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THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPIC

By the Rev. Charles E. Schaeffer, D. D.

May 27th—What Does It Mean To Me That "All Men Are Brothers?" Romans 15:1-16.

The fact that all men are brothers was never more fully realized until Jesus came into the world and taught men this great truth. Jesus exemplified it in His own person and life. He was the Son of Man. While He was born in a Jewish home and His ancestors were also Jewish, He did not belong to any particular race. He was above race and above nationality. He belonged to the whole human race and, therefore, in a peculiar sense He is the Son of Man. In the Old Testament period they scarcely recognized the fact that all men are brothers. Once in a while one of their great Prophets arose and declared it, but the people themselves never fully accepted it and scarcely understood it. The brotherhood of man is a necessary corollary of the Fatherhood of God. Because God is the Father of all men it follows naturally that all men are brothers. We are all made in His image. We are His offspring, children of one common Father.

Now, in the Old Testament times they did not think of God as the Father of all men. They conceived of Jehovah as a tribal God. Every tribe almost had its own God. It was a household God and naturally that idea developed the spirit of rivalry, of narrowness and prejudice and bigotry. The Jews thought that they were a peculiar people. They had a special and separate God from the rest of the people round about them. One's conception of God always determines one's idea of humanity and one's relation to other people. Sometimes we are told that it does not matter very much what people believe or in what kind of a God they put their trust. All that is necessary is that they live in right relations with one another. We are emphasizing sociology so much these days and are disposed to minimize theology. The fact of the matter, however, is that one's theology colors one's sociology. If you have a wrong or a narrow conception of God you will likewise have a wrong and narrow conception of humanity. If, on the other hand, you have a proper idea of God then you will get a right conception of man. Jesus gave us a new revelation of God and therefore also of man. The conception of God which Jesus had was that He was a universal Father, that He was the Father of all men, that He was over all and in all, that in Him there was no differences in His attitude or relation to mankind. He was no respecter of persons. He did not draw a line between different races and nationalities. God had no favorites. When Jesus gave us this idea of a Universal God He released a fact which was revolutionary in the thought life and in all of man's relationships. Therefore, the greatest thing that Jesus did for the world was to give us a new revelation of God. The first thing, therefore, that the fact that all men are brothers means for me is that it gives me a true and enlarged conception of God as the Father of all men.

In the next place this truth means that I have a new estimate of man. Jesus likewise revealed this truth. Before His coming into the world men looked down upon each other. Society was divided into classes and groups. There were barriers which separated men from their fellows. Some of these barriers were racial, some of them were national, some of them were social and religious. The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. They called them dogs. The Jews were the favored people and all others were outcasts. Those outside of the Jewish race were regarded as enemies and they were not to be treated with respect. Now, Jesus came into the midst of that spirit of life and announced this truth of the brotherhood of all men. He showed the value of every man. He knew what was in man, and the incidental things of color and class and cash had no significance with Him. He saw in every man a child of God and recognized a brother in everyone. Therefore, He was inteersted in all men. He came to rescue the last and the least and the lost. There was none too far sunken but he might be reclaimed. In parable, in story, in practical effort He taught this great truth. Consequently the brotherhood of man means to me that I must have respect for all men. I must not say that I am holier or better than anyone else. I must see the worth in every child of God. The image of God is still there although it may be temporarily obscured.

"Down in the human heart,
Crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried
That grace can restore.
Touched by a loving hand,
Wakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken
Will vibrate once more."

The world has still a long way to go before this great truth is put into full practice. There are still too many discords and divisions among men. We are prone to despise others and fail to recognize the stamp of God and the value of every human soul.

In the third place this great truth devolves certain obligations upon me. I can no longer live for myself. The first questions which God asked was addressed to Adam: "Where art thou?" The second was addressed to Cain: "Where is thy brother?" and Cain answered with this sneering question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The question has persisted down the ages. My brother is the one that is born of my own parents, but also the one born of other parents, it may be in a different part of the earth. My brother is the one who lives near me, but also the one who lives afar off. My brother is the one who has the same color of skin that I have, but also the one of darker or more yellow hue. I am my brother's keeper. The world is so organized that I cannot live my life fully and completely without interest in my brother's welfare. If I neglect him I myself will suffer for it. So I have duties and obligations towards my brothers the world over. I cannot lead a narrow or selfish life. Moreover when I fulfill my obligations to my brother I am at the same time serving God. St. John tells us that if a man does not love his brother he cannot love God. Jesus Himself says that if we give but a cup of cold water to one of the least it shall not lose its reward and inasmuch as we do it unto them we are doing it also unto Him.

The poet Longfellow gives us a beautiful story of the monk who was in the Church for prayer at the noonday hour. It was the custom when at that hour the Church bell would ring, for the poor to gather at the Church door waiting for alms. The monk had been longing and praying for a vision of God and just when he was to go forth and give his alms to the poor at the door the Vision Splendid appeared. He lingered and hesitated: "Shall I stay or shall I go," he asked himself. Then the Voice spoke within him,

"Do thy duty, that is best;
Leave unto thy God the rest."

and so he went and performed his duty towards his begging brothers at the gate and when he returned into the sanctuary the Vision was still there and

"'Hadst thou stayed, I would have fled,'
That is what the Vision said."

So if we fulfill our duties towards our fellowmen we are at the same time rendering service to God.



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It may be all right for people to set out to air their grievances, but it does not accomplish much to hot air them.

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ONE class of Washington boys know Herbert Hoover especially well during the sammertime. They are the ones who sell peanuts, pop and all the other things that go with a ball-game. The Commerce Chief, dressed to join the rooters, here is shown buying his supplies for the afternoon's diamond session. Often his young salesmen receive dollar watches which Hoover likes to give away to the boys of the capital.

Wasting Their Time

Hanny in Philadelphia Inquirer.



Looks Like a Clean Sweep

Gale in Los Angeles Times

