Caesar or Christ

Christ is the Supreme Exemplar of the serving life. Christ alone dared the adventure of the complete integrity of the social order.

Autocracy cannot live with Christianity and democracy cannot live without it. Autocracy is built upon the control of the many by the selfish force of the few. Democracy is built upon the consent of the many and the common service of all. There are just two master idols of nations and of men: the one, dominion over others by force for the selfish gain of a few—the ideal of Caesar; the other, service to others for the common good of all—the ideal of Christ. Between these two ideals there is an irreconcilable conflict, for the one means in the dominion of a despotic class and the other in the dominion of a free people. The same conflict goes on in the life of every nation.
and of every soul—selfishness versus service. Caesar versus Christ. This
nation cannot be saved by sectarian
or class-minded leadership, however
sincere, able, or personally
worth;

The leadership that will save Amer-
ica must be as large as the commu-
nity, the state, the nation, the world,
the leadership that regards every
soul as of priceless worth, that re-
pects the dignity of personality in
rich and poor and old and young of
every class and creed and tongue.

Let us interpret to the brain and
heart of Christendom the meaning of
this mighty war for the future of the
human race. Let us declare its cen-
tral significance as the triumph of
democracy, the vindication of the
worth of all productive labor for the
integrity of the national life, and the
essential unity of the free peoples of
the earth. Let us proclaim Christ as
the Founder of this democracy, the
Exemplar of this integrity, the In-
carnation of this unity. Let the

spirit of the risen Christ lift us above
the bigotry of sect, the arrogance of
class, the curse of self, and the preju-
dice of race and tongue.

Let us be consecrated to the whole
program of the Master, individual
and social. O friends, how this hour
vindicates the necessity of His gospel
if civilization is to survive! How it
brings into judgment half-way living
by the gospel, half-way teaching of
the gospel, and half-way faith in the
gospel! The only one who needs to
look upon this hour with sorrow is
that man or woman who has never
been willing to see the whole gospel
lived out in the world. They may
well say: "Caesar has triumphed,
Christ is dead." But those who know
that Christ has never yet been ac-
cepted in any city, or state, or nation,
and that the reason the world suffers
as it does today is because of this
denial of His, may well proclaim
that at last after nineteen hundred
years it is made manifest that noth-
ing can save individuals, homes, communities, nations, and the world except Christ—Christ, a living reality in the whole life of the people throughout the world!

Let the churches of Christ enlist for this great adventure of the soul. Then shall we see the fulfillment of the promise of the fathers, a great free people, with the opportunity for a decent human life guaranteed to every child born under the starry flag. And then shall abide with us efficiency, honesty, and discipline, the products of the deliberate will of free citizenship in a Christian democracy. And at last through the blood and suffering of the peoples of the earth shall he win for individuals and nations freedom and peace throughout the world.

From "The Churches of Christ in Time of War."

WITNESS COMMITTEE

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