

for him and to obedience to his will as revealed in Scripture.

But Christianity is not a Sunday religion. The Christian is a new creature in Christ. His whole thinking and life are God-oriented. His faith provides the foundation for a life of obedience to God. God, the world, the church, men, the material goods necessary to life and welfare, all take on new meaning for the true child of God. The Christian religion is a revolutionary philosophy of life. It is a faith which if it is true God-given faith, must affect the whole of a man's life. This is of the very heart and essence of evangelical Christianity. Hence it is true that the message of the Gospel has the most pertinent bearing on our life in society.

True preaching seeks to lay the only adequate foundation for morality. Christ came to redeem us from sin. The Christian is called unto holiness. Love for God must express itself in obedience to his commands. Without true faith, morality is not built on a solid lasting foundation. There have been those who have sought to build a superstructure of Christian life on something other than the Gospel. This is moralism but not true morals. The other danger is to be entirely engaged in laying the foundation and to neglect the superstructure. The task of the pastor is to lay the foundation and then to build on it. For Christianity is not just a set of beliefs, nor is it a life divorced from doctrine, but rather it is a life built upon revealed truth.

It has been my experience in preaching to Africans that the Gospel message must be applied in the concrete situation of everyday life if it is to be understood. When an African pastor preached, "Thou shalt not steal" to his congregation, they all approved. It was when he added, "Thou shalt not steal thy neighbor's chickens", that they really understood the meaning of the command.

We have become so accustomed to separating our religion from our life in society that we accept as normal a double standard of ethics, one for the individual and a distinct one for the collective. We teach and profess to hold to the view that children are to honor and to care for their aged parents in need and that the church has a responsibility for its poor, but unblushingly we turn these responsibilities over to the state. We know that charity is to proceed from love and to be voluntary, but we are unconcerned by coercive foreign aid often for the avowed purpose of promoting a way of life out of accord with Christian morals. We know that communism is an evil system that is based in its theory and practice on defiance of every one of God's laws yet we condone or approve our official permitting and actually aiding its advance.

We hear much today of the need of the church to speak prophetically. But one of the chief characteristics of the Old Testament prophets was their outspoken rebuke of sin and evil. It was for this "meddling" in the affairs of the rulers that some of them suffered a martyr's death.

It is the church's task to speak out against public as well as private evil. If the man in the pew fails to see the implications of the message he hears, for his relations to others, to the things of this world, and to the political-economic issues of his day, the minister has failed in effective communication. In our representative form of government, the responsibility for our official policy and deeds lies not only with our representatives but with all of us.

The foundation of true morality lies in a right relationship of the individual to his God. This involves love of God and obedience to his law. But this basic spiritual relationship to God must manifest itself in a relation to things and to men in accord with the norms given by God and summarized in the ten commandments. So the preacher can not apply the divinely given code of ethics without showing its application to the daily life of the listener and to the issues of our day.

Many sincere ministers have mistakenly followed the socialist or welfare-state philosophy of life because they have failed to understand its basic antithesis to the law of God but rather have viewed it as in accord with Christian morals. It is important today, since most of the crucial domestic and foreign issues are economic and also moral ones, for the pastor to be at least conversant with the field of economics. Unless he has at least a passing knowledge of the views of such men as Menger, Bohm-Bawerk, Von Mises, etc. and acquaintance with some current periodicals in the field, he will find it difficult to evaluate the trends and our increasing acceptance of the socialist philosophy of life, in the light of God's absolute standard. In building the superstructure on the foundation of the Gospel we need to be able to reject stones that will not fit on this foundation. Thus the need for at least some knowledge of this field.

The pulpit is not a political platform. It is rather a sacred trust from God for the purpose of proclaiming the whole counsel of God. But if this message, which has broad social implications, is adequately proclaimed, it is bound to affect and to change radically the trends that are inimical to the standard of true righteousness. The Gospel will change individuals, families, and the church, and when its implications are made clear, will, through them, effect a revolutionary change in the whole structure of society and in the political-economic relations of men. Thus will we come to experience the truth that righteousness exalteth a nation.

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