

Religious Department

THE JUSTICE OF GOD

Divine justice is that attribute, or character, of God which is manifested in the willing of righteous laws and the execution of those laws with absolute impartiality. Those laws are summed up in two injunctions; love to God and to our neighbor. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. It is transgression of these laws that has brought the race to where it is morally today.

The fairness of divine law cannot be reasonably questioned. As their Creator, God has a right to require His creatures to honor, reverence, and obey Him. He made man in His own image, in that He gave him the power to know God and to love and obey Him. All mankind, having sprung from one pair, are brothers, with equal rights and common feelings and interests, and there is nothing unjust in the commandment of God that these things be recognized among men.

In the application of these laws, God is no respecter of persons, and the distinctions that prevail among men by reason of wealth, intellect, superior position, etc., have no place in the eyes of the Almighty. Rewards for obedience and punishment for disobedience will be meted out with absolute justice.

The justice of God receives testimony from various sources. Conscience, God's deputy in the human soul, cites all men before it, and pronounces them innocent or guilty. The law of God is written in the hearts of heathen and Christian alike, and conscience declares that law to be holy and just, and demands obedience to it. It accompanies sinners everywhere, and often condemns them of falsehood when they are trying to justify themselves for their misdeeds. Wrong as heathen are in attributing to beings that are the products of their imagination the calamities overtaking them for their sins, they are right in interpreting them as proof that there is a moral government that does not allow crimes to go unpunished. Their sacrifices evince the convictions that the Gods are incensed at sin and must be propitiated. Their Elysium for the good and Tartarus for the wicked, declare that justice rules here and hereafter.

The scheme of redemption also bears testimony to the justice of God in language that cannot be misunderstood. Such is the unalterable determination of God to punish sin, which is the transgression of his law, that when his own Son would interfere in behalf of sinners, He must pay the penalty on the cross for their sins. The wages of sin is death, and before men could be saved, an atonement for sin must be found, and the Cross was the solution of the problem. Truth, justice, and mercy all must meet the Cross.

The general judgment is also a testimony to the justice of God. Men claim that God does not deal justly with men here, and that the righteous suffer more than the wicked in numerous instances. This is true, but the scales will stand even at the last. In the last verses of the 29th chapter of Matthew, Christ describes the Judgment day, when he "shall render to every man according to his deeds." "For we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ;" that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad." "For God shall bring every one into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." Before the assembled human race, God will vindicate His Justice.

For a man to hope to escape the consequences of his sins other than through the Cross, is for him to hope that God is not just, and therefore unrighteous, and that He is not what He says He is: "A just God and a Savior."

A. R. M.

Just suppose that Christians should put the time and energy in the promulgation of the Gospel politicians do in their campaigns!

MINISTER WOULD SEE ROOTS OF EVILS CUT

So much in harmony with the purpose and spirit of the State's Voice was a sermon recently preached by Rector Theodore Partrick in the Church of the Good Shepherd, Raleigh, that the report of the sermon by the News and Observer is given place upon this page. The editor of the Voice has followed Mr. Partrick's career with interest since he succeeded the now minister as editor of the Sampson Democrat and is much gratified to see him digging at the roots of the evils against which the writer has so long waged a ceaseless fight. Here follows the report of the sermon:

Greed, dishonesty, lust and intemperance are the causes that lie at the root of present day evil conditions, said Rev. Theodore Partrick, Jr., rector, in his sermon yesterday morning at the Church of the Good Shepherd.

The aim of Christian service, he said, is to bring about a social order based on justice and goodwill and this can be done only by applying the ax to the root of the trouble.

"The Church is not a self improvement society, content to gain a little here and a little there, but its purpose is to go to the roots of our social order. And this, he said, "brings on the age-old controversy: shall the Church align itself with any specific agency or form of government? In the present instance, capitalism. This one thing we must remember whether we live under capitalism, socialism or any other form, we have the same men to deal with."

As he saw it the Church was not concerned as to any special system, as a system, but in the acts of the system. To him it was the duty of the Church to condemn evil in any form and to commend that which is good.

"We need something more to cure surface conditions, which stand out in unemployment and poverty. The world is suffering from a very bad headache. We have unemployment which is creating hunger and crushing out the spirits of men. We have a panic caused by innumerable fears. We are burdened by debt which is a prior claim on all we have. Our social agencies are in danger of being abandoned as unessential."

Conditions, the rector declared, have reached such a stage that the stomach has first call and the material is being maintained at the expense of the spiritual. But, after all, he said, the conditions which confront us are but symptoms, and the Church is concerned with the disease that has caused them.

Christianity, he declared, has been a way of light for men who have worked with their hands and with machines. In all ages this has been so because Christianity has hitched its wagon to a star instead of machines.

Mr. Partrick urged that the church give its support to efforts looking to the elimination of war and for the uplift of men. Disarmament, he said, is only proximate; there must be elimination of envy and jealousies which are at the root of war.

One of the most dangerous elements of today he saw was in the condition where so few men of wealth and power hold the destinies, comforts and happiness of the people in their hands, an inequality which should be corrected. Another needed thing, as he viewed it, was the regulation of machines, making them the servants of men and not their masters.

INTERRACIAL RELATIONS

Sunday, Feb. 12, being Lincoln's birthday, the North Carolina Commission on Interracial Co-operation very fittingly requested North Carolina ministers to preach upon "Interracial Relations." As Rector Barber, of Christ Church, Raleigh, stated, interracial relations in North Carolina, in which there are so few foreigners, must have direct reference to the relations between the white and black people of the state.

Not so many years ago, it would have been dangerous for any white minister to speak as plainly as did some of the North Carolina ministers Sunday. The very existence of the Commission on Interracial Co-operation, composed of leading citizens of both races, speaks of a better day.

Amalgamation Not Wanted

Dr. Barber correctly stated that the Negroes do not desire amalgamation, but the amicable adjustment of friendly relations between the races. The term "social equal-

ity" is taking on a new definition in the country, especially in the South. Formerly, to suggest social equality would be to flaunt a red flag. Today, when "social equality" is used in connection with the race question, the meaning is more that of civic equality. In fact, many people have not learned the real meaning of "social" as so often used in scientific circles. We cannot get away from the significance of the term in the old "socials", where the boys and girls of the community met to have their frolics. "Social" still signifies to most Southern people the idea of intimacy. But it is not intimate relations that the Negroes desire and that justice demands that they have.

Civic Equality

What is demanded, and rightfully, is civic equality, or social equality in that sense. It is, we believe, as little desired by the blacks that their racial identity be lost in a mixture with the whites as it is repugnant to the whites. The races must remain distinct; and that means the separation of the races in schools, churches, and in social gatherings. But that does not imply nor justify any civic inequality. Dr. Barber mentioned and severely scores a racial injustice of this kind committed in Wake county. The demand for economy determined the county board of health to cut down the number of county nurses. Yet they left four white nurses, but not a single colored nurse. This injustice was protested by Dr. Barber and others, but without effect, though it was pointed out that the Negroes need the help of a nurse more than do the whites, and that the very protection of the whites depends upon that of the Negroes.

That a change of sentiment is fast being effected even in the very county in which the colored race was thus discriminated against, is apparent. It was only a few weeks ago that the writer first saw a school bus loaded with colored boys and girls, and it was in Wake. High school students of the Cary section are being conveyed to the colored high school of Raleigh in a bus. Such a sight even fifteen years ago would have made the average white man's blood boil. Yet reason seems to prevail. If education is the most excellent and necessary thing it has been deemed to be for the whites, it is just as good for the colored. Yet that logic has not generally prevailed. It is striking to see the contrast in the character of the school buildings for whites and blacks in most of the counties. All the educational hurrah and spending of public money for education has been, in many sections, regardless of the fortunes or opportunities of the colored boys and girls. Nearly every white child may attend school in a modern school building, some of them altogether too costly, while the majority of Negro children are still forced to gather in buildings that are discreditable to present-day civilization. Also, provision has been made for very few eight-months terms of school for the blacks.

The latter failure may be really a blessing; yet the discrimination exists, and exists because of the action of those authorities who deem length of term, high salaries of teachers, and the high quality of the school building and equipments essential to the future welfare of the children and of the state. Holding the opinion that the writer does, that half time work and half time school attendance is better for even the white children, he cannot grieve that the Negroes are thus discriminated against. Yet the discrimination exists.

Personal Discriminations

Too, the time is not altogether past when white men will treat the colored man more unfairly in wages and other business relations than he will the white man. Some yet deem it necessary in demonstrating their own superiority over the Negro to treat the latter harshly. One does not have to kick a dog in order to demonstrate his superiority over the dog if he has it. And the severest and harshest