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### **MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.**

Series IV: Sermons, 1914-1963, undated.

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Reel  
148

Box  
52

Folder  
198

Religion and World Peace, 1924.

1. The Task - (1) Supreme ethical problem (2) Came into
2. Heretofore - abstraction - ultimate desideratum
3. Confronted - Leadership - praiseworthy  
Must decide - vindicate - lead - back
4. To lead - must transcend State  
In the Middle Ages - competed - failed  
With Reformation - ascendancy -  
Results (1) Morally self-sufficient  
(2) Last role of competition - ally  
In many countries today - agency -  
yielded up - undermines  
If State declares War - Sanction &  
condone - unpermitted = silent
5. Dictatorship - Totalitarian - Coordinate  
Germany
6. As long as it does not rise above  
control - but free itself - abstraction  
local shines when tribal desires  
- Guide - critic - censor



7. Nationalism - retards

1. As natural - war

2. Dictatorship - Abyssinia

8. Religion is Universal -

1. Are we not all - one Blood -

2. Speak of Humanity!

9. Work for peace - Agencies

1. No Peace without Security.

2. World can't defeat -

10. Role of Peace - worker harder

- Concentration camp

- will not come as radiant  
maiden -

11. But this role of presented  
its church best



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"RELIGION AND WORLD PEACE."

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER.

THE TEMPLE. SUNDAY MORNING.

OCTOBER 26, 1924, CLEVELAND, C.

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JOSEPH T. KRAUS  
Shorthand  
Reporter  
CLEVELAND



It is altogether proper, my friends, that we should begin our year's work with a discussion of peace, more especially with a discussion of the relation of the church, of organized religion and of religion, to peace; and I believe that the problem of the establishment of international peace is the greatest challenge to the church today, even as it is, to my mind, its chief task for many generations to come. I say that it is a challenge to the church, not only because peace is essentially an ethical problem within the scope of the social program of the church--by church, of course, I mean organized religion, of whichever denomination it is--the Christian church, or the Jewish synagogue, or the Mohammedan denominational institutions, or the Buddhist, or any organized religious institution.--I say, it is a challenge to the church not only because peace is essentially an ethical problem, but also because the church has claimed, and proudly boasted of the fact, that it came to bring peace to mankind. Judaism preached the beating of swords into plowshares; Christianity preached even the love of one's enemies; the great Buddhist religion preached: " " which meant non-injury to any form of life.

Now, heretofore peace was an abstract ideal, very much removed from the practical concerns of men; an organized religion was content to think of peace as a sort of an



ultimate, a far distant thing; one which is to far removed as to be beyond the scope of practical consideration. Now, in the last generation, and more especially in the last decade, life has taken this subject of peace and thrust it into the realm of . . . . and made it the most pressing and the most vital problem of today. It is no longer the ideal abstraction, an ultimate desideratum; it has become an immediate, troubling problem. And so the church is confronted with a choice of roads: either one of leadership into the work of establishing peace and the machinery for the perpetuation of a peaceful order among peoples,--either that or a role of futile irrelevancy.

The church must make up its mind whether it is to lead aggressively the children of man along the hard road of peace, or whether now, as heretofore, more cautious than courageous, more shrewd than wise, more earthly than heavenly, it will content itself with a mechanical reiteration of its age old exaltation to peace and good will, without actively, aggressively entering into the struggle, leading, goading, driving men on towards peace.

The ultimate decision of the church will, in a large measure, depend on the attitude of thinking men and women towards the church. Because of the silence of the church during the last few generations, when the vast masses of mankind were struggling for an economic competence; when the oppressed were rising against the oppressors, and reaching up to a higher and a better standard of living,--because



of the silence of the church in that great economic and industrial upheaval, it alienated the loyalties and affections of millions of men the world over; and it is my firm conviction that should the church remain silent today in this great new struggle of the children of men for the . . . . . the crimes and wickedness that go before, or if it assumes an ineffectual attitude or lackadaisical indifference, it will again alienate millions of thinking men and women, who will turn from an institution whose inspiration seems to be entirely of the past and in the past, whose will is paralyzed, and to whom they cannot turn for guidance and encouragement in the pressing problems of their lives.

I believe that the church can assume such leadership in the field for which it is most qualified only when it will have courage enough and the prophetic passion to rise above the state. The church must rise above the state if it is to resume the spiritual leadership of the world. In the Middle Ages the church claimed to be the ultimate repository of both temporal and spiritual power. The church in the Middle Ages had political aspiration; it wished to establish a political empire; it disputed the sovereignty and the rights of kings and princes and potentates; it competed with the political units of power. In modern times the church has yielded that temporal power to the state; in modern times the state has enjoyed a marvelous ascendancy in power and in influence. The church, no



longer able to retain its temporal power, allied itself with the state and became the servant of the state. In many countries the church receives its subvention from the state, and even in democracies, where the church receives no such subvention, its innate conservatism has made it, consciously or unconsciously, an ally and servant and tool of the state.

Now, at no time in the history of civilization has the state, that political organization, assumed such arrogance and such power and such domination over the minds and loyalties of men as in our own day. The divine rights which once upon a time kings and potentates claimed, the state now claims. "The state can do no wrong"; "my country, right or wrong"--this is patriotism, and the church, the ally and the servant of the state, must underwrite, must subscribe to this doctrine of the divine rights, the supreme authority of the state.

During the last war we have evidence of how tragically the church has lost its spiritual sovereignty. Every church became the state church; every church, whether in Germany or in France, or England or the United States, became a partisan, a combatant, a channel of state propaganda. The German Christian was first German, and only by a wild stretch of the imagination Christian; the French Christian was French first, and only by a wild stretch of the imagination Christian.

And so the church, which once upon a time claimed not only spiritual sovereignty but even political sovereignty,



now, in our twentieth century, has lost not alone its political sovereignty but even its spiritual sovereignty. It has lost its own voice; it is now an echo of what another institution. . . . it commands it to speak.

But religion, my friends, is not national. All religions, all great religions, are international. By that I do not mean that all great religions are opposed to nationalism, but they do not concern themselves with nationalism. Every great religion transcends the reaches of race and nation and caste and position and station. It has a mission which goes beyond the temporary and local political organizations of mankind; it has a mission which has to do with truth and justice and peace and love. Every great religion is autonomous; it derives its authority not from the state, not from a king, and not from a Congress, but from God and from the innate spirit of God resident in the souls of men.

Every great religion concerns itself with man; not as a political unit, not as a member of this nationality or that nationality, but with man, of the child of God, and with mankind. And if religion is to resume leadership, active, aggressive leadership in this confused world of ours, it must, by an act of self-translation, rise above the state. I do not mean that it should try to master or control the state; that it should engage and mix in politics; for temporal power always corrupts spiritual power when it comes in contact with it.--what I mean is that the church should



free itself from its subservience to the state; and it should speak its own words, and it should be the guide of the state, and the critic of the state, and the censor of the state, if necessary; that it should demand that the state lift up, aspire to its code of conduct and ethics, rather than that it should defend and sanction and sanctify the code of conduct of the state.

That, to my mind, is primary. If religion, organized religion, would do that; if, whenever the state ordains a Defense Day, organized religion will ordain a Peace Day; if, whenever the state institutes a Navy Day, or an Army Day, organized religion will institute a World Court Day; if, whenever the state institutes a Flag Day, organized religion will institute a Ten Commandments Day, or a Sermon on the Mount Day; if, whenever incompetent, uninformed legislators offer an affront to a friendly nation, as was done by the legislatures of our land to a friendly power--Japan--, organized religion would send a commission to Japan, traversing the length and the breadth of that land, informing those people that we are their friends, and that these political morons do not represent the sentiment and the will of the American people.--if organized religion will be true to its own standards and its own ideals, it can lead mankind today.

Just exactly what service can the church render the cause of peace? As it see it, a two-fold service. First, the church can create a peace frame of mind, a peace



temperament, a peace attitude, a will to peace among people. If the church can, by education, by constant exaltation, by giving its sanction and its sanctification to the cause of peace, make peace so living, so vivid, so marvelously concerning men; just as it made the Holy Land so attractive to mankind that crusaders went from all parts of Europe to conquer it, to shed their blood for it; just as it made the cause of the abolition of slavery so near to the hearts of men that they were ready to wage a civil war for it,--if the church can, by constant teaching and preaching, make men, and especially young men, feel how contemptible war is in all its trappings and all its machinery, and how heroic peace always is; if the church can inflame the imagination of men, then peace will be brought perceptibly nearer to realization. For one must always remember that psychology is a tremendous factor in war and peace. It is not true that economics alone makes war or establishes peace.

In this connection it might be well to read this sentence of Professor McDougall, the eminent psychologist. It is very pertinent, and it is very true. He says: "In the sphere of international relations, psychological thinking is still conspicuously lacking. The economic interpretation of history is the assumption that, explicitly or implicitly, underlies almost all discussion and practice. It is still assumed that men are governed solely by the desire for economic prosperity; that each man and each nation strives merely to obtain as large as possible a share of material



goods, of wealth of the world, and that all that is needed to produce the millennium is maximum production and equitable distribution of such goods. The course of history has shown, and always will show, the falsity of all such purely economic interpretations of national life."

Man does not live by bread alone, and wars are not waged for bread alone. Something of the jungle man, something of the primitive beast, something of the viciousness, something of the combativeness of man must be eradicated, and the only institution, the only agency capable of reaching down to the mainsprings of human conduct is the church, is organized religion; the only agency that can mold character, and fashion, crystallize, purify the soul of man, and inculcate within him a will to peace, is the church.

The church ought to set itself the task also of destroying national conceit, of destroying national egotism. The church, being international in purpose and scope, ought to assume the chief role of teaching men to look upon men of other nations as men; to suppress their own national vanities and their own national chauvinism. The church ought to teach men to look upon their own political organization honestly and critically; just as the church teaches man to be critical of self, and when sinful to acknowledge his sins, and when erring to rectify his errors, so must the church teach men to act and think . . . .

That is the first task of the church in this age in which we live--the contemplation of a will to peace, and



the eradication of that vicious national conceit, which is so devastating to the world today.

Secondly, and lastly, the church must do more than that. It is not sufficient merely to point to these ineffectual ideals; the church cannot content itself merely with preaching the will to peace and not showing the way. What mankind needs today is the way, the direction. The church must also point the machinery for the establishment of peace. There will be no disarmament of the nations unless the nations feel secure. It would be folly, it would be criminal, for a people to strip itself of all its protection--of army, of navy, or aircraft, without being compensated by some corporate agency which will protect it and safeguard it on the occasion of an unjustifiable action.

France never will disarm, France never should disarm, until it is secure against an attack by a nation, such as Germany. Germany, after it has regained its prosperity and its position among the nations of the world, will not disarm, and should not disarm, until it is protected against any possible aggression on the part of Russia or France, or any other power.

In other words, for the church merely to indulge in vain. . . . . about the desirability of international peace and the benefits of disarmament is to engage in futilities. For the church to point to some agency which can be set up by the nations of the earth, which, promising protection for all peoples, will enable these



peoples almost automatically to discard those armaments which weigh so heavily on them, is for the church to engage in practical service to mankind.

Back of competitive armament is fear. Let us not forget that. No nation wishes to arm and burden its people with excessive taxation just for the joy of having large armies and large navies. Back of all competitive armament, which inevitably leads to war--no armament is national life insurance,--back of all competitive armament is fear, and as long as mankind does not establish an institution, an agency, a league, a court, which will promise effective security for a nation attacked unjustly, so long will nations not disarm.

In other words, the immediate task of the church today is to focus itself, and rivet the attention of men and women upon the first step in the establishment of such an agency for the mutual protection of all peoples. If the world is not yet ready for a league of nations, such as is in operation at Geneva--and some nations are not yet ready for one reason or another to enter such a league--then certainly the minimum, the sine qua non, for this day, not ultimately, but this day, as the first step to the world court for the adjudication of international differences, the church must demand that every people submit its differences to this world court, which will derive its authority from the moral will of mankind, and ultimately, when it will have gained prestige and influence, may be given final force to make its decisions effective.



Clearly, my friends, there can be no peace among nations unless nations are willing to submit their problems, their difficulties, to a court; just as there can be no peace among individuals unless individuals are willing to submit their differences to a tribunal. There can be no peace in the world unless each nation pledges itself to submit all disputes to such a court. Clearly, private warfare must give way to public law; clearly, public warfare must give way to international law. There is no other way. And the church, organized religion, must constantly bring the thought of men and women to this way of salvation, to this road to international peace. Later on, when the church will have seen the success of this rudimentary institution, it may then reach out and ask for a wider agency, for a stronger organization. But this is the first step, and this must be taken now, if mankind is not to pass through another such ghastly tragedy as it passed through four years ago.

Let us not delude ourselves; mankind is not at peace today. The last war did not establish peace; the last peace did not effect peace. An economic arrangement, such as the Dawes reparation settlement, does not mean peace to Europe; it means merely an economic breathing space for the nations of Europe. Let us not delude ourselves; our own Washington Conference did not limit armament; it merely enabled the nations of the earth to turn their preparedness into other channels; from major battleships, which are



already antequated, to minor craft, and to submarines, and to airplanes, and to chemicals, and to poison gas.

There is more of armament in Europe today than there was in 1913, and the nations of the world today, including the United States, are arming themselves to the teeth for the next great war. Now, if mankind is to be spared the disaster, the tragedy, of another such war, more ghastly, more destructive than anything which has taken place heretofore, it is, to my mind, the imperative duty of the church, rising above the state, rising above its subservience to temporal needs and to temporal requirements, true to its vision, true to its prophetic mission, to preach at all times, continuously, first, peace, the ideal of peace; the ugliness, the brutality, the Godlessness, the criminality of war, of all war; the heroism, the grandeur, the sublimity of peace, of law, of justice among nations. And then turn the vision of men to that first institution, the first agency which promises a modicum of security to the peoples of the earth as a means for disarmament.

That is, to my mind, the task of religion in the next generation and the next century. Let us not think that peace will come about easily and quickly. It cannot. Man and nations are not so constituted. The road of peace will be a hard road to travel, and the men who set out to travel that road will suffer, as the dreamers have always suffered. The dreamers at all times have been. . . . . Their dreams have survived. Those who ask for peace today



will be denied and persecuted; they will be called traitors and pacifists and disloyal. But it must be so; it has always been so. The church and the churchmen must feel above the considerations of expediency. They must be true to the God spirit in them.

When the church will regain its voice, men will hearken unto it, and nations will then. . . . . unto it. And so. . . . .

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# CHANNING AND CHRISTIAN HISTORY

By PROFESSOR FRANCIS A. CHRISTIE, D.D.

# THE MORAL EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG

By PROFESSOR ROBERT J. HUTCHEON, A.M.

# ORGANIZED RELIGION AND WORLD PEACE

By RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER

*Sermon*  
157

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## CHANNING AND CHRISTIAN HISTORY.

By Professor Francis A. Christie, D.D.

There was a time when nothing could win acceptance as religion unless it could claim a venerable antiquity. Now the advocate of a thought must guarantee its novelty. The idea of progress disparages the *quod semper creditum*. An eager generation stands on tiptoe to catch the whisper of the moment that is to be. Mention as your warrant a name as old as Channing, and you may detect a certain polite reserve of manner. It appears on inquiry that Channing is not altogether modern. He entertained some belief in miracles and expressed a view of the nature of Jesus that is wholly antiquated. Now we will not deny progress or gainsay the claim that truth is the daughter of time, but the remoteness of a man depends on the perspective, and why should we adopt the perspectives of the history of doctrine? If we would be modern let us be sure that we have a thoroughly modern point of view.

When we expound the history of doctrine we find ourselves dealing with a secondary product of religious history, a product that is only intelligible when we see the deeper and primal element of which it was the intellectual result. The nineteenth century was proud of the discovery of a distinction between religion and theology and it gave primacy and originative power to religion or, to use a word of almost equal ambiguity, to piety. The distinction may be crudely used at times with the result of making religion a blind sort of feeling without vision of the object of feeling, but it is certainly clear by this time that religion is not essentially an intellectual exercise and that it cannot be won or inculcated *more geometrico*. Religion lies in the mysterious capacity of the will to obey or to resist ideas that have the dynamic power of ideal obligation. Doctrine may postulate or logically infer the intellectual premises of this experience, but religion itself is the life responsive to great divine objects that are objects to the will rather than to the understanding and are experienced in a state of ideal exaltation of the inner self that is hardly scientific inquisitiveness. When we are considering the historical significance of a man it is important to know whether he belongs to the story of those who were busy with the intellectual explication of the primal experience, or was one who initiated a new intensity or a new enlarge-



ment of the religious experience itself. I have read an exposition of Martin Luther which makes him a name in the history of doctrine. The chapter devoted to him calculates with nicety the form of his doctrinal conceptions and leaves the impression that Luther was a somewhat confused and broken-down representative of scholasticism. When on the other hand Harnack discusses Luther's place in religious history we discover a genius through whom society regained the essential Christian experience in its clear simplicity and, for all his doctrinal obstinacy, the emancipator of the Christian from servitude to ecclesiastical science. In the one version Luther is a name of subordinate rank; in the other he inaugurates a new era of life. On the one hand a Lutheran is a person defending certain problematic views; on the other hand, a Lutheran is a new type of man and Lutheranism a new form of social life.

So, as concerns Channing, one may have a cool indifference to some of his theological definitions or arguments and yet be exalted by him to an ideal fervor, receive from him an expanded conception of piety and become through him a new type of man. A man may belong to the foot notes of a history of doctrine and yet loom large in the records of social transformation. In the matter of Christology Channing might be mentioned with the ante-Nicene Fathers, and yet his notion of religion may be beyond the tiptoe reach of the most advanced doctrinarian.

For myself I think that Christianity as a story of religion proper falls into three stages, Catholicism, Protestantism and Channing, and I invite you to consider Channing's place in the history of piety.

The first stage of Christianity as religion was Catholicism and while Catholicism contained much of the religion of Jesus we need not agree that Catholicism was the necessary evolution of the religion of Jesus. The historian knows nothing of mechanical necessity. For him a later stage of historic life is explained simply when it is shown to be the play of motives and interests that are present in the earlier stage. Our present-day study of religious history insists that we shall take a broad view of the social-religious complex, and in this broad view it is plain that what went on evolving was not some isolated abstraction known as pure and primitive Christianity but an antecedent widespread type of piety modified by the ethical spirit of Jesus and invigorated by the affinity to pagan myth of the Christian faith that Jesus died and rose again.

After the somewhat indeterminate conditions of the first two centuries, Christian piety began to develop steadily as a



Christianized pagan religiosity. This mode of statement is not at all inconsistent with the common assertion that the starting point of Christian development is found in the missionary Paul. Paul's suggestions and impulses are manifold, and the pagan society converted by him appropriated what in substance was already familiar under the form of various mystery cults. In the sixteenth century reformers seized upon Paul's doctrines of atonement and justification by faith, but the ancient Greek society did not turn its selective attention upon these conceptions. Paul's conception of faith as redemption was buried out of sight until the German mind revived it after Catholicism had run its course. Catholicism arose from other elements in Paulinism, elements strikingly related to the contemporary tendencies of pagan religiosity. Consciously or unconsciously Paul was a Greek to the Greeks. In that age of syncretism cults were tending to become universal forms of religion unlimited by nationality or descent. Paul universalized the new Palestinian fervor and emancipated it from Jewish racial bonds. These cults had myths of divine heroes that died and were alive again. Paul offered in the place of problematic myth the certain historic fact of Christ dying and risen and exalted to lordship. The cults of the world offered sacramental communion with the dying and resurgent divine hero, the gift of sacramental substances conferring immortality, the mystic appropriation of the god and his deathlessness by the initiate. Paul's epistles glow with the enthusiasm of these conceptions presented in a Christian form, and these are the conceptions which the Greek world appropriated for its Christianized religiosity. These interests were fundamental and dominant, stronger than any other, more scientific interest.

The history of doctrine illustrates the superior power of these interests. To give supreme authority to the word of Jesus the apologists of the moralistic second century dropped the Jewish notion of Messiah and declared that the Logos spoke through Jesus. That position gave the supreme rational guarantee to the Christian preaching of one God, of moral service and of heavenly reward. It gave at first no more than this rational certainty. So far as that interest was concerned the Logos might have continued to be conceived as a half-god, an intermediate being. Something like Arianism would have been a justified result or else the view of Origen. But an interest more powerful than theoretic reason seized upon this Logos doctrine and insisted upon consubstantiality with God and the union of two natures in Christ. This more powerful interest was the craving for the redemption of resur-



rection, for deification, for union with a being whose absolute deity and eternity conferred on man eternity of being. For the fundamental aspiration of the Greek society was that which Paul met in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, the yearning for incorrupt eternity of being. Redemption naturally included ethical values, but the redemption is expressed in terms physical rather than ethical. On the human personality lay the blight of finitude, the doom of death. That doom began—in the Christian version—with the sin of Adam, but attention seemed to rest upon the horror of the consequence rather than upon the guilt of its cause. The dogmatic movement is clear from these premises. If our redemption is given in Christ, there must be full deity in him, for only so is there assurance of an eternity of being, an *aphtharsia*, an exemption from finitude; there must be full humanity, for only so is given the guarantee of man's eternalizing for the blessedness of that land which eager souls expect. So the sacraments which impart the God-man are more than symbol; they are a union of the material with the heavenly substance and confer the immortality of the God-man. So when Christianity became the state religion and the great hordes of the pagan population poured into the church we have but an extension of all this magical and sacramental kind of religiosity. The dogma became mere ritual. The scriptures were simply passages in the ceremonial. The ethical is overlaid with the passion for amulets and saints' relics and images and pictures and whatever material forms might be thought to contain the virtue of a heavenly and immortal reality. Western Catholicism was indeed more alive to the ethical and gave a special development to the penitential discipline, but the ethical interest in which it originated was lost and penance found a substitute in indulgences, and indulgences were a substitute for moral obligation. The ethical view of western Catholicism is emphasized in its theological reflection as influenced by Augustine, but the Augustinian element was somewhat out of relation to the ritual life of the church and the history of mediaeval conflicts shows the triumph of the interests of sacramental ritual over the ethical Augustinian element. A separate western type of religiosity was not fully developed—unless it be in the "new devotion" of the Brothers of the Common Life and that was a symptom of transition to something new.

Such Catholicism was the first type of piety and two things were evident about it. In the first place, if indulged in seriously and completely, it was inimical to the welfare of society in its historic tasks. It enfeebled men for citizen-duty and



was the foe of culture. When the Isaurian emperors wished to secure the Empire from barbarian attack they brought to the capitol and stationed on the frontier bodies of a more primitive Christian sect that in the isolation of Armenia had failed to share in this development of piety and had preserved the vigor and the social responsibility of strong men. And the divorce of such Catholic piety from the general life was evident by the fact that it generated a division of classes. He who would taste and feel and see the supernatural must sequester himself, must forsake the family vocation, must lead the ascetic, the angelic life, must be celibate, must be holy priest or holy monk. Only he was *religious*. The rest were religious dependents, religious only in a secondary degree. In the end the church meant essentially the corporation of the priests and monks.

In the second place, while ritual and memory preserved something of the ethical Jesus, it is apparent and was apparent that the religiosity so evolved was incongruous with the original spirit of Jesus and his company. There had been a departure from the essence of Christianity. Whenever a glimpse of the classic initial form of Christianity was regained there sprang up sects to protest against this erroneous and unwholesome divergence from the central and essential Christian principle. That which Jesus contributed to the world's religious forces found itself in protest against a system of piety which was simply a more advanced stage of paganism. There was a restriction and suppression of man's moral personality in its full dignity. There was a cleavage of the spiritual society. There was a discord between the spiritual and the materialistic. The redemption offered was magical and the realization of that redemption was postponed to another world. Evidently the historic development needed simplification and refining.

An opposition to this system inherited from antiquity is evident in the peoples of German stock whenever they lost their docile attitude of mere uncritical reception. With the slow maturing of German civilization the opposition gathered force and the crisis came with the German Luther. His personal struggle for confidence in God had revealed to him a simpler apprehension of piety, a reduction of Paulinism to the long buried essence of the spiritual side of Paul's thought. Catholicism had made religion a thing of infusions and inspirations of divine reality into the man who had made himself receptive by the sacrifice of the human. The vast mass of spiritual dependents, inferior in religious privilege, esteemed incapable of the personal consciousness of super-



natural communion were bidden to docility of obedience and assent. For the saint the embrace of God, for the mass the belief in a divine Providence.

Luther saw the infinite blessedness of this layman stage of faith, saw revealed in it such a richness of spiritual possession, such a glad security of God, such a dynamic force for the ethical life that all the privileges of monk and saint fell into the background. Catholic piety had lost the personal confidence of divine Friendship which belonged to the early cry of Abba Father. Luther kindled that early faith afresh. Religion was the message of God's friendship for sinful man and man's response in faith. The message is brought home to the soul by the unquestioned fact of Christ's death for human sin, and the faith that accepted that message as a personal truth contained in itself all the joy, all the privilege, all the power of religion. The religious life was simply the attestation of that faith in conduct whatever the lot or calling. Lord and ploughman, prince and peasant, scholar and household drudge, each in his separate sphere was living the religious life without need of convent or ordination or ascetic preparations or supernatural infusions. Faith was redemption. No longer the division of classes, but a universal priesthood of faith. No longer the withdrawal of the religious from the sphere of historic tasks, but the beginning of an age when the historic task could be seen as the sphere of religion itself. No longer the crippling restriction of the human personality but the beginning of that era in which the ideal of religious life could meet and blend with all the high ideals of the human personality.

It is true that the exhibition of these results was slow and restricted. Luther's reform and simplification, Luther's re-conquest of a more natural and human piety was overlaid by all that petrification of dogma and scholasticism that religious warfare seems to have entailed for the temporary protection of the new piety. A change, however, had begun. The simplicity of simple trust in divine friendship had begun to triumph over the magical and sacramental. A new and nobler type of man of social life had been founded and the nineteenth century with its critical analysis of the past has enabled the simple essence of Lutheranism to begin afresh its more unhindered evolution. It is evident that Lutheranism seen in this light rouses the sympathy of the reader of Channing, and yet the sympathy has its limits. The Lutheran type of piety taken by itself is the attainment of peace for the self-accused spirit, but it lacks the positive energy of the life that reaches beyond the assurance of forgiveness to the full



sanctioned activity of the human endowment. The word of God for Luther is the proclamation of Christ's atonement, and the critical study of the origins of Christian beliefs makes a crisis for Lutheranism of tragic significance. That word of God which evoked the Lutheran piety of faith seems imperilled, and mere Lutheranism does not contain within itself a new and securer word of God to the soul that would fain bask in the sunshine of divine friendship. For the word of God that can reveal divinity and evoke faith and inspire the fulness of human perfection of life, a word of God undisturbed by the tragedy of historical criticism and indeed fortified by every advance of the science of religion we must go on to Channing and those for whom Channing spoke. The road to Channing lay through Calvinism.

The internal history of Protestantism, its history as a spiritual principle, may be said to lie in the changing conceptions of the word of God. In the age of controversial orthodoxy the word of God was presented in the Formula or the various confessions of Calvinism. Against this mere "notionism" mystics like Fox rebelled and asserted an inner word of the spirit. Pietism recalled the Lutherans to the insight that the word of God was such a revelation as evoked personal religious experience. Rationalism contended that the word of God was the universal human innate idea of God and duty and heavenly reward. Speculative idealism insisted that the word of God was the idea of the unity of finite and infinite spirit. Experience with all these suggestions would seem to show that the religious instinct is not so much concerned with the truth that gratifies the inquisitive understanding as that word of God which is redemptive to the sluggish soul and gives the joy and energy of supreme good for the spiritual race. Protestant piety seeks that present redemption. It desires the faith that leaps up when the vitalizing message of God is spoken in the deep seat of personal being, suffusing the heart with ideal joys and invigorating the will with the spontaneity of ideal endeavor.

That is Protestant piety, and the characteristic and almost definitive method of Protestantism for the evocation of that experience is that which the Augustinian Calvinist tradition used. The ultimate and complete illustration of that method is found in New England in the Eighteenth Century. There the whole community of such villages as listened to Edwards were convinced of the truth of the Calvinist version of the word of God and singularly responsive to its appeal. That word of God provocative of the highest human felicity was the Divine Sovereignty.



One thing binds Lutheranism and Calvinism together. For them both the spring of all religious activity is the personal realization of the forgiveness of sins. Apart from their differences of ecclesiastical organization and discipline the marked distinction is the rigor and distinctiveness of the logic by which this experience was induced in Calvinist circles. For the sake of argument against Erasmus Luther gave an extreme presentation of the Scotistic view of God as arbitrary will and harsh expression to the idea of predestination. When relieved of the necessity of further argument he seems to have relegated the topic to the background and to have made little practical use of it. He discountenanced the appeal to the sovereign majesty of the divine will and persuaded men by the known general provision of divine grace. Nor did Luther, like some of his followers, accentuate the horror of the life under the law so as to force his hearers to pass from a state of terror to a state of assurance. True, the antithesis of law and grace was the clue to all doctrine for him, but it remained a kind of abstract antithesis, a matter of theoretic analysis, and was not applied to the concrete personal life. His doctrine of grace was a comfort to the sinful Christian rather than a revivalistic appeal to depraved sinners.

In Calvinism, on the other hand, the doctrine of an inscrutable predestination was central and constant, and the antithesis of corruption and redemption was applied with more homiletic insistency. Edwards is the supreme instance of this Protestant preaching of redemption, because he discovered by his psychological acumen the method of presenting the doctrine so that numerous and radical conversions were the result. According to this view of piety, the Christian disposition began when God could be loved simply for the glory and beauty of his unmerited grace without any intervening claim of worth or effort to mar the adoration with a taint of personal interest or selfishness. In order to bring hearers to this absoluteness of selfless adoration it was necessary to convince them of their utter perversion and devilishness as men, and to accomplish that purpose Edwards and all consistent Calvinists had to take conscience away from man and make it simply an act of divine restraint. Man was painted as in himself the hater of all good simply coerced by an outer divine force into a certain decency of social demeanor. And not only was conscience denied to man as man but all its suggestions to the mind as to the nature of goodness and justice were discredited, that the purely arbitrary and capricious goodness of God might dawn upon the soul as a purely supernatural light, and that the disposition identi-



fiable as regenerate and Christian might be a purely supernatural operation. Such Calvinism only made sharply explicit and pressed home on every man for personal realization the truth which belonged to all that was typically Protestant.

Let us not forget that purity and singleness of Christian character were the result of this drastic experience, but let us simply note that the method of inducing the Christian state was an outright denial of the faith in God with which Christianity began, and could not therefore be consonant with the permanent essence of Christianity, if Christianity had any continuity of essence at all. Let us note also that this method of evoking piety began to destroy piety itself. Hopkins followed the logic of it all and insisted that we could love only the elect and since we could not tell who were elect we could love our fellowmen only in a tentative way. The history of this piety is a history of social disunion and dissidence, the exhibition of a tendency to withdraw and sequester the few assured elects from the social whole and from the church circles that could not be consistently ~~loved~~. There was a withdrawal too from the cultural task of humanity. The agents of this piety could not admit to the mind's sphere of attention aught that would conflict with the monoideism of their regenerative supernatural light. There was a withering and crippling of the human personality. The Kingdom of God was a name simply for another world and all the intramundane Messianic ideal had dropped completely from consciousness. Here again was an illustration of the fact that this final consistent form of Protestantism had lost continuity with the earlier stages of Christianity as an historic movement.

The opposition to all this was long afoot, but opposition does not make succession. Rationalists opposed the Calvinist doctrine of God, and of man, but this opposition did not, as history shows, provide a further movement of Christianity which should maintain continuity with the past of its essential elements. In particular, Rationalism dropped completely the idea of redemption as the religious experience in its inmost aspect, while certainly, as an historic religious movement, Christianity is a religion of redemption. Catholicism in its typical aspect offered redemption in physical terms and by a process of sacramental administration. Protestantism in its clear expression offered a moral redemption by a process of divine co-action upon a resistant will. For the Catholic the redemptive gift was a substance. For the Calvinist the redemptive process was a reconstitution of the moral disposition.



The name of Channing seems to me to signalize a stage beyond these two, because he also offers redemption—something generative of salvation, something more than mere mandate of duty—and also because his apprehension here is consonant with the spirit of the beginning of the Christian movement and serves to restore the intramundane Messianic ideal with which the original Christian preaching of redemption was associated. The older church declared its doctrine of human nature only as it somewhat tardily developed the presupposition of its whole system of belief. The underlying premise thus explicated in the end was the utter ruin and impotence of man in himself and the doom inevitable to his nature as man until a foreign redemptive action should be enacted upon him. With only incidental protest this doctrine of man reigned through Catholic and Protestant times, the Greek current emphasizing the physical blight and doom, the Augustinian element emphasizing the moral hopelessness of human nature. The Arminian made a tame modification. Channing made a revolutionary substitution. My whole intention is to say that in Channing's intuition of the dignity of human nature there was not merely the substitution of one anthropology for another, not the mere insistence on human dignity in place of human depravity—not such mere substitution but the promulgation of a word of God of redemptive efficacy.

We have been saying that the Christian and indeed all highly ethical religions seek something more than a truth for the gratification of the inquisitive reason. They seek a Word of God that lays hold on the will and the higher emotions with some intense electrifying effect, so that inertia gives way to vitalized activity, apathy and listlessness are stirred to ideal exaltation, and the soul is assured of direct personal relation to the Eternal Power that is its absolute sovereign, such a relation, moreover, as is the assurance of an ultimate conformity to the nature absolute and adorable. The history of the pagan cults of the Roman Empire would seem to show something like a uniform law—the law of formal worship rising to personal communion or personal union with the divine power. This makes a broad contrast with the mere rationalistic moralism that merely argues the existence of a divine authority and infers the duty of moral obedience by the resources of a distinct and separated will.

Let us admit that Channing did not sharply and consistently present religion in the relation of these distinctions. The man who is the vehicle of great historic change is never so conscious of the bearings of his own thought and ex-



perience. In the great religious genius humanity takes a new step somewhat confusedly and somewhat unconsciously without full awareness of the reformatory value of that step. So it was with Luther. So it was with Channing. At a late period of his life, when asked if he had ever experienced conversion, Channing answered: "I should say not, unless the whole of my life may be called, as it truly has been, a process of conversion." In spite of this partial disclaimer, we have to remember one rather distinct spiritual crisis of his youth when, beneath the willow trees of a Cambridge meadow, reading Hutcheson's account of man's capacity for disinterested affection, there suddenly burst upon his mind his view of the dignity of human nature, when, to use the words of another, "the glory of the divine disinterestedness, the privilege of existing in a universe of progressive order and beauty, the possibilities of devotedness to the will of Infinite Love, penetrated his soul." We who read Edwards' account of the conversions in Northampton can see that this is exactly the disposition identified by Edwards as regenerate and evidence of redemption. And it is a mark of superiority over Edwards that Channing with all his delight of memory in that blessed moment of the revelation of spiritual light should not rely on its momentary exaltation but desire only to claim that the word of God then and there revealed had been the continual and progressive spring of his spiritual life.

It is due to the revivalism of Calvinist history that we have come to disuse the word and thought of redemption unless there is meant the crisis of some sudden and radical change that divides life into two authentic periods of nature and grace. But before Calvinism it was not so. With Luther it was not so, and with such a Lutheran pietist as Spener it was not so. For great examples of religious experience like these redemption was not a name for a momentary and distinct crisis. It was a more timeless truth of present imperfection and a perfecting made possible by non-empirical transcendent process. Every reader of Channing is aware that he belongs to the records of those who in fuller measure have experienced and expressed this redemptiveness of religion and, if this is the inner essence of all that calls itself evangelicalism, Channing surely is one of the most evangelical of Christian pietists.

For Catholicism, let us repeat, the word of God generative of such redemption was the truth conformed to pagan myth that Christ died and rose again for our salvation. The truth was law for the implicitly believing mass. The privileged few sought sensible or supersensible enjoyment of union with the eternal substance thus made accessible *ab extra* to man. For Protes-



tantism the word of God operative of redemption was that Christ died to make possible the forgiveness of sins and the bestowal of grace to the will that was else devoid of grace. Channing's word of God of redemptive efficacy was the illuminating intuition that human nature was never without God, that human nature in itself contained as its constitutive essence a mysterious unison with the Perfection which is God's nature. The word of God to which Catholicism and Protestantism appealed has been relegated by the history of thought to the realm of myth, so far as its objective reality is concerned. Channing's word of God is not dependent upon history and does not stand or fall with some old interpretation of an historic event. The incongruities and irrationalities and cruelties of the older Christian system lay in the fact that its redemption was attached to an objective transaction hid in the recesses of a Roman province and the obscure past of Roman history. Channing restored to Christianity its imperilled claim of universality by discovering the truth that is redemptive in every human breast.

Christianity had offered a visitation of the divine spirit to man which should furnish blessedness of emotion, ethical character to will, and certitude of divine fellowship; but it made that visitation contingent upon faith in an historical event, or rather in an historical event subjected to an insecure interpretation. Channing proclaimed not a visitation so contingent but an indwelling of God evident to every soul that should contemplate the mysterious regnancy of the ideal element of its own being. The human soul was the oracle of the redemptive truth. "The reason why men see God in the outward creation is that their own nature has an affinity with Him and cannot be unfolded or find repose without Him. We comprehend and desire Him because we carry His image in our moral and intellectual powers and because these tend to this source." "Man, though human by nature, is capable of conceiving the idea of God, of entering into strong, close, tender and purifying relations with God, and even of participating in God's perfection and happiness. We hear this great truth unmoved. It is a truth to wake the dead. It ought to exalt our whole life into joy."

Let us not ask of Channing the metaphysical explanation of this inner mystery by which man and God share one common character and one common energy of goodness. In the end it is the same mystery as Kant's transcendental freedom, it is the everlasting mystery about which Pelagians and Augustinians have struggled vainly. Let us not ask why in man there should be the conflicting fact of evil, *das radikale Böse*, for which Kant again could posit only a transcendental cause. We are looking at Channing not as a metaphysician, not as a doctrinal thinker.



These he was not. He was the voice through which humanity spoke its new and larger faith, the oracle of revelation. It is for those who follow him to apply intellectual method for the explication of the sum of doctrines involved in his re-expression of the one central and saving truth of the soul. It is enough for us to see that a great throbbing inspiration of the Christian soul speaks in Channing, and that he told men anew how and where to find the redemption which is the essence of religion.

And that this was not a mere capricious individual surmise but an insight of more universal authority is shown by its powerful and inspiring appeal in antiquity to the loftiest Stoic moralists, by its struggle to assert itself in the interest of the aesthetic nature in the age of the Renaissance, by its definite conquest of the political mind in the eighteenth century, but the immense invigoration which it exercised in the beginning of the marvelous period of German thought of the period of Kant, Herder and Goethe. For all these oracles of modern humanity the triumph over evil was not by faith in some ancient enactment, nor by any mere heroic self discipline of penance or repentance, by nothing, indeed, that has its sphere in the outer and phenomenal. Redemption, they declared, is found by descending into the depths of the inner nature and beholding the infinitude and absoluteness and universal authority of the worth that is regnant there, a worth decreed by the soul itself and yet a worth grounded in a supersensible world. That worth grows and is victor over all evil and unworth by the very consciousness of its infinite dignity. This, said Goethe, was the supreme height of religious evolution. Only when released from the long inbred contempt of self and reaching the reverence of himself could man attain the highest of which he was capable. Religion does not wait for the indorsement of theoretic reason before it shows its efficacy, and the efficacy of this redemptive word of God is attested by its powerful extension over our society in all those circles that, groping crudely for a metaphysical form of expression, proclaim a release from every ill and suffering through the consciousness of this divinity of the soul of man. The faith in a divine relationship and a divine possibility for man is experimentally proven to have a power of intensifying the spiritual personality and giving it the victory over evil.

And we can measure that power in part by its contrast. Certain schools of literature have fallen heir to the old theological contempt of man and have depicted human nature with gross and cynical realism simply as a bundle of coarse passions, and under the suggestibility of such a picture men have seemed to verify its truth. And as the poison of the old view was getting expelled from theology, political economy took it up and in-



vented an economic man with the elimination of the morality which Channing affirmed as the essence of real men. This too has had a baneful suggestibility. As an English writer has said: "It is astounding to what an extent we have succeeded in turning this scientific monster into a reality." Channing did not deny the fact of moral evil; he left it as a mystery coincident with the fact of moral freedom. But he saw man as man is given in his present stage of development—not as some abstraction of theological theory, nor as abstraction of the older political economy. He saw the actual concrete normal man who is a spiritual moral personality, and he saw that such a personality is the subject with which Christianity deals. He saw man as Jesus saw him, a being responsive in his own personality to that character which is perfect and complete in God. He saw a perfectible child of God and therefore a being already endowed for perfection. He meant by human nature not the brute that man may become by deserting the human possibility, but the man in the light of that distinguishing infinity of good which is bound up in his life and of the aspiration for communion with a changeless perfection of Being which should nourish, fortify and fulfill the yet imperfect measure of human perfection. He is saying, only more copiously and with an eloquence more profuse, what the Synoptic Jesus said in terse brevity when he condensed all religion in the bidding to become perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect.

If in this way Channing clearly reverted to the essential conception of the Christian religion as it was in its original moment, the coincidence of Channing's apprehension of piety with the inspiration of the founder of Christian piety is shown in another striking characteristic. All previous piety and theology was conditioned by what was determined to be the essence of Christianity. For the Greek that essence was the appropriation of the incarnate, dead and resurrected Son of God for the eternalizing of man. For the Protestant it was the forgiveness of sins through the death of Christ. In both cases there was a striking loss of the intense Messianic expectancy of a perfect family of the Father of Love within the horizon of man's world.

For Germany Ritschl made a change. If there is one fact more momentous than all others about Ritschl as a theologian it is that he determined the essence of Christianity in a manner different from all his predecessors. Ritschl found all Christian ideas and ideals phases of one central organizing conception, and that conception was the Kingdom of God, the life of a perfect spiritual community of love as the necessary form of life under a Father of love. Ritschl was fully conscious that in this new determination of the essence of Christianity he was a reformer of piety, giving religion a fresh appeal to the volitional creative self-



assertive personality of modern man. He understood this central conception not strictly in the form presented by Jesus but in the form which the thoughts of Jesus must assume after the immanent criticism of history has operated upon it. Ritschl, that is, suppressed the miraculous and apocalyptic form and developed the intramundane and ethical form which Kant had introduced to modern thought.

Ritschl was a university scholar, a systematic theologian, and it was his office to suggest to modern Christianity the reformulation of Christian doctrines in the light of this new determination of the essential principle of Christianity when it resumes its sway not under the control of Paul but under the control of Jesus. Channing was not a university scholar, not a systematic theologian. He was a practical pietist and preacher, and he simply set about the realization in life of that which Ritschl wanted first accomplished in doctrinal system. Vast as the service is that Ritschl rendered, his efforts have one fatal defect. He conceived the claim of this kingdom of love as resting simply upon a miracle of historical revelation, and the historical study of his own followers has undermined that arbitrary claim of exclusive supernaturalism. Ritschl, like men of old time, conceived the redemptive word of God as brought *ab extra* to man, and such a conception always gives a problematic character to the redemptive revelation. But Channing has nothing to fear from the progress of historical criticism. The historical enunciation of the Christian principle is nothing isolated in time—nothing that stands or falls with the contingencies of history. In Channing's view, Christianity is in continuous and everlasting generation, since the generative principle is in the mysterious supernaturalism of man's own being. And Channing's supernaturalism restores to the Christian soul the Kingdom of God as expectation and ideal. Since the character lawfully regent over the human spirit is the character of a Father of Love, the full expression of the quickened spirit of man is one family of love. "By revealing to us the greatness of that nature in which all men participate Christianity lays the foundation of a universal love."

The older types of Christianity as they worked themselves out to full expression had produced spiritual castes. They had rent the unity of man by creating the most cruel and most odious of aristocracies—the aristocracy of religious privilege. In all the complex diversities of modern society one idea has been struggling to gain control of life with something of the irresistibility of a force of nature. It was the idea of Democracy. Channing's resolution of religion to the Word seated in every human breast united this irresistible principle of Democracy as the human form



of life with the essential principle of Christianity. Were we to tell the tale of Channing's practical endeavors, it would not be a mere tale of pitying philanthropy. It would be the tale of the noblest efforts known to history to procure a civilization of equality in moral dignity and moral possibility. It would be the tale of Channing interpreting Democracy as Christianity and Christianity as Democracy. It would be the tale of his enthusiasm for a social reconstruction "founded on the essential truth that the chief end of the social state is the elevation of all its members as intelligent and moral beings," the tale of his yet unrealized system of popular culture, democratizing the college by the inclusion of mercantile education, reforming all education by the union of manual labor with intellectual study, directing the united enthusiasm of the democratic state and the Christian church by the elevation of the industrial life to the dignity and the privileges of culture, engaging all for a crusade against war, slavery, intemperance, ignorance, inequality, injustice, and materialistic greed.

Channing Unitarianism meant an enthusiasm for a Christian civilization that should realize in full expression all men's inherent dignity as children of God and members of a divine family of love. Here none of the old division into classes by the operation of a mistaken view of piety but a piety operative for the fusion of men in one equal brotherhood and thus operative for the spirit of Jesus as no other piety had been. Here none of the old atrophy of the human personality by the abstraction and withdrawal of piety from the secular and cultural tasks of men, but the full harmonious expression of human powers in a personality organized and controlled by surrender to the divinity regnant in its own ideals. All good, he said, became moral by union with this moral principle. On every side we are hearing now that the older Christianity as it is perpetuated makes divorce of the religious and the secular. He who would live a harmonious life in which the distinction is lost and religion is the guide and inspiration of our share in the tasks of civilization shall find his teacher in Channing.

The amazing corruptions of American life are not the denial of Channing's gospel but the evidence that it has not been heard. How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard, said Paul. Liberal Christianity has not yet fully given itself to the proclamation of this religious humanism. It has been fortifying itself by preliminary rectification of the general thought. It has—as a means to its end—been engrossed in Biblical criticism and following that path has explored the field of Comparative Religions. It has—as a means to its end—reformed the Cosmology, and it is to be feared that some have been so ensnared by



the non-human aspects of the world's history as to forget the sovereignty of the spiritual in man or to leave man's redemption to the slow mercy of evolution. But the world reawakens. Society seems to insist in its new religious gatherings on this gospel of vast human potentiality through the intuition of the divinity linked with our being. The phenomenal world is a mechanism, but there is a world which is not but is to be. It is the kingdom of our ideals. The two worlds meet in the human heart. The disposition of the heart can transfigure the outer world of mechanism with the significance of our ideals, can make it the scene of the absolute and imperishable values of our ideals, can make it the temporal instrument of a kingdom which belongs not to time. We know not what we shall be until we do the creative deed, and the power to do the deed comes from faith. The faith is the faith that the essence of our moral personality is founded in God himself and that his creative energy is entrusted to our use.

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#### THE MORAL EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG.

An Address Before the "Round Table," Meadville, Feb. 23, 1925.

By Professor Robert J. Hutcheon.

A state of great anxiety, indeed of panic in some cases, exists in many minds today over the moral condition of the young. Habits of reticence, modesty, self-restraint, earnestness, respect and reverence which were formerly fairly common among the young seem somehow to have lost their appeal. The glamor which large experience and ripe wisdom once exercised over youth has faded away and young people are experimenting with life on their own account gleefully and even recklessly, as though human nature and the physical environment were like clay and could be easily moulded to the heart's desire. No one in constant touch with adolescent boys and girls need go beyond his own experience to learn something of this venturesome and carefree mood, but if any one wishes to enlarge his experience by reading the reports of others, let him read the articles of Judge Ben Lindsey of the Juvenile Court of Denver, Colorado, in the last two numbers of *Physical Culture*. Judge Lindsey is too kindly and wise to be a mere faultfinder—indeed when he does find fault it is with the parents and teachers rather than with the boys and girls—but he makes it perfectly plain that the old reticences of youth are largely gone, that the young are eager to pluck the fruit of life before it is ripe and that the old checks on a reckless experimentalism are very rapidly losing their power.



Now I am not concerned tonight to try to show that the young are worse than their parents were in their adolescent years. I take for granted that human nature is much the same in the same group from generation to generation. The change is not in heredity but in environment—in the stimuli brought to bear on the growing mind, in the life-habits which are drilled into the children in their tender and plastic years and in the social atmosphere which, though it may be invisible, nevertheless soaks into and saturates their innermost being. We, older people, who are so critical of our young, would probably have been as they are, if the mental, social and economic world of our youth had been what theirs is now. Our task is not one of faultfinding but of diagnosis and, once the diagnosis is made, of remedying the trouble so far as our wisdom, patience and insight enable us so to do.

Let us begin by taking stock of the difficulties that confront the moral educator. When things go wrong with our youth we are inclined to lay the blame on the teachers and preachers because obviously it is their professional duty to mould the life of the young. We are apt to think that moulding human nature to moral ends is a rather easy matter and that, if teachers and preachers only did their duty, all would be well. But human nature is not so easily moulded. As the apostle James says: "Every kind of beasts and birds and of serpents and of things in the sea is tamed and hath been tamed of mankind, but the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." It may well be that the apostle was somewhat over-discouraged about human nature when he made this bitter comment, but those great men who have known human nature at closest range have never felt the task of redeeming and sublimating it to be an easy one. So impossible has the task seemed to the orthodox Christian theologians through the ages that they have interpreted the Christian religion as nothing less than a supernatural effort on the part of God and his son Jesus Christ to do for man what man could never do for himself, and they taught that, even with the supernatural help of God, only a few were likely to be saved, so deep-rooted and incurable was the evil of the natural man. We do not all accept this theological interpretation of Christianity nor do we share the pessimism of the Calvinistic outlook on human nature but, for all that, we must keep steadily before our minds the fact that human beings can come into the world heavily freighted with an animal heritage, that the first powers to develop are always the self-preserving and therefore potentially selfish ones, that the cultural desires are the latest to manifest themselves in the individual life as they were in the life of the race, and that, if the sensual,



selfish and ease-loving tendencies are allowed to get a big start in the adolescent years, the cultural desires may never overtake them at all. Human nature as displayed in the pages of history both towers to the heights of heaven and sinks to the depths of hell. It has produced its heroes of religion, patriotism, art, science, poetry and common everyday goodness, as well as its monsters of cruelty, greed, sensuality and hatred. As the mountains are about as high above the level of the seashore as the depths of the ocean are below it, so the heroes of history are about as high above the average human level as the monsters of history are below it. In other words, average human nature is neither utterly bad nor sublimely good but educable and mouldable if we work persistently and intelligently enough at the task of educating and moulding it. The very gifts that make us men, namely, our imagination and reason, make the problem of moral education both easier and harder. If we can go higher than the animals, we can also sink lower. The infinite element in human nature is the source of its badness as well as of its goodness. The infinite element in love, for example, may produce the tender spiritual passion enshrined in Mrs. Browning's *Sonnets From the Portuguese* or the subtle, ingratiating, all-conquering sensuousness of a Cleopatra. The infinite element in the human mind may find expression in a search for truth that inspires men to the most stupendous life-long tasks in the laboratory, observatory and library, or it may move man to heap one useless million upon another so long as life lasts or to gather up all the reins of a nation's political power into one's own hands as with Lenin and Mussolini. Some men and women will rise above the average level of morality, even if their environment is not altogether favorable, because the driving power of their social and cultural impulses is unusually strong; others will sink below the average level, unless handled with more than ordinary wisdom and insight, because their heritage is very mixed and confused or because the driving power of their sex-instinct or their acquisitive instinct or their instinct of domination is excessive; but the great majority of human beings will always belong on the average level and will always respond with average sensitiveness to moral discipline and pressure if that discipline and pressure are applied at the right time and in the right way. Hence if the morality of our average adolescents today is not what it should be, we must search for the reason, not in some change in human nature, but in the failure of society to provide adequate stimuli or in the failure of society to prevent other stimuli from arousing too early in the life and too passionately the dangerous tendencies in our adolescent population. The task of moral education is never an impossible task but it is always a difficult one and one



that calls for the keenest insight as well as the greatest patience and wisdom on the part of the moral educator.

It might be assumed that we are all agreed as to what the moral character, which is the aim of moral education, really is. But to add definiteness to our discussion let me summarize very briefly what is generally meant among ethical teachers by the term *moral character*. It is recognized now that it is impossible to separate the personal and social aspects of a moral character from one another but for purposes of exposition it is generally thought expedient to distinguish between them. The character qualities which are thought of as most personal are such as courage, initiative, temperance, self-respect, industry and thrift. Without courage, the young will shrink before every obstacle, hardship and failure. Without initiative they will never do more than go through the motions of their parents and teachers. Without temperance they will soon acquire habits of extravagance, excess and moral abandon that will make the sober, quiet life which is the lot of most humans seem unendurable. Without self-respect, they can have no inward monitor warning them against the wrong and spurring them on towards the right. Without industry they cannot maintain the standard of life which they have come to think indispensable. Without thrift they cannot maintain their independence in times of sickness and unemployment or in old age. Unless we manage somehow to stimulate all of these character qualities in the young, disaster awaits them and the societies they compose. They are making far greater economic demands on life than former generations did and, since economic goods and services do not grow wild, they must learn to work either harder or to better advantage than their fathers did.

The character qualities which are thought of as most social are those which are indispensable, first, in involuntary relations, that is, relations which we are born into, such as the family, the neighborhood and the country, and, second, in voluntary relations, such as marriage, business, church, political party and social life. Without filial piety and respect of children for parents, the basis of all reverence is undermined and the home cannot be, as in the past, the breeding place of the greater virtues. Without disinterested public spirit, democracy ceases to be such except in name and becomes a mere screen behind which an invisible government manipulates legislation to suit its own ends. Without intelligent, enthusiastic patriotism, nationality ceases to be an inner psychic reality and becomes a mere common legal system and a territorial demarkation. Without love and chastity the marriage bond loses all its ideal values and the relation between the sexes becomes cheap and vulgar and in the end disgusting.



Without honor in business and faithful fulfillment of contract, our colossal credit system would soon tumble into ruin. Without loyalty to the religious and political institutions to which we belong and tolerance towards the differing institutions to which our neighbors belong, our institutional life would soon dwindle or be completely absorbed in the hateful work of mutual extermination. When we read in our college text-books the story of the migrations of Germanic peoples into the territory of the old Roman Empire, our pity is awakened for the helpless farmers and villagers who happened to live in the path of these marauding invaders and we thank God that America stands in no danger of such invasions. But our civilization has become so complex and so dependent on brains and morals and disinterested public service that, if the social virtues we have just been outlining should somehow be weakened in the characters of our children or grandchildren, social chaos might arise from within our own borders without any invasion whatsoever from beyond.

We are to understand by moral character, then, in a few words, such personal virtues as courage, initiative, temperance, self-respect, industry, thrift and such social virtues as filial piety, public spirit, patriotism, philanthropy, chastity, honor, loyalty and tolerance. And, further, we are to understand that such virtues are not mere external adornments like ribbons, bracelets and rings, made a part of our mind by dint of much repetition of the words and phrases which describe them, but profound inward states of the mind, moulding personality silently and persistently from within and forming in time a character which can stand foursquare to all the winds that blow. Such is the moral personality at which moral education aims. In the face of all the weaknesses to which human flesh is heir, it may seem too great a thing for our schools and churches even to aim at, but moral characters constitute our greatest social need and the call to produce them is the greatest challenge that comes to the church and the school today and cannot be shirked or minimized.

It is often said that the longest way round is the shortest way home and in this discussion the old saying is *a propos*. I might proceed directly to discuss what the church and school may do to develop moral personality, but I prefer to achieve my purpose in a more roundabout way. I want to make plain what everybody knows but what we are all apt to forget, namely, that the school and the church are not the only teachers of the young, not the only moulders of moral or immoral personality. The movie, the newspaper, the gossip and tattle that go on perpetually in the hearing of the young, the hero-worship which the demi-gods of the baseball, football and pugilistic world inspire in the



breasts of their fellows, the dress, speech and manner of life of our most popular social leaders, the conspicuous waste of our most extravagant spendthrifts, the ideals and ambitions that inspire our ablest men and women, the dominating personalities of public life,—all these social forces which are ceaselessly playing on young life and moulding it, unconsciously, no doubt, but profoundly, have, as we say, a kick and a thrill and a drive in them which the moral lessons of the weary teacher in the little red school house or of the none too eloquent preacher in the pulpit can very seldom have. The greatest obstacle which organized religion and organized education meet in their efforts to mould the characters of the young towards moral ends is not the innate badness of young human nature but the vulgarity, the lust, the extravagance, the selfish greed, the corruption, the mobmindedness, the intolerant bigotry, the reckless disregard for law, the narrow materialistic aims of that vague but real entity called *the General Public*. Night and day, summer and winter, year after year, the influence of the general public plays on the young mind, suggesting, tempting, exciting, insinuating but only too seldom restraining and disciplining and warning.

Especially along these lines is the influence of the general public today chilling and depressing to any moral idealism that the church and school may try to awaken in the young. For example, the desire for wealth may develop some of the personal virtues which I have mentioned above, such as courage, initiative, industry and thrift, but when it becomes extreme, as it tends to do, it makes against such personal virtues as temperance and self-control and against most of the social virtues already named. The wealth-lust in America is the moral educator's greatest obstacle. The glamor which the newspapers have thrown around our millionaires, the pictures of their homes and weddings and costumes and social doings which the illustrated weeklies carry, the sight of their sumptuous automobiles on the streets, the stories of their colossal gains on Wall Street, the deference which communities pay to their highly successful money-makers, the widespread feeling that if you cannot spend money freely you are a nobody—can we not see how all these things excite the imagination of the young and easily persuade them that to get money is far more important than to get wisdom and understanding? What are the worldly rewards of the scholar or the scientist or the artist in comparison with those of the successful business man? To express contempt for such men and women the word *highbrow* has been coined and the extent to which the word is used is an indication of the extent to which our cultural standards have been lowered by our wealth-lust and our craving for conspicuous display. That explains why a class in



the High School of a neighboring city voted no to the question: Should we set a legal limit to the amount of wealth anyone may accumulate? They explained to their teacher that they voted no because they wanted the chance to become rich men and women which their parents and grandparents had had. Such is the inevitable ambition of the young when the greatest passion of their elders is to make money largely and spend it freely. How can the still voice of a morality as expounded by a poorly paid teacher or preacher make itself heard amid the thunder of applause with which the general public greets the successful money-maker? The rewards which morality has to offer are bound to seem to the young very sober and drab and unexciting in comparison with the popularity and power and magnificence which vast wealth brings to most of its possessors. The moral educator will fight a hard uphill battle so long as our general philosophy of life appraises the mere accumulation of wealth as it does today.

Or again how can we be surprised at the sex-experimentation that is going on among the young of today, (according to the testimony of such men as Judge Ben Lindsey), when the newspapers of our great cities print day after day in the most conspicuous columns the stories of the sex-experimentation that is going on among their elders? What young and curious person who turns over the pages of the great dailies can fail to be familiar with the progressive legalized polygamy of the movie stars? These stories no doubt produce shame and disgust among the more mature and sober-minded readers, but in minds that are inexperienced and curious and eager for thrills they may awaken very different reactions. To the infidelities and sex-experiments of the motion picture artists we must add the suggestions of the pictures themselves. Everyone knows how the reticences and modesties which used to keep the sex-interest in the background of life have been torn away by the motion-picture. It need not be denied that the sex-interest was not sufficiently recognized in the past by educators, parents and preachers and that in consequence the young have been unduly kept in ignorance of their own powers and needs, but the mistakes of the past are not rectified by this vulgar laying bare of the privacies of life before the curious eyes of children and adolescents. The so-called legitimate drama and the sex--novel have also added their quota to this programme of sex-suggestion and sex-stimulation. The result of it all is that the young are sex-conscious far too soon and because of this premature expression of an easily excited impulse they find it more difficult to subject their minds to the tamer experiences of study and business and domestic responsibilities. In all probability the young of today are



not a bit more highly sexed than their parents and grandparents were but the stimuli that pour in upon them from the newspaper, the movie, the theatre and the novel awaken their sex-interest too soon and make it more feverish than it normally is when it is awakened, as it ought to be, by the natural ripening of the bodily organism and the social nature.

And, thirdly, consider what a disastrous handicap to the moral educator is the whole business of law-breaking and law-defying and lax law-enforcement and self-appointed law-enforcers which shrieks at us from our daily papers. Obedience to law as an expression of the organized will of the community of which one is a member is an indispensable part of every moral character. This obedience to law is perfectly consistent with an effort to get rid of bad laws and to secure better ones; nevertheless obedience to significant laws, so long as they are laws, is the very reason for the existence of organized political society. It is the task of the moral educator to overcome the merely instinctive individualism of the young and train them for vital membership in society, and that job is hard enough under the best circumstances, but how immensely more difficult it becomes when the laws of society are flouted by many of its most conspicuous members, when the police force whose function it is to enforce the law connive at wrongdoing for a share of the profits of wrongdoing, when the bootlegger makes a fortune in a few years by breaking the law, when the enforcement of the law becomes so lax that even murderers are seldom made to suffer the penalties which the law lays down and when even Governors of states and members of the Federal cabinet use their privileged position as lawmakers or law enforcers to defeat the law by making money in illegal ways? When the general public itself is indifferent to law-flouting and law-breaking, how can we expect the admonitions and moral lessons of the teacher, however impressively delivered, to be effective with the average boy and girl?

I have not thrust these three phases of our general life upon your attention in any spirit of mere fault-finding or of hopeless pessimism. Censoriousness is one of my pet aversions and I am not pessimistic about our future. I have dwelt upon them because we cannot discuss intelligently the problem of the moral education of the young until we see clearly what the moral educator is up against. He is not up against an incurably bad human nature. Human nature never was, is not now and never will be incurably bad. The altruistic, the artistic, the intellectual and the religious impulses are just as natural and original to man as his egoistic and sensual impulses. What the moral educator is up against is a social environment which for historical, eco-



nomie, political and social reasons just now happens to stimulate unduly the sensuous, self-assertive and venturesome side of the nature of our young people.

Confronted by this sort of world what should our programme of moral education be? We need not go far afield for an answer. On such eternally important matters as morals we can add little to the wisdom of the ancients. Physics and chemistry and radio and all the mechanical inventions of recent years have no fresh insight into the moral life to offer us. We have not outgrown and will not outgrow the Wisdom Books of the Old Testament or the Ethics of Aristotle. And these teach us that moral education consists, first of all, in the inculcation of moral habits. Long before children are old enough to have moral heroes and long before their social natures have been completely awakened, they can be trained to moral habits and attitudes which will serve as a basis for the more personal morality that ought to come later. Here is where our modern home training and discipline have egregiously fallen down. We have inferred that, because the aristocracies and the old forms of religion took advantage of the plasticity and pliability of childhood and youth to inculcate habits, ideas and attitudes that merely perpetuated the dead or dying past, we of the democratic world ought to leave our children entirely free to grow and express themselves according to their own natural impulses, to find out things for themselves and to make all their own moral choices. It sounds like a liberal, big-hearted and large-minded attitude. People are so afraid of bringing undue pressure to bear upon young lives that they often refuse to bring any pressure whatsoever to bear. But no attitude could be more unsound psychologically or disastrous morally. As well might a horticulturist refuse to prune his apple tree because that would be to interfere with the course of nature. As well might we compel the children to start where the race started intellectually, make their own discoveries and inventions as they go along and learn only through their own errors and misjudgments. But we don't do that in the intellectual world. They are the heirs of all the ages and we help them to enter into their heritage. To all the discoveries of science, all the inventions of mechanics, to all the comforts and luxuries of travel and home life we introduce them as soon as we can. Why, then, should we refuse to hand on the moral experience of the past and allow the young to grow up as though ten thousand years of historical life had taught the human race nothing about living? It is the craziest idea, and the most illiberal, that any so-called liberal ever acted on. For sound physiological reasons the self-preservative or selfish impulses are more active at the beginning of human life than the social or moral impulses and if



the parents do not guide and mould the young life, the selfish impulses will crush the social ones when the time comes for the latter to ripen and be organized into character. The main moral task of parents is to help their children to grow out of the natural innocent selfishness of childhood and become socialized beings, sensitive to the praise and blame, the purposes and values of their community. And the way to do it is to insist on obedience, to make plain to them that they may not have all their natural desires crave for, to make them share their blessings with others, to enforce regularity in the performance of life's bodily functions, to make them responsible as they grow older for the faithful execution of some daily task, to teach them to respect those who are more experienced than themselves and, at every onward step of the way, to bring home to them that they are members of a community and that their life can be successful and happy only as they make the good of the community a real part of their own goal.

All these suggestions are as old, in idea if not in language, as the Book of Proverbs and Aristotle's Ethics, and therefore may seem out of date to those who despise the past because it had no automobiles, aeroplanes, radios, high explosive shells, big Berthas and submarines. But just as fresh air, wholesome food, bodily exercise and sound sleep are as necessary for our health now as they were four thousand years ago, in spite of all the brilliant advances of modern medicine and surgery, so with the old moral habits that served to socialize the natures of children in the past. They cannot become antiquated. Obedience, self-restraint, respect for elders, filial piety, punctuality, regularity, order, cleanliness of body, cleanness of speech—these simple moral habits lie at the basis of our associated life and they must be drilled into our children long before they are capable of a dramatic conversion-experience and long before they are able to make a personal choice as to what calling or profession or service they are to devote themselves to. If children grow up without them it is the fault of their parents or teachers and not their own.

In the second place, moral education consists in the actual experiencing of social relations and of the emotions that accompany them. In later life men and women must work together in the school, store, factory, foundry, railroad, publishing house, labor union, hospital, civil service, court room, legislative hall, army and navy, and in all these forms of associated life they need control of temper, habits of politeness and consideration, willingness to give and take, a sense of fair play and a capacity for team play, readiness to lead or follow as circumstances re-



quire, loyalty along with the right of free criticism and an intelligent appreciation of the social value of the service rendered.

Now, we can never train boys and girls into those virtues by merely talking about them. They must get the inner feel of them in actual experience. They must live the associated life, not in the economic and political groups to which they will later belong, but in the recreational and social groups which are becoming more and more popular today, such as the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, self-governing clubs, teams for the various games, religious societies, etc. If vital membership in groups is the great moralizing agency in life, and I believe it is, then all those organized movements among the young have immense moral significance. Within these groups they need for the most part the same qualities they will need in the more serious groups they must enter later on. They learn in play the same social attitudes that they must have in work. For play is more than recreation; it is initiation into co-operative effort and the sharing of a group mind. It is more than physical exercise or skill in a game; it is the training of the will to face difficult obstacles instead of following the line of least resistance. And when, as is the case with the Boy Scouts, the recreational group is not merely local but national and international, and the Scout has the feeling of membership in a world-wide organization, the social and moral value of such membership is greatly enhanced. No greater mistake was made by our Puritan ancestors than their failure to see the value of well-organized play as a moralizing and socializing agency. You cannot moralize boys and girls, as they thought to do, by mere repression or by the inculcation of moral precepts alone. The best preparation for moral participation in social, economic and political relations later on is the living experience of membership in recreational and other groups in early life.

Finally, though the inculcation of moral precepts and ethical truths is not the most vital part of moral education, it is still a real part. Mere ideas, even though they be moral ideas, need not issue in conduct. At the best they suggest and guide conduct rather than inspire it. But even to suggest and guide conduct is a good deal and the persistent presentation of moral ideas in the home and the school does provide the young with a standard by which they can estimate the moral worth of their own and other people's conduct. Especially is such teaching impressive when it is presented in connection with the lives of great moral heroes. Probably the greatest moral asset any nation has is its great men and women, living and dead. The moral life heroically lived by some one individual is the most eloquent sermon on moral values that can ever be preached to the young. Abraham Lincoln is worth more to us than a cartload of textbooks on ethics. Wash-



ington is a greater inspiration to patriotism than a thousand fourth of July orations. Jesus Christ is worth more to the world morally than all the theologies, fundamentalist or modernist, that have grown up around him. The greatest teacher of morality in a school or a college is the teacher whose own life is the most conspicuous embodiment of moral principles and the next best is the one who can interpret in the most moving and persuasive way the heroic elements in the lives of the great national leaders. We can teach mathematics and logic by means of abstract symbols, but not morals. One may read in the books on painting until he knows all the points in a good picture and the names and styles of all the greater painters, but if, when he stands before a real painting, his own emotional nature makes no response to its appeal, his reading has been of little avail. So in morals. The best test of one's moral education is not whether he can pass an examination on ethics but whether he can thrill to a genuinely heroic life and carry some of the hero's inspiration into his own conduct. Here there is an immense field for the teacher and preacher in the moral education of the young. No one race has had a monopoly of moral heroes nor is the value of a hero confined to his own people. The world lies before the moral teacher where to choose. His business is to choose those to whom he himself makes the most moving response and then to make them so live before the eyes of his pupils that they will feel the grandeur of moral personality and have their youthful capacity for hero-worship and discipleship kindled into life and vigorous activity. A moral maxim or formula is often as ineffective as a shell that fails to explode, but the same moral truth, made striking and glorious in a human life, not seldom breaks through the crust of indifference, shakes the soul of youth to its depths and summons it to a heroic battle for truth or justice or beauty.

Possibly some of you may think that I have been too broad and general in my treatment of this great theme and that I should have given far more time to the topics discussed in the last few pages. I can only reply that the moral education of the young, as I see it, cannot be treated apart from the particular social setting in which they live or apart from the general philosophy of life that is acted out by the older people of the community to which they belong. My strong conviction is that the greatest need in moral education in America today is a saner, quieter, more contemplative, more socialized philosophy of life than that on which most of us grown-ups are now acting.



## ORGANIZED RELIGION AND WORLD PEACE.

An Address Delivered in Meadville, March 9, 1925, on the Adin Ballou Foundation.

By Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, of Cleveland, Ohio.

The task of establishing international peace and the machinery for the perpetuation of such a peace is an especial challenge to organized religion. Not only because peace is essentially a supreme ethical problem, decidedly within the social program of church and synagogue, but also because every great religion claims to have come into the world to effect peace.

Heretofore peace has been an ideal abstraction, and the church—by church of course I mean church and synagogue and every other form of organized religion—has been content to speak of it as an ultimate *desideratum*, a condition highly to be desired but so far removed as to be beyond the pale of practical and immediate concern. But necessity and the events of the last two or three generations have thrust this abstraction into the realm of *Realpolitik* and have turned it into the most pressing and perplexing problem of the day.

The church today is confronted with a choice. It can assume one of two rôles—the one of leadership or the one of pious irrelevancy. The church must decide whether it means to vindicate its historic claim to be the peacemaker of the world and aggressively to lead mankind along the hard—and it will be a hard—road to peace, or whether it will, as heretofore, more cautious than courageous, more shrewd than wise, refuse to enter the arena of struggle and content itself with the mechanical repetition of its age-old exhortations to peace and good will. Upon the decision of the church as to which of the two rôles it means to assume, depends, in a large measure, the future attitude of thinking men and women towards the church.

In the past the church alienated the loyalty and devotion of millions of men because of its refusal to participate in the economic and industrial adjustments made necessary by the new conditions of life. The church may again forfeit the loyalty of millions if it remains silent now on this inescapable moral issue. For thinking men and women must ultimately turn from an institution whose inspiration is solely of the past and in the past, and whose will is atrophied; an institution to which men cannot turn for guidance and inspiration in the troubling and harassing emergencies of their social existence.



It is my firm conviction that the church will assume leadership in the work of establishing international peace only when it will transcend the state. In the Middle Ages the church competed with the state. It laid claim to ultimate sovereignty in both temporal and spiritual affairs. The church insisted upon the identity of spiritual and civil power, and sought to establish itself as the supreme political arbiter. Of course it failed, as it was destined to fail. It was well that it did fail, for temporal power inevitably corrupts spiritual power, and enfeebles it.

With the Reformation the ascendancy of the state began. In the struggle between church and state the state emerged triumphant. The accent was placed upon national autonomy and ultimately upon national self-consciousness. This resulted in two things: First, the state was presumed to be morally self-sufficient. Public morality was not necessarily coterminous with private morality. The state alone was the source and criterion of national ethics. Secondly, the church having lost the rôle of competitor, assumed the rôle of ally. It became a state agency and this condition has continued to our own day.

In many countries the church is either an outright state-church or receives its subvention from the state. Even in democracies where the church does not receive financial support from the state it has so completely yielded itself up to the political philosophy of the state that it is content in most instances to underwrite the policies and programs of the state. If a state declares war the church will sanction it or condone it. If the state engages in imperialistic expansion and exploitation, the church will either endorse the act or, in pusillanimous worldliness, remain silent.

In thus becoming a tool of the state, the church has lost, to a great extent, its spiritual authority and its spiritual influence.

As long as the church does not rise above the state—not in the sense of endeavoring to master it or to control its political fortunes, but in the sense of freeing itself from an alignment which carries with it the endorsement of the state's political purposes and programs—so long will peace, the traditional and avowed ideal of the church, remain an abstraction. During the last war every church became a state church. The Christian church in Germany was German first and only secondarily, and by a wide stretch of the imagination, Christian. And that was true of almost all churches of Christendom and all synagogues of Jewry. The churches proved to be local shrines where tribal deities were worshipped.

Now religion is international in the finest and truest sense of that word. It is not opposed to nationalism, but it overleaps it. It does not concern itself with nationalism. It concerns itself



not with the temporary political units of men, but with man himself and with mankind. It goes beyond race and creed and governmental boundaries. Its domain is the world of common human needs and aspirations, of justice and peace and holiness. Its empire is of the universal spirit.

When religion speaks of these basic things its voice is listened to and men obey. But when it loses its own prophetic voice and becomes an echo of the state, of ingrown nationalism, or of radicalism, it ceases to be a force in the work of human rehabilitation.

The church must be the guide, the critic and the censor of the state, not its tool and its propaganda channel. It will then be able to render two distinct services to the cause of peace.

It will be in a position to create a real temperament for peace, a "peaceful frame of mind", a will to peace. Peace is not altogether a question of economics. Nations do not make war or establish peace prompted solely by economic urgencies. Man does not live by bread alone and nations do not wage war for bread alone. Many other factors, psychological and historical, enter into every situation. If religion can free itself from the shackles which in the past have tied it to the organism we call the state, if religion can be itself again, independent, true to its own inspiring mission, speaking fearlessly and passionately, it can set about kindling the imagination of mankind with the ideal of peace. It can fire the souls of men. It once set armies in motion, crusading to the Holy Land, by sowing a glowing mystic fervor among men for that land. If religion can become imperial again, uttering its own revelations, it can imbue men and women with a passionate, ardent love for peace. It will touch and consecrate the souls of youth with the matchless ideal of peace. It will create a will to peace!

Whenever the state will declare a Defense Day, organized religion will declare a Peace Day. Whenever the state will declare a Navy Day, organized religion will declare a World Court Day. Whenever the state, through a group of political illiterates, will hurl a gratuitous and unwarranted insult at a friendly nation like Japan, organized religion will declare that day a day of national mourning, even as it was a day of rational humiliation for Japan. Thus aggressively and persuasively organized religion will create a peace dogma among men and a new sacrament.

This is the first service which the church will be in position to render. The other service is the focusing of the attention of men upon the *machinery* for effecting peace. It is not enough to cry peace, peace, when there is no peace. The church must call the attention of men to the agencies, however provisional, however rudimentary, which promise to bring peace, if only one step, nearer.



No people will disarm unless and until it feels itself secure. Back of all international competitive armament is fear, fear of aggression, fear of being unable to resist aggression. Until the nations of the world are assured of a competent international agency which will protect them against unjustified and sudden aggression, they will not, they cannot, they should not disarm.

The church must be on the alert to discover and, if necessary, to bring into existence such an agency. If the existing League of Nations is inadequate or if in our country it does not seem to answer all our requirements, then the church must turn to other agencies or must devise them. There should be no hesitancy on the part of the church at the present time to endorse the World Court and to invoke the conscience of the American people in its behalf. This accomplished, let the church advance to the next station on the way to the ultimate goal, leading, not following, a church militant and adventurous, not timid and bated and wistful.

This program which I have briefly outlined is not an easy program. It is extremely difficult. Christianity must orient itself anew. Christianity began its career preaching pacifism. At the behest of empire it abandoned the ideal of pacifism. It gained in prestige, but lost in leadership.

It may well be that pacifism is an ideal not adapted to the Western World. Pacifism is after all the religion of the spiritual *élite*, the aristocracy of saintliness, and the Western World has not produced a sufficient number of such saintly souls to be a determining influence in the affairs of the world. The Western temperament seems to be activist. The Western mind believes in progress and salvation through combating evil. It prefers active resistance to active or passive non-resistance.

Furthermore, the pacifistic and communistic ethics of primitive Christianity was for a world *in extremis*, a world about to end in cataclysm, to be miraculously reconstructed on a scheme of absolute perfection. Evolution has supplanted eschatology in our day so that the ancient indurate code is not fit for a world progressing by evolutionary rather than revolutionary stages.

If this is true, then Christianity ought to take cognizance of this fact of racial psychology and historical science and adjust itself to it. It should surrender in theory what it has been compelled to surrender in fact. It should proclaim an activist program of social regeneration, thereby saving itself from that spiritual dichotomy, the glaring contrast between profession and practice, which has heretofore stultified its will.

Judaism faces another difficulty. The synagogue as an organization has played a very small rôle in bringing about world peace. The Jew, the world over, is prayerfully yearning for peace. No nation suffers as much from war as does the Jew.



Witness the tragedies which the last war brought to his door. Judaism, too, has a marvellous tradition of peace which was first fashioned in the souls of its great seers. Yet the Jew is so situated in the world, and his position is so insecure, that in some lands he must perforce refrain from aggressive work in behalf of peace lest his sincere and earnest endeavors be interpreted by his enemies and traducers as manifestations of disloyalty and treason. The Jew has been compelled in selfdefense to be wary lest his devotion to the cause of peace bring suffering and disabilities upon him.

The Jew, however, must realize that this is his cross and his crown and his immortality. It is only by such independence of spirit that he can vindicate his claim to a separate existence, and to his professed prophetic mission. If his rôle is to be the rôle of a prophet, then he must submit to the tribulations which fall to the share of the prophet. The Jew must rediscover his prophetic voice and at the cost of being misunderstood, of being maligned, of being damned as a traitor, he must speak his soul. "Peace, peace, unto those that are near and unto those that are far off."

Christian and Jew alike must remember that peace will not come as a radiant maiden bearing gifts. Peace will come, if it ever comes at all, as a man of sorrows, spat upon and mocked. Like unto every great ideal of mankind peace must first travel the thorny road of frustration, defeat and sorrow ere it can reach the goal of consummation and triumph. Herein is the challenge to heroic deeds and sacrificial loyalty. Herein lies the redemptive ministry of organized religion in the world today.



1. It is a tragedy that we should begin our year preaching with a sermon on peace, and now particularly on the relation of religion and peace. For I regard the task of establishing intern. peace as the greatest challenge to the church to-day, and its primary concern in this century.
2. I said that it is a challenge to the church, not only because it is at bottom an <sup>imperial</sup> moral problem, clearly within the social program of ~~every~~ church; but also because it has been the traditional claim and boast of every org. faith - that it came to bring peace to the world. ~~Necessity~~ ~~Heretofore~~ peace has been Judaism preached. beating swords into ploughshares; Chris: to love even our enemies; ~~Mohammedanism~~ ~~Islam~~ - and Buddhism - Hinduism - "ahimsa" - the doctrine of non-injury to any form of life. Heretofore peace has been an ideal abstraction, and the churches have been content to preach it as an ultimate desideratum, a condition highly desirable but so far removed as to be outside the realm of practical consideration. Necessity has thrust peace into the realm of Real politics and made it the most pressing and the most nettling problem of the age - Org. religion faces a choice of roles, either one of leadership or one of <sup>poor</sup> ~~feeble~~ irrelevancy. The church must decide whether it means to vindicate its ancient claim of peace-making and aggressively to lead mankind along the hard road of towards peace, or whether, here as elsewhere, more cautious than courageous, never showing itself with a mechanical repetition of its <sup>apostolic</sup> ~~exhortations~~ of peace and good will.



Hence if org. rel. is to lead mankind out, the means of achievement  
itself, it must be only thru an act of self-transcendence. It  
must rise above the State. It must not try to control  
it or master it; that would be worse than serving it. It  
would completely destroy its self. But it must return  
to its own standards, and its own program. It must  
regain its own voice. It must be the guide the  
critic, the censor, the state. It must demand that the  
State, in its actions, material & spiritual, should live up to its  
code of ethics. <sup>Rel. speaks in the name of the degraded man, a weakness, is weakness, is weakness</sup> When rel. will find its voice again - <sup>its ideal</sup>  
men will and nations will talk head and heart. <sup>in the world - the</sup>

4- What service can the Org. Rel. render the Cause of Peace?

I. Create a peace temperament <sup>and degree of interest</sup> thru education,  
exhortation, sanctification, make peace, as peace as  
near & dear to men to-day as the Holy Land was to  
the Emancipator - a thing men will die for! As  
the abolition of slavery was to the men, the South  
75 years ago - a cause men will wage civil war  
for -

1. The importance of this should not be underestimated.  
It is a mistake to assume that the "will to peace"  
is a negligible factor. That economic reason alone  
determined world war is false. In the connection  
the words of the eminent psychologist Prof. Max Klinger  
are in place. Quote

2. A man does not live by bread alone.  
And men do not fight for bread alone. The  
Church must use its great spirit. ~~authoritative~~ persuasion  
to make even alien and contemptible in  
the eyes of men - and all the class-trap artificers, war.



The Church must outlinde an ardent, passionate  
enthusiasm for Peace - for the inauguration of  
the youth, the world with the heroism of  
Peace. When the State organizes warfare days -  
let the Church org. Peace Days. When the State  
org. Navy Days, let the Church org. World  
Court Days. When the State calls for Flag  
Days - let the Church call for a 10-Cannon  
Day - or a Sermon on the Mt. Day - <sup>Japan</sup> ~~delegation~~

1. There are <sup>churches</sup> ~~many~~ <sup>hundreds of</sup> churches ~~waiting~~ <sup>awaiting</sup> to this service.  
When ~~the last~~ <sup>the last</sup> warfare day was thrust upon  
the Am. people - the most misguided effort of a  
corrupted administration - ~~spoke~~ <sup>spoke</sup> ~~men~~ <sup>men</sup>, the Churches  
here & there did make their voices heard in  
denunciation! and my heart was gladdened. My  
own letter (Feb 6)

2 - Must destroy <sup>inaction</sup> ~~inaction~~ correct  
3. We will ~~soon~~ <sup>soon</sup> be called names! and  
the banner will be presented! We will be called  
slackers, pacifists, traitors and disloyal! But  
it was so from the beginning of time. The prophet  
was always stoned ~~and crucified~~! The dreamer  
is crucified. The dream survives. The road of peace  
will not be an easy road to travel. But it  
must be travelled! - if mankind is to leave  
the slough of despair and enter the golden land  
of promise -



5. Must forcibly direct minds & men to the concrete expressions which the "will to peace" must take - to the machinery for bringing peace about. It must not be content with merely making men think of peace, and desire peace, with ineffectual and undirected idealism. It must rivet the souls & men ~~up~~ upon some agency, some form of org - however provisionally temporary it might be - which will bring peace <sup>to</sup> ~~to~~ steps nearer - In peace will be the goal will be reached by crawling not by leaps and bounds.

1. It must not be content with clamoring ceaselessly for the limitation of armies, navies, aircraft and all instruments of war. It must also work for the establishment of some agency which will adequately protect nations against unjustified aggression. ~~but which for no~~ nation will or should abandon the security which its own armies give it, unless it is assured some corporate protection when it is attacked. ~~At the bottom~~ There must be inter. guarantees of safety before nations will disarm - at the bottom <sup>complete armament</sup> ~~of war~~ is fear - fear of aggression - Remove that fear, and armament which is a sort of tax on every people, will disappear -

2. Such an agency cannot be conceived formed. Its nucleus is in a league - and in a "World Court"



If the Am. people are not yet ready for a League - then  
the minimum which the Council should demand  
is a "United Court", at first ~~turning itself on~~  
relying upon the moral sense, mankind to  
maintain it - ultimately, as it gains in power and  
authority, armed with force, to make its  
decisions effective

1. Ultimately there must be compulsory  
jurisdiction by an int'l. tribunal over inter-  
national disputes. There is no other way - ultimately  
~~every~~<sup>all</sup> nations will have to submit their differences  
to judicial settlement. There is no other way.  
Ultimately law will have to supplant  
uncontrolled and uncollable war. If  
civil. is to survive - private wars, as deep rooted  
as pub. int. just way to law. Public wars  
must likewise. Whether it will ~~disappear~~ uncontrolled  
will have to wait upon more numer. holocaust  
such as we had 5 yrs ago - more deadly & more  
than any - will depend largely upon what the int'l.  
will do. ~~in the next~~

2. It is well to remember that the last war had  
no hope of lasting peace. That shows plain gives the  
exhaust. nations of Europe a temper. but they spell.  
That the nations of world, including Am., are becoming  
as they never did before. - That the Natl. Conf.  
had not in the least limited armament. Nations  
merely kept their prepar. to pub. aircraft and  
chemicals - The world is still a powder-keg



no wrong. my country right or wrong! This is  
patriotism - and <sup>rel.</sup> has become subservient to this  
kind of patriotism - The church must be patriotic -  
If the State ~~is engaged~~ has declared war - the church must  
sanction and sanctify that war - If the State seeks  
empire - the church, out of a sense of loyalty & patriotism -  
must condone it - In the last war - every church  
became a State church, a partisan, and a comba-  
tant; and a channel of nationalistic propaganda. The  
Ch. Church in Germ. was severed first - and only  
by a wild stroke, the cessap. Chris. So in France,  
so in Eng. So with the Jewish Synagogue?

2. Our w.c. nationalism has destroyed the sp.  
merit, the ~~the~~ Religion. It has become the first  
of politics, or of economics. But all great  
religions in their spirit & gospel were international.  
They did not spurn nationalism. They did not con-  
cern themselves with it. They had a mission  
which transcended <sup>borders</sup> race, people, caste or station.  
- justice, love, peace! They were autonomous!  
Their sanction <sup>authority</sup> was not the State. And their  
object was not to run the a secular political  
organization or unit, but Man and Mankind!  
Their authority was God, and the unswerving spirit!

3. If rel. is to when rel. is thus free and unentangled  
it speaks words, living fire, and men hear them  
and are moved. When it ceases to be a clear  
conscience voice, and becomes an echo of some thing  
else - it falls on deaf ears -



4. And upon its decision depends the attitude of the Church, men and women towards the Church - Its silence in the vast econ. struggles in the last few generations, when it was not vocal in behalf of the oppressed against the oppressors, ~~but~~ alienated the loyalty of millions of the working classes the world over. Its silence now, or an ineffectual policy of drifting, may turn millions more from an institution whose inspiration is in the past, whose will is atrophied, and towards whom even Occident turns for guidance in the things which touch their lives.

3. Org. Rel. Can assume leadership ~~only~~ in this work of ending war and creating the machinery for an enduring peace, only when it will be heroic enough and prophetic enough to put itself above the State. In the Middle Ages the Church maintained that it was the ultimate repository of both secular and spiritual power. It disputed pol. sovereignty with Kings and Princes. It sought to establish itself as a political empire. It failed. ~~It lost its power and influence~~ <sup>It lost its power and influence</sup> ~~in secular power~~ <sup>in secular power</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~corrupted it~~ <sup>corrupted it</sup>. In modern times, with the ascendancy of powerful States the Church, no longer able to retain pol. prestige, has allied itself with the State; in many lands it receives its subventions from the State. It caters to the State. It has become its servant. Even in democracies where the Church does not receive subventions from the State its ~~material~~ <sup>material</sup> ~~inherent~~ <sup>inherent</sup> ~~connections~~ <sup>connections</sup> have made it the willing tool of the State. The State to-day has assumed the role of divine ordination, once assumed by Emperors, Kings and potentates. The State can do







# **Organized Religion and World Peace**

BY

**RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER**



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## Organized Religion and World Peace

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER of Cleveland, Ohio

THE task of establishing international peace and the machinery for the perpetuation of such a peace is an especial challenge to organized religion. Not only because peace is essentially a supreme ethical problem, decidedly within the social program of church and synagogue, but also because every great religion claims to have come into the world to effect peace. ✓

Heretofore peace has been an ideal abstraction, and the church—by church of course I mean church and synagogue and every other form of organized religion—has been content to speak of it as an ultimate desideratum, a condition highly to be desired but so far removed as to be beyond the pale of practical and immediate concern. But necessity and the events of the last two or three generations have thrust this abstraction into the realm of *reale politique* and have turned it into the most pressing and perplexing problem of the day.

(The church today is confronted with a choice of roles. It can assume one of two roles—the one of leadership or the one of pious irrelevancy.) The church must decide whether it means to vindicate its historic claim to be the peacemaker of the world and aggressively to lead mankind along the hard—and it will be a hard—road to peace, or whether it will, as heretofore, more cautious than courageous, more shrewd than wise, refuse to enter the arena of struggle and content itself with the mechanical repetition of its age-old exhortations to peace, and good will. Upon the decision of the church as to which of the two roles it means to assume, depends, in a large measure, the future attitude of thinking men and women towards the church. ✓



In the past the church alienated the loyalty and devotion of millions of men because of its refusal to participate in the economic and industrial adjustments made necessary by the new conditions of life. The church may again forfeit the loyalty of millions if it remain silent now on this inescapable moral issue. For thinking men and women must ultimately turn from an institution whose inspiration is solely of the past and in the past, and whose will is atrophied; an institution to which men cannot turn for guidance and inspiration in the troubling and harassing emergencies of their social existence.

It is my firm conviction that the church will assume leadership in the work of establishing international peace only when it will transcend the state. In the Middle Ages the church competed with the state. It laid claim to ultimate sovereignty in both temporal and spiritual affairs. The church insisted upon the identity of spiritual and civil power, and sought to establish itself as the supreme political arbiter. Of course it failed, as it was destined to fail. It was well that it did fail, for temporal power inevitably corrupts spiritual power, and enfeebles it.

With the Reformation the ascendancy of the state began. In the struggle between church and state the state emerged triumphant. The accent was placed upon national autonomy and ultimately upon national self-consciousness. This resulted in two things: First, the state, presumed to be morally self-sufficient. Public morality was not necessarily coterminous with private morality. The state alone is the source and criterion of national ethics. Secondly, the church having lost the role of competitor, assumed the role of ally. It became a state agency and this condition has continued to our own day.

In many countries the church is either an outright state-church or receives its subvention from the state. Even in democracies where the church does not receive financial support from the state it has so completely yielded itself up to the political philosophy of the state that it is content in most instances to underwrite the policies and programs of the state. If a state declares war the church will sanction it or condone it. If the state engages in imperialistic expansion and



exploitation, the church will either endorse the act or, in pusillanimous worldliness, remain silent.

In thus becoming a tool of the state, the church has lost, to a great extent, its spiritual authority and its spiritual influence.

As long as the church does not rise above the state—not in the sense of endeavoring to master it or to control its political fortunes, but in the sense of freeing itself from an alignment which carries with it the endorsement of its political purposes and programs—so long will peace, the traditional and avowed ideal of the church, remain an abstraction. During the last war every church became a state church. The Christian church in Germany was German first and only secondarily and by a wide stretch of the imagination Christian. And that was true of almost all churches of Christendom and all synagogues of Jewry. The churches proved to be local shrines where tribal deities were worshipped.

Now religion is international in the finest and truest sense of that word. It is not opposed to nationalism; it overleaps it. It does not concern itself with nationalism. It concerns itself not with the temporary political units of men, but with man himself and with mankind. It goes beyond race and creed and governmental boundaries. Its domain is the world of common human needs and aspirations, of justice and peace and holiness. Its empire is of the universal spirit. ✓

When religion speaks of these basic things its voice is listened to and men obey. But when it loses its own prophetic voice and becomes an echo of the state, of ingrown nationalism, or of racialism, it ceases to be a force in the work of human rehabilitation. ✓

The church must be the guide, the critic and the censor of the state, not its tool and its propaganda channel. It will then be able to render two distinct services to the cause of peace.

It will be in a position to create a real temperament for peace, a "peaceful frame of mind," a will to peace. Peace is not altogether a question of economics. Nations do not make war or establish peace prompted solely by economic urgencies. Man does not live by ✓



✓ bread alone and nations do not wage war for bread alone. Many other factors, psychological and historical, enter into every situation. (If religion can free itself from the shackles which in the past have tied it to the organism we call the state, if religion can be itself again, independent, true to its own inspiring mission, speaking fearlessly and passionately, it can set about kindling the imagination of mankind with the ideal of peace. It can fire the souls of men.) It once set armies in motion, crusading to the Holy Land, by sowing a glowing mystic fervor among men for that land. If religion can become imperial again, uttering its own revelations, it can imbue men and women with a passionate, ardent love for peace. It will touch and consecrate the souls of youth with the matchless ideal of peace. It will create a will to peace!

Whenever the state will declare a Defense Day, organized religion will declare a Peace Day. Whenever the state will declare a Navy Day, organized religion will declare a World Court Day. Whenever the state, through a group of political illiterates, will hurl a gratuitous and unwarranted insult at a friendly nation like Japan, organized religion will declare that day a day of national mourning, even as it was a day of national humiliation for Japan. Thus aggressively and persuasively organized religion will create a peace dogma among men and a new sacrament.

✓ This is the first service which the church will be in position to render. The other service is the focusing of the attention of men upon the *machinery* for effecting peace. It is not enough to cry peace, peace when there is no peace. The church must call the attention of men to the agencies, however provisional, however rudimentary, which promise to bring peace, if only one step, nearer.

✓ No people will disarm unless and until it feel itself secure. Back of all international competitive armament is fear, fear of aggression, fear of being unable to resist aggression. Until the nations of the world are assured of a competent international agency which will protect them against unjustified and sudden aggression, they will not, they cannot, they should not disarm.

The church must be on the alert to discover and,



if necessary, to bring into existence such an agency. If the existing League of Nations be inadequate or if in our country it seem not to answer all our requirements, then the church must turn to other agencies or devise them. There should be no hesitancy on the part of the church at the present time to endorse the World Court and to invoke the conscience of the American people in its behalf. This accomplished, let the church advance to the next station on the way to the ultimate goal, leading, not following, a church militant and adventurous, not timid and bated and wistful.

This program which I have briefly outlined is not an easy program. It is extremely difficult. Christianity must reorientate itself anew. Christianity began its career preaching pacifism. At the behest of empire it abandoned the ideal of pacifism. It gained in prestige, but lost in leadership.

It may well be that pacifism is an ideal not adapted to the Western World. Pacifism is, after all, the religion of the spiritual elite, the aristocracy of saintliness, and the Western World has not produced a sufficient number of such saintly souls to be a determining influence in the affairs of the world. The Western temperament seems to be activist. The Western mind believes in progress and salvation through combating evil. It prefers active resistance to active or passive non-resistance.

Furthermore, the pacifistic and communistic ethics of primitive Christianity was for a world "in extremis," a world about to end in cataclysm, to be miraculously reconstructed on a scheme of absolute perfection. Evolution has supplanted eschatology in our day, so that the ancient indurate code is not fit for a world progressing by evolutionary rather than revolutionary stages.

If this be true, then Christianity ought to take cognizance of this fact of racial psychology and historical science and adjust itself to it. It should surrender in theory what it has been compelled to surrender in fact. It should proclaim an activist program of social regeneration, thereby saving itself from that spiritual dichotomy, the glaring contrast between profession and practice, which has heretofore stultified its will.



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