climb; but it is down in the valley and is found only by the meek and lowly souls who, being cleansed from all carnal ambition, seek it for God's glory alone.

Our Motive in Seeking

We ought to question our motives very closely if we are seeking for "power." Which do we prefer, a holy life or the gift of a mere magnetic power? Which would you rather be, a Simon Magus, desiring the Holy Ghost for what you can get out of Him, so that you may figure large as a leader of the people, or a Dorcas, the influence of whose holy life is felt everywhere?

"He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." Those who are seeking "power for service" do not believe this. They are more anxious for the power that takes the city than for the right spirit which God says is greater than all exploits.

Which would you rather be, the conqueror of the city or the conqueror of sin and self? Get rid of these, and God will give you the greatest power of all—the power of a holy character—There is no greater power than this.—Way of Holiness.