

REAL CHRISTIANITY.

The following from the *Chicago Times*, points out an individual responsibility toward God and the truth, which sectarianism will not take the place of. It says: –

"It is probable that we are to be forced, ere long to the serious consideration of how closely Christianity, as taught and practiced, is in accord with the actual spirit of its Founder. Somehow it is meeting with unexpected opposition in the world, which raises the question of whether Christianity is really Christian. We shall have to confess that it is not satisfactorily so, says an exchange. If the question were put in this form, Is Christianity Christ-like? we should readily admit that it is not. It has lost, or grown weak in some of the main characteristics of its Founder. It does not adequately preach the Gospel to the poor, not do its members seek first the kingdom of God; they do not love their brethren as themselves, nor are they touched with the feeling of others' infirmities to the degree which impels them to adequate measures of relief.

While it has gained much, Christianity has also suffered in its contact with the world – it has lifted the world up immeasurably beyond its old position, but it has also been dragged down from the sublime ideal established by Jesus Christ. It must return. It cannot stoop and conquer. Its only hope of acceptance lies in maintaining itself as the one thing pure, to which men may give themselves with the assurance that there is nothing better. It seems unnecessary to say that current Christian practice does not conform to such an ideal as this.

It is easy to say that Christianity is to be judged by its ideal precepts and not by the actions of its adherents. But in the practical world it is not judged by its ideal precepts – it is judged by its fruits. It will continue to be judged so. Therefore it is impossible to see how it is to succeed in extending itself much further without our broadening

our conception of human brotherhood, deepening our sense of human wrongs, miseries and sins, and without a larger degree of self-sacrifice, sympathy, and purity of life. As Canon Wilberforce says: "The only thing Christianity needs just now is Christians." And these sooner or later it will have to find. We shall be driven by increasing skepticism and indifference to raise our standard of *personal fidelity* to Christ and His commands. Nothing will eventually be found to answer except that every Christian shall try to be a Christ. Christianity will learn to be not only Christian, but Christ-like, else it cannot venture to offer itself as a remedy for human wrongs, an antidote for human fears and sorrows.

It is a fact that Christianity has always made most rapid progress in those periods when its theology has been simplest and its practice purest. The creed of Christendom has never been so simple, nor its life so pure and Christ-like, as in apostolic times, when it spread so rapidly around the Mediterranean. The great Wesleyan revival originated in the feeling that the age had drifted, both in theology and in practice, very far from the teachings of Christ, and its entire strength lay in the emphatic call to greater simplicity of faith and purity of life. The Church was compelled to raise its standard of living by the same causes that are operating now, the spread of atheism among the learned, and indifference and immorality among the ignorant. The Wesleyan revival was the only answer that was ever needed or could be given to the infidelity of the eighteenth century – only it did not go far enough. There is a degree of beauty and completeness in the example of Jesus Christ never dreamed of by Wesley and his followers, and this it belongs to the Christians of our time to discover and illustrate in their lives."

