

"An Emergency Call"

Scripture Lesson:- Joel 2: 12-22.

Boiler  
11/16/58  
Q.M.

Text:- Joel 2: 12&13.

Introduction:- We are living in an emergency hour. Those who do not realize this have not studied the times carefully. Jesus reproached the men who claimed to be the religious leaders of his day because they were able to foretell condition of the weather, but were unable to read the signs of the times.

Shall we not this morning note some of the things which are wrong with the church and the world. We will note but briefly the things which constitute an emergency with the church.

I.

THERE IS A WEAKENING OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF SIN ON THE PART OF BOTH THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

Sin has ceased to be exceeding sinful, even to those who call themselves Christians. Such a thing as a deep pungent conviction of sin is almost unknown at the present time. This is not because men have stopped sinning, or because of any change in its essential character. There is just as much guilt in the sin of our day, as that in any age of human history. The lack of any deep consciousness of the fact denotes a deadening, a paralysis of the moral faculties, which is an ill omen to our generation. It is evident to those who study the facts, that we have an abundance of crime of the lowest and most revolting forms. The alarming thing is the seeming lack of positive action against it. There will be no repentance, no seeking forgiveness, no hunger after righteousness, until men find and learn the real guilt and doom of sin. It is only when we find out how sick we are that we call the Great Physician.

II.

INDIFFERENCE TO THE CLAIMS OF CHRIST AND HIS CAUSE ON THE PART OF CHURCH MEMBERS.

Ask any pastor who has a deep concern about the spiritual life of his people, attend the mid-week prayer meeting of the churches, attempt to enlist any large number of church members in any real, form of Christian service, and you will learn what this means. You will find many times the number of Christians gathered at prayer meeting, at the school or the ball games; and you will find far more with frivolous excuses, than with a willingness to undertake any work for the Lord. Such terms as self-denial and sacrifice are meaningless to a vast number of church members.

Many join the church because it seems the proper thing to do; but they make no connection between religion and life. Many church members are of "the earth, earthy", and live after the flesh to fulfill its desires.

### III.

THERE IS LOWERING OF MORAL STANDARDS. The church is conformed to the world, rather than being transformed by the renewing of the mind. Things are tolerated which were frowned upon a generation ago. Lax standards of sex morality, the loose and easy way in which marriage vows are taken, the silly talk of companionate marriage, and the floods of vile literature, all cry that the bars have been let down. Little by little the Sabbath is being destroyed, and its holy hours of quiet worship are destroyed. Some people, who are measured by their lowered standards of living, measured by the lowered moral sense, are bringing bitter headaches to those who hold that the Ten Commandments are not out of date, and to those who still believe in the morality of the Sermon on the Mount.

### IV.

THERE IS A DEARTH OF PASSION FOR SOULS. Christianity has always gone forward with mighty strides when those who professed it were motivated by an intense desire to save the lost. But the present time is not a time of deep religious experiences. It is just not just the proper thing to be much con-

cerned about other people. We are living in a day when the things of eternity do not occupy very much of the time of the average church member. We are not thinking about men and women in terms of eternal destiny. Death, judgment, heaven and hell, are not positive facts in the minds of many who count themselves factors in religious life. Burning zeal, fervent enthusiasm, earnest prayers and stirring exhortations, are considered a bit old fashioned in this modern age.

V.

THERE IS A DECAY OF MISSIONARY ZEAL. One of the appalling facts to those who think seriously is the decline of the missionary spirit. The receipts for missions are falling off at a time when Christian people have more money than ever before. The people who comprise our churches are not less liberal, but they are giving their money for purposes other than sending the gospel into all parts of the world. Either we must have a renewal of the spirit that made the church of the early centuries a dauntless army of evangelists, or we must be content with a dying form of missionary work. I know that many of the churches are interested in sanitation, education and improved methods of agriculture. That is fine, splendid, but we must not forget that the foreign man had a soul, to save.

Then, too giving in the ordinary church is not what it ought to be. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, and prove me now herewith, if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that ye will have not room to receive." If we would all give our tithe into the church treasury we would not know what to do with the money. Some churches are doing it. The Seventh Day Adventists, the Nazarenes, the Assembly of God. These churches pay more than enough to keep the church at home, and support several missionaries on the field.

VI.

A TREMENDOUS EFFORT OF MODERN RATIONALISM TO DESTROY FAITH IN SUPERNATURAL. Our religion is a supernatural religion. Our God is bigger than all

all of what we call nature. He is above, and was before nature. Everything that is, came from His creative power. Our Christian faith is a revelation from the God who is greater than all.

Conclusion:- We will win not by arguments, nor by the persuasive words of man's wisdom, but by "demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

Human nature has not changed. The facts of sin and death are just the same. Humanity still weeps over open graves. Sin continues to bear the fruits of degradation and shame. The redemption that is in Christ Jesus will still deliver from the dominion and power of sin, and his blood remains the only agency that can take away its guilt.

The call just now is a turning to God in the deepest sympathy, for a time when hearts shall be broken. The first marks of a revival have always been repentance among God's wayward children. There can be no revival without this. Our people, must pay the price of triumph; they must pay it in prayer, in penitence, in tears, and in renewed consecration.

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