

MODERN INCONSISTENCY—A CHALLENGE TO US

By Ezra Hood

In our homes of today we do not want war. We talk against it, we pray for it to cease, and then go right to town and buy our little children toy guns; and if this does not teach them war, then it will teach them to become criminals. I have gone to homes where the little fellows were playing (some of them, innocently) with their toy guns, and they would say, "I'll shoot you!" or "I'll kill you!" Not so long ago one said to me: "Put up your hands, or I'll blow your head off!" I feel it is sad to teach such to our children and expect them to love the Lord when they grow up. I never had any such training when I was a boy.

God says, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Now, I can put many interpretations on that Scripture; but it is either true, or it is not true. Often, children pattern after their parents. What kind of pattern are you? What we teach our children while they are young will mold their lives and characters for later years. Our Bible schools will never relieve us of our parental responsibility. Parents can teach their children to reverence them, their home, and the church, without their ever seeing a Bible school. In fact, a Bible school is not a reformatory, but a place of training. What they are taught in the home, before they are old enough to go to Bible school, does as great a part in molding their lives as the school does, if the home is what it ought to be.

The foundation for Christian character usually begins in the home, and under home training. We can teach them and mold them into almost anything we desire. Many mothers of today use so many unnecessary methods of trying to beautify their children, to make them look "cute" (as they say), and conform to the wishes and desires of others; and on down the line the poor children have to suffer, when they desire to become humble pilgrims.

We are living in a world of sin, and if we do not master sin, it will master us, sooner or later. We can be overcomers, but it will cost us some self-denial. There is such a strong downward pull these days that it renders it difficult for our young folk to stand unless they have our help and prayers; and some leaders in the churches and schools help to lower the standard of good Christian morals. Just open your eyes, and see!

So many of our precious young men have been forced away from their homes and loved ones against their wishes, and those of all concerned. We need some more men at the head of our affairs who fear God, who love righteousness, and hate sin. Many of our affairs could be settled better by prayer and faith than by force. The Bible speaks about those who would honor the god of force, building more powerful weapons of war than others, that they may destroy more people and property more quickly. What a time we are living in! God said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Such awful butchering slaughtering and punishment of our boys is almost unbelievable among civilized people; but carnality is in the saddle, and has the reins. There is no telling where we will go or what we will do—killing our men by the thousands in an undeclared war—something

before unheard of, so far as I remember.

The Bible way under the New Testament times would seem a better way to preserve our liberties. Many thousands of miles are travelled, and thousands of dollars are spent in conferences between the high officials, which will never bring peace. There will never be any peace, unless the great Author of Peace gives it. The tendency of our world is to use the "Diotrephes method" as found in the Third Epistle of John. If the nations could be persuaded by our rulers today to proclaim a session of prayer and fasting, and real repentance toward God, as in Jonah's day, I believe similar results would follow. Instead, we use money, bartering human life, and force—and it will never work.

For those who will take a stand for truth and right, stand against the ungodliness of our day, live lives of sacrifice and devotion; for those who get where they know that Jesus' blood covers every sin and cleanses their hearts from all sin and depravity—for such Jesus will come, one of these days, and take them away out of the awful chaos in which we find ourselves.

I would like to appeal to all God-fearing, God-honoring people: if they would only quit playing meeting, and quit seeking numbers, and insist on the "praying through" method, **we would be more spiritual. To have a spiritual church we need one in which each member takes his or her place, prays and testifies, and insists upon deeper spirituality. May the Lord help us to search the Scriptures, and pray, and be ready when Jesus shall come for His own.**—The Church Herald.

RELIGIOUS COUNTERFEITS

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber" (St. John 10:1).

The devil is a great strategist and has devised many different means of leading souls astray. However his plan usually follows one of two basic patterns, and it matters not to him which of his plans becomes operative, since, in either case, the same result is effected. Plan number one is to slowly, but surely, bind his subjects with evil habits and lustful appetites, under the constant pretense that "now is the time to be free and have your 'fling'—there is plenty of time to turn over a new leaf, when you get ready to do so." Someone has well said, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." How true that is!

A news item clipped from our daily newspaper some time ago, related an incident of a lady in Long Beach, California, who had a pet cobra (a very poisonous snake). She had been showing some business friends how she could handle the so-called pet, when she noticed it acting in an unusual manner. Said she to her friends, "I must put it back into its cage, for it is getting nervous." But before she had carried out her intention, the poisonous serpent had buried its deadly fangs in her hand. The account stated that she died one hour later in a Long Beach hospital. How many today are playing with sin while the fatal sting is injected into the human soul, assuring eternal death. This writer has seen many pitiable cases, in which those involved were astounded at the depths to which they had fallen, when the light of the Gospel revealed their depravity, and they became aware of their "leprous" condition. Nearly all

such persons, however, did no more about it than to relate their pathetic stories, while scalding tears coursed down the crude lines of a sin-scarred face; then closed their stories by cursing their names, declaring, "But it is too late for me now."

The devil's second plan is probably the most dangerous to the majority of our readers; and, indeed, it is the tendency to get those who would be religious to miss God's true requirements for the Christian, resulting in a religious form, and possibly some rigid rituals which would take on the appearance of genuine Christian piety. From hell has come the modern philosophy that "it does not matter what one believes, just so he is honest and sincere in his belief." May I say that such philosophy could apply only to those who are inmates of a mental institution, and to those who are prospective inmates. If, by contending honestly and earnestly, that a spoonful of strychnine is not poisonous, one could consume it without ill effects, then we might dare consider the aforementioned religious philosophy as reliable. God has mapped out the way to heaven in the Book of all books; and neither Joseph Smith, Mary Baker Eddy, John Calvin nor Judge Rutherford has succeeded in improving upon God's plan; nor has any found a short-cut to the City above.

One of the outstanding characteristics of people who are not spiritual is that they are always seeking for signs. Jesus condemned those of His day for this fault, and it is made clear in the Scriptures that in the last days, one of the devil's chief techniques will be to deceive his pitiable subjects by signs and wonders. This will reach its zenith under the reign of the Antichrist, when the False Prophet will be given power by the Dragon to call fire down from heaven in the sight of men to deceive them and cause them to worship the Antichrist. That anti-Christ spirit is in the world already, and thousands of people are being led into delusion and false doctrine by highly-publicized healing campaigns and alleged special gifts of prophetic insight into the future. Indeed, we reverently recognize God's marvelous power to heal, and we marvel that we may be recipients of such miraculous divine gestures of God's grace in a world of sin. Let no man think, however, that the devil does not have power to exhibit many virtuous works, himself, when such will promote his cause. He is still "the prince of the power of the air." His agents in Egypt counterfeited almost every miracle which God gave Moses power to perform when he was seeking exodus from the land of bondage. There is one safe test which should be applied to all religious leaders; that is, "Do all their life and teachings correspond perfectly with all the tenor of the Scriptures?"—The Church Herald.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

I spoke one night on "Where are the dead?" My audience, I think, expected me to deal with the question of the future state. They were greatly surprised. Declaring that ninety per cent of the dead were in the churches, I gave them quite a few facts to think over. There are big dead churches everywhere, and to them the Lord's injunction certainly applies. "Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire.

—People's Monthly.