

"It is the Christian's belief that a regeneration of heart will give a man peace. When his heart is right, he is at peace with God, with himself and with other human beings. There would not in that situation by any occasion for war, internally or externally. A new life is essential for peace and not for war. The promoters of the Movement laid down as its purpose the militarization of the people for war. I think that should be corrected with the addition of our doctrine of peace.

Finally, I for one would like to see the absolute standards of Christ upheld along with the four principles of the New Life Movement. Propriety, righteousness, incorruptibility and a sense of shame are not so comprehensive and practical as absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness and absolute love. Personally I desire to declare boldly that by applying these four principles of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, and by surrendering the self to God, one will certainly have a new life. I am certain that every Christian who is willing to live such a life, is co-operating in the best possible way with the New Life Movement. E. S. Yu.

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### The Necessity of Social Justice\*

H. A. WITTENBACH

**J**EREMIAH 34; 17. "Therefore thus saith the Lord, 'Ye have not hearkened unto me, to proclaim liberty, every man to his brother and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim unto you a liberty, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence and to the famine'."

Why is it that we so often overlook the emphasis that the saints of the Old and the New Testaments continually put upon social justice as an essential accompaniment of the service of God? Their fiercest denunciations were always upon those who, while claiming to be the servants of God, through their action or inaction helped to perpetuate social injustice and social inequality.

The message of God to the Jewish people, contained in the above words of Jeremiah, contains a profound truth that is vindicated over and over again in history. Social injustice, the neglect of the sufferings of the poor and the oppressed, has in every nation and in every generation led to disaster. Failure to proclaim liberty led to Civil War in America; failure to consider the claims of the poor led to revolution in France; failure to practice brotherhood in Russia gave birth to communism. Similarly, neglect of the living conditions of the poor, of the provision of adequate food, sanitation and clothing, is nullifying all the work of medical research and perpetuating diseases that could be eradicated from our civilization in a decade if medical sciences were given a free hand. So, too, in China, the neglect of the peasantry, the failure to provide educational facilities, to improve

\*Sermon at Union Service, Canton, Feb. 28, 1937.

communications, to give protection against floods, leads to famine year after year.

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During the week, Bishop Hall and I had an informal conference with the head of one of the departments of the provincial government, a man who is a Christian. The Government is up against a big problem, a serious food shortage in the province, caused very largely by the conditions under which agriculture is carried on. Most of the land is farmed by tenant farmers and most of these are in debt. More and more are they being forced off the land to swell the ranks of the unemployed in the cities. The farmers are unable to get money on fertilizers and good seed and they have no reserves against bad seasons. Moreover, they are exploited annually by financiers who speculate in grain, causing the prices to drop at harvest, so the farmer has to sell to find money to meet his commitments. He has to rise when he has eaten up the little he has been able to save for his own consumption, and comes on the market as a purchaser.

Two things need to be done, increase the productivity of the land and increase the area under cultivation. And these cannot be done without the organization of rural co-operatives for the provision of capital for rent, fertilizers and debt amortization is the obvious way out. The Government is able to command financial resources but lacks the personnel for the successful conducting of such co-operation. The government leader issued this challenge. He said:—"Why can't the church organize a great Christian Co-operative Trust, rural co-operative committee of the churches, which will co-operate with the Government in this great task of rural reconstruction? The church has tried and experienced workers, it has its little communities scattered all about the province. The Government can find the funds if the church will produce the workers." He added that he was prepared to appoint a man, nominated by the churches to the government department, to give his time to the organization of co-operative societies and rural service amongst church groups.

There is a challenge. What is our response? Shall we throw ourselves whole heartedly into this scheme of co-operation or shall we shrug our shoulders back and plead that we are only concerned with men's souls, forgetting that these souls are being destroyed by the cruelties of the present Christian social structure?

I have heard from a reliable source that there is an increasing body of opposition to the New Life Movement. Men claim that the suppression of gambling is reducing the revenue and making people dissatisfied. The ruthless suppression of opium is also affecting the national revenue as well as denying many a long-enjoyed pleasure. Not to mention causing friction between the Central Government and Kwangsi. And so, too, with the attempted suppression of "squads" and the insistence on economy and so on. They say that one must give the people freedom or they will be discontented and a discontented populace is a danger to the peace of the State. "Stop the New Life Movement, or at least water it down so that it will be palatable."

What has the church to say about this? In the New Life Movement we have a valley of dry bones which, inspired by the Spirit of Christ, can become a great army of the Living God. A Chinese pastor said to me some time ago;—"Oh yes, the New Life Movement is excellent but we must go carefully. If we support it too vigorously, we should be in a bad way, should there come a change of government." Is that the attitude of the Christian church?

Lindsay Glegg, Justice of the Peace and business man of the City of London, is also a keen evangelist. Speaking some time ago to a group of Christians he said;—"You are sound in your orthodoxy, you are sound in your theology and you are sound asleep."

Paul tells us that "in the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman." We have all noticed the wonderful way in which the world was prepared for the coming of Christ and his church. The Greeks gave to the world a universal language: the Romans built splendid roads in every direction and their soldiers ensured safe travelling. We see the same conditions in modern China, ever-improving means of communication, more and more settled conditions and a universal language. The only thing that was not ready for the coming of Christ was the Church of God, the Jews. They had got out of tune with God and the result was that, when the message came, they could see in it only distortion and, instead of looking for the fault in their own receivers, they attacked the broadcasting station.

Where do we stand to-day? Are we hearkening to the call to proclaim liberty, every man to his brother and every man to his neighbour; to go out in a venture of faith for the relief of men's bodily sufferings in the Spirit of Christ, putting aside our doubts and fears; to stand firmly behind Christian leaders, giving moral, religious and practical support that will enable the New Life Movement to be a real life-giving movement of the Spirit of God?

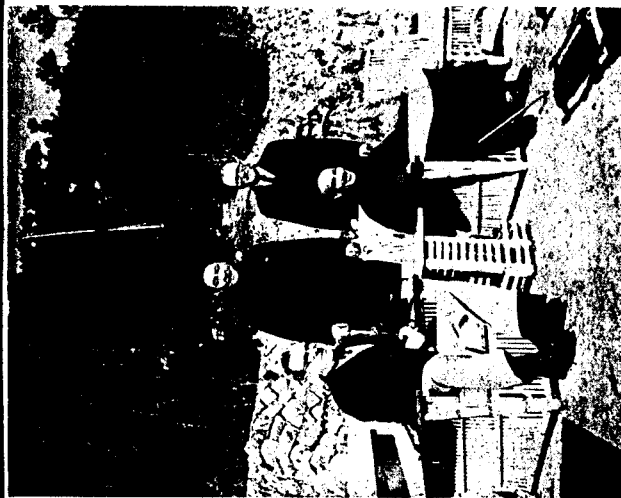
The Jewish Church was living within the closed doors of orthodoxy, traditionalism, formalism and self-complacency. The disciples, before Pentecost, were living within the closed doors of fear and uncertainty.

May God wake us up. May He again fill us with His Spirit that we may go out, and enter the door opened that no man can shut, the door of opportunity that leads to the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

### Where Service Fails

F. OLIN STOCKWELL

**E**VEN a cursory reading of the Gospels reveals the fact that the service which Jesus rendered to those about him was a direct and immediate outgrowth of his religious passion. Loving God and helping your fellowman were but two sides of the same experience. "Jesus, knowing . . . that he came from God, and goeth unto God, riseth from supper, . . . and he took a



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GENERALISSIMO CHIANG KAI-SHEK AND SOME OF HIS AIDES.

I. The Generalissimo and Rev. George Shepherd, American Board Missionary, and others strolling amidst bamboos at foot of Mokanshan.  
II. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek (seated), W. H. Donald of People's Economic Reconstructive Movement (seated, left), J. L. Wang, New General Secretary of the New Life Movement (standing, left), and Rev. George Shepherd, Adviser to New Life Movement Headquarters at Nanking; (standing, right), discussing social and economic issues at Hangchow, Chekiang.

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