

**THE CHRISTIANITY
OF JESUS CHRIST:
IS IT OURS?**

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The christianity of Jesus Christ: is it ours? by Mark Guy Pearse

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MARK GUY PEARSE

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★R. R. Bowker

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THE CHRISTIANITY OF JESUS CHRIST: IS IT OURS?

CHAPTER I.

CHRIST'S IDEA OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE many aspects in which Christianity presents itself may perhaps be summed up in these three:

First. *It is a revelation of God, and of our relation to Him.*

Second. *It is a means of individual salvation.*

Third. *It is the power of God for conquering and regenerating the world.*

Of these, the first and second are constantly kept to the front. But without the third the other two must ever be incomplete. The evils which those within the Church most deeply deplore, and which the foes of Christ fasten upon most readily for criticism and scorn, spring from the neglect of the great purpose of

Christianity in relation to the world. Unless it be accepted in the completeness of Christ's claims and purposes, our religion may only perpetuate and intensify the very evils which he is come to remedy. The urgency of the appeal to men to seek their own salvation, the promises of religion for this world and for the world to come, can scarcely fail to minister to our very selfishness, unless we go on to learn our responsibility in reference to the world's conversion. We can not fully realize any of the blessings of Christianity except as they tend through us to bless the world. We can not know truly the Fatherhood of God except as it leads us into a true brotherliness toward all men. The salvation that is in Jesus Christ is ours exactly in proportion as we die to ourselves and live to the glory of God and the good of others. We trace our holy religion to its Spring and Source, and find it in the Heart of the Eternal Father: GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON. There is the manner and the measure of the Father's love, and wherever that love dwells it must shape itself after the pattern seen in the mount. The Apostle of Love becomes again the indignant Son of Thunder at the thought of any manifestation of religion that stops short of this. *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for HE THAT LOVETH NOT*

HIS BROTHER WHOM HE HATH SEEN, HOW CAN HE LOVE GOD WHOM HE HATH NOT SEEN? Loved with a love so wonderful, redeemed at a cost so infinite, there is but one proof of our love that will suffice—What is it? **HEREBY PERCEIVE WE THE LOVE OF GOD, THAT HE LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US—that we accept and rest in; but the claim which grows out of that love, alas! we are slow to admit.—WE OUGHT TO LAY DOWN OUR LIVES FOR THE BRETHREN.** Of that we stop short. We accept the love of God; we accept the gift of salvation; but of the third great purpose of religion—a power in us for the conversion of the world—we are content to remain in untroubled ignorance. This is the great hindrance to Christianity—unchristlike Christians. To uplift and purify the religion of our time; to put into it the heroism and might of a conquering force, it is needful for us to search out Christ's idea of Christianity, and then with all our hearts to give ourselves up to it.

The purpose of God in giving his Son; the purpose of Jesus Christ our Savior in all his life and death and resurrection; the purpose of the Holy Spirit in every breath of his influence within the Church is one—*it is the salvation of the world.* And we are "of God" only as this purpose possesses us, and directs and controls our whole life.

Upon what, then, does the salvation of the world depend?

There are abundant promises which speak of the kingdoms of the world becoming the kingdoms of Christ—promises that the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. He *must* reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. These glorious events shine ever before us—the Church's hope and joy and strength. From age to age the conviction abides that as the Almighty Father made the world, as the Son of God redeemed it, so assuredly the Holy Ghost is come to regenerate the world and to fill it with the glory of God.

But how is the work to be done? Churches and varied Church arrangements, preachers and workers of all sorts, we have more plentifully than ever before. Yet who of us is content with the progress of the gospel? Is this country of ours a model of what Christianity can make of a nation? Think of its lust; its hideous squalor; its drunkenness; its gambling; its caste in the churches, rigid and haughty as any Hindoo distinction; its pride; its love of money; its haste and eagerness to be rich at any cost, and by any means. If this is all that Christianity can do for us, is it really worth while to go to the trouble of training men and sending them, at much expense, to the ends