Christian motivation in educating for democracy

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CHRISTIAN MOTIVATION
IN EDUCATING FOR DEMOCRACY

by
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INTRODUCTION

The life and teachings of Jesus Christ have been used throughout the centuries as a justification for empire and dictatorship, for constitutional monarchy and for varying degrees of democracy. The church organized to spread his Gospel has been both friend and foe to such efforts. It has upheld friendly Caesars, maintained the theory of the "Divine Right of Kings," backed Cromwellian dictatorships and today lauds American democracy. When the church has identified itself with a form of government it has been due to a radical disapproval of the injustices of a precedent form of government or to a satisfaction with the temporal status in which it finds itself.

Likewise the church, but particularly prophets and pressure groups within the church, have been responsible for holding before the people the vision of the Kingdom of God and thereby drawing them toward it and away from a present form of government. That this is true is not alone to the credit of individuals who have been masterful enough to lead the people onward but to the faith they had in the God which Jesus Christ revealed to them. To the "practical man" such thoughts may seem irrelevant, but in fact they are not. It is Aldous Huxley who shows the truth of this:

It is in the light of our beliefs about the ultimate nature of reality that we formulate our conceptions
of right and wrong; and it is in the light of our conceptions of right and wrong that we frame our conduct, not only in the relations of private life, but also in the sphere of politics and economics. So far from being irrelevant, our metaphysical beliefs are the finally determining factor in all our actions.¹

What bearing, then, does Christianity have upon the organization of human society? My purpose is to show that the conception of God and His will for men as revealed to us by Jesus Christ is the motivation for democracy in the field of human relations. By democracy we mean the spirit of equal rights, duties, privileges, voice and opportunities in the administration of corporate affairs.² Democracy implies freedom of conscience and expression, the right of individuals to act as they see fit, limited only by that which would be injurious to them or to others. Stated positively the rights of an individual "are those conditions of social life without which no man can seek, in general, to be himself at his best."³ The possession of rights in this sense implies a duty to be one's best self. The liberty which the possession of rights suggests involves in its nature restraints, "because the separate freedoms I use are not freedoms to destroy the freedoms of those with whom I live."

My freedoms are avenues of choice through which I may, as I deem fit, construct for myself my own course of

¹ Huxley, Aldous, EAM, 11.
² Warbasse, CD, 189.
³ Laski, H.J., RLE, 1.
conduct. And the freedoms I must possess to enjoy a general liberty are those, which in their sum, will constitute the path through which my best self is capable of attainment.4

Equality does not mean identity of treatment or even identity of reward; for neither is possible so long as men are "different in want and capacity and need." Equality means the absence of special privileges in such degree that the difference in treatment and reward "does not enable me, by its magnitude, to invade the rights of others . . ." Equality also means adequate opportunities to all.5

The essence of democracy is cooperation rather than compulsion; it depends upon the use of reason as opposed to force or the threats of force.

We shall consider Jesus' conception of God and His will for men, its influence in history, its motivation for the extension of democratic principles in politics, in economics, in race relations, in international relations, in the use of coercion, and in the church.

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4 Laski, RLE, 8.
5 Ibid, 10.
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CHAPTER I

DIVINE KINGSHIP - HUMAN DEMOCRACY

Into the life and thought of the world Jesus brought a clear picture of the kind of being God really is. He is not a judge whose sternness needs appeasement. He is not a king whose mercy must be called forth by persuasion. He is rather "Our Father who art in Heaven." On the authority which these words convey Jesus based the whole existence of society.\(^1\) He recognized that human life descending by ordinary generation unites man to his kind and can only issue from one parentage, the Author of all life whom he called Father.\(^2\)

From the fact of the fatherhood of God in which every man holds an immediate relation to God it follows that all men constitute a single family.\(^3\) This is so self-evident from Jesus' great commandment that every man shall love God with all his life that it becomes equally apparent that every man has value in the sight of God, because the love of every man is sought by God. Jesus makes it even clearer that all are brothers when he refuses to permit a partial brotherhood:

Ye have heard that it was said, thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, love your enemies and pray for them that persecute

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1 Gladden, W., CS, 20.
2 Ibid, 23.
3 Scott, ETJ, 59.
you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth his rain on the just and the unjust.  

Even your enemy is your brother because he is the child of your Father. All men come under the law of brotherhood and therefore all human relations whether industrial, political, domestic,—are founded on this fact. Each must be willing to acknowledge the rights of his brother and none is entitled to use another "as a tool for his own ends."  

In a world in which all men are brothers and stand in relation to God as sons there must be cooperation. "Fatherhood is not tyranny" and "sonship is not bondage." The relation is one of partnership of men with God in which each tries to do what seems best for the other. It is a partnership not for the benefit or gain of a few but for the good of all.  

Such a relation can be at its best only when individuals recognize themselves as sons of God and willing to follow His will as the law of their lives.  

Both history and philosophy likewise assume that a permanent foundation of self-government in the state is capacity for self-government in the individual, and the first condition of self-government in the individual is recognition of an invisible law or divine lawgiver whose

4 Matthew 6:43-45.  
5 Scott, ETJ, 59.  
6 Ward, E., SE, 110.  
7 Gladden, CS, 24, 25.
authority he does not question.  

Jesus has provided us with the only basis on which democracy can function: the brotherhood of man, the infinite value of the individual, and submission to the will of God as a necessary basis of unity.

However, Jesus does not stop with a mere philosophic basis for democracy. It is his conception of God which makes democracy seem feasible. In giving us his conception he dared to break away from all previous standards to give us a God of love, righteousness, mercy and peace. These moral qualities are His essential nature and are hence the norm for our moral life. "In our narrow sphere we are to act as God does in His 'that we may be children of our Father who is in heaven.'" In the character of God lies the justification of man's reliance upon goodwill and love as a basis for his participation in society. Such a basis means democracy for in it is a willingness "to treat others as persons rather than as means and to make one's own good coordinate with the good of all others involved in the same situation."

From the records we have of Jesus he is continually preaching and teaching in terms of the Kingdom of God on earth. This society of which he speaks is one wherein will be done

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8 Abbot, CSP, 55.
9 Cutting, CS, 7.
10 Scott, ETJ, 39, 41; Matthew 5:45; Luke 6:35.
11 Matthews, JSI, 51.
the will of God. Yet membership in it is not one of compulsion by law or pressure. In place of the multitude of external rules which had governed the Jewish concept of admission to Heaven Jesus gave us a few great controlling principles to which a man must voluntarily consent. "A kingdom of God composed of those not freely consenting to the laws of the kingdom would hardly be a democracy." In other words Jesus does not place hope either in external rewards or in a "subtle inner determinism" as the motive in building a new society. It is evident that he is depending on an inward motive, the effort of the will, as the condition for joining the "kingdom." This further implies that he has no hope of getting a good society out of bad men. His "primary concern is with the individual."

Nevertheless, the "kingdom" is a collective conception and Jesus thought of it as such. It was not simply a matter of saving human beings so that they might be fit for heaven, but "of transforming the life on earth into the harmony of heaven." To Nicodemus he had said that a man must be "born again" if he was to become a part of the kingdom. And in this respect his work for a good society presupposes the personal and spiritual, yet he also believed that the personal can find

12 McConnell, DC, 11.  
13 Calkins, CCM, 152; Gladden, CS, 16.  
14 Rauschenbusch, OSC, 65.
"actuality only in the outward and social." The social or corporate living of the will of God would be the future community he called the "kingdom." Although Jesus thinks of the "kingdom" as future he desired that men should live as if it were already here. This thought of Jesus' was expressed very beautifully in an earlier time by Plato.

In heaven, I replied there is laid up a pattern of it, methinks, which he who desires may behold and beholding may take up his abode there. But whether such an one exists or ever will exist in fact, is no matter; for he will live after the manner of that city having nothing to do with any other.

Jesus has provided us with a philosophic basis for democracy in the brotherhood of man, a unifying basis in the high ethical qualities in God's will and a method of attaining democracy which is in harmony with the society he hopes to establish. Now he gives us a faith which is necessary if we are to keep the inner feeling of democracy. Jesus possessed something of the patience of the Infinite in his relations with people. He believed that the forces back of the universe and the power running through it were friendly to the goals he was trying to achieve. He believed this because he was convinced he was doing God's will. Therefore he did not need to put pressure on any man; for he was sure the thing he taught had eternal validity. He was convinced that the truths he espoused were at work like seed or leaven and that men could be the

15 Scudder, SC, 379.
16 Plato, REP, Book 9.
instrument for their fruition.\textsuperscript{17} So long as he did the will of God he did not worry or fret as to the result. Paradoxically he was both concerned with results and finely careless of them. He did his best as he thought God wanted him to do and trusted implicitly that the work would be carried forward even if to all appearances he had failed. Such a faith is necessary if an individual is to feel the spirit of democracy. Otherwise an idea may seem so important and immediate success so essential that coercion or violence, or even the taking of life may be accepted as the way to achieve a "pet" project.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{17} Scott, ETJ, 47.
\textsuperscript{18} Ward, SE, 132.
CHAPTER II

THE CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE FOR DEMOCRACY IN HISTORY

The institution called the church was organized around the life and teachings of Jesus by the energetic efforts of Paul and the other Apostles and followers of Jesus. Though it invoked the aid of a Divine spirit it was largely human and consequently imperfect according to the limitations of its membership. Yet it managed to keep much of the spirit of brotherhood and democracy in its organizational form. All men, whether rich or poor, slave or free, Jew or Gentile could attend and participate in the rites of the early church. No matter what his station each must kneel in the same token of reverence and each must in the same manner receive the body and blood of Christ. Although there were various grades of the priesthood within the church all were recruited from the multitude regardless of the place from whence they came. Thus the church was renewing herself with common blood and keeping within herself the necessary root of democracy.¹

Before all of this organization had taken place Christianity was kept alive by communities of believers. In such communities every important question was referred to the community as a whole and each member had a voice in deciding it.

¹ Smith, DC, 47.
"The evidence is conclusive that far down into the first Christian century the organization and spirit of these Christian communities was absolutely democratic."²

The record of the first three centuries is a constant fight upon the part of the early church to make its convictions felt in the social and political strata of the Roman Empire. Persecutions did not prevail and finally the Christians secured under Constantine a nominal control of the Empire.³ Progress within the empire for democracy can be seen best by looking at the influence of Christianity upon legislation. The Institutes of Justinian formulated in the sixth century contain doctrines which can be traced directly to Christian authority. These Institutes are designed to facilitate the freeing of slaves and to maintain freedom after it was once bestowed. What a legal advance this was to think that a slave who had been set free could not again be brought back into bondage! The Roman law encouraged the manumission of slaves, "but the church taught it as a religious duty."⁴ Pope Alexander III gave final authority for freedom when he declared that slavery could no longer exist in Christian society.⁵

Among early Christians the spirit of democracy in the use of property was urged by men like Justin and Clement of Rome,

² Kent, STP, 285.
³ Wells, OH, 519, 520.
⁴ Smith, DO, 54, 56.
⁵ Ibid, 57.
by Cyprian and Tertullian and later by Augustine. Justin held that everything should be shared with the poor.\(^6\) Clement of Rome said, "the use of all things that are in this world ought to be common to all men."\(^7\) Christianity did not achieve any real democratic distribution of property or economic resources but it did make sharing with the less fortunate a brotherly necessity rather than public feeding to prevent proletarian revolution.

Likewise the elevation of womanhood can be attributed to Christianity. No finer proof is available than the marked contrast between the Venus of the Romans and the Greeks with her incarnation of passion and the Madonna with the Child in her arms before whom men stood reverently.\(^8\)

The first Bishops of Rome were poor and insignificant but as time went on the authority of the church came to vest in them and they became the counterparts of Emperors of Rome. Democracy in the church must have seemed dead in the days when the break-up of the Empire and the invasion of the barbarians gave the Papacy opportunity to assume dominion over the disorganized nations. The empire no longer remained; its remnants contained a civilization that was in a state of extreme demoralization. Plagues raged, epidemics swept the land, robbers

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\(^6\) Justin, APO, I, 14.
\(^7\) Eddy, HSJ, 76, 77.
\(^8\) Smith, DC, 58.
abounded and famine seemed permanent. In the midst of all this the Christian Church slowly and weakly attempted to restore a lost sense of community. The growth of the monasteries provided the church with one of its most effectual instruments for maintaining the Christian religion and at the same rehabilitating a broken society.

Paradoxically the monasteries of the middle ages had within them both allegiance to the hierarchy and the germs of modern democracy. They taught men to know that they had a common humanity and a common Father in Heaven. They taught them also to come out of isolated ignorance and profit by one another's wisdom. Many monasteries were witnesses against the feudal caste. "With them was neither high-born nor low-born, rich nor poor."  

Moreover it was in this period following the break-up of the Empire that a Pope like Gregory the Great was still able to admonish men that "All men are by nature equal," ("Omnes namque natura aequales sumus"). Was it because he had grown up in the monastic tradition?

As the generations passed the church became very rich. The monastic orders which had denied wealth to the individual member increased the power of the organization and of their

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9 Wells, OH, 527-529.
10 Cutting, CS, 6.
11 Carlyle, ICS, 22.
church. The church became outwardly strong but morally decadent. Little of the democratic spirit of its founders was left, yet the remarkable thing about it all is that from time to time when the church seemed most imperilled men of great ability and brotherly spirit came to her aid. Dunstan in England framed the ecclesiastical canons of King Eadgar and laid the foundations of democracy there.\textsuperscript{12} The monastery of Cluny in France was a bulwark of influence for the maintenance of Christian brotherhood.\textsuperscript{13}

The power of the papacy under Hildebrand and Innocent III grew to such an extent that the pope was secular as well as religious sovereign of most of western civilization. Yet even under the all powerful Innocent the forces of democracy staged a revolt. Stephen Langton, the Archbishop of Canterbury under Innocent, was the moving spirit in the revolt of the barons against King John of England, when in 1215 the issue of despotism or constitutional government gave birth to the Magna Charta. In the sixty-third paragraph is a revealing statement,

\begin{quote}
Wherefore we will and firmly decree that the English church shall be free, and that the subjects of our realm shall have and hold all the aforesaid liberties.
\end{quote}

Despite efforts of the Pope with whom John had allied himself the Charter remained and democracy moved forward.\textsuperscript{14}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{12} Smith, DC, 78, 79.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid, 80.
\textsuperscript{14} Smith, DC, 95, 96, 99.
\end{flushright}
In other parts of Europe from the eleventh century onward there were contests between two parties of the people, the Guelfs who represented the people and the Ghibelines who represented imperial interests. In all of these contests the church, for the most part, allied herself with the Guelfs, the party of the people.15

Coeval with the papacy's rise in power and the low moral condition of the clergy there came into existence mendicant orders, of which the chief were the Dominicans and Franciscans. Their members earned the name of friar, "because they were brothers of the people."16 In later years the plan of Dominic was perverted and the Dominicans became the instrument of an imperial church in its Inquisition. Nor were the Franciscans constant bearers of democracy for Francis' teaching of poverty and brotherhood fell before the warped vision of power and the lure of temporal ambition which ruled the ministry of succeeding generations of mendicants. Yet it is a truth of history that men of vision leave their stamp not only on the generation they serve but their inspiration to generations yet unborn. Francis was such a man. He advocated no political or social reforms in a formal way. "He brought the gospel back again and made it at home in lowly places." He taught his followers to give up material wealth and the more insidious egotism,

15 Smith, DC, 97, 98.
16 Ibid, 110.
to forego external power and internal pride. His democracy was compelling because for him democracy and religion were identical.

How democratic the Christian religion really is, how it exalts the common people, how it glorifies the darkest places of human life, is disclosed in the Franciscan revival of the thirteenth century. 17

When the Black Plague swept Europe and England in 1347 and 1348 it brought the scourge of death to millions. A recurrence of the plague about twenty years later made the need for social reconstruction imperative. The shortage of labor gave the worker a new spirit of independence which led to a struggle for industrial democracy. The scourge did not generate the idea; it was but the servant of a truth the world already had. Quite illustrative of this is the poem by William Langland, "The Vision of Piers Ploughman," which, though strange to the modern mood, was truly the incarnation of the democracy of Christianity in the fourteenth century. The poet makes Piers Ploughman the common working man and the basis of the poem the gospel of moral equality among men. Rooted in this spirit came the insurrection of the peasants led by a parochial helper, John Ball, and Wat Tyler. In the latter part of the fourteenth century, also, we find John Wycliffe who denied the supremacy of any human power, whether pope or king and held that property was not for ownership but

17 Smith, DC, 113-131.
use by stewards of God. The doctrines of Wycliffe spread to Europe and found life there in the person of John Huss of Bohemia, and validity in the popular protest against tyranny which was sweeping the church and state in their epoch of reformation. 18

With Martin Luther comes a new period in the life and thought of the church. His action in suppressing the peasant's uprising is a dark blotch on his record as a democrat. Nevertheless, earlier in life he inspired revolt against ecclesiastical tyranny and lent rhythm and direction to an insurgent democratic mood. When he denied the supreme authority of the papacy there was implicit denial of all authority which existed "without the consent of the governed." 19 This is explicit in his pamphlet on "The Liberty of Christian People" wherein he says: "A Christian man is the most free lord of all, subject to none." Yet this was not so remarkable as the thing he did, when as a peasant he confronted both church and state with an issue of conscience.

In his own person he had incarnated the doctrine of private judgment, and in demanding freedom of conscience for himself as with a great voice out of heaven he demanded freedom for all men. 20

Luther was startled when his words and actions were used by peasants under the leadership of Muenzer in a direct political

18 Smith, DC, Chapter V.
19 Cutting, CS, 7.
20 Smith, DC, 196, 198.
and social application but the mood he had interpreted he could not break.

In Switzerland, Ulrich Zwingli, a people's priest was the moving genius. He won a complete victory over the authority of the Roman Church. Not content with that he set about molding the will of the Swiss people against outside alliances in order to preserve their more democratic institutions. These were his distinct contributions to religion and democracy yet for his own people he secured the abolition of serfdom.21

John Calvin's contribution to popular sovereignty came in his teaching that Christian congregations had a right to choose their own pastors and in the fact that John Knox was his disciple. John Knox carried forward the cause of the poor in Scotland and largely by the exigency of his position sought freedom for the church from the control of the state. Both Knox in Scotland and Robert Brown in England gave motion to the contention that civil officers as well as religious should be chosen by consent of the people.22

It was men like these who were the life of the Reformation and it was the Reformation with its renewed emphasis on the worth of personal life which laid the foundation for a new appreciation of democratic principles.23

21 Smith, DC, 207-212.
22 Cutting, CS, 7-8.
23 Calkins, CCM, 51; Kent, STP, 330.
In the days of William of Orange and Mary, daughter of Charles I of England there was drawn up and accepted by parliament and the sovereigns a Declaration of Rights which asserted for the people the right to free exercise of religion, to a free choice of representatives in parliament and to liberty of debate within parliament. It was the new evidence of the influence of Wycliffe in the onward moving unity of democracy and religion.\(^{24}\) The same movement was at work among English settlers in America despite an intolerant group attitude to heretics which manifested itself in witch-burning and in the persecutions of Quakers in New England; for it was in the New England churches that the rule of the majority in each congregation made its challenge to tyranny.\(^{25}\) How powerful this inherent love of freedom was can only be confirmed by the course of American history when influential English descendants rallied together in congressional action to bring unity out of religious difference and correlative hope out of divisive disaster.

In England of the 18th century the resultant decadence from a power attitude and colonial wealth had its effect on the church. Those who wanted to preach unhampered and with liberty of conscience were forced into the open fields to preach their gospel of reform. John Wesley and his companions

\(^{24}\) Smith, DC, 233.  
\(^{25}\) Ibid, 236-241.
were of this caliber. They brought new life into the religion of England because they were sure that the most degraded of men had the capacity for salvation. The revival which they started, aided by like-minded forces in the Church of England was responsible in the early nineteenth century for the movement against slavery, for reforms in the poor relief system, for prison reform and many another ameliorating factor in the life of the oppressed.

The work went forward. In England John Howard succeeded in making the object of prison discipline not social reprisal but reformation. Also in the English line of democratic Christian succession was Charles Kingsley the leader of the movement called Christian Socialism. His sermon in London in 1851 on the "Message of the Church to the Working Man" brought a storm of protest which closed to him the pulpits of London but which gave to us Hypatia and made Kingsley one with Victor Hugo, Charles Dickens and Besant "who preached the gospel, not in terms of theology" but in vivid parables of life "after the manner of their master." More influential than Kingsley was the Earl of Shaftesbury whose labors for the working classes and for social reform would have been remarkable for a member of the nobility if he had not been a Christian.

26 Carlyle, ICS, 52.
27 Calkins, COM, 51.
28 Smith, DC, 298, 299.
29 Ibid, 299, 300.
In America it was the church which was the intelligent foe of slavery, and the churches' leaders who led the nation in the fight for abolition.

Truly noteworthy is the evolution of democracy from the teaching of Jesus through the many tribulations of the institutional church and the vicissitudes of political life. Complete democracy is still a long way from fulfillment. And in these days when from within there are attempts to identify the Christian way with the status of partial democracy and from without there are indictments upon the church's ability to lead the forces of democracy we must resuscitate the democratic spirit which was in Jesus and re-examine the church machinery with which we are equipped. The church's heritage from the Wesleyan and other evangelical movements is the type of organization with which the church now functions. It is most significant that in the Methodist and other similar churches are the roots of a larger democracy than any the world has thus far known; for in these churches in their conference organization the decisions lie with the conference rather than with a hierarchy. The bishops are then General Superintendents and as such the servants of the conferences. How exemplary this is of a true labor democracy:30 Even today, then, we find within the church the seeds of future democracy as well

30 Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1936, 21-31.
as the sustenance and conservation of that which has already been gained.

The church cannot and must not be identified with perfect democracy any more than it can be identified with the kingdom of God. It is the instrument whereby the spirit of its founder may become real to men, not alone in their very personal relationships but in their political, their economical, their inter-racial and inter-national relations. That it has done this through history can only be attested by the continued progress in those fields toward democracy and the influence upon that progression by Christianity and Christians.
CHAPTER III

THE DEMOCRACY OF TOMORROW

The founder of Christianity did not claim to be expert in the details of social reorganization. His teachings were in terms of principles which show his insistence that every social institution must be judged by what it does to the men who compose it.¹ His surety that God is Father to all demands a "constant and practical recognition of human brotherhood." Brotherhood not only implies equality of rights but it further implies that the real foundation of those rights is in the ethical equality of each individual; for in the Golden Rule it is each individual who judges the rights of others on the basis of his own claimed rights. The principle on which it rests is that each shall do to others what he expects others should do to him.² This means that every good we desire for ourselves we should try to secure for others. The widest application of this principle in government would suggest that each should be consulted concerning the rights which he expected for himself and the rights which were necessary for the good of all. Otherwise one man or group of men could indicate from time to time what are the rights of others on the basis of their ephemeral desires. That this can be true of one or a

¹ McConnell, DC, 48.
² Gladden, CS, 35, 36.
small group of individuals indicates the possibility of selfish application on the part of very large groups. Hence the larger and more inclusive the group which consents to the interpretation of their individual rights, the less likely is the chance that rights will be disregarded. This would further suggest that except in cases of complete unanimity the rights of some would be infringed or curtailed. Therefore the only way in which the rights of such a minority could be maintained would be the recognition on the part of the majority that the conduct of individuals and minority groups shall be tolerated up to the point where it becomes injurious to society.3 Even this must be judged by the standard of brotherhood as expressed in the Golden Rule: In their position the rights which I would expect I must now yield to them. This demands not only a passive attitude of tolerance on the part of the majority but an active defense of the rights of the individual conscience however inconsistent it may seem with the exigency or propensity of the larger group. Only in this way can government progress; for otherwise it becomes "a colossal agency for smothering the voices of the prophets."4 And only in this way can the full potentiality of each man as a self governing unit be realized; for without it there are no blunders to develop into wisdom nor self-injuries to turn into self-restraints.5

3 Gladden, CS, 163.
4 McConnell, DC, 75.
5 Abbott, CSP, 43.
A necessary right which belongs to the individual is the right to life and security in a material sense as well as in matters of conscience. Whenever and so long as such rights are at the arbitrary discretion of another there is no democracy; for the ability and power on the part of some to threaten such rights means the concentration of authority and hence of government in their hands. It is a truth of history that the authority of every ruling class has lain with its ownership of either the life or means of livelihood of those who were ruled. Under slavery there was ownership of the body of the worker; under serfdom there was ownership of the land on which the serf had to live; under capitalism there is ownership of the jobs of the workers through ownership of the tools of production. 6

The only way in which owners can maintain their ownership and hence their control over the non-owners is by a system of government which recognizes their rights to ownership despite the insecurity of non-owners. So long as this is true the basis of social organization is economic. It therefore follows that there will be a struggle between men to see who shall possess the most. Those who will fight for possessions and power admit that their first interest is in things as the reason for their connection with others of their race. If this

6 Eddy, RSJ, 119, 120.
is true it becomes inevitable that dominion, which is of the essence of a relation to things, will become the major emphasis of his life; "and he will naturally come to extend it so far as he can over persons." Labor in such a society becomes "a commodity to be bought in the cheapest market and sold in the dearest." 8

If Christianity would assert the brotherhood of man in the midst of such a society an industrial democracy would be the inevitable outcome. An industrial democracy would demand first of all that no man or group of men by virtue of economic power or possessions be able to exploit others. This further implies the collective ownership by the whole people of all those factors which in the possession of a few are a threat to the security of those who possess not. Should this become true it would necessarily mean that every man would be a laborer; for each would work for wages since he owned nothing which could yield unearned increment. Several industries, such as that of public education and the carrying of the mails are an application of this principle. 9 Wages under a set-up of that sort need not be equal but equitable.

In the second place the practical operation of an industrial democracy demands that there be no accumulation of

7 Gladden, CS, 39, 40, 41.
8 Ibid, 44.
9 Ibid, 126.
profits of wealth except for a surplus which may be necessary for overhead and replacement of equipment. If this were not true labor would be paid less than the amount it had produced and hence could purchase only a limited part of its production. The consequence would be under-demand, commonly called overproduction, which would lead to unemployment and a frustration of the very aim democracy was designed to secure.\(^{10}\)

The application of the Golden Rule to an economic democracy would not mean the abolition of private property but the extension of it so that the rights which hitherto a few have had may become the rights of all. That this seems necessary we can attribute to the fact that man, with a distinct physical organism, has the tendency to desire property rights in those things by which his life is sustained.\(^{11}\) Whatever guarantees his self becomes a part of him and hence is a right, which in a brotherhood society he must be willing to extend to all whom he considers in that light.

In addition to political and economic democracy there must be racial brotherhood. If God is truly Father as Jesus believed, then underlying all differences of race or color there is a common humanity.\(^{12}\) Mere membership in a particular race ought not to mark a man as either superior or inferior.

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\(^{10}\) Abbott, CSP, 61.  
\(^{11}\) Gladden, CS, 123-125.  
\(^{12}\) Calkins, CCM, 151.
Men should be judged on the basis of their own unique personality. Treatment, therefore will not be equal; for the needs and abilities will be variants and need varying applications. Where there is adequate claim to equality is in the field of human rights. It is a claim to the abolition of privilege. "It is a pressure against barriers which shut off a class or people from the enjoyment of what appears to be a fuller and freer life." It is Christianity's and Democracy's challenge to privilege, their revolt against supremacy and domination, their claim to equal rights and opportunities for all races which ultimately will destroy lynching, abolish discrimination and repeal acts of exclusion. What is much to be desired is that racial units shall grow to feel that "they are parts of one sympathetic and embracing social whole to which each can make its own contribution and from which each can receive what it needs to supplement its own possessions." What is most to be desired is that in all relationships men act as if racial differences did not exist as such, but only personality differences.

In a world of brothers violence becomes atheistic because it denies the unity of life. To assert one's self and work for the social fruition of the truth which has been asserted, all the while maintaining the rights of others, is

13 Oldham, CRP, 84.
14 Calkins, GCM, 150.
vastly different from forcing one's conclusion upon others. Ultimately the willingness to use violence means the willingness to over-ride all opposition. This is tantamount to holding before an individual or group the alternatives of acceptance of one's position or annihilation. Obviously this is contrary to the right of conscience and freedom of choice upon which democracy is based. It is likewise contrary to the spirit of Christ who rejected all violent means, thereby transferring the conflict "from the field of battle to the antagonism of mind against mind, and of heart against lack of heart.""15 Were violence then to become the method by which any group, political, religious, or industrial, sought to achieve a more perfect democracy, its use by one group would have to be justified at the same time its use by a resisting group would be condemned, thereby reversing the logic of the Golden Rule to "that which others wrongfully do to me I may rightfully do to them." Not only does this destroy the unity of brotherhood so necessary to democracy but also it means that the group which accepts the values and techniques of violence, the very antithesis of democracy, are bound by it.16 Moreover, the end which is sought, however noble, cannot justify means which are inconsistent with it "for the simple and obvious reason that the means employed determine the

15 Rauschenbusch, CSC, 64.
16 Gregg, PNV, 134.
nature of the ends produced."\textsuperscript{17}

A world divided into nations which are not primarily co-operative units for the achievement of a more efficient and more inclusive brotherhood has by its very nature erected barriers to universal democracy. The maintenance by artificial barriers of difference, particularly differences in privilege and opportunity tend to create separate antagonisms between those nations whose privilege and opportunity is relatively much less than those of other nations. Such antagonisms are both manifestations of a lack of democracy and a hindrance to achievement of democracy. A solution would necessarily demand the abolition of national lines as boundaries of special privilege. This would involve the making available to all people the world over of natural resources and the products of industry on a non-profit and hence non-differential basis. A solution would also demand the rejection of non-democratic means in the settlement of disputes. War would be outlawed and alliances would be shunned; for in war the first casualty is democracy and in alliances the first thought is special privilege for those within the circle.

Democracy by its very nature cannot be defended by a departure from its principles; for, like Christianity, its defense is in its practice. The progress of democracy is by

\textsuperscript{17} Huxley, EAM, 10.
its consistency in maintaining the rights of people as persons. The proponents of programs for the establishment of democracy may condemn systems of thought or action, and deeds or things in themselves but never the rights which are indigenous to personality. Only in this way can we explain Jesus' command to love our enemies; for he never intimated that we should condone the things they did. 18

18 Matthew 5:44.
CHAPTER IV

THE CHURCH'S APPROACH TO DEMOCRACY

Because man cannot live apart from his fellows the very nature of his being makes societies inevitable. A moral life in aloofness is impossible because "growth lies in the direction of belonging." 1 "Institutions exist to lend to each individual member their over-individual dimensions and scope." 2 Such institutions must ever be less capable of expressing perfection in terms of the ideals toward which they strive than is the individual; for whatever is historical inherits the weaknesses as well as the strength of the past and whatever is organized is composed of men whose vices are mixed with their virtues. At best, institutions can provide an environment friendly to the maturing of ideal qualities in the individual.

Organizations to propagate the faith and teachings of the Founder of Christianity have been of two types, the sect type and the church type. A sect is a compact religious society which follows a certain opinion or set of opinions or a particular leader or authority. 3 The church in its Protestant form is an organization whose membership includes a cross-

1 Hocking, HNR, 153.
2 Ibid, 154.
3 Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.
section of the community and which in all essentials is controlled by that membership. Thus the value of a sect is to keep society alive to moral issues by the group pressure which organizational unanimity on these issues offers. The church's function, on the other hand, is to minister to the religious needs of a community. The basis of membership, then, is not primarily ethical but in response to a felt need for worship with those who have "similar spiritual aspirations."

In Protestantism this means that the church as a whole will exhibit but little social enlightenment at any given time by comparison with certain minority groups of Christians. For in the Protestant churches the principle of lay control is well established. Such organization slows down action in comparison with either the sect type or a church whose dominant leadership is clerical and hierarchical. The Protestant church pays its price in terms of corporate action for its principle of the "priesthood of all believers" and a democratic type of organization. Consequently efforts on the part of a few to commit the church to a radical position will prove futile unless the great majority are ready to accept such a position.

The Church will become the instrument of social progress in the direction of the kingdom of God insofar as it maintains within its organization a democracy so that prophets and pressure groups within the church may, without persecution,

4 Johnson, CS, 77.
5 Ibid, 64.
operate to convince and educate the total membership. Such prophets or pressure groups may organize within the church for the purpose of contending for their position but to seek to commit the entire membership to principles which they are not ready to assume is to use pressure not in accord with the standards of democracy. Their function is "to carry the whole body forward as rapidly as they can by moral influence and educational effort." Examples of pressure groups within the church are the Methodist Federation for Social Service and the Church League for Industrial Democracy.

To follow a democratic principle within the church may appear to thwart or slow up the process toward the democratic goals of the Founder of the church, yet short steps taken by a large body are of more widespread influence and lasting duration than the "long strides taken by a few." When the body of the church has arrived at the position toward which a portion of its membership has been leading it, it will then serve in society as a pressure group for the securing of its position as the corporate expression of the people. In this respect the church's relation to society is that of a sect. Action of the state may also cause the church to become a sect. This would be true when a totalitarian state invades the sphere of the church or denies its liberty.

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6 Johnson, CS, 85-87.
7 Ibid, 123.
8 Ibid, 91.
The fact of democracy within the church does not mean that the church is either hesitant to act in relation to social issues or wary of moral discipline for its members.

Rather, it means that when the church speaks and acts in relation to social issues it should be reflecting a corporate conviction and not a minority opinion that has little significance for the group as a whole.9

In summary, the social function of the church rests on two major principles. First, if the church is to speak and educate in terms of a good society which shall embody the democratic principles of its Founder it must so far as possible attain self-consistency. Within its own organization it must use means which are in harmony with the ends it heralds.

Secondly, the church has an obligation which quite transcends the boundaries of limited membership. It should properly influence public opinion "if in so doing it is making effective a body of convictions deeply held by the people whom the church represents."10

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9 Johnson, CS, 92.
10 Ibid, 100.
DIGEST

The central purpose of Jesus' life and teachings was to give men a clear conception of God and His will. Jesus taught that God was Father and from this fact of fatherhood he was convinced that all men are brothers. Such a relationship of man to man and men to God makes each individual a personality of supreme worth. In addition, Jesus taught that the nature of God was love, righteousness, mercy and peace, and that men should live in harmony with God's will. He also suggests that men will have to live in accordance with God's will if they hope to attain God's kingdom here on earth. Finally, Jesus' faith in the purpose of God was so controlling in his life that he was sure the Force back of the universe was friendly to his goals and would bring them to pass if men cooperated with God. Thus, Jesus provides us with a philosophic basis for democracy, a unifying basis in the ethical qualities in God's will, a method of attaining democracy, and a faith which will keep the inner spirit of democracy alive.

The influence of the life and teachings of Jesus throughout history has operated to lead society in the general direction of democracy. In the first three or four centuries Christianity accomplished the amelioration of slave conditions, elevated womanhood, and gave the motive of love to the caring for the poor instead of the former motive of preventing pro-
letarian revolution. The monasteries kept democracy alive in the middle ages by teaching a common fatherhood and by living a brotherly life. Even individuals held the teachings of Christ as so central that they moved in the direction of democracy. Noteworthy among them is Langton of Canterbury who was instrumental in securing the Magna Charta. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries when the papacy was at the height of its power various mendicant orders like the Franciscans carried the spirit of brotherhood in their own organization and in their dealings with others. When their influence lapsed John Wycliffe in England, Martin Luther in Germany, Zwingli in Switzerland, and others challenged the rights of temporal sovereignty over the Christian conscience. In their wake came the declaration of Rights in England and the demand for democratic rule within the church. Wesley and his companions carried the Gospel to the poor and started the revival in England so instrumental to the abolition of slavery, and amelioration of the lot of those who were oppressed. Thus the work went forward. In England the Earl of Shaftesbury sought better conditions for labor; in America the church led in the fight against slavery. Today the church finds itself still the hope of democracy. Its heritage in the struggle for democracy is the teaching of Christ and a democratic system of organization.

On the basis of Jesus' teachings the church can offer no
detailed system of social reorganization. It can hold to the principle of brotherhood and therefore to the equality of rights for all persons. This may mean majority rule if the rights of all persons are considered and they are consulted about their rights but it also means complete tolerance for the minority. The church can also espouse the right of the individual to life and security. This may mean the elimination of all profit from industry and the establishment of all men as wage-earners but it would also mean elimination of threats to security by any one class, and economic democracy. It need not, however, mean the abolition of private property.

In addition to political and economic democracy the church can fight for racial brotherhood wherein all men will be judged on the basis of their own unique personality rather than on racial or color differences. This will mean equal rights and opportunities for all races, with no discrimination or exclusion on account of race.

As a method for social change or for preservation of that which the church believes worthwhile violence must be rejected. Willingness to use violence means willingness to over-ride all opposition. This is obviously contrary to the spirit of democracy and the spirit of Christ. Moreover nationalism and its barriers to international and equal access to raw materials means special privileges for some and the maintenance of artificial barriers to brotherhood. Democracy, like Chris-
tianity, cannot be defended; its defense is in its practice.

Man's desire for group association ought to be met by institutions which provide an environment most friendly to the maturing of his highest ideals and potentialities. The church is such an organization. Unlike the sect which functions best to achieve desired group goals the church ministers to the religious needs of a whole community. Its function, also, is to maintain within its organization a democracy so that prophets and pressure groups may without persecution operate to convince the membership of whatever is valid in their position. When the great majority in the church arrive at a position as a result of the application of democracy then the church may function in the state as would a sect, but only in regard to issues which have achieved corporate sanction. The church has an obligation to remain self-consistent with the teachings of its Founder and also to transcend the boundaries of limited membership and influence public opinion.
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