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with
Christ



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By

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A B C's of Holiness
Keeping Faith With the Past
The Baptism With the Holy Ghost



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To the members of the General Council of the Nazarene Young People's Society who co-operated so loyally in the years from 1923 to 1936, and to the hundreds of district and local leaders of the N.Y.P.S. during these three quadrenniums, I dedicate this booklet.

FOREWORD

This message was delivered on June 20, 1936, the closing service of the Fourth General Nazarene Young People's Society Convention held in Edison Hall, Kansas City, Missouri. The slogan for the convention was "Deeper and Farther With Christ."

The General Council had chosen the writer to deliver this message because it marked the close of more than twelve years of service as General Secretary of the Nazarene Young People's Society, and he had voluntarily stated he did not desire to consider further service in that field. The message was presented as a challenge, coming from the heart of one who had watched the developments of the N.Y.P.S. from its beginnings, to the young people who are to carry on throughout the coming quadrennium. At the request of many the message is presented in this printed form.

Forward with Christ

“Follow thou me” (John 21: 22).

Jesus appeals to youth. It was to a group of comparatively young men that He uttered His first challenge, “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.” Those men accepted His call and became His close followers. He had taken them through varied experiences; they had seen Him tested upon numerous occasions. They had seen Him die. They had assisted in His burial. They had heard the glad tidings of His resurrection. He had appeared to them to comfort their broken hearts and to establish their faith. The words of this text were uttered as the renewal of the challenge to a somewhat vacillating Peter. By these words we would challenge every young person to accept Him as a personal Savior and to go through life as His follower.

There are numerous leaders clamoring for the support of youth and many voices are heard calling, “Follow thou me.”

There is the loud clamor of the pleasure mad world enticing youth to follow its vanities and to pursue its gay way, but it promises nothing but that which is fleeting, empty and worthless. There is the call of the materialist who solicits youth to devote his powers of mind and life to the substances of this physical world, to confine his pursuits to the development of material things and thus to attain success; but he promises nothing for that world where moth and rust do not corrupt or where thieves do not break through and steal. There is the appeal of the opportunist alluring youth to follow his will-'o-the-wisp fantasies, to leave the path of ar-

duous endeavors toward true achievement and to tread his path toward a promised cheap success; but his promises have no more foundation than has the mirage of the desert. The idealist calls to youth to accept his philosophy, to follow his path toward a promised Utopia; but his promises are as groundless as those of the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow.

Ringingly clearly above all the clamoring voices of the day is the challenge of Jesus, "Follow thou me." He offers no glamorous way of life, but He would have us tread a sincere and joyful way. He offers full enjoyment of the material possessions of this life, but emphasizes that these are entirely of the earth and are not worthy of being the treasures of our heart; that they are temporal and passing but that the lasting possessions are those which are the unseen qualities of character provided by the riches of His grace, that these treasures will remain as eternal possessions long after material things have vanished. He calls us to follow the path of consistent and continuous application of His righteous principles which are profitable in this life and in that which is to come. He calls us to follow Him in the discipline of life and in the endurance of its conflicts, promising a crown of life to those who will endure unto the end. His promises are substantial; their worth has been proved by His followers for several millenniums. We are assured that He is faithful that has promised and that what He has promised He is able to perform. We are safe in accepting His challenge, "Follow thou me."

What Does It Mean to Follow Christ?

To follow Christ is not like following human leaders. We may become their followers, advocate their ideals and promulgate their tenets without agreeing with them in the full

details of their platforms or without endorsing their personal character. Not so with following Jesus. He is so inseparable from His teachings that we cannot follow them fully without accepting Him. His character and His principles of life are so intricately interwoven that we cannot accept one without the other. Hence the challenge is not to accept the teaching of Jesus, but to follow Him. We are not called upon to endeavor to pattern our lives after His example, we are to follow Him. We are called upon to follow a Person, not His teachings. He is greater than anything He said or did, hence to follow Him is the greatest thing youth can do.

The first step in following Jesus is a personal acceptance of Him as Savior. And this acceptance must include not only the initial work of salvation in the forgiveness of sins, but a full salvation in the entire cleansing of the nature from inbred sin. There is no other means of coming into a personal relation with Christ whereby we may acceptably follow Him except by being made new creatures in Christ, and by being filled with His Holy Spirit.

This step of salvation would include a full submission of our hearts and lives to Him as Lord, Ruler, Captain, Lawgiver and Commander. We accept His work as Savior that we may be redeemed from sin. We accept His lordship over our lives and bow in full submission to His rulership that we may continue in the relation of followers. Obedience is ever the basis of remaining a follower of Jesus.

This challenge, "Follow thou me," may be presented with a twofold appeal: first, the personal appeal; and second, the appeal to the group.

The Personal Appeal

The central theme of the gospel is personal redemption and the successful method of promulgating the gospel is by

means of personal witnessing. There is a distinct personal appeal to the challenge presented by Jesus. "Follow thou me," was addressed personally to Peter. In the early days of Jesus' ministry it was the individual fishermen who were called, and who accepted Jesus' personal appeal by which He made them outstanding leaders of men in the Christian sense. Jesus still challenges individuals to follow Him. The call comes ringing to individuals of this generation to accept Christ as personal Savior and to devote their lives to following Him.

The acceptance of this challenge, "Follow thou me" brings us into partnership with Christ. What higher honor could be ours than to enter into partnership with the God of the universe, to pool our limited resources with the inexhaustible resources of God! What more exalted privilege could be ours than to follow Him in partnership in service by putting our feeble efforts and limited experience into co-operation with the power of Christ and to depend upon His wisdom and grace for success!

Our commitment in this partnership; our consecration to Him; our acceptance of His challenge, "Follow thou me"; must be so real and substantial, so definite and lasting, so full and complete, that God our divine Partner can actually count upon it; that He can find in it a foundation on which He can develop character pleasing to Him; that He is assured of our future obedience in the trying places of life and in His calls for service.

A soldier in the World War was given the position of signalman and runner in a company command group. They were occupying the front line trenches with a corporal and several men out in "no-man's land" in outpost duty. The captain found it necessary to send a message to the corporal so he called the runner to his side, giving him the message to be delivered. It was no small task to climb from the

trench, and squirm about as a serpent over rough ground, exposing himself to the fire of the enemy. He may have hesitated—he did. But the hesitation was not a question of obedience; rather it was to ascertain which way to pursue to reach the corporal. He raised his steel helmet and lifted a prayer to his heavenly Captain—for he was a Christian—and then went on his dangerous and difficult journey. He was successful in reaching the corporal, delivered the message and in a surprisingly short time he reported back to the captain. But where was that question of obedience settled? There in the trenches that day? No, not altogether. That question of obedience was settled back in a mustering office months before when the soldier took the oath of allegiance. His commitment as a soldier was so substantial there, that he could be depended upon to be obedient in the tests of the battle field. That is what God desires in our partnership and commitment to Him. It must be so real and lasting that God can be assured of our obedience in all trying circumstances and that He can depend upon our faithfulness at all times.

God Has Faith in Man

By the invitation to join in partnership with Christ, to "Follow thou me," He demonstrates that God has faith in man. God believes in man. He believed in man sufficiently to make the most daring venture of all times—the giving of His only begotten Son. He believed that if He could reveal Himself through His Son that man would accept that Son and be saved, that saved men through partnership with Christ could bring honor and glory to His own great name, by spreading His cause throughout the earth. God had confidence that His efforts with men would not be fruitless, that His work in partnership with redeemed men would be successful; hence he was willing to make the venture.

He knew man as he came forth from His hand in the day of creation. He knew man's possibilities; He was conscious of what man could be. He believed that it was worth all the effort He could put forth to redeem man—to salvage the wreck by saving the fallen race instead of starting a new race not capable of evil; and that it was worth all the infinite patience and concern He could exercise in His partnership with redeemed men to bring from them the very best that was in them and thereby exalt His grace and glorify His name.

Comradeship With Jesus

This following Jesus in partnership ripens into real comradeship. We are not strangers distantly related by an investment in a common interest, as persons from widely separated places may pool their resources by investing in a business enterprise. We have entered into partnership of the most intimate nature. We have given our hearts to Him. There is a mutual welding of affection, a devotion to Him, a relation deeper than the partnership existing in the lives of those married couples where love truly reigns. A comradeship—a fellowship of the deepest nature. Let us follow Him so closely that this comradeship may be blessedly real and increasing. Let us give Him opportunity to win our hearts—our deepest devotion.

It is surely not a matter of mere circumstance that the heart searching question "Lovest thou me?" is so closely connected with this challenge "Follow thou me." In one of the questions Jesus put to Peter he added, "more than these"—"Lovest thou me more than these?" Do you love Me more than you love anything which may hinder you in your devotion and service to Me? Do you love Me enough to stake your all on Me—to follow Me in the truest and deepest sense? Here is the secret of all true discipleship—of sin-

cerely and honestly following Jesus. To follow Jesus in partnership and comradeship is not a matter of outward enthusiasm. It is not alone the product of cold reasoning. It does not depend merely upon keeping a pledge or the carrying out of the provisions of a covenant. It springs from the depths of a heart that truly loves God, that loves Him sufficiently to follow Him closely and obediently in all phases of life. Do we love Him enough truly to follow Him? Is our devotion to Him so deep and genuine that we are possessed of His Spirit and absorbed with His cause and its advancement in the earth? If we are thus possessed of His Spirit we are conscious of a partnership with Him; a comradeship that as we walk the ways of life, we, like the disciples who walked with the risen Lord to Emmaus, are conscious of our hearts burning within us. And too we realize that in all of our service we are not merely working *for* Him; we are working *with* Him—He is our partner.

Lifted Above Average Living

To accept conscientiously the challenge, "Follow thou me" will lift us above the plane of average living. There are not many people today who are willing to set the pace for others to follow; not many who can stand out from the crowd and inspire confidence in their leadership and in their ability to fulfill their promises. The curse of the modern church is average living—being satisfied to live on a plane equal to others around us. We need an inspiration that is born of something higher and more lasting than mere human enthusiasm, an inspiration that Jesus alone can bring to the heart as we follow Him, an inspiration akin to that possessed by the followers of Christ in other days when they surmounted their difficulties, overcame their persecutions, and despite a hostile world carried the cause of Christ on to victory.

We need something to take us out of ourselves. Something that will absorb us in its pursuits, that will command all there is of us. Many lives are empty and barren because they have never felt the surge of an inspiration sufficient to lift them above themselves. Multitudes live in the consciousness of their own limitations—timid, hesitant, backward; failing to realize that they possess possibilities which if developed will make them successful in their service for Christ. It is often a timid, bashful, blushing youth who becomes the star of the football field. Why? Because he has found something that has challenged him sufficiently to lift him for the moment above his timidity and bashfulness. In the pressure of the game he forgets himself and for the moment overcomes his self-consciousness in the absorbing desire to win victories for his team. The heroes of battle fields are not always the boastful, self-confident soldiers. Frequently the obscure and somewhat timid, but sincere soldier has been distinguished for heroism in battle when he was lifted above himself in the absorbing moment of heated conflict.

Oh, young people, is there not something about Jesus that will so challenge us to devote our lives to Him that we may be absorbed in our love for Him and our interest in spreading His cause—the cause of full salvation—throughout the world? Will we not be so fully consecrated to Him and so confidently trust Him that we may find in Him a power to overcome our conscious weaknesses and limitations, our timidity and backwardness? Will we not so sincerely follow Him as to permit Him to provide us with a sense of release from restrictions which otherwise would limit or defeat us in our service to Him? If we conscientiously follow Christ, He will release some things which have been hidden within us. There is something in each of us which will respond to no other touch but Christ's, that will never be developed

unless we accept His challenge, "Follow thou me." What many young people in the holiness ranks need is that touch of inspiration in their hearts that comes only from fully following Christ.

Follow Him as Guide

When we accept this challenge, "Follow thou me," we are not creatures adrift on life's sea without a Pilot, or wanderers through life's shifting scenes without a Guide. We have found a Guide in Jesus Christ—One whose authority we respect, whose Lordship we recognize as supreme, whose wisdom we cannot question, whose laws we can obey with safety, and whose leadership we may follow in security.

We are not as swimmers caught in some current or rip-tide, from which, despite our skill and experience, we are unable to free ourselves. The Christ of the storm is our Guide. We are not victims of our environment when Christ is our Guide. We are not defeated by circumstances when we are wholeheartedly following Him. We will not give with the pressure of life when we are conscious of the inner presence of Christ. Our Guide is our Liberator. He makes us free, yea, "whom the Son makes free is free indeed." The history of the Christian church is the accounting of victories over all forms of difficulties and opposition presented by the forces of evil. Wherein do we find the source of these victories? In the power of Christ as released through the lives of those who would follow Him. Our Guide still provides strength to the faint, power to the weak, and victory to those in the conflict.

At Cross Currents With the World

To accept the challenge, "Follow thou me," and to live by its principles puts one at cross currents with the thinking and actions of the world. A selfish world cannot understand

one who will unselfishly devote himself to the service of Christ and his fellow men. A gainseeking world cannot know the currents at work in the life of an individual who will sacrifice all thought of personal gain that he may devote himself to Christ and to the spreading of His kingdom in the earth. Not only do they fail to understand such an individual, but they often engage in active opposition against the person who will dare to accept Christ's challenge, "Follow thou me." Character is not formed by drifting in the streams of this world—it is formed by battling against its currents. Christian strength and character are not obtained by being conformed to this world, but by being transformed in the spirit of our minds. Adversity will come, but we may overcome adversity and make it serve us as a means of character development.

Because we are at cross currents with the world, because they do not understand us and therefore some may actively oppose us, there are some hardships involved in following Christ. But what type of hardships are they? They are the hardships of the explorer who has dared to separate himself from comforts of life and venture to explore the heretofore unknown. They are the hardships of the discoverer who is possessed of a vision of something out beyond the line where other men have stopped and turned back, something that is worth discovering at the price of opposition, ridicule, deprivation and suffering. They are the hardships of the pioneer who dares to conquer the wilds of nature and build his home in virgin lands; the hardship of pioneers who left comfortable pulpits and parsonages to go out under the stars to proclaim the gospel of full salvation to the world. They are the hardships of the soldier who largely forgets the hardships of the battle that he might share in its victories. They are the hardships of the missionary who is urged by a

burning soul-passion to carry the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who grope in the darkness of heathen night, who will sacrifice his personal ease and comfort that he might win the hearts of those of non-Christian lands to Christ. They are the hardships of the Christian who dares to walk the narrow way with Jesus, who suffers with Him that he may also be glorified together, who shares the love of Christ in his heart and realizes that the difficulties of the present moment are not to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed, that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look . . . at the things which are not seen."

Discipline there is in this life of following Jesus. But it is the discipline of the athlete who sacrifices and denies himself during the days of training that he may be victorious in the combat.

This challenge, "Follow thou me," is a call for those of true soldier spirit, those who are willing to venture beyond the limits set by a short-sighted world, those who will dare to follow Christ and blaze a trail with Him through a sin-blinded, deceived and selfish world. Here is a demand for a courageous spirit. There is no place here for what one has termed "hothouse piety." It demands the sturdiness of the oak with roots firmly grounded and purposes firmly fixed. Such sturdiness and fixedness of purpose can only obtain when we as individuals sincerely accept the challenge of Jesus, "Follow thou me."

The Group Appeal

While we realize the central purpose of Christianity is individual regeneration, we must not lose sight of the fact that these individual Christians form a group and that this group owes a distinct debt to the world. . . . There is nothing to

take the place of individual regeneration; on the other hand nothing can substitute for the responsibility of these regenerated individuals who form the church of Christ in meeting their obligation to the world. This challenge, "Follow thou me" has a distinct appeal to the group of individuals who have personally accepted Christ.

There is a sense in which it is not enough to accept the personal appeal of this challenge; we must unite our forces under the leadership of Christ and follow Him in conquering evils of all kinds. One soldier standing alone on a battle field will make little advancement against the forces of the enemy, but a group of well trained fighters working together will rout the enemy and drive him from his positions. In this Christian life power increases rapidly. The individual Christian may be looked upon as merely nothing—a cipher. He may almost feel that way himself. But the value of ciphers consists in being placed on the right side of a figure. A cipher by itself is nothing, but put on the right of the figure one, it makes ten. Six ciphers—000,000—are of little value by themselves, but put them on the right side of the figure one, and we have a million—1,000,000. Our value in combating the forces of evil does not consist in standing alone but rather in being on the right side of One. We are told in God's Word that one shall chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight. How rapidly power is increased when it is placed on the right side of that One. The Christian forces have always been in the minority, but with Christ as their leader they have overcome.

It is apparent from the teachings of Jesus that He expected His church to influence the world and to correct evils that were entrenched. In His parable of the kingdom of heaven being likened to the mustard seed He taught the spread of the kingdom throughout the earth. This seed is insignificant

—the least of all seeds—but when it is grown it is the greatest of all herbs. It becomes a tree in which the fowls of the air may lodge. From the humble beginnings at Pentecost the Christian Church has been marching on down through the centuries. It has overcome opposition, persecution and popular acclaim. At times its light has become rather dim, but there has always been a remnant who have been faithful to God and who have held aloft the torch of truth. At other times this light has been turned into a flame, until it has become almost as a prairie fire sweeping everything before it. In its progress it is becoming more and more like the tree from the mustard seed until now it is spreading its branches almost throughout the whole earth. Surely Jesus meant that the church—the group of regenerated individuals—would grow in numbers and influence until the whole world would feel the impact of that influence and be benefited by its presence, like the fowls of the air were benefited by lodging in the branches of the mustard tree. This does not mean that the world, thus benefited by the influence of the church will become Christians as individuals, any more than it means that the fowls by lodging in the branches became part of the tree. The truth is that the group of Christians—the church composed of regenerated individuals—will influence the world, whereas the individual Christian is often much limited in his influence.

We have but to look around us to see the influence of Christ and Christianity everywhere. The present civilization in which we live is founded upon Christian principles and is honey-combed with Christian truth. That we are falling short of the desired goals of our civilization is readily acknowledged, but the very standards by which we judge our shortcomings are Christian standards. The progress made in human freedom is not the natural result of an evolutionary process; it is the

result of the Christianizing influences set in motion by Christ and continued through the group of His followers, the Church. To realize the benefits of these influences contrast the conditions of so-called Christian lands with those in so-called heathen lands. What makes the difference? The religions of the people of those lands. Although conditions are far from ideal, and there is an apparent drift away from the standards of a Christian civilization, yet we are compelled to recognize that our heritage is a Christian heritage and we are today the recipients of blessings brought about only because the Church as a group of Christians has followed Christ.

The Purpose of the Christian Group

We believe we may summarize the purposes of Christ's life, teachings, death and resurrection thus: He came to bring about the redemption of the individual and the reformation of society. Each of these purposes must be kept in its proper place. We cannot regenerate the individuals by reforming society, nor are we entirely to ignore our responsibility toward the reformation of society by confining our efforts exclusively to the regeneration of the individual. The supreme purpose is the regeneration of the individual; the reformation of society is secondary.

We are extremely interested in the regeneration of the drunkard and we well realize that nothing can take the place of that individual's coming into personal contact with Christ, but we should also be interested in stamping out the iniquitous traffic which made him a drunkard and which remains as the constant source of temptation to the redeemed drunkard, and to all others, youth and aged alike. If the liquor traffic continues to exist in this nation and in the world, it should exist only after the group of Christians—followers of Christ—have fought with all their strength to

stamp it from the earth. We cannot be true followers of Christ and take a passive attitude toward any evil.

The sad situation existing in the general church world today is that practically all emphasis is being placed upon the social phase of the gospel, the reformation of society, and little if any emphasis is given to the message of individual regeneration. We must never lose the positive note of individual regeneration, for for this purpose were we raised up; but on the other hand we must not make the mistake of being indifferent to evil conditions existing in society. By doing our best to reform society we make it easier for people to accept Christ as personal Savior and to live the Christian life.

Meeting Definite Issues

The church has always been the sworn foe of evil wherever it has existed. The prophets of old were proclaimers of social reform. The church today, as a group of followers of Christ, must make a bold corrective attack upon the entrenched evils which, through their influences, are tearing down the work built up by the church. It is certainly true that a group of Christians—followers of Christ—working together in prayer and service can set in motion influences which could not be started by mere individuals and which will have effective results in tearing down the strongholds of Satan. We as individuals are partners with Him; as collective partners we form the army over which he is Captain.

As our Captain leads on it is our duty as a group to follow Him. As the leaders of the church grapple with some of the great issues of the day we must lend our influences to all efforts to bring about a better condition upon the earth. We are well aware of the fact that by no means can we usher in the millennium by following the present program, that only the personal appearance of Christ can bring in the mil-

lennium. But can we be true to the trust given us and be found occupying the responsibility placed in our hands when our Lord returns if we fail to realize our obligation toward doing all within our power to better conditions in society? May we not in some measure prepare the ground work for the millennium by faithfully working at our task today?

We cannot afford to be passive in our attitude toward prevailing issues. Although it is stated in the Bible that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, we cannot afford, through our indifference, to add to the momentum of these evil influences. Rather we must do all within our power to restrict them and by so doing be able to win some souls to the Lord Jesus Christ, which perhaps will not be won if we remain passive. If conditions continue to grow worse they should be permitted to do so only after we as a group of Christ's followers have done our best to better them.

The question of war and our participation in peace efforts is presented as a challenge. It is surely not in keeping with the teachings of our Master, who taught that His followers should love their enemies, for so-called Christian nations to engage in war against each other, nor could it be considered Christian for these nations to engage in war with nations of other religions. The war system is one of the outstanding evils of the day. Are we to be indifferent to the cause of peace? Are we to rest complacently in statements of scripture concerning wars and rumors of wars and make no effort to further the cause of peace? However fruitless we may consider our efforts to be it is surely our duty to lend every ounce of our influence to the cause of peace. We had better fail propagating peace, than to succeed in advocating war. In this as in all other world evils we should maintain the attitude that if war comes it has come only after we have done our best to avert it and to maintain peace.

There are the existing evils in our economic life which the followers of Christ are combating. As far as these evils relate to the kingdom of God we are actively to combat them. God was not indifferent to the condition of the poor in His plan for the organization of the kingdom of Israel. He made provisions for the poor to be taken care of from the tithes of the people, also that on each year of jubilee there should be the remission of debts and the land returned to its original owner. Jesus emphasized the responsibilities of His followers to the poor when He challenged the rich young ruler to sell his possessions and give to the poor, to follow Christ and have treasures in heaven. The early Christian church arose to meet the emergency of providing for the poor of their number by forming a Christian community in which none considered that the things he possessed were his own, but those who had possessions sold them and gave the money to the apostles that there should be none among them that lacked the necessities of life. The Apostle James in writing to the Christians condemned those professors who did not share their worldly goods with the brother who was in need. Surely, with such a background, we must realize our responsibility toward the economic needs of the people of God. Also we must go farther than that to meet the immediate need. We must endeavor to correct the system by which one man may amass a great fortune to be used in his own selfish pursuits while his neighbor and his family are deprived the actual necessities of life. If such an evil system continues let it be done only after we have done our best to correct it.

We face a deplorable moral condition. We have drifted far from the high moral standards of the Bible and those observed by many of a previous generation. This moral situation is more of a result than a cause. The causes which have contributed to the present day low moral conception are

those which the church has always opposed and which it must continue to oppose. While the church generally has been engaged in promoting the by-products of Christianity, namely, the social gospel, with no vital emphasis upon individual regeneration, the enemy has taken advantage of the situation and has polluted the sources of amusement and pleasure patronized by the vast majority of the people of the day. They have contaminated the stream of literature and corrupted the minds of people through their loose and suggestive writings. They have captured many of the people in high responsible position and these leaders by their actions and statements have consciously or unconsciously led the people astray. The trend in the field of general education has been toward paganism and materialism. It has not been outspoken in its opposition to God; it is godless, finding no room for God and formulating a philosophy of life in which they assume they can easily get along without Him. These and many other causes are responsible for much of the present moral decline. What shall we do about it? Can we sit still while the enemy pollutes the stream of human thought? No! No more than we could sit by without protesting while we watched some person or persons polluting the streams which furnish the water supply of a city. We must "follow Jesus" in making a bold corrective attack on this moral situation. This nation and world cannot long remain part pagan and part Christian. We must do our best to overcome the pagan and exalt the Christian. We must boldly affirm our positions against worldliness in the general church world. We must endeavor to clean up the sources from which our moral life is polluted. We cannot compromise with evil in any sense. We must realize that it is our duty to fight for righteousness, to actively oppose the wrong, and if evil con-

ditions exist they must do so only after we have done our best to correct them.

The church has always been strongest in its moral influences when it has been strongest in spiritual power. In three centuries the evangelistic fervor of the early church brought about a complete change of attitude on the part of the Roman Empire, for the emperor embraced Christianity as the religion of state. Had it majored its efforts and emphasis upon this change, it would have failed. But through prayer and constant emphasis upon personal regeneration, through ceaseless evangelistic endeavors to save people of all nations, through a full dependence upon the Holy Spirit for its power and success God helped it to influence the world. We state again, that the primary emphasis of the church is the gospel of individual salvation and the by-product or secondary emphasis is the reformation of society.

The World Call

There is another important call to the group—the regenerated individuals composing the church of Christ—that is, the call to follow Christ in the spreading of the gospel to the world. The commission of Jesus, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature,” rings as a challenge to the youth of this Christian generation. “Follow thou me” in the evangelization of the world, is the call from Christ.

Time was when it was exceedingly difficult to get into fields in mission lands. That time is gone—we trust forever—but today the doors are opened wide for the preaching of the gospel. Thousands of people are interested in hearing and accepting the gospel message. Yet, with all the efforts put forth by the church for the evangelization of heathen nations during the past century and more, there are actually

more heathen people living on earth today than when the first Christian missionary landed on heathen soil. Have our efforts been fruitless? By no means. But we have not advanced with the Christian message and in bringing about the salvation of the people as rapidly as the population of these nations has increased. To offset this dark statement we may say there are no doubt more Christians in these heathen lands than there have ever been in the history of the world.

We are challenged to enter the door of world wide evangelism. Perhaps there will always be heathen in the world, but they should continue to be so only after the Church of Christ has done all within its powers to bring about their salvation. The individual Christian cannot do much to carry the gospel message to the world, but the group of Christian followers can do much to bring about wonderful success. Let us work together with Christ in presenting the gospel to those who have never heard and in seeking their salvation.

This challenge, "Follow thou me," has a distinct appeal to the group. The group of Christians by following Christ can do what individuals can never do. Again we emphasize that personal regeneration is the primary emphasis of the gospel message, but the reformation of society is its by-product, or has a secondary emphasis and is therefore not to be ignored.

A Dark Background

We acknowledge as we look out on the world, we have a dark picture presented to us. But we shall not be dismayed nor shall we be driven from the field of battle because of the blackness of the storm clouds. We well know that upon this dark background may be painted a beautiful picture.

It was on the dark background of Calvary that Jesus painted the bright picture of human redemption, when He by the grace of God tasted death for every man, that through

death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil: and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage—a picture of redemption. It was on the dark background of a tomb that the risen Lord painted the bright picture of hope when He burst asunder the bonds of death assuring us that death had lost its sting, the grave had lost its victory and He is alive forevermore with the keys of death and of hell upon His girdle as tokens of His everlasting conquering power;—a picture of victory.

It was on the dark background of persecution that the early church painted the bright picture of success in evangelistic efforts. They were undaunted in the face of imprisonment and death, they counted not their lives dear unto themselves, they overcame otherwise insurmountable difficulties to present the gospel truth to the world. When scattered abroad they carried the torch of gospel truth with them, with the result that the fire was spread by the dispersion of God's people, while their persecutors had designed that by this dispersion Christianity should be stamped from the earth.

The Reformers of a few centuries past painted a bright picture of gospel freedom on the dark background of corruption, oppression and ruthless persecution by the established church. On the dark background of religious decline and moral laxity the Wesleys and their contemporaries painted a bright picture of a sweeping revival, the influence of which lives to our day. The leaders of the holiness movement painted on a dark background the picture of heroism and devotion to the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification by refusing to compromise their convictions and to yield to the demands of a worldly minded church leadership.

A dark picture? Yes! The world presents no easy road today for the person who will dare to go forward with

Christ. This call is not for the faint hearted, the fearful, or the compromiser. It is a call to soldiers whose love and devotion to Christ and His cause inspire within them loyalty and heroism such as will parallel anything ever manifested by the followers of Christ in preceding generations.

We too may paint a bright picture of success on the present dark background of uncertainty, of skepticism, of paganism, of spiritual decline, of moral decay, and of appalling indifference, if we will but accept the challenge to go deeper and farther with Christ. We are not creatures of our day; we are followers of Christ. We are not to be defeated by the powers of evil and their array of weapons which are formed against us, for we are following our great Commander through whom we may be more than conquerors. We will not succumb to the deadening influences of the day, for we are conscious of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit within our lives, bringing to us a realization that He that is within us is greater than he that is in the world. We will meet the issues of life with a confidence and hope, an assurance and trust, that, regardless of denials and apostasy on the part of some, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure"; and, as long as there is a Christ who ever liveth to make intercession for us, we are assured of personal victory and of success in our efforts to further the cause of Christ in the earth.

Conclusion

We are called upon to lay no new foundations. Others more noble and worthy have done this. Ours is to build upon the foundations they have laid; to accept so fully the challenge of Christ, "Follow thou me," that the superstructure we may build will compare favorably with the materials of which the foundation is made. We must have a clearness of pur-

pose and vision. There must be within us nobility of character. We must be determined to effect no compromise with sin, but rather to be possessed of such heroism, sacrifice, devotion and self-denial that we will be loyal to the principles of Christ and the doctrines of righteousness and holiness. We must be characterized with a master passion to serve, and be strong and resolute in the conflict. No matter what may come or go we must always realize that the end is worthy of any means necessary to reach it, and that to obtain the prize before us is worthy of all we may be able to put into the fight.

“Follow thou me.” What a challenge to the young people of the Church of the Nazarene! Dr. P. F. Bresee once said, “We are in the morning of the Nazarene movement and the sun never sets in the morning.” The Sun of Righteousness has risen. He is speeding onward across the skies and is spreading His full-orbed light on the world. Will we follow Him and present this light to those who have not heard? Will we follow Him in our personal devotion and comradeship? Will we follow Him in combating the entrenched evils of the day? We will, by His grace.

“Lead on, O King Eternal,
The day of march has come;
Henceforth in fields of conquest
Thy tents shall be our home.
Thro’ days of preparation
Thy grace has made us strong,
And now, O King Eternal,
We lift our battle song.

“Lead on, O King Eternal,
Till sin’s fierce war shall cease,
And holiness shall whisper
The glad Amen of peace;

For not with swords' loud clashing,
Nor roll of stirring drums;
With deeds of love and mercy
Thy heavenly kingdom comes.

“Lead on, O King Eternal,
We follow, not with fears;
For gladness breaks like morning
Where'er Thy face appears;
Thy cross is lifted o'er us
We journey in its light:
The crown awaits the conquest;
Lead on, O God of might.”

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