

## **SEEING THINGS AND BEWILDERED**

FEW realize the wonderful change that has come over public sentiment during the last forty years – the Harvest time of this Age. The increase of knowledge prophesied for our day came on time and is doing its work. It is opening eyes of understanding long blinded by ignorance, superstition, false doctrines. Not only is this true in respect to God's consecrated people, who are now so much more clearly understanding the Bible and its Message, but it is true in large degree of the intelligent people of the world who make no profession of Christianity, yet have a good respect for the principles of righteousness, justice and mercy.

Misled by the errors which have adulterated Christianity, these well-disposed people wonder to what extent the Church's claims might be true, to the effect that present kingdoms constitute Christendom – Christ's Kingdom. Naturally they would doubt it, wondering why Messiah's Kingdom would make so little progress in the earth and exhibit so little power. This leads on to a double confusion:

(1) They wonder why all Christian people do not undertake the political, social and financial problems of the world and bring harmony out of confusion, and thus accomplish the world-wide uplift which should be expected if Christ's Kingdom is controlling the world and if Christian people are commissioned of the Lord to convert the world and uplift it socially, etc.

Many preachers and professed Christians are similarly led astray from the real commission of the Church by these errors – so that they abandon the preaching of the Gospel, and instead preach Sociology, etc., etc.

Thus it comes that the comparatively few Christian people who are following the Scriptural lines carefully, and preaching the authorized Gospel of Christ, are discredited, hindered, rebuked, made to appear to the world as neglecting their commission.

On the other hand, how plainly the Bible presents the subject! The true Church is commissioned by the Lord, not to convert the world, but to take out of the world a Little Flock of faithful footstep followers of the Lord. These are to pass through great tribulation, in order that they may enter into the Kingdom, which is still future. They are not to mix in politics, etc., but to throw their entire influence on the side of the preaching of the Gospel to all who have hearing ears to the intent that, thus drawn, called and sanctified by the Truth, an elect class of one hundred and forty-four thousand shall finally be completed and, by the "change" of the First Resurrection, pass from the earthly nature to the Heavenly and become the Bride of Christ, His associate in the great Kingdom which He will then establish world-wide, to the blessing and enlightenment of all the families of the earth.

(2) The world's second difficulty growing out of the adulteration of Christian doctrine could not be better illustrated than by the following article which we clipped from *The New York Call*. Evidently the writer is genuinely puzzled, as thousands of Christian people are puzzled, by the present war and by the fact that professed Christians are fighting on all sides, under every government except the Turkish. What are they fighting for and what are they fighting against, if so be that all of these kingdoms are Christ's Kingdoms – Christendom? Surely this war and the more terrible conditions which the Bible shows us will follow it will gradually open the eyes of mankind more and more. By and by, when the "flaming fire" of anarchy shall sweep the world, every eye of understanding will have discerned the gigantic error of the creeds which for a time misled us all. Their eyes will see through the trouble; and gradually they will understand the facts, the great lesson, that all the

kingdoms of this world are human and are in large degree associated with the empire of the "Prince of this world," and that these are being overthrown to the intent that Messiah's Kingdom shall be established under the whole heavens. The article from *The Call* follows:

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### A SLUMP IN SALVATION

"It is not only Socialism that has gone under in the European fracas, but the Salvation Army has also disappeared on the continent. Ten thousand of its most active members and workers are now fighting under literal banners of 'Blood and Fire' instead of the metaphysical symbol known by that name, under which the army conducted its warfare against 'the Devil.'

"The organization and system have completely collapsed on the continent, and in neutral countries the army is financially broken. A reconstruction of the entire army will, it is said, become necessary after the war is over. Its officers declare that it has suffered more than any religious organization in existence except that of the Catholic Church. In this country the well-to-do are closing down on their donations, the churches give nothing; the industrial plants, from which most of the money was extracted, have mostly gone out of business and collections at street meetings have fallen to the vanishing point.

"The report seems to show that this concern was no different from thousands of others based frankly on material considerations. When economically affected, it disappeared as they did. The metaphysical signboards and trademarks under which it carried on business became utterly useless and impotent in the face of material collapse. Actual, physical warfare, simply blotted out the abstract conflict between 'Sin and Holiness,' which the army was supposed

to continually wage, and 'salvation' became a drug on the market. Those to whom it is offered without money and without price have no use for it, and those who formerly put up the price so that it might be brought to 'perishing sinners' have quit; and both the sinners and those who carried them the glad tidings are equally perishing on the battlefields of Europe, fighting the 'battle of the Lord' on opposing sides.

"But in this respect, the army is by no means unique. There is nothing which purports to represent 'religion' today that can stand up against war, from the haughty ultra-respectable, established state churches to the 'religion' of the gutter. The universal impotency of all of them suggests that they, too, should be sent to the scrap pile along with 'militarism.' If the world needs 'religion' of any kind, it needs an utterly new and different one, instead of one that serves 'the Devil' in war time, and pretends to oppose him in time of peace."

