

THE CHURCH OF GOD.

Eph. 5:27.

*We talk a good deal about Q.T. Ch and N.T. Ch and make difference too great - "olive tree" "I came not to destroy but to fulfill"*

We tried to talk this morning about the House of God showing that His presence is actually here at this altar. That He dwells out side of us, as well as inside our hearts. To night we want to think of the church of God as that combination of human hearts which make up the Bride of Jesus. Our text is Eph. 5:27. "That He might present the church to Himself a glerieus church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

*There are things that do appeal to modern life & gain the edge*  
This institution must have an appeal to modern life. Does it make that? Does it make that appeal to day? It can if it will be without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing. Whether or not the church presents any such front we do know that she is passing through the testing fires in this time as perhaps she never did before. George Stanley Frazer in his beek "Christianity And The Man of Today." has this to say:

"While every age has witnessed influences that have been hostile to the church, perhaps never before has organized Christianity had to contend with force so subtly aggressive as today. Under the constant fire of criticism that has been directed against the church, a vast literature of complaint has accumulated. It has been alleged that the church is afraid to test its faith in the light of reason, that it dare not face the intellect of the age."

Baren Van Hugel pictures the masses in full flight from the church. He claims that the reason for this is that people have been trying to keep the church great instead of holy and useful. Consequently the church can not say any more "Silver and gold have I none". Neither can she say "Arise and walk." He conceives the pathfinder being crushed by the machine, spirituality degenerating in to political color, and agitation supplanting evangelization.

*Begin*  
Now if the criticism of Mr. Van Hugel is correct then there is a blame some where and where is it? If such criticism is true the church of Jesus is spotted wrinkled, and has blemishes. I believe the man is about right. The church today does not present itself as holy. It does not even venture to say that can live a holy life. What kind of a sensation comes to you when you see some nice apples across the street and your mouth waters and you cross and purchase some in a sack and when around the corner you take out one and there are rotten spots on it, and it is all shriveled? You are disappointed. So with people approaching the church. Some folk are not what they seemed at a distance. Where rests the blame for the criticism? The church is what the people make it. Contention has hurt. *Some men out of ch. think they are wiser than those - it's all "you do not know much do you?" "No but I am not lost"*

We as a church can not address this age in terms of the past. There was a time in the past when people looked on life as a shadow and upon any kind of joy as a sin. But in the light of the present age life is real and life is earnest and joy is a possession of the good man.

People have been inclined to take some one man's ideas as final. If he said the church must be thus and so it has to be that and nothing more. But in our age as church members we must remember that "The life of Jesus in the souls of men reveals itself in varying forms through differing minds, and His appeal is broad enough to include life in all its diversity of temperament.

- a. To John Newton Christ was the cleanser of souls (Newton was libertine and infidel till Christ cleansed him)
- b. To Browning Jesus was the solution of the dark enigmas that haunt the intellect and the Light to the avenues of truth.
- c. To Philips Brooks Jesus was the severign beauty of the world.

## 2. The church of God.

d. To Wesley Jesus was the Burning White Light that reanimated the decaying life of a cold formalism. *My friend what is He to you?*

One of the sad defects of our age is the dearth of that vision by which we are able to discern the transformation in the life of the individual unless he comes in a certain way. Evangelists will say he must come running from the back of the house. The statistician says that he must come when he is in his teens or he will never come. The modern S.S. expert says educate him into the Kingdom. Whenever or wherever man comes to recognize his lost condition and turns from the carnal to the spiritual he is led by the same divine Spirit. *Crib- Huelley*

A. The man of India forsaking an inheritance and going to the forest to feel after God is moved by the same power that arrested Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus. *Swamp Society 707 the Rutter 1787*

B. Stuart Mill was taught by his father to be an atheist. He got intellectual basis. His was denial. His deeper nature cried out for deeper truth. Life in negation was not worth living. He read poetry from Wordsworth and it stirred his soul and satisfied the hunger of his heart long starved on the husks of denial.

C. Louisa Alcott ran over the hills one morning at dawn and paused to rest. Through the arch of trees she saw the sun rise, and with it there arose in her a new life that sustained her ~~harsh~~ *harsh* soul in long years of sadness.

The wrinkles, spots, and blemishes in the church today do not come because you were not converted in this way or that but by this fact whether you were converted at all or not. *wrong conceptions about how to get for membership & wrong conceptions about building up membership &*

We are not only to ask the question "What must I do to be saved?" But also a twin question, "What must I do to make a better world?" These questions are followed by a covey of others: "Will I make the world better by trying to hinder the work of good people who can do the thing better than myself?" "Can I make the world better by dragging an old unconverted life through the church for years?" "Can I make the world better by claiming to be a Christian and at the same time holding so much ~~malicious~~ hatred in my heart that I will speak to people in the religious crowd for effect and then not speak to them on the streets?" If that is your idea of living in the church then you are a wrinkle, a spot, and a blemish that will prevent Jesus from presenting the church of your community to Himself Holy and glorious.

The church to perform her duty is not to become a clearing house for all kinds of industrial and political entanglements. Other institutions can do that. But she must give what others do not give. She must instill such gospel as will meet the real hunger that lies deep in the human soul.

### 1. Building membership from other churches by

a. Criticizing destructive doctrines

b. trying to array rich & poor against each other (that old rich ch)

*matter not what method use of the above both are wrong and indicate that selfishness is at bottom - out of selfishness there grow jealousy - untruth - falseness*

*they want you to come in and pay your money so that they may pay less -*

*could your membership out of those you win from the world*

*the only thing that a person should leave any church and join*

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