

Guest Editorial

GOD'S MINORITIES

R. P. Shuler, "Methodist Challenge"

Strange indeed are the ways of God! Only a few times has history recorded the multitudes and God marching together. It is truly amazing to read the record and discover how many times during the march of the ages God has associated with a hand-full of dedicated people and changed the very highways of mankind.

That's why I watch America come to proportions, to power and to first place among the world's nations and I am scared. That's why my heart beats rapidly and with foreboding as I watch Methodist leaders vaunt themselves and boast of the fact that the Methodist Church is the largest, richest and most powerful Protestant church in America. I know something of the days of struggle of the early Colonies, when our revolutionary fathers wrote "In God we trust" on their silver dollars. I have read the matchless story of the Christmas Conference, when less than a hundred Methodists gathered together, preached, shouted, fell upon their knees in deep repentance and consecrated the Methodist Societies in America to the God of the ages and the Christ of Golgotha.

When the Red Coats dared to send their well-trained soldiers to our shores to whip us into subjection, we were but a small company of patriots. When Wesley hesitantly consented to the consecration of Asbury and Coke, we were more despised than the holy rollers and our revivals were laughed to scorn in respectable ecclesiastic circles everywhere.

But within a very few hundred years, the nation and Methodism have become the amazing miracles of the centuries, and I tremble. In the days when we were weak and dependent, the God of the age led, empowered and gave victory to us. Today, we have become dangerously sufficient. The spirit of the revolution is dead. The revivals in Methodist churches are a curiosity. Few of the truly well-known city cathedrals that house large congregations of Methodists would permit a Holy Ghost revival, as in the days of our fathers. Human leaders, with special qualifications, augmented by educational fitting and especially trained for leadership, are in charge. If we need the God of the past, we at least appear to have by-passed the altars where once we penitently called upon Him.

We have forgotten the text from which our fathers preached: "If my people, called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven; I will forgive their sins and I will heal their land."

We have passed by the words of Caleb and Joshua, the two minority spies, who said: "Let us go up at once and possess it... If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into that land."

I can not forget the little hands-full with whom God has performed His miracles of the centuries. I recall that Moses and fleeing Israel stood before the Red Sea, the rod of God lifted toward heaven, and marched through its depths as if on dry land. It was not the test of Moses or Israel. It was the test of God and He did not fail. He has never failed and He will not fail. He did not need multitudes and does not need them now. He needed Moses with the rod of God in his hand and a few dependent ex-slaves with faith enough to follow. That's all God has ever needed.

What an impossible minority when God won with Joseph! With Daniel! With Elijah! With Gideon! With Joshua! With the three Hebrews! With the twelve! With

Martin Luther! With John Wesley! With George Washington! With a thousand consecrated minorities that might be named, for His conquests are without number. But try to count, if you will, how many such victories He has won with the multitudes behind Him, God and the millions? Never yet! It has always been God and the little army that has dared to trust and fight. We must learn once more the strength of God's minorities, when God is with them and they are with the mighty Jehovah.: When we discover again the girth of God, then we shall know the secret of the world's hope, if hope there is.

The major churches are today apostate, not because God is failing, but because their leadership is not lifting the rod of God beside the impossible challenges of an evil and pagan world. We must discover a disconcerting truth: Not only is Russia pagan but America is pagan. Christian America, so-called, is immoral, materialistic, rationalistic and self-centered. What is the cure?

The cure is a revival of the grace of God in the hearts of men that will send them to their knees at an altar of repentance, until the church at least shall become God's dedicated minority. We need hope for nothing more. In fact, we need nothing more. We should want nothing more. The final conquest of Jesus Christ is as certain as God Himself. A universe, just now beginning to actually unfold before the startled gaze of scientists testifies to the prowess of the God of the ages. He is indeed the God with Whom all things are possible!

Therefore my hope is not in the "big three" or the big half dozen, or even the big ten million. My hope is in One who died on a felon's cross and who has teamed up with the poor and with the few, who have been despised and hounded from Bethlehem until this day. He will not fail, for he is more than the miracle Babe of the manger. He is the only begotten Son of God, equal with the Father, present at the foundation of the world and the creation of the universe. He is the Mighty One who has and shall lead captivity captive and give the good gift, the best gift, to men. I am not afraid to trust Him. Though the world about me be destroyed with fervent heat, I know that He will never desert His own. He never has. By His very nature, He never can. The destruction of everything about me does not mean the destruction of God. And while God lives, yea while Christ lives, those who are His own shall live also.

"Fear not, little flock, it is thy Father's good pleasure to give thee the kingdom." Such were the words of the Master. They are still good!

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One of our commonest experiences is the handling of money. And nothing will sooner show whether our consecration be a reality or a sham, nor will anything serve more quickly to accentuate and enforce the life of consecration, than to spend our money daily beneath the sway of those principles, which it is easy to enunciate, and so difficult to practise.—F. B. Meyer.

COMFORT

There is a day of sunny rest
For every dark and troubled night,
And grief may hide an evening guest
But joy shall come with morning light.

For God hath marked each sorrowing day
And numbered every secret tear,
And Heaven's long age of bliss shall pay
For all His children suffer here.

—William Cullen Bryant.