

## IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIAN FUNDAMENTALS IN TIMES LIKE THESE.

Rev. G. S. Appleman

We feel that here is an inseparable relation between sound teaching and sound living. There is a great array of scriptural references on the importance of sound doctrine. Again and again we are exhorted to contend for the faith, give heed to sound words, or to preach the Word. We are faithfully warned against false doctrine, false philosophy and traditions of men. We would cite such references as Col. 2:6-9; Eph. 4:14, 15; Heb. 13:7-9; Titus 1:9; 2 Tim. 3:14. We should see that sound doctrine is inseparable with sound living and orthodox teaching with orthodox living.

Pres. Glenn Frank, of the University of Wisconsin speaking recently on the present drift says, "Late in the nineteenth century, teaching was gaining great headway that aimed at an emancipation from orthodoxy. Then heavy blows against traditional religion were dealt, and there was great activity in the so-called freedom of thought. Now follows the reconstruction of ethics using independent judgment in the field of conduct."

This condition, which we no doubt all have witnessed, has led to a revolt on the part of many against the sacred teaching of God's Word; in fact a revolt against things and times sacred, revolt against the Christian Sabbath, against the sanctity of the Church and the ministry, until some seem to assume that it is a mark of superior intelligence to be a doubter or irreverent.

Loss of reverence, and revolt against divine standards has contributed largely to the general breakdown in morals and in the religious attitude of the great masses. Loss of responsibility to God means a loss in our responsibility to one another, to institutions and all authority in general. The outlook in these days is not so good as we study the world conditions, but it offers the Church and Christian leaders a wonderful challenge. Are we able to face it? Lloyd George of England has recently been quoted as saying, "Now that civilization is endangered, it is up to the ministry and to the Church to save it." It seems that methods of modern religion have not gotten us very far in the solution of the problem. Certainly we cannot meet the challenge with our faith blasted by modernism or with a mutilated Gospel. If the Church meets the challenge we shall meet it with a whole Gospel, and faith in the Word of God, and in the God of the Bible.

I have been studying the attitude of the early Church, and I feel God teaches not only by precept but by example. And God certainly has given us directions for times like these; He hasn't left us in the dark to grope our way. Here, I say, is the early church facing a world problem to them as dark as the picture we face today. They faced a world steeped in paganism and with Judaism virtually apostate. They faced the task before them and it is glorious to say they faced it triumphantly. The early Church faced the problem of evangelizing nations in the strength of Jehovah.

They had a vivid realization of the world's need. Their writings picture the darkened unenlightened condition of souls, yet they faced the task fearlessly, because they saw the remedy. Yes, they not only saw the remedy, they were enjoying the remedy themselves. They were living epistles; they exemplified God's power to deliver from sin.

The lives of the early Church centered

around three outstanding events, namely: Calvary, the resurrection, and Pentecost. These were great events in their lives. They say the significance of Calvary as a remedy for sin. They made themselves unmistakably clear on this matter, they enjoyed the benefits of Calvary.

They gloried in the resurrection. It was a reality. We do not need to ask if they believed in the merits of Calvary and the reality of resurrection, they lived in resurrection victory. Their lives evidenced the fact that they enjoyed a newness of life.

And as to Pentecost, they were never the same after it. Pentecost to them was life shot through with a power that made them well nigh irresistible. They enjoyed a Pentecostal cleansing, Pentecostal joy, Pentecostal victory, Pentecostal power. These experiences were fresh in their lives. May God help us to keep our experience fresh and up to date! If ever there were days when we as Christians should hold the wonder, marvel, and glory of a real Christian experience and Christian living, it is now.

In one of Harold Bigsbee's recent books, one of the characters is a modern flapper whose life is wrecked by sin. In her attempt to find some one on whom she can depend for help, she finds Grandmother Podock, who lives on the outer edge of town. Grandmother Podock is one who enjoys old-time religion, and when the flapper pours out her story, and unburdens her heart in the presence of the old saint, she is made to say that her parents were church members, and her friends—many of them—but that religion held no vital place in their lives.

The lesson I gather from the early Church is that religion held a vital place in their life. Their preaching and living was convincing. Their religion was an energizing force which stimulated them to untiring service.

Some have sought to divert our attention from doctrine and the Christian essentials by saying that we need applied religion. We need first a religion worth applying, a religion built on the truth of God's Word. God help us in days like these. I believe by the help of God we can face the world problem and face it as the early Church did. What a rebuke this would be to empty profession, and meaningless religion!—The Wesleyan Methodist.

## MAN WITHOUT CHRIST—EPH. 2:12

Rev. John Clement

This text is one of the most startling scriptures in the New Testament. It speaks of man without Christ, hope or God in the world. We could get a good line of thought for an expository sermon out of this chapter.

1. A sinner's state, verse 12—"without Christ."

2. The way of salvation, verse 7—"through Christ."

3. The believer's standing, verse 10—"in Christ."

4. The believer's prospect, verse 5—"with Christ."

I have seen men without food, home, clothing, money, friends, reputation, character, health, but the worst of all is to be without Christ. No poverty can equal the person without Christ; no shame can illustrate the poor man dying without Jesus. Oh, the regret and remorse to launch out into eternity with no Saviour! Loss of fortune, name, position, can not compare with it.

1. Without Christ in the heart, home,

business, in the day of trouble, in the day of death, in the day of judgment, and worst of all without Him in hell.

2. Without Christ means that there is no peace. Poor soul, chased by the desires of hell, runs to pleasures of the world disappointed. There is no peace for the soul until Christ comes in.

3. Without Him there is no safety; like a vessel on a storm-tossed sea without an anchor; no pilot to dodge the hidden rocks; no angel of the Lord encamping around you; no promise like "I will be with thee." If Jesus is aboard He will pilot us safely through to the haven of rest.

4. Without Christ means without hope. "Hope is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast." It drives the clouds of sorrow away, it looks through prison bars to liberty, it looks through the cold grave and sees a reunion of all the people of God in the world beyond. No hope means despair. See that poor lost soul wrecked on the shores of eternity, above him an angry God, broken law, and beneath him a bottomless hell, "no hope!"

5. Without Christ all religion is vain. Church-going is slavery; good deeds are nothing but thin veneering to hide sin. Without Christ religion is dead and the future is dark.

6. Without Christ all men are going to the same place—moralist, rich, poor, refined, outlaws and the scum of the earth—all are headed for hell.

7. Without Christ man is without an advocate, poor soul, he has no one to plead his cause at the bar of God. Your sins are yet unforgiven and will meet you at the throne of God and will drag you down to hell.

8. Without Christ you will have no one to break the fetters of death and bring you up in the first resurrection. When all the holy dead come out of their graves you will sleep on for a thousand years. You will have no place in Christ's kingdom.

9. But if you have Him you have Him in your heart. That is the Holy of Holies of God's living Tabernacle. An indwelling Christ is the New Testament standard of salvation. Paul says in Gal. 2:20, "Not I but Christ liveth in me." In John 14:20, "I in you." In Col. 1:27 Paul is discussing a mystery and says it is "Christ in you the hope of glory." Paul had a big day when he recorded Eph. 3:17. There are thousands of church members that never knew what it means to have an indwelling Christ, and I am sure you can not have Him in you and not know it. Do not be satisfied with non-essentials but have Him in your heart now.—The Wesleyan Methodist.

## TURNING THE LEAF

Turning the leaf that the New Year brings

To the worn old book of life,

Is turning your back on a tired past,

With it fear and distress and strife.

Turning the leaf, you may turn to Love

To brightness and joy and laughter,

But it isn't the turning that counts so much—

As what comes after.

It's the writing that counts in the book of life,

It's the message you pen each day—

It's whether the page be rosy hued

Or touched with a sullen gray.

It's what we may teach as we humbly write,

And what we, please God, may learn;

What really counts, as the New Year dawns,

Is what comes after—the turn.

—Sangster in Heart and Life