

Q: After two thousand years of Christianity, why do we still have wars? (12-17-16)1

A: Well, to begin with, this slight error: We haven't had two thousand years of Christianity. We haven't had two thousand minutes of it. We've had two thousand years of a church that calls itself by the name of Christianity, but which only in a very small measure practices it.

I was on a steamer a few years ago going to the islands, and there was a group of missionaries on board going to the Orient – to reform the heathen, I guess. ... Well, a group of us sat at dinner one night and the subject of conversation was the Bible. They were talking about the Bible, and I suppose every once in a while I had a little something to say about it, because I happen to like the Bible. One of the men finally turned to me and said, "Well, you do know the Bible, don't you? What is your church?"

"Oh," I said, "I don't have any."

"What do you mean? Don't you belong to a church?"

"No."

"How do you know so much about the Bible?"

"Oh well, I suppose if I tried to explain it, I'd have to say this: I had so many problems in life that I was looking for a principle to live by that would get me out of my problems, and one of the books I studied was the Bible. I found a principle in there that I could live by. I really can't live by it one hundred percent – I'm not quite that good – but at least I can live by it enough to solve most of my problems."

"Well then, why don't you join a church?"

"Oh well, the principle I found wouldn't be accepted by a church."

"What? A principle in the Bible that wouldn't be accepted by a church?"

"Yes, that's what I mean."

"What is that principle?"

"I know there's a fellow there named Jesus Christ, and he has a wonderful principle of life, and to the extent to which you can embody it in your life it does wonderful things for you."

The man said, "Why, we're built on the teaching of Jesus Christ—our church is." I said, "Are you kidding?" "Oh no," he says, "so is this man over here. Why, his church is founded on the teachings of Jesus Christ." I said, "Just think of that. At my age, born and brought up in America, and I never knew there was a church that would even accept the teachings in it. Why you astound me! I'm surely going to join one of those churches when I get back home."

He said, "Why certainly, we're founded on the teaching of Jesus Christ." I said, "Well tell me this. In this war that just came to an end, how many days each week did you set aside for praying for the enemy?" Well, of course, they hadn't gotten around to that. "Well," I said, "did you have days of prayer for our people and our boys?"

"Oh yes."

"Well it seems to me the Master said there wasn't any profit in that – wouldn't do you any good. *'It profiteth nothing to pray for your friends or your relatives,'* he said, didn't he? That's the way I read it. He said even the Scribes and Pharisees do that, but it doesn't do them any good. Why did you waste your time?" Oh, they didn't remember that either.

"Well, did you send any chaplains out to war?"

"Oh, of course we did."

"Sure, in defiance of the Master's teaching. The Master said, *'Those who live by the sword will die by the sword.'* I suppose your chaplains told the boys they were going to pray for them and get them into heaven if they died, or that maybe they were even going to get God's protection to keep them alive. You were lying to those boys, weren't you? And you were calling it Christ."

"What?"

"Well, that's what he said: *'Those who live by the sword will die by the sword.'* Definitely, that's what it says there. No place in the book does he authorize wars or deaths or killing.

As a matter of fact, whenever anyone died and he was around, he raised them up to life. He didn't read any funeral ceremonies – not that man. Uh-uh. Nor did he ever say that God said you should go out there and get killed. Oh no! If you lose your life for my sake, in demonstration of the principle of spiritual power, that's one thing. But to go out there ... Why, do you know what he said? We have no right to save our lives at the expense of the other fellow's life – no right to do it. No right to avenge ourselves. If the other fellow smites us on one side, let him smite the other too. And if he wants our vest, give him a coat too. And what are you doing telling these boys that they have the right under Christ to go out and commit murder so that their mothers and fathers of the old generation can stay alive a few more years? That's noble. That's Christian, isn't it?"

Oh, they sat there, and they took it. Then after a while, I said, "You know what I'd like to know too? How do you stand on spiritual healing, about sort of raising the dead and healing the sick?" Well, of course, they couldn't do that either. "Well, now let me put the question the other way around: Which of Jesus' teachings are you founded on?" One woman, the wife of one of the ministers, said, "You know, Mr. Goldsmith, I've been unhappy for many, many years and haven't known why. But I see it so clearly. We've got everything in our church but Jesus Christ."

Now you know, it's sad. But don't think for a minute that every word of this isn't true. It does say in Scripture that the Scribes and the Pharisees pray for their friends and relatives, and it profits them nothing. You must pray for your enemies. It says in Scripture that you must forgive seventy times seven; that you must not avenge yourselves; that must not even protect yourself. "*Put up thy sword*" – it does say that. And it does preach spiritual healing, and it does preach all the rest of the things like forgiveness of sin. But the church condemns. If you just sin – according to their laws – you get excommunicated. Why even in an enlightened church like the Christian Science Church, if they catch you committing adultery, they excommunicate you.

I'm not excusing adultery, but I am saying that there is nothing in the law of Christ that says a person should be excommunicated for it. They should be healed. They should be shown the way of wisdom or permitted to go their own way. But where does it say that you're to draw a line and excommunicate? Oh no. The Master didn't even excommunicate the woman caught in adultery. Certainly not! He took the thief right into heaven with him. Oh no, no, no, no! Let's get square with the teaching of Jesus Christ and find out that we haven't had Christianity. If we had had Christianity, we would have had brotherly love; we would have done unto others as we would have them do unto us.

After the first World War, we would have gone into Germany and helped them to

rebuild. We would have helped to feed their people instead of denuding the country of its coal and its iron and its steel, and forbidding food to go in, and taking everything out until they had to raise up a Hitler before they could get food. The Allies wouldn't give it to them. The Allies let them starve. The Allies let them go to pieces. They had to raise up a Hitler to get it by force. Why, we wouldn't have had World War II if we had had Christianity. There wouldn't have been World War I if there had been Christianity, but if Christianity had come even after World War I, there wouldn't have been World War II. No, we had no Christianity. We had business - big business.

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