

- Editorial -

THE CHURCH UNCONVINCED!

I said to my friend, "The trouble is, the world is not convinced that it needs the Church." My friend startled me with his sudden response, "No," he said, "The trouble is, the Church is not convinced that it needs the Church."

"The Church unconvinced that it needs the Church" — Let's think it over. Is there any evidence to support such an assertion? What about the attitude of the Church toward the lost of the world? Is there real concern in our hearts that men without Christ will go to Hell? How much do we care? What about the Church's attitude toward the mid-week prayer meeting, the Sunday evening service, the revival effort, the cause of missions?

An indication (and a shocking one!) of our indifference toward the Church is found in the fact that 66,000,000 Americans are not even claimed as Church members ("Religions in America" Ed. Leo Rosten, Published by Simon and Schuster, N. Y., 1963). We might be surprised if we knew the percentage of that 66 million who were raised in the Church and in so-called Christian homes, but who at this point in their lives consider the Church to be an unnecessary appendage to our affluent society and hence something only to be cut off.

The inspired apostle was right when he said, "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God" (I Peter 4:17). The Church stands to be judged for its indifference, its slowness to believe, its myopic vision, its internal squabbles, its unnecessary divisions and its shoddy organization. All this—while men march hopelessly into eternal darkness.

Isaiah's call was for our day when he said: "Awake, Awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean" (Isaiah 52:1).

KNOWLEDGE BY FELLOWSHIP

We were meant to know God, not by inference only but even more by fellowship. Knowledge by inference does not satisfy our deeper capacities and yearnings. For instance, my four-year-old boy becomes lost in the deep forest, having wandered away from the yard. The alarm is sounded. The search begins. At first there is no evidence to go on. Then a small set of tracks, unmistakably his, are found in a patch of snow. Our heart beats faster and our pace quickens. My boy has been here. He is alive. Here is knowledge by inference, plain, indisputable. But how empty and unsatisfying. My heart craves for more. I must see my boy and hold him in my arms, and feel his warm face against my own. Frantic with fear and hope, we search on.

Then there he is, alive, arms outstretched. I clasp my boy to myself. My delight is boundless. For this is knowledge by fellowship. The tracks, only moments before so meaningful and full of hope, are temporarily forgotten in the ecstasy of warm reality.

Obvious, you say. Yes, indeed, but how many there are who never get beyond the "track" stage in their quest for God! They infer God—from nature, from history, from revelation, from the faith of others, but they themselves never come to know God in personal fellowship. They never experience the warm glow of God's spirit in their hearts nor the exciting realization that God is real, and personal, and very near.

God's plan was for us to know Him, to fellowship with Him, to share the richness of His presence. How frustrating to God when we fail to move close enough to experience these things!

By faith let us move a little closer to God. He is there to be found if we search for Him. He waits for us today.

1964 NATIONAL HOLINESS ASSOCIATION CONVENTION

Plans for the 96th annual convention of the National Holiness Association to be held in the Hotel Leamington, Minneapolis, Minnesota, April 1-3, 1964, have been finalized. The convention theme, "To Tell the World," suggests the passion for holiness preaching and the missionary and evangelistic endeavor of the association and the constituent member denominations, colleges, seminaries, mission boards, and state, county, and local groups.

Speakers for the main session represent several of the affiliated denominations and include the Rev. James Lentz, Evangelical Methodist minister and missionary evangelist of World Gospel Mission; Dr. Kenneth E. Geiger, N.H.A.'s retiring president and General Superintendent of the United Missionary Church; Dr. Hardy C. Powers, General Superintendent, Church of the Nazarene; Commissioner Samuel Hepburn, Territorial Commander, Salvation Army; Dr. Walter S. Kendall, Bishop, Free Methodist Church; Rev. Herbert Sebree, Pastor, Spring Arbor College (Free Methodist) church; and Dr. William Gillam, Vice President, Oriental Missionary Society. Mr. E. Stanley Banker of Miltonvale College (Wesleyan Methodist), Miltonvale, Kansas, will serve as convention music director. Representatives of other groups will also participate in the program.

Seminars dealing with specific areas of endeavor will be headed by recognized scholars and leaders of the holiness movement. Scheduling of these workshop sessions will make it possible for delegates to select and attend three complete program units. Planned for the 1964 convention are the following seminars and their leaders: Camp Meeting, Bishop Henry Ginder; Doctrine, Dr. Leo G. Cox; Education, Dr. J. S. Logan; Evangelism, Dr. Robert Coleman; Holiness Preaching, Dr. Richard S. Taylor; Missions, Dr. William Gillam; Spiritual Life, Dr. J. C. McPheeters; Sunday School and Youth, Brig. Edward Deratany. Mr. M. A. Lunn will direct a special publishers' section. The Rev. Merne A. Harris of Vennard College will serve as Dean of Seminars.

Additional information and a printed program may be received by writing the National Holiness Association, 1819 South Main Street, Elkhart, Indiana 46514.

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