

MACEDONIAN CALL

"Come Over Into Macedonia and Help Us." (Acts 16:9.)

INDIANAPOLIS, IND., JANUARY, 1927.

WHY DON'T CHRISTIANS CONVERT THE WORLD?--No. 3.

Dear Brethren in Christ:--

In the subject before us this time, we have one of the greatest of religious questions. Of course, we must not think that we shall be able to convert the whole world, nor even a large per cent of it, for Jesus has said that "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." But the serious question confronts us, Why did the apostolic church make such rapid strides, while the Church today is doing so little? Even twenty-five years ago, nearly every church had its protracted meeting, at least once a year, but now there is hardly half of them in the larger towns and cities that have enough interest to have a series of meetings to preach what they consider the gospel.

Jesus intended that his gospel be preached by the lives of his followers as much as by their words. He said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5: 16.) Through Peter, our Lord said to the disciples, "Having your conversation [anner of life] honest [beautiful, excellent] among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." (2 Peter 2: 12.)

The early disciples were so devoted to their Lord that they tried earnestly to carry out these inspired injunctions. Those who brought reproach upon the holy name of Jesus by the lives they lived were excommunicated from the fellowship of the church. When there was a fornicator in the church at Corinth, Paul declared that a little leaven leavened the whole lump, and told them to deliver such a one to Satan. To the brethren at Thessalonica he gave the command to withdraw from every brother that walked disorderly. Thus the church was to be kept pure, and to be a light to the people about it, that others might be led to glorify God. And it did keep itself clean, and did such works that multitudes were led to the Lord by the lives of the Christians.

But what a difference between the lives of disciples then and the lives of disciples now! The world as a whole knows that a Christian makes a higher profession than any one of the world, and that he should live a far better life. But when the professed Christian frequents the dance hall with the man of the world, can the former expect to convert the latter? No man or woman can engage in the modern dance and be pure in his thoughts, and be pure in his life very long. Billy Sunday has called dancing "second-hand adultery". Many a girl has started into the red light district through the private and public dance. Now most social gatherings must close with a dance. Business gatherings wind up that way. High school entertainments conclude with such, oftentimes. Pleasure boats on the rivers, lakes and oceans must have that as their chief attraction. And some so-called churches even have dances at some of their gatherings. But the man of the world knows that no pious feelings are aroused by hugging one of the opposite sex, and he laughs in his heart at the hypocrisy of the professed Christians who frequent such places. Such Christians are indeed walking in the light--the light of the ball-room, but not the light of God. They are driving people from Christ rather than drawing them to Him.

And whoever heard of a person being converted to Christ by a theater-going Christian? Perhaps the motion picture theaters today are doing as much to demoralize the people as anything. They are run for money and make their greatest hit, as a rule, when appealing to passions. All one needs to do to see the evil of the system is to stop and look at the bill boards. In Washington, D. C., a few months ago, it was found that on one Sunday 7000 people went to religious meetings, and 50,000 went to theaters. Many of these were professed Christians. The worldling says, "Why should I become a Christian when the Christians go the same places, and do the same things, that I do?" The light of the Christian is shining all right through his money and presence; but it is the bright light of the movie rather than the bright light of Christian influence to the groping sinner along life's dark and rugged way.

And now our nation has become drunk with the excitement of games and contests of different kinds, and rushes on toward destruction with the Church pushing it rather than holding it back. First it was the swimming of the English Channel to which we were feted in the newspapers. Then it was the prize fight, where tens of thousands of people, many of them professed Christians, paid exorbitant prices to see two brutes batter each other till one gave way. Then the world series of the base ball must occupy the attention of our millions of church members. Foot-ball comes next upon the scene when millions of professed followers of Jesus watch men struggle and tussle and knock and scrap with each other (often in the mud), sometimes breaking noses, arms, jaws, etc., or carrying one helpless from the field to die in a hospital. Then the basketball takes its places and entertains the excited crowds. The schools are doing more to foster this sporting disposition than any other institution. At the games, high school boys and girls shout till they are so hoarse they can hardly talk, and gambling in the form of betting is going on with very many at practically all these games. In the early days of Christianity when Christians attended the gladiatorial contests, they were excommunicated from the ranks of the faithful, but now a big per cent of those who go such places are professed Christians, and little or nothing is said by the preachers and elders. But notice the difference in fruit. Then the Lord added to the Church daily those who were being saved; but now, the Devil is adding daily to the world those who were once saved. Do you ask, Why can't we convert the world? The answer is plain. The world has already converted a good part of the Church. Men and women who grab for the sporting pages of the daily paper, are not the ones who are converting souls to Christ. Some Christians have their light shining, but it is a red light--a light warning others not to pass that way.

Nor will the bobbed hair class of Christians do very much to save the world, for the spirit of the world is back of it. Do not think that I am too strict. Let us reason. Women might let their hair be long, and do it up in a fantastic way, which would be to specially attract attention, and it would be as unscriptural as the bobbed hair. I am not talking of children, but of grown women, especially those who are supposed to be settled in life. There ought to be a dignity about a grown man and woman, which would command the respect of the younger generation and which would keep the grown ones from trying to dress and act like sixteen year old boys and girls. In nearly all instances there is a lightness about women who will have their hair bobbed because others have bobbed hair. The bob leads to the shingle bob, then the boyish bob, and then--on and on, farther and farther into the spirit of the world. I have no apologies to make for this catering to the world. But it is not, remember, the bob that I am specially striking--it is the spirit back of it. That spirit may use long hair in a way as unscriptural. Women who cater to these frivolous customs are not the women who are bringing souls to Christ, as a rule; and they lose the respect of many plain and sensible men and women of the world who might otherwise be influenced for good by those very ones.

This spirit of catering to the world does not stop with the bobbed hair, but takes up other extreme fashions. Sleeveless dresses expose the bare arms of the wearer, Low-neck dresses lay open the bosom about as much as the law will allow. Skirts

to the knees and often higher, play their part together with painted cheeks, rouged lips and painted eye-brows. And last, perhaps, come the knickers, which were tabooed at first, but are later adopted through the education which comes through this catering to the world. It is not these things alone which I condemn, but the spirit back of them. The immodest and worldly styles may change, and something else come in which is just as bad. The inspired Paul says that "women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." (1 Tim. 2: 9, 10.)

As to what is meant by modest apparel, the inspired Moses tells us something about it, and the spirit of that applies today, "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; for ALL THAT DO SO ARE ABOMINATION UNTO THE LORD THY GOD." (Deut. 22: 5.) When women are having their hair cut like a man's, wearing clothes so much like his that one has to take a second look to discern whether it is a man or woman, they certainly are deviating from God's Word. Many men and women today have fallen in with the world respecting dress; and this is one reason why the Church is doing so little to convert the world. The Church has adopted frivolities of the world.

And along with the worship of Queen Fashion goes the worship of King Nicotine. Boys try to imitate their fathers and other men, and soon become slaves to the filthy weed. Though some mannish women are now smoking cigarettes, the great mass of the women are not, and the user of such can not influence them for good. Many Christians today let their light shine, but it is the light of their cigar or cigarette. But such lights are not guiding people to Christ.

And so the world goes on, converting the Church, instead of being converted by it. The people love to have it so, and the preachers do not cry aloud and spare not but preach in glittering generalities. We are not converting the world as did the Apostolic Church. They were a spiritual people, while we have lost much of the apostolic spirituality. They were raised to walk in newness of life, and walked that life; while we today are walking too much the old way. They were indeed new creatures, while we are only partly so. They were a peculiar people, but we are not. The Greek word for "church" means "called out", and a church which is not called out of the world is not a church at all. A non-spiritual church is no church, and can not convert men and women to Christ.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

O Lord, may every reader of these lines see the seriousness of the situation in which the world, the Church and he himself is. May we realize that the world is sinking fast to destruction and carrying the Church with it. Help us, O God, to do more in the future than we have done in the past, to save those around us who are sinking down in sin--to give more of our time, talent and means. But help us to see that we can do little toward saving others unless we ourselves are saved; and that we are not saved if we love the world and the things of the world. Help us to come out from the world and be separate, and to touch not the unclean thing, that the Father may receive us, and that others through our lives may glorify His holy name.

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JESUS--"Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."

PAUL--"Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men."

Things to remember.

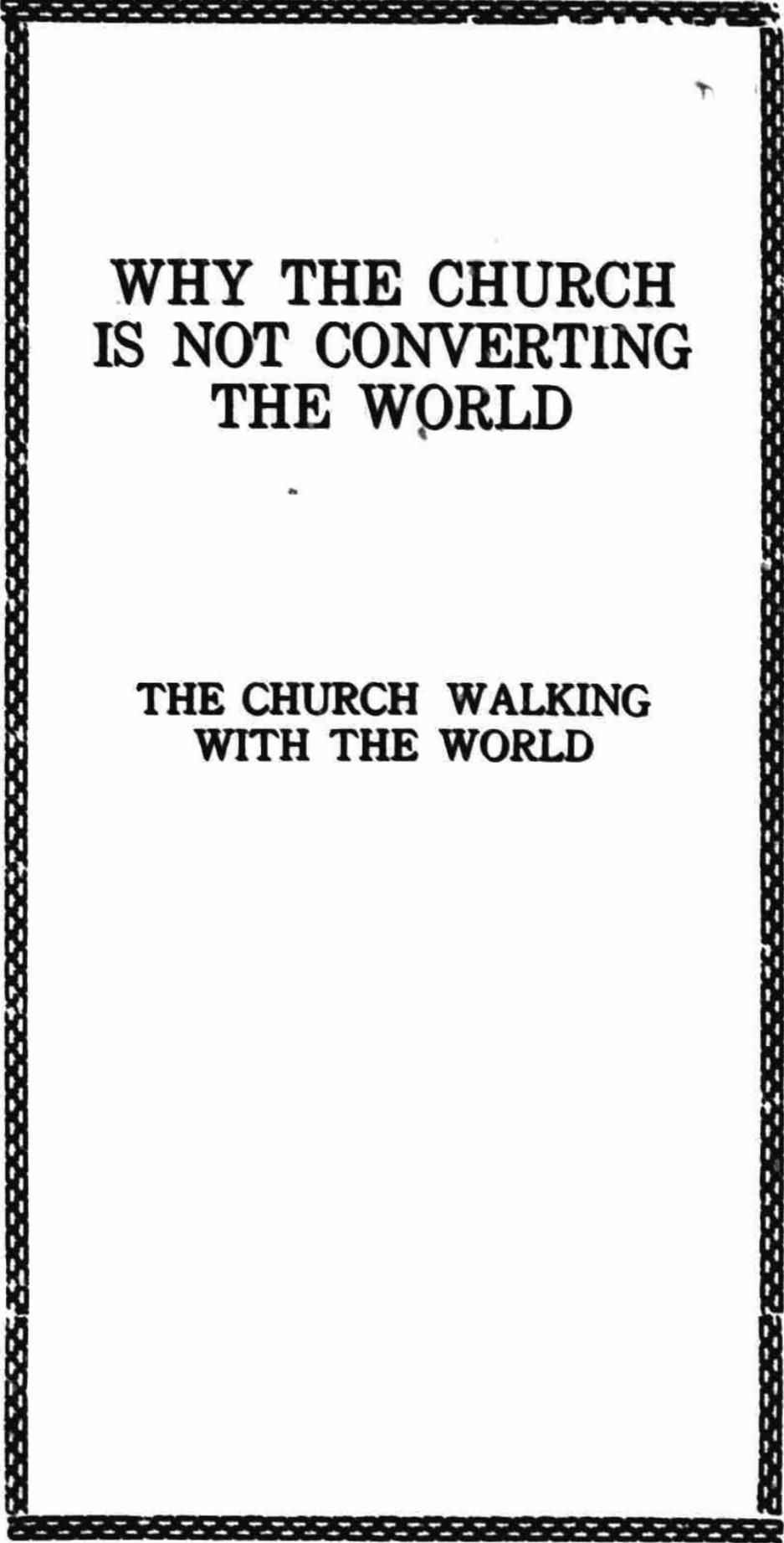
Now that the holidays are over, and people have settled down, wouldn't it be well to take an inventory of how much we have spent foolishly? Instead of exchanging gifts with friends, would it not have honored Christ more by helping the poor who can not recompense thee, or helping the mission workers (they are the poor too), who are sacrificing so much to plant new churches and to help weak ones? Get in touch with a mission worker that you know is all right, and ask him what he has received the past year, and then ask yourself if you would be willing to sacrifice home comforts and remuneration as he has done? If you don't know any, write me and I will try to put you in touch with some. One of them wrote me recently that he had converted an elder in a digressive church, and believed he could turn the whole church to the right way--but he was not able to bear the expense, as he had done so much mission work already in '96.

---I myself have four Macedonian calls for tent meetings next summer, but have no tent. Bro. Love's tent is too large, while I wish a small one, the canvass of which I may be able to carry in an automobile (if occasion requires), and one that I can use all summer without restrictions. Who will help me get one? Don't be afraid we shall get too much, for any extra will be used in mission meetings. I suppose it will cost \$50 or more. My son, Paul, will help me in such work, and we are expecting to help him develop himself into a mission worker.---TO THOSE who have not seen previous numbers of the Macedonian Call, we say that it is our hopes to send it out once in two or three months, to try to stir the brethren to greater zeal in planting new churches and helping weak ones. I am much pleased with the sentiment for it. My time in putting it out (which is considerable) is largely donated.---ARE THERE places east of the Mississippi River where a few earnest disciples wish to make an effort to plant the Cause firmly in their community?---PASS your Macedonian Call to others to read, or send for more for FREE distribution, or, better still, send me names and addresses of those whom you wish to receive each issue as it comes forth.---THE SUCCESS of this effort depends on YOU (not the other fellow) in doing something.---SINCE the plan of sending out the Macedonian Call seems to be doing good with Christians, why wouldn't it work with outsiders? We could send mimeograph letters (with other tracts possibly) to most of the outsiders in our community, once in two or three months. The first letters could be on general disobedience and warning (with scriptures); then we could bring them closer to the true Church. What do you think of the plan?

What Some Think of the "Macedonian" Plan.

"I esteem it very highly as a commendable effort in sound Evangelism, and prayerfully trust that all who can, will endorse and support it and all other such moves." (Missouri preacher.)---"Read it with pleasure. I wish every member of the Church of Christ could read it."---"Our hearts are with you."---"I think you should be heartily encouraged."---"I believe it will do a great deal of good at this time. I will help you from time to time, if the Lord wills."---"I heartily endorse your plan."---"Send me a few copies of your next issue. You may depend on me." (A secular editor.)---"I am for it with all my heart, as I am sure it will accomplish a great deal of good." (Missouri Preacher.)---"I think your sheet, the Macedonian Call is fine, and I believe that some of our careless, yet good, brethren may be stirred up." (Elder and Preacher.)---"May I ask about the expense of putting out these Macedonian Calls, as I wish to stir the brethren where I go." (Missouri preacher and mission worker.)---"It is surely good." (Kansas preacher.)---"I heartily endorse your plan." "They are fine. I was very much discouraged when I received No. 2, but felt better when I read it." "It is indeed very fine, and I trust will bring pleasing results." (Elder.)---"Wonderful lot of good teaching in it." (Leader in new church.)---"Quite a few workers in this state are getting stirred with mission zeal. I think your efforts have mostly stirred this spirit." (Mission preacher.)---Brethren, if we can keep this going, and keep enlarging our audience, can't we help in every state? I will do my part. It is up to you.

Send all communications direct to D. A. Sommer, 918 Congress Ave., Indianapolis, Ind.



**WHY THE CHURCH
IS NOT CONVERTING
THE WORLD**

**THE CHURCH WALKING
WITH THE WORLD**

THE CHURCH WALKING WITH THE WORLD

The Church and the World walked far apart
On the changing shores of time;
The World was singing a giddy song,
And the Church a hymn sublime.
"Come, give me your hand," said the merry World,
"And walk with me this way."
But the good Church hid her snowy hands,
And solemnly answered "Nay;
I will not give you my hand at all,
And I will not walk with you.
Your way is the way that leads to death,
Your words are all untrue."

"Nay, walk with me but a little space,"
Said the World, with a kindly air;
"The road I walk is a pleasant road,
And the sun shines always there;
Your path is thorny and rough and rude,
But mine is broad and plain;
My way is paved with flowers and dews,
And yours with tears and pain.
The sky to me is always blue,
No want, no toil I know;
The sky above you is always dark,
Your lot is a lot of woe;
There's room enough for you and me
To travel side by side."

Half shyly the Church approached the World,
And gave him her hand of snow;
And the old World grasped it and walked along,
Saying in accents low:
"Your dress is too simple to suit my taste;
I will give you pearls to wear,
Rich velvets and silks for your graceful form,
And diamonds to deck your hair."

The Church looked down at her plain white robes,
And then at the dazzling World,
And blushed as she saw his handsome lip
With a smile contemptuous curled.
"I will change my dress for a costlier one,"
Said the Church, with a smile of grace;
Then her pure, white garments drifted away,
And the World gave, in their place,
Beautiful satins and shining silks,
Roses and gems and costly pearls;
While over her forehead her bright hair fell,
Crisped in a thousand curls.

"Your house is too plain," said the proud old World,
"I'll build you one like mine;
Carpets of brussels and curtains of lace,
And furniture ever so fine."
So he built her a costly and beautiful house,
Most splendid it was to behold;
Her sons and her beautiful daughters dwelt there,
Gleaming in purple and gold;
Rich fairs and shows in the halls were held,
And the World and his children were there.
Laughter and music and feasts were heard
In the place that was meant for prayer.
There were cushioned pews for the rich and the gay,
To sit in their pomp and pride;
But the poor, who were clad in shabby array,
Sat meekly down outside.

"You give too much to the poor," said the World,
"Far more than you ought to do;
If they are in need of shelter and food,
Why need it trouble you?
Go, take your money and buy rich robes,
Buy autos and radios fine;
Buy pearls and jewels and dainty food;
Buy the rarest and costliest wines.
My children they dote on all these things,
And if you their love would win,
You must do as they do, and walk in the ways
That they are walking in."

Then the Church held fast the strings of her purse,
And modestly lowered her head,
And simpered: "Without doubt you are right, sir,
Henceforth I will do as you've said."
So the poor were turned from her door in scorn,
And she heard not the orphan's cry;
But she drew her beautiful robes aside,
As the widows went weeping by.
Then the sons of the World and the sons of the Church
Walked closely hand and heart;
And only the Master, who knoweth all,
Could tell the two apart.

Then the Church sat down at her ease, and said:
"I am rich and my goods increase;
I have need of nothing, or aught to do
But to laugh and dance and feast."
The sly World heard, and he laughed in his sleeve,
And mocking said, aside:
"The Church is fallen, the beautiful Church,
And her shame is her boast and pride."

The angel drew near to the mercy-seat,
And whispered in sighs her name;
Then the loud anthems of rapture were hushed,
And heads were covered with shame.
And a voice was heard at last by the Church,
From Him who sat on the throne:
"I know thy works, and how thou hast said,
'I am rich;' and hast not known
That thou art naked and poor and blind,
And wretched before my face;
Therefore I from my presence cast thee out,
And blot thy name from its place."

Oh! erring Church, from the tempter's side flee,
Put on thy garments of white;
With meekness and truth, with faith, hope and love,
Walk again in the fullness of light.

NOTE—This poem is free while the supply lasts. Loan your copy again and again. Help us send out free literature. Send to D. A. Sommer, 918 Congress Ave., Indianapolis, Ind.