

PULLMAN MEMORIAL UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

REV. LEWIS H. ROBINSON, Minister

PHONE 406

ALBION, N. Y.

Why have ye done this thing? Pharaoh & mediums.

The motives that inspire or impell people to do things are of course many but they may be grouped under a comparatively few headings. The necessity of earning or securing a living, of food, clothing, shelter, heat, light etc. accounts for the reason why we do most of what we do.

The desire for pleasure - for the abundant life, accounts for & furnishes the motive for travel, books, games, sports, cars, yachts, adornment and all manner of luxury. Love furnishes the motive of a great deal of human effort, a great deal of sacrifice & labor. So does its opposite hate - this latter motive is the most expensive motive we have. Probably it is the cause of all our trouble. It is devastating in families, communities, among the nations of the world.

The desire for riches determines the whole manner of life of many people. Some are very selfish - can hardly bring themselves to do anything for others. Others are dominated by motives. Some of which are called good because they make for peace, mutual benefits - a cooperative society - the general welfare - and some motives we call bad because men acting upon them become anti-social. Whatever makes for the abundant life of all is good - but whatever makes for sorrow & disruption, of society - the disintegration of character is bad.

So to day I would like to have you consider with me what the religious motive has inspired men to do. The manner of life it impells men to live. Its first great manifestation seems to have been to build, altars, then temples, cathedrals, for the honor, honor & glory of their gods men have made huge sacrifices. Because religion impelled them to do so. The Egyptian Pyramids, Maya Temples the huge & glorious temples of India - the cathedrals of Europe - These have been very costly in terms of human labor - and of course a very large part of it slave labor.

Not that I approve of the manner of this construction but the fact is that had it not been for their religious edifices we would to day have almost no record of several past centuries.

All that remains of a wonderful Maya civilization is their temples. At Chichen Itza in Guatemala. The Pyramids of Egypt - Ankers Wat in Siem. all speak of a high degree of civilization that somehow passed. We have respect for their achievements.

The only real achievement of the middle ages of European civilization was its cathedrals - like St. Peter's in Rome, St. Mark's in Venice, Notre Dame in Paris, Milan, and others in almost every capital city. I look at the pictures and shudder to think of the cost yet they were nothing compared with the wars they waged at the same time. St. John's Cathedral of N.Y. City - costing probably 15 or 20 possibly 30 millions of money. Seems rather inconsistent to see beggars resting on the steps of a church dedicated to the service of Christ - a man who likewise had not a place to lay his head - seems like a misuse of money. Yet we cheerfully pay twice or 3 times as much for a battle ship - whose life is about 20 years - while St. John's presumably will last many centuries. and be a joy, a beauty and a richness in the lives of millions all down those centuries. I guess we ought not to complain of the cost - It is one of the great achievements of our generation.

Our religion has inspired our greatest art - The greatest paintings seem to have a religious motive - Durer's "Last Supper" and Michael Angelo's life work in theistine chapel at St. Peter's. The pictures of the Madonna & of Jesus - are the most famous and the oftener reproduced. Religious music the greatest music. Religious literature is our very best - and human character is exalted to its very height by religion. The founders of religions have been the greatest heroes of every race.

But even all of the great temples, mosques, cathedrals, all the Art - music & literature inspired by religion is not by any means its greatest achievement in the civilizing of humanity. The process of changing and refining human nature, of changing a man from Cro-Magnon or Mandrillal sangary into something like the or toward the likeness of the Christ - is so slow that many people say "Human nature does not change, nor can it be changed. Yet it has been changed - very gradually - human conscience has been slowly developed - these are things we do not do because it is wrong i.e. anti social - against the common interest.

PULLMAN MEMORIAL UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

REV. LEWIS H. ROBINSON, Minister

PHONE 406

ALBION, N. Y.

Very early in human history the medicine men, the priests set up taboos - things which were not to be done, and which if done carried heavy penalties. The first laws were all religious there was no civil law in the ancient of days. We may laugh at many of their commands - but in their day they were no doubt important - Anyway the process of civilizing man began. It is a process that goes on forever and the religious motive is almost the only one. It has made men grow more gentle, increased his brotherliness, awakened sympathy & pity, kindled love, subdued man's barbarism - very slowly but gradually & surely all the time - After long experience one finds out that the ideals of religion are more practical than the customs of savagery, and we run up a notch. This is, after all, the greatest achievement of religion. I'll agree that religionists having reached a certain level are then conservators, stand patters, loath to go on to new & higher levels and have tried to arrest progress - and even the opposition to progress many times. But nevertheless even in its reactionary state it still helps & inspires the more backward peoples that come under its influence.

Religion is still awakening the conscience of man. For 3000 yrs. the more progressive part of the world has been monotheistic - concerned one creator of us all - but we have been very slow to apply the logic of that tenet of faith to our daily lives. That means of course the Bro. of man - The term was not even used up to comparatively recently but as long ago as Isaiah the prophet realized that the gentile nations were under the same rule as the Jews, that God had purposes with them - that though they knew him not yet the creator used them, guided & guided them to ends of which the Persians for e.g. were unaware.

So we enquire how is religion inspiring man to day? 1st we are showing men the folly & sin of war. Man's conscience is not keen upon this subject yet. For the most part the world still thinks that a resort to arms & mass murder is the best way of settling disputes, only way.

So nearly all nations go in for vast amament programs.

The people who go to church, and have religious interests are always the leaders in social reforms. Their consciences and moral perceptions are the first to be kindled + awakened. Thus we find these "out ahead" of the majorities of the race always persecuted, derided - often hated, sometimes jailed - As illustrated by Geo. Fox - whose life we will study in P. S. times jailed - As illustrated by M. C. Bept. and many others not most orthodox, churches.

The religious motive of a day - is - "Life is more precious than any thing else. The desires of the people are the true desires of the country or world. Profits are good - Business is good - to be desired but not at the price of child labor, drunkenness, impoverished homes, squallor of the working class - dehumanizing of the masses. It is more practical - more progressive, happier for any nation to help the poor the weak the ignorant, the feeble, than to exploit them.

So religion as we know it encourages cooperation - It teaches men to live together in mutual helpfulness + in peace. To bear one another's burden + fulfill the law of Christ.

We cannot expect people to go the whole way of this program in a single bound. We only gradually + slowly make such progress. But when it is made, if it ever is, it will be the very greatest achievement of mankind - Greater than all buildings, all temples, all art, all music, all litt. It will be the religious motive that inspires us - Religion is really inspiration to achievement.

This is not the whole story, of course. Religion may degenerate into something entirely different - until it becomes opium to the people - It did that in Russia - with what result! But religion standing in + obstructing the path of human progress - was wiped out - but a truly religious motive of brotherhood was substituted for it - There will be an organized religion in Russia sooner or later. A people cannot endure without it - Life will become impractical - purposeless, not inspired. Sacrifice is the law of life -