THE MEANING OF SERVICE

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The Meaning of Service by Harry Emerson Fosdick

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HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

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HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

AUTHOR OF "THE MANHOOD OF THE MASTER," "THE MEANING OF PRAYER," "THE MEANING OF PARTH," STC.



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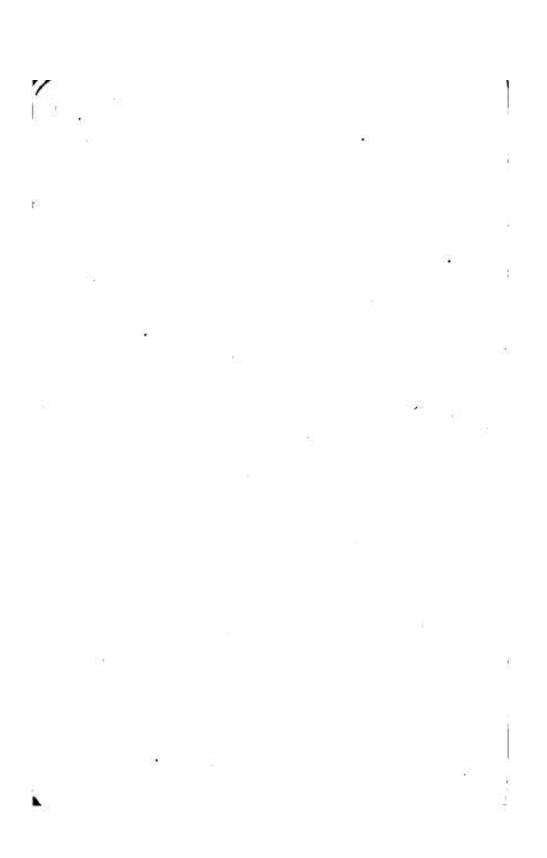
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To

FRANK SHELDON FOSDICK MY FATHER

WHO FOR NEARLY HALF A CENTURY, AS AN EDUCATOR OF YOUTH, HAS ILLUSTRATED IN HIS LIFE THE MEANING OF SERVICE.



PREFACE

This little book completes a trilogy which it has long been my hope to write. "The Meaning of Prayer" is a study in the Christian's inward experience of fellowship with God; "The Meaning of Faith" is a study in the reasonable ideas on which the Christian life is based; and now "The Meaning of Service" is a study in the practical overflow of the Chris-

tian life in useful ministry.

This last book has been written at a time when its theme is most congenial with the crucial need of the world and the dominant mood of thoughtful folk. The overturn of human society in the Great War has inevitably brought to the top those elements of Christian life and thought which center about service. The task to be accomplished on earth is so immense, the cheap optimisms which once contented us are so impossible, the enemies against whom the Christian program must win its way are so formidable, and the need of unselfishness, public-mindedness, and sacrificial love is so urgent, that anyone who thinks at all about humanity's condition must think about service, its meaning, motives, and aims. I have not tried to keep these immediate and pressing conditions of our time from showing themselves in this book. One can write more timelessly about prayer and faith than he can about service. Yet I trust that I have not altogether lost the accent of those universal Christian truths and principles which make service, in any age, the indispensable expression of discipleship to the Master.

To many books and many friends, beyond the possibility of individual acknowledgment, I am indebted for the inspiration of these studies. In particular I am once more under heavy obligation to my friend and colleague, Professor George Albert Coe, Ph.D., for his careful reading of the manuscript, and to my publishers for their unfailing kindness

and painstaking care in preparing it for the press.

November 1, 1920.

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H. E. F.

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The best Prayer