

— Editorial —

Spiritual Delinquency

(II Peter 1:9)

Peter's second epistle is his valedictory to the Christians of the Early Church. Two main concerns occupy his mind: 1. The danger of falling away and becoming apostate, and 2. The necessity of personal diligence if one is to survive the onslaughts of the Evil One and be ready for the Second Coming of the Lord. The Christian life, Peter says, will require continuous growth and development. We must "add" if we are to grow, and the things to be added are subject to infinite development—virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity.

Indications were already present in the Church that many were losing their first love, were content to be lukewarm in their faith, and were substituting profession for passion. Peter had a right to be alarmed. He wished to alert men to their danger. His forthright message of warning was timely then. It is timely still.

A lack of the Christian virtues is very obvious, for it manifests itself in three ways: a) spiritual blindness b) short-sightedness c) forgetfulness. This is spiritual delinquency. It is a condition that is hard to correct. For he that is spiritually blind will not be able to see himself as he really is, nor will he accept the diagnosis from someone else. The sinner at least knows that he is not right with God. He knows that he is the one referred to whenever the sinner is mentioned. There is always the hope and the possibility that he will recognize his need, seek the Lord, and find forgiveness. Not so with him who is spiritually blind, self-righteous, and prides himself that he is not as other men are.

Short-sightedness is a serious handicap. The limited vision of the victim keeps him from discovering the deeper things of the Spirit, the great far-reaching promises of God. Short-sighted men cannot see the mountains of promise afar off. Nor can they see the imminent dangers of the enemy whose forces are always arrayed in opposition to the Christian's progress. It has been the Church's general short-sightedness that has kept her forces circumscribed and her world ministry limited. The only growth the Church has ever known has been because of those who have had normal, healthy sight, making possible to them a broad vision and a true perspective.

Forgetfulness is also a mark of spiritual delinquency. It is easy to forget what God has done for us by his grace, to forget our responsibility to others, to forget that we are the light to those who yet sit in darkness.

We may need to go to God today for a check-up. If the diagnosis suggests trouble, and the symptoms indicate spiritual delinquency, let us pray humbly for his healing grace.

THE TREND

ALCOHOLISM has reached epidemic proportions in the U. S. and is now one of the country's major health problems, according to W. A. Scharffenberg, executive secretary of the International Commission for the Prevention of Alcoholism.

"I say alcoholism is an epidemic," he said, "because it is a growing national problem and nothing is being done nationally to prevent it. Of the nearly 6,000,000 known alcoholics in the country, we will bury 350,000 before the year is out."

Mr. Scharffenberg said social pressure is a major reason for the increase in alcohol consumption in the U. S. Whether he wants to or not, the average adult will accept a drink to please his host or hostess, he said.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

221 Pitt Street,
Saint John, N. B.

Dear Sir and Brother:

In the last issue of the "Highway", I notice an item in reference to the building of the fence and other repairs at Beulah Camp.

Since you have seen fit to mention the undertaking, the name of Rev. Wilfred Green should have been mentioned as a financial contributor. Like yours truly, he also gave considerable time in the building of the fence as did Bob Harding.

The cost of materials was considerably higher than originally estimated, and came to approximately \$200.00. We now have a nice appearing job with two coats of paint on the fence, white with green posts, and in my opinion adds considerable to the appearance of the main grounds. We would like to see others interested, and continue the fence for another 200 feet to the turn in the road, also gates placed. Furthermore, I am of the opinion that suitable signs should be placed at the entrances advising the public that the grounds are church property, and not a thoroughfare. At the present time, signs protecting the property, and enforcing the rules are conspicuous by their absence.

There are other projects which we would like to sponsor with the approval of the Alliance.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Trafton

Ed. Note: We wish to thank Brother Trafton for taking the time to set us straight on the building of the Beulah fence. Our apologies to those whose names we omitted.

SICK CHURCH

"The church is sick at the core, and no readjustments of organization will suffice. It is sick with self concern. It is sick because it thinks of its mission as being concerned primarily with making the good people of its membership better. The church is called not to be the light of an organization or a gathered congregation or a select few, but the light of the bruised, bleeding, hungry, lonely, fear-crazed world. Our mission is not within the church itself. The church's mission is in the world."

—Bishop Richard C. Raines
Indianapolis

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