

MAN'S GREATEST NEED

"And thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins."
Matthew 1:21.

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."
John 10:10.

What all the world is seeking is life, -- life that is rich and creative. Now and then a man appears alive to his finger tips, a man who never tires, whose enthusiasm never wanes, and who is a real dynamo. What man wants is life physical, and that means abounding health, passion for work, an eager longing for such new days to come with opportunity for productive industry. Man wants life intellectual, and that means a hungry mind, constant growth, increasing culture, a consciousness of being fully equal to any emergency. Man wants life for his affections, and that means an increasing capacity for friendship and loyalty to those we love, with power to keep our friendships in repair. Man wants life spiritual, and that brings the gift of peace, freedom from worry, full power to rise victorious over all disasters and trouble. The secret of happiness and success is in a deep uprising life, rushing forth in exterior service. What we call failure is the consciousness of a wide gap between our ambition and our performance.

Jesus Christ disrobed Himself of His dazzling splendor, and came down from the mansion to the manger to lead a lost world back to God.

There is but one curse in all the world -- the curse of sin. It would be almost impossible to describe what sin had done for the world when Jesus found it. He found it a gloomy place where humanity was dying of a disease which none but Himself will ever be able to cure.

The world in His day, as in ours, needed something better than any mere man could bring with his little program. It needed a Saviour; One who could save it from its sins and give it a new life. And Jesus came to do that very thing. He gave to the world a new idea of God, a new idea of the worth of man, and planted a new hope in the human heart.

As to God -- He revealed Him as a Father, not some far-away Sovereign, but a tender parent dwelling with His children; with eyes that weep, with a heart that sympathizes, and with arms that lift us up when we fall.

As to man -- he was to be every other man's neighbor and he was to love his neighbor as himself. The Golden Rule was to be the law of life. The wise and strong and rich were to help the ignorant and weak and poor.

As to the new hope -- He told the guilty that sin could be forgiven and that a man's record could be righted; that in His cross every wrong could find atonement; that life and hope could be born afresh, and redemption found for those who all their life had been subject to the fear of dying and of death. And when He finished His mission on the cross, rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven, the world had a new religion. Christianity had been born.

And what has Christianity done for this world? Not all that it might have done; nor all that it would have done but for the wicked will of man that has opposed itself so largely to the will of God. And yet, it has given to the world the greatest person -- Christ, the greatest Book -- the Bible, and the greatest institution -- the Church. Look abroad today throughout the world at the asylums for the afflicted, homes for the poor, hospitals where blind eyes are made to see, deaf ears are unstopped,

and the lame are made to walk, and tell me how much of it has been done in the name of atheism, or infidelity, or unbelief in general. Not one bit of it.

Atheism sends no missionaries to the South Sea Islands; agnosticism builds no hospitals in India, etc. These things belong to the genius of the Christian faith, and wherever the star of Bethlehem has gone, there the sacredness of human life has been held in due regard; there the fetters have been broken and the curse of slavery lifted; there womanhood has received its rightful reverence; there the hoary head has been deemed a crown of glory; there the real worth of a little child has been unveiled, and society has been blessed with organized effort on behalf of the poor, the afflicted, and the unfortunate, because all the while into the heart of humanity there has been stealing softly the Spirit of the Holy One of God.

What is the matter with this world? There's something wrong. A teacher asked her class, "What is the shape of the world?" And one little fellow replied, "My dad says it's in the worst shape now it has ever been." We all know that it is in a state of upheaval. Civilization is rocking. Economic systems are giving way.

Some business men met not long ago and after a whole day of conference issued this pronouncement: "The root cause of the world's disorder today is spiritual. The only way out is the way up. Our world will never get right with itself until it gets right with God. We crave for our times a revival of the sense of the reality of God, of our dependence upon Him and of loyalty to Him."

What this world in its present condition needs is a Saviour. But the world doesn't seem to know it. It wants a super-man. It wants a leader. It wants a reformer. It wants an advisor. It wants a big business man. It wants a dictator. But not in any of these is the supreme need of the world to be found. Its supreme need is a Saviour, whose name is called "Jesus." He alone can save it from its sins, from its threatened disaster and from itself.

I. The International World Needs Him.

What do nations care for treaties, agreements, and pacts, so long as their hearts are ruled by selfishness, and greed, and lust for another's possessions and powers?

II. The Commercial World Needs Him.

Industrial world will walk in peace only as it goes hand in hand with the matchless Christ. Rumblings of discontent everywhere. Turmoil, strife and enmity fills our land and world today. Nothing can eat away immeasurable curse of human selfishness except the all-consuming love that is born of the Spirit of the world's great Redeemer.

III. The Domestic World Needs Him.

How much the home needs Him. And how He would save it from the strife and unholy contention that drives so many families into godless separation and sends the children out into the world handicapped for life. We need old-fashioned Christian homes. If you go to Piedmont Square in Atlanta, people will point to a magnificent statue and they will say to you, "That is our Henry: our Henry W. Grady." Grady was a great statesman and a great patriot. But more than this he was a true Christian gentleman. When he stood for the first time in Washington, D. C., he said to a friend who stood by his side, "That, sir, is the home of my nation," and a tear glistened in his eye. Sometime after that, when going back into the Southland, he stopped for the night at the home of a Southern planter. When the evening meal had been eaten and the family had gathered in the spacious living-room, the father called for his Bible and read a chapter from the Word of God, and then while the entire family was kneeling about him, "the priest and father prayed." And Grady said, "I made a mistake when I said that glittering pile of marble back in Washington was the home of my nation. The home of my nation is the home where Christ is the head of the family and the Bible is read and the children are taught to pray." Youth will never be saved until push battle across threshold of the American home.

IV. The Church Needs Him.

V. The Individual -- You and I -- Need Him.

What will you do when temptations come if there is no one to whom you can say,

Temptations lose their power
When Thou art nigh;

What will you do when you find yourself in the deep waters of trouble and the waves of despondency and despair are about to overwhelm you, if there is no voice to say,

When thou walkest through the waters I will be with thee,
and through the deep waters they shall not overflow thee.

What will you do when bowed down in the gloom of death's dark bereavement, if there is no one to whom you can turn as did the early disciples and say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou alone hast the words of eternal life." What will you do in the night when the light fades from the eyes and Death knocks and says, "You must come with me," if there is no Boatman to pilot you through the unknown seas upon which you must embark?

What will you do in that other day "when the sun grows cold and the stars grow old and the leaves of the judgment book unfold" if you have been indifferent all your life to Him whose name was called Jesus and Who came to save His people from their sins?

If you are putting Christ out of your life, if you are turning your back upon Him, believe me, the time is coming when you will need Him --- time of trouble, perplexity, sorrow, bereavement, and time of death. And if you must pass through the shadows alone, if alone you must meet the last great enemy, what are you going to do? It will be too late to call for the Great Deliverer when the time of judgment has come. There will be no balm for sorrow, no physician to heal, no blood to cleanse, no door of mercy to open, no Christ to save. Do not try to live without Him.

It is pitiable to see men and women journeying without a guide, laboring without a day of rest. Their days are spent without songs of praise. They are continually reaching out into the uncertain future without communion with God. That have rulers without righteousness and without justice; homes without peace, marriage without sanctity. Their young men and women are without ideals, boys and girls without purity, and children without innocence. There are mothers without wisdom, fathers without self-control, poverty without relief, sickness without medical care, sorrow without sympathy, wounded hearts without balm, sin and lying and crime without a remedy and worst of all death without hope. Such is the condition of those who live in paganism. Do you want to live like that?

1. Christ will satisfy highest demands of your conscience.
2. Christ will make your life better.
3. Christ will stand the test of the dying hour.
4. Christ will stand the test of the judgment day.