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The church as a social center

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GRADUATING THESIS

THE CHURCH AS A SOCIAL CENTER

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICE

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The Church as a Social Center.

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THE CHURCH AS A SOCIAL CENTER

The Origin and the Growth of this Idea.

Upon reading these words, "The Church as a Social Center," one might be led to ask concerning how late an invention this idea is in the field of religion. Who has taken this advanced step in attempting to define religion in social terms? What a turning from the old paths is this in the mixing of religion with the affairs of this life? The questioner needs to have brought to his mind the fact that true religion has always been social in character, and to be defined in social terms is only the expression of its true nature. Religion has been caused to live in an unnatural element when its distinctive social nature and function have been denied it. The claim is to be made today that the attempt to socialize the church and the gospel which it preaches is not an effort to enter a bypath, new and untrod, but rather has for its purpose the restoration of the things of religion to the place they have always been intended to fill. The contention is then that a social religion is not a creation of the modern mind, but has its roots in

the far distant past.

If you will allow yourself to be taken back to the days of the early dawn of man's history proof will even there be found of this fact. The Semitic peoples traced to their beginnings and early home on the continent of Asia are found to have been a religious people. The social nature of their religion was its distinctive characteristic. It is to be noticed that with them the saving of their individual souls had small importance in comparison with the things which concerned their everyday lives in their relationships with each other. While it is true that in those early days the forms of religion were crude and would come far short in measuring up to our present day standards, yet there was a social germ present.

A community of these early Semitic people had a God from whom they believed themselves to be physical descendants. The god was the father of them all and in this family relationship the tribe or community united at stated times in a common meal, during which food was offered to the god and of which they believed he partook when they saw the blood which they poured soak into the ground or the smoke from

a sacrifice disappear in the air. Into their religion they brot the things of their everyday lives. Of the god they asked help against their enemies, counsel in matters of national difficulty, or a sentence of justice when a case between individuals was too hard for them to decide. The social side of the religion of these people showed itself in the development which it gave to the idea of brotherhood in the community, the hospitality to strangers for which it stood, and in the belief that suffering, from whatever caused, affected the whole community and not simply individuals.

These were the days long before the birth of Christianity thru the advent of Christ yet Christianity, and the Judaism which preceded it, do not disagree with the social emphasis of this earlier form of religion. The Hebrews thru whom Christianity came were a division of these Semitic peoples and their religion at the beginning of their history shows the marks of the same social stamp. These people, like the other branches of the family of Semites, were composed of tribes or clans, twelve in number. The wandering life which was theirs at first caused them all to live on the same social plane. With them all social

social questions were religious questions. There was no separation between them. The Jewish religion in its most early forms had in mind the bringing of the things which concerned the daily life of the tribe under its care. The affairs of the secular lives of these people-their personal relationships, the caring for the weak, sanitation, the securing of justice, and all such, were not only matters of social concern but of religious as well. We are to contend that this is the real function of religion today.

It is true that this conception of religion among the Hebrews did not stay in the forefront. It did not become dominant. It failed to reach its fullest expression for the same reason that a socialized religion has failed to gain the ascendancy in modern times. New elements became injected into the life and that of the people which resulted in hindering religion in following its ideal. In the first place when the tribes of Israel reached their new homes in Canaan some became cultivators of the soil while others took up their abode in the cities. The inevitable result of this was that social changes came. Some of the people, being stronger, succeeded

more than others. Private property began to develop, and social distinctions between people made. As the lives of men gained in material things it became harder for them to see themselves as one people which the complete solidarity of their former lives had made possible. When the time of the kings had arrived a greater separation between the classes was manifest. The result was that upon the death of Solomon, Israel's third king, the nation experienced a revolution. Yet regardless of this fact the history of the Hebrews to the time of the captivity is a story of the growth of royal and aristocratic power at the expense of a less fortunate people. It could only mean a severe social struggle, the traces of which are clearly marked in the writings of the prophets.

There is also to be noticed moving along by the side of this economic advancement a religious conflict. The aristocratic classes of Israel still remained religious but their religion became of quite a liberal type. They came to the place where they saw no objection to giving the worship of Baalim, the gods of the region before the Hebrews came to make it their home, an equal footing among them with

the worship of Jehovah. The more exclusive certain groups became the less was true religion able to function and the more did it lose its true significance in the thinking of the people. Those who claimed to be its possessors made it impossible for religion to assert its largest life and to show its true nature. Fundamentally its purpose was to function along the great social lines of the life of the people and to put every man on an equality with his neighbor. The prophets of the Old Testament pleaded for this very thing. They rebuked the ruling classes for their greed. They called for true righteousness and repeatedly emphasised that formal religion could never take the place of justice.

What about the attitude of Jesus in regard to his gospel being applied along social lines? Is it pleasing to him at this day to have his gospel made a social message for this life and his church active in touching the various phases of the life of the community? The Master was surely interested in the things which were contained in the lives of the people with whom he came in contact. He had knowledge of the poor, the sick, the afflicted and the oppressed of his day. He ever ministered unto such. It was his

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purpose to bring kingdom of God to this earth. To accomplish this the whole social life of man is involved. Jesus did not aim directly in getting people home to heaven, but rather in getting their lives here on earth in harmony with heaven. "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth," was his prayer.

Let us look at some of Jesus teachings in an effort to discover a social emphasis in them. A rich young ruler came to him one day with a desire to know the way of eternal life. Jesus found that as an individual he was living a good life. There was but one request made of him, and that was to go share his many possessions with the poor of the earth. He would then be qualified to enter upon that path of righteousness which his heart desired. The Master would put into the religion of this man a touch of human life such as he had never had before.

The Pharisee was a religious aristocrat. He could see only himself. The Master's use of unvarnished terms in heaping condemnation upon him helps us to see how far short this individual came in the estimate of Jesus. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God", said Jesus, and upon this both he and the Pharisee

agreed, but they separate the next moment when Jesus adds, thou shalt also "love thy neighbor as thyself." To the Pharisee religion meant God and one man, but to Jesus it meant God and two men, for it included a man's neighbor. In other words for the Pharisee religion was ego-centric, for Jesus it was socio-centric.

Jesus was a very sociable man. He desired to come into sympathetic touch with human life. It was not hard for him to fall into conversation with people. There was no life into which he refused to enter. He could talk with the sinful woman at the well, he went to dine at the home of a despised tax gatherer, the gospels speak of him being at social meals. He wanted people to be neighbors and brothers and he set the example. There was no distinction of classes in the mind of Christ. He came from the common people and championed their cause by ever calling for freedom, equality, and brotherhood among men. He came as a servant and men were considered great by him to the extent which they possessed this same characteristic. Dr. W. M. Thomson paints a beautiful picture when he says of Christ, "With uncontrolled power to possess all, he owned nothing. He had no place to be born in but another man's stable, no closet to pray in but the

wilderness, no place to die but on the cross of an enemy, and no grave but one lent by a friend."*

The view of Jesus embraced the whole of life and its needs, all of which he connected closely with his gospel. He gives us a picture of the judgment day scene and shows how eternal values are reckoned on the basis of the extent to which his gospel had a social application here in the world. Those whose religion had led them to the sick, the hungry, the naked, the strangers, and the imprisoned, heard the words, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you-" And this inheritance was denied to those whose religion had not led them along these lines.

That his church should render a service in things social is certainly pleasing to Christ. Instead of preparing men to live in another world we are coming to see that the great need is to prepare them to live in this one. Instead of thinking of the kingdom of God somewhere at some future time we want to bring it to earth and enthrone it in the present social order. Jesus would teach the church that in order to save its own life it must be willing to lose it in service for others. He would have men use his

* "Land and the Book", P.407.

gospel and go out to deal with the things that are in an attempt to make them what they ought to be. We, as the followers of the Master, are to disrobe religion of its otherworldliness and take it out among men to have it help solve the practical problems of life.

Why has not the church more largely entered this field? Religion, down thru time, has never been able to keep away from itself strange forms of expression. It has been made to render service upon foreign soil. As a result its social bearing upon life has been lost sight of at times. At the very beginning, when Christ closed his life on earth, his followers began to expect his visible return and the beginning of his reign here. What were the things of this life to such a people? They could now go for a new and an heavenly order was about to come. Even when this failed to materialize men still clung to the idea that the attainment of heaven was the only thing to be sought, and that the things of this life were an hindrance to this end. Many entered the monastic form of life, denied themselves the world, and subdued every claim of the physical life in order that the spiritual might receive its greatest devel-

opment. Christianity was made unreal. Men sought salvation in the silence and twilight of the cloister, instead of out in the activities and daylight of life. The religion of Christ was denied to this extent its true field of action.

The time came also when Christianity was thrown into speculative molds. Its heart was taken from it while it was defined in terms of the intellect. Theological and philosophical discussions were now the order of the day. All the categories of religion were put thru rational processes for men wanted to philosophize. But the heart of man failed to be satisfied thru any such means.

The organization of Christianity in the church has helped to hinder the social message of the gospel at times. The church has made an effort to educate its constituency in Christian living and has accomplished great things. But many churches have come to the place where their biggest job is to maintain themselves. The organized church has often concentrated its social interest in the people directly connected with it and has failed to see the religious values of the social order outside of its walls. Churches have, in many instances, been made up of a

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special class of people who seemingly have been unable to see that the gospel is for the most lowly of men.

Down thru the years there have been those who have continually emphasised the gospel's social character in the face of these and other difficulties. Today voices are being raised by the people of every faith in a plea for the churches to make of themselves social centers in their communities and to have their gospel apply to the whole life of the people in their midst. The social conception of the kingdom has been advanced by the modern spirit. Every constructive force in the religious field of the present day has it for its ideal. The historical study of the Bible has given what the book has to say a new meaning. The churches today which are possessed of the social viewpoint are the ones which are really alive and rendering the largest service for the kingdom.

The Present Day Showing Its Need.

One cannot ponder long upon this subject without coming to feel that there is great need today of a socialized church. The days in which we are living are vastly different from those in which our grandfathers lived. No thinking mind will deny that

Christianity today must adapt itself to meet conditions which were not in existence then. It is the same Christianity which they had in the past but it is called upon to meet a new need which this new day has produced.

The present day calls the church to assert an interest in all of the things which make up the everyday life of the people. There is a call for the church to present a concrete gospel. It is necessary to get religion out of the field of theory and emotion into that of the doing of practical deeds. Today is showing the need of a gospel with a program, which will minister unto the social, economic, and even the political life of the people.

The church has suffered because it has failed to contribute to the social life of its people. The human heart naturally seeks association with its fellows, and the hour of recreation, amusement, or entertainment is a legitimate desire. There must be something in every life to help lighten the drudgery of toil and the cares which every day brings. Multitudes feel the need of giving their evenings over to the pursuit of some form of pleasure. Every normal life desires it. The church has never entered this field to

the extent that it should. The recreational needs of the people have been turned over to other agencies and have been put upon a commercial basis. The church has given itself to the preaching of the gospel one day in the week and informing the people what they must not do if they are to save their souls. We would not have any less of the gospel preached but the need is for the church not to make this the end of its activities. The pulpit is unceasingly trying to impress people, and here the matter often stops, while the crying need remains for the church to get its people to put into operation some great expressional activities. The church has, to a greater or less degree, condemned dancing and card-playing, but what has it done to contribute a form of social life which will take the place of these? And until the church can produce social activities for its young people which will be a positive contribution toward the satisfying of their social natures, there is little ground for condemnation on the part of the church. If dancing and card playing are wrong then it is the business of the church to see that the growing youths are given an opportunity to express their lives in the right way. It is farcical simply to say to them, be good and come

hear a sermon every Sunday.

When is the church going to save the people? Is it going to be brot about by the church simply throwing open its doors each Sunday for those thus minded to come and upon the hearing of a sermon return home again? Present indications are that multitudes will never be saved unless the church takes a new viewpoint in regard to them. Why is it today that so many people feel that the church is of small consequence to them? Is it because they are such rank sinners that nothing standing for good appeals to them? A thousand times, no. In many of their cases it is the fault of the church. They shall be reached, they shall be saved, when the church as a love-servant becomes willing to show an interest in all of the things which combine to make up their lives.

The church must open its doors more than one day of the week. There is need today that the church be an organization concerning itself with the temporal as well as the spiritual affairs of its people. It must make an effort to apply its gospel to the concrete problems of life. If a just and living wage is needed by some of the people, if sanitary conditions in the community are bad, if some are compelled to live in

unfit houses, if some measures for the preservation of the health of the people are needed, it is the job of the church's gospel to apply itself to the helping of these things. Its ideal must be the making of the community such a place where every one, even the most lowly, will have opportunity given them to live a normal life.

There are people in every community who feel that the church does not care for them. They have drawn this conclusion because the church has never given them any evidence that the opposite is true. What chance has the gospel in such lives? The church must show the people that it cares for them; it must show them that it cares how and under what conditions they are living; it must show them that it cares concerning the troubles which they have; it must show a desire to contribute to the joy and happiness of their lives thru social intercourse. Let any man come to feel that the church which is in his midst is interested in the things which concern his life, let him feel that this church is working for a larger life for him and his children, it is then that the gospel of Jesus Christ will speak to him a welcome language.

With the church making itself interested in

community affairs there is a need today that it become a center where the things affecting the community life might be thot over and discussed. Here people might be brot together on a basis of equality to think in community terms. Not only could public sentiment be aroused on any matter thot to be of importance, but the church has the power, as no other organization, to inject into such questions a religious stimulus.

The present day is showing the church that social service is one of its tasks. It is one of its tasks if the church is to keep alive. The church which spends the most of its time in an effort to keep in existence is surely in a condition which approaches death. The live church is not the one which is being served by a faithful few but rather the one which is itself serving the many. Instead of building the church up out of the community we must see that the community is to be built up out of the church. The church is not to exist for itself, with this for its ideal it will only die, but let it prove that it stands for the purpose of entering into the life of the people in its midst, it will then come to its largest life. When the people of the

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community see that the church has this viewpoint
their hearts will respond to its call. Let the church
serve the people in both their religious and social
needs, and let it be seen to that these social needs
are not neglected by it, and as a result a people will
be raised up with strong feelings of obligation with-
in them for the church which has ministered unto them.
We often see individuals who hold the church in high
regard because of its ministry to them in an hour of
sorrow or trial which came to them. But the church
must not wait until the clouds have gathered for an
opportunity to minister to human needs. This sort is
not its only kind of service. The church needs to get
upon the scene at an earlier time than this. Today is
showing a need for the church to enter into the commu-
nity life, and with true religion as a background, apply
itself in the direction of bettering the conditions
which are there. Make the human conditions of life
better and much is done toward clearing the path over
which the religion of Christ will come.

The waning interest found in many churches will
revive, ~~and~~ empty pews become full, and the support of
the church by the people found to be a good invest-
ment, when the church decides that its task is to

apply itself to the things of this life in an effort to make them what they ought to be.

Then also this social emphasis is needed because it will make possible a course of action for individual Christians. Personal religion can only come to its greatest expression when its functions in social relationships. Individuals are only possessed of a spiritual selfishness who do not realize that the largest life for religion can only come to them as they share their lives with others. The church, to be effective, must do more business. It must point out to its membership forms of Christian activity. The followers of Christ today have too little to do in helping advance his cause. There are many people in the church who would like to be of use and would gladly toil in this field, but many times the church has no definite program and is not trying to complete any special task. Hence it is unable to supply every man and woman with a job. In many instances there is little for an individual to do other than listen to sermons. Much splendid talent is going to waste in the pews because the church has not a field of operation of sufficient size to give all employment in gathering the harvest. The harvest

is truly great but the preachers are trying to gather it alone. The church entering the field of community service means employment for the people of the church. It means Christianity expressing its true nature, that of service; it means the keeping alive of the spirit of Christ in the heart of the individual; it means the reaching and helping of hundreds more to a better life.

Every community is different yet there are none which do not have a need and there are none in which the church cannot act along some social lines. In the places where community surveys have been made and conditions studied it is surprising the facts which have been unearthed and the need which has been shown. Nothing perhaps has done more to impress upon the church the need of social service than the study of the actual conditions which exist in the community. How many children are not attending Sunday School? How many parents practically never attend church? How many people in the community are living in need of one form or another? How are the young people getting their amusement? Does the church know? These are a very few of the things which every church can find out about the community where it is. The church which will go to the trouble of securing the

facts in regard to such matters will have brot forcibly home to it the need of a social gospel.

Its Possible Field of Operation Today. ^{III}

Upon the church becoming aroused of this need the question comes what can be done toward putting into operation these new convictions. What can be done will depend upon the character of the community, and the needs which are there. While every community presents its own problems yet there is no church but that can apply itself to some form of social betterment.

All during the past women have taken a large part in the life of the church. It is even so at the present day. With the social viewpoint what might the women of a church do? The work which naturally falls to them is with the women and children of the community. What a united band of women, with service as their ideal, could accomplish! Let the women of the churches of any community unite to uplift the social conditions of their kind, and work to this end, large results cannot help but come. Why cannot the women of a church let such a noble task as this be their recreation and a channel of pleasure to their lives? We are to realize that we are truly living

ourselves as we help some one else to live.

The service we wish to point out consists of something more than an occasional gift of food to the poor or the bestowal upon them of our cast off clothing. Those who are not classed among the poor have needs which must be ministered unto. Their are women whose greatest need is a woman friend who will come in the name of the Master and sit in sympathy by their side. There are mothers who long for the touch of another hand and another heart for a short time to beat with theirs giving them a new courage and spirit to take up again the tasks of life. There are those who are ill, there is the stranger within our gates, there are the young women employed by the various industries, there are the aged women, and may we speak it softly, yet solemnly, there are the women who have come from foreign shores to make their homes and to rear their children in our midst. Women of the Christian church, is it not to be spokento our shame that all of these have been too much neglected? The church has taken all too few steps in ministering unto them. We have done our duty, we feel, toward the burdened mother by saying we are sorry for her; it is concluded that the stranger must launch out and make her own friendships;

we decide that the young woman toiling in the factory will make good anyway if she has it in her; we are released from further obligation to the aged if we ask concerning them occasionally; and as for the woman of foreign birth, who does not know our language well, nor understand our ways, thoughts of her never cross the threshold of our minds. Yet Jesus came to save all people and we are his followers.

The Ladies Organization of the church needs a vision to see what might be accomplished thru organized friendly visiting. With such a program they would come to see what the needs of the homes are and under what conditions children are being reared. They would see what are the obstacles hindering the proper development of home life, and what are the forces in the community having a bad influence over child life. Such visiting in the name of the church would put religion in sympathetic touch with social conditions in relation to the home and would cause some plans to be made for making things better. And many would be the people in whose hearts would arise a love for the church because the church has now proven that it is ~~now~~ interested in them.

What could a Young Peoples Society do? There

are surely great possibilities for it along social lines. It should furnish large opportunity for the recreational life of young people. They must have some sort of social life. Is the church going to let outside agencies furnish it for them? If so the church need not wonder why the young people of the community are estranged from it. Whether we want to believe it or not it appears true that young men and women at this day will never be drawn to the church thru the preaching of sermons on Sunday. Let the church see to it that a continual contribution is made to their social natures and they will be found quite willing to listen to the right kind of sermons. The Young Peoples Society must not wait until outsiders come to its meetings ,they must be gone after, and given as intense and interesting a social life as the world gives, but at the same time holding before them great religious ideals. Young people will gladly come to the church when the church is willing to give them what their natures legitimately crave.

The young people can also help the church serve the community in other ways. Let them see that the church lawns are kept in good condition and flowers planted around the church. Secure permission to

plant flowers at the rail-way stations, the school houses, and other public places. Create a sentiment in the community for every home to keep green lawns and clean side-walks. Have the planting and care of shade trees encouraged. See to it that every pile of refuse in the community is removed and that no unsanitary places are allowed. A united young people are able to get behind a movement to make the town a beautiful place. But what has this to do with religion? Simply thru such a course as this, or a similar one, would show the community that the church is serving it and that the church is interested in it. There would be but one result if such a program were carried out—the people would become intensely interested in the church, and the church would have a hearing for its message. Let the church show that it exists for the community, the people will then always have a place for it in their lives.

The Sunday School is only beginning to enter its real field of service. We are realizing more and more that the way to save the world is to save the young. There is no way for the church to save them for the right kind of a future only by having much to do with their developing lives. The Sunday

School could conduct a play ground in the summer and have those in charge who would see that the children are surrounded by wholesome influences. The church should consider the child from the very beginning of its life and plan to keep its life surrounded with religious influences. The Sunday School can afford to make use of a gymnasium, or similar place, for the boys to congregate and enjoy themselves. Pool rooms, bowling alleys and such places are glad to have them, while the church is contented to keep its doors locked. The Sunday School must not neglect golden opportunities to put religion into the lives of the young. There is little to be hoped for unless the Sunday School can get away from the idea that one hour on Sunday is sufficient for this purpose. A religious social life conducted in a competent manner would only result in the upbuilding of the Sunday School. There are many possible forms of community service open to the Sunday School which are used all too little. A reading room might be furnished supplied with the best magazines and other reading. Lectures on educational subjects could be given as well as educational moving pictures. Gymnasiums, play-grounds, game rooms, athletic teams, tennis courts, contest games,

picnics, and frequent free sociables, are only a few of many definite ways in which the Sunday School can minister to community needs. Some one says such things would be expensive. It is true but results would be secured which would make the expense worthwhile.

A Wisconsin pastor* in a town of one hundred people having a social vision organized a base-ball team in the Sunday School; established a gymnasium in the basement of the church for clean wholesome amusement during the week; secured a library to supply the community with good reading; provided a lecture course for the people from the State University; had farmers institutes in the church to interest the farmers; with the result that the Epworth League had more leaders for the devotional meetings than could be used, the membership of the Sunday School increased one hundred percent, while many were added to the membership of the church.

Many are the ways in which the church as a social center can throw the influence of religion into the community. To the extent that the social conditions in the community are bettered is the success of the church assured. Let the people of the community

* T. P. Hilborne, Yorkville, Wis.

come to know that the church has a spirit of helpfulness and brotherhood existing in it, let them see that the church is working to make the human conditions of their lives better, hearts will then open on every hand. While the church is bettering the community it is also in the meantime bettering itself.

What about the men of the church? What talent is going to waste here because the church is not giving them social tasks to accomplish. Our ideal for the church must be, not one man in it a minister but every man a minister. A church may have a Men's Club meeting at stated times for mutual pleasure with the religious emphasis reduced to a minimum. That is one thing, but a church with the men organized, with a religious passion as a basis, not for their own pleasure primarily, but for the purpose of making the social conditions of their community better, is a vastly different thing. When we can come to see others instead of ourselves then we are walking in the footsteps of the Master.

The men of the churches could unite for the purpose of discovering the causes of poverty in their midst and how it may be prevented. They could devise

and put into operation some plans for making the foreign sections of the community better places for these people to live in. They might have a department to which the unemployed could come and receive help in securing work. They could arouse public opinion in the direction of having the laws enforced concerning intemperance and other social evils. They could put their influence into the industrial life of the community and contend that every employee shall have a living wage, a just number of hours in which to toil, one day's rest in seven, and sanitary conditions surrounding them in the place where they labor. Are not these things right? The reason the great army of toilers have little use for the church today is because the church is too weak kneed to espouse their cause. The employer is in the church. He is a Christian, yet those who are making his money for him often fail to see where his Christianity produces any results in their lives. And yet the church prays for the kingdom of God to come. It will never come to this large group of people unless the church as a whole takes a far different attitude toward them. The church could do much toward answering its own prayers. It could back up what it says with deeds.

Its Relation to Evangelism, Religious Education,
and Missions.

Let us look at the relation of the socialized church to evangelism. It is to be understood at once that the church with the social viewpoint has not a substitute for evangelism. Evangelism is the very goal of social service. It is true that the form of evangelism which it presents is not the kind which was presented by the old time revival method. Social service has as its distinct object however the salvation of men. The defect in the old revival method was the emphasis it placed upon self-interest. The welfare of the individual was made central. Today we are feeling that the religion of Jesus Christ has a larger meaning than this. Our conception of human welfare is social rather than individual. The evangelism which social service would present does not find its motive in self-love, but in the love which identifies the self with the neighbor. It would bring home to the individual the truth that his personal redemption is tied up with the redemption of the society to which he belongs. He cannot be saved and be indifferent to the welfare of others. In presenting men the gospel the church has stressed well the personal

advantages which its acceptance will bring. Fine buildings, good music, pulpit oratory, and all the other attractions which it has to offer, have been made the basis in getting men to enter its life. Today we would call men to the church not for pleasure but for service and sacrifice. When the Christian church first started its career this was the nature of its appeal. The evangelism of social service does not call men to be "carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease," but calls them to a battle which means struggle, suffering, and self-denial.

This new evangelism is to be in operation all the year, for this is required in order to save men. The old revival method covering a certain number of days or weeks may be likened to a fireman who rushes into a burning building and carries a thinly clad human being into the middle of the street. That person has been rescued but he has not been saved. Before he is fully saved clothes must be furnished, a place of shelter provided, and a chance given to start life over again. The revival has rescued large numbers but it has left them in the middle of the street where many have died. The revival method presents to individuals the problem as to how they shall sur-

vive the new conditions to which this change in their life now brings them face to face. The socialized church not only has for its purpose the saving of people from the fire but also the making of conditions in their life afterward of such a character that they will be able to survive. There is little use of rescuing men unless they are to be kept rescued and here has been the weakness of the old revival method. The socialized church is contending that in order to keep a man saved the things which make up his life must be saved also. He cannot keep saved, in other words, unless the conditions under which he must live and the society among whom he dwells have a like transformation with him. A man may be rescued but he cannot be saved if, after his rescue, he is compelled to live in poverty, or amid unsanitary surroundings, or with institutions or forces of evil existing on every side of his life. Let the church go out with a social gospel and make conditions in human life of the right sort and it will then be no trouble not only to rescue but to save men. This sort is the evangelism of the socialized church and today seems to point out to us clearly that it is the only kind which will get true results.

It does not mean that there will be no revivals. It simply defines in a new way what constitutes a revival. The revival for which this evangelism works will often be conducted in the community rather than in the church. The church will consider that there has been a revival when there has been rid from the community any power which is hindering the community from being the proper place for people to live in. Are there saloons in the community or the sale under cover of intoxicating drinks? Is there a corrupt political life? Are there places of amusement which are questionable? Are there houses of which the public knows little of what goes on inside? Are there conditions causing some of the people to live in poverty? Are there things which contribute toward undermining the public health? There will be a great revival of life when the church sees to it that nothing of the character of these things is allowed to remain. Is not this real evangelism? Will it not save the people? It is this for which the social gospel stands.

Today we are hearing much about religious education, and it is presenting a most interesting field. But it cannot be considered a thing separate

from social service. We would educate the children in religious things but the religious education of the child in the Sunday School, or elsewhere, cannot be effective if the social conditions with which the child is surrounded are of a character making it impossible for the things which are taught to have any application in the child's life. If they are surrounded by unfavorable conditions no amount of religious teaching will ever develop the best of characters.

Religious education cannot be effective if it omits the element of service. The religious instruction given in the Sunday School should not have religious nurture as its sole purpose, but there should be provided definitely for the school training in service. Acts of service are the means by which instruction is made vital and effective in developing character. The best way to learn is by doing.

The foreign missionary enterprise of the church is the most comprehensive program of social service known today. The mission church is the center of the whole life of the people who have been won to its faith. Indeed the social passion of the church is today showing itself most clearly in the mission

fields. It is here that the church is really operating a social program. It is laboring for better education for the people and better industrial, economic, and social conditions. The missionary sees the need of applying the gospel of his church to all the affairs of life. He is going out in an attempt to make the community a fit place for people to live, he toils to bring to pass the elevation of the physical and social life of the people, realizing that upon the success of this work depends the success of the gospel.

I wonder if the mission church, which we are supporting, is to blaze the way for us in showing us our real duty. When the church in this country can be sufficiently awakened to see that it is failing to reach the masses, that it is not adapting itself to the needs of life today, then may it please God in his mercy to still guide his church in the accomplishing of the things for which it was put in the world to do.
