

CHRISTIANITY AND RACE PREJUDICE

TWO DISCOURSES DELIVERED IN THE
FIFTEENTH STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, WASHINGTON, D. C.,

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BY THE PASTOR,

REV. FRANCIS J. GRIMKE, D. D.

“AND PETER OPENED HIS MOUTH, AND SAID, OF A
TRUTH I PERCEIVE THAT GOD IS NO RESPECTER OF
PERSONS.”--*Acts 10: 34.*

*These two discourses are sent forth in the hope that they may
be used by the Holy Spirit in arousing the White Christians of
the United States to a sense of the evil of race prejudice, and
of their duty, as Christians in regard to it.*

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Christianity and Race Prejudice.

I.

How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.—JOHN 4: 9.

Some years ago a very interesting volume was published by Dr. Francis G. Peabody of Harvard University, entitled "Jesus Christ and the Social Question." This morning I want to talk for a little while on the Subject—CHRISTIANITY AND RACE PREJUDICE. We have just had an exhibition of race prejudice in connection with the Sixth World's Sunday School Convention that met in our city last week. The present is a good time therefore to consider the subject upon which I desire to speak this morning. It isn't of race prejudice, in general, that I am to speak; but of Christianity and Race Prejudice.

I. WHAT IS RACE PREJUDICE? Prejudice, as defined in Webster, "is a bias or leaning towards one side or the other of a question from other considerations than those belonging to it; an unreasonable predilection or prepossession for or against anything; especially, an opinion or leaning adverse to anything, formed without proper grounds, or before suitable knowledge. Race prejudice is such a bias or leaning adverse to another because of his race identity or affiliation. It is a prejudice against another, not because of the possession of undesirable qualities, of unworthy traits and characteristics, but purely and simply because of race identity. That there is such a thing as race prejudice in the world, no one will deny. It exists to-day, and it has always existed. In the text, which we are considering, the question is asked, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria?" And this is followed by the statement, "For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans; the Jews were strongly prejudiced against the Samaritans; and prejudiced against them because they were Samaritans. And we who are living to-day, especially in this land—in America, in these United States of America, know, to our sorrow and regret, that there is such a thing as race prejudice. Everywhere it confronts us—North, South, East, West; go where we

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will it meet us; go where you will we see it, we feel it; if we would forget it, we can not.

What is the nature of this prejudice? When we attempt to analyze it, to get at the heart of it, what is its character? How does it manifest itself?

(1.) It is an adverse feeling; it is a feeling of antipathy, a feeling that inclines us unfavorably towards the individual that excites it. There is in it, to say the least, that which is akin to hostility, that which is not friendly.

(2.) Where it exists it leads to uncharitableness of judgment; the tendency is to judge with greater severity; to put the worse construction upon the acts of those against whom this feeling is excited; and to accept and welcome everything that tends to put them in the worst possible light, and to suppress or minify whatever may tend to make a favorable impression. We see this clearly, in the treatment that is accorded to our race in this country by the newspapers. Whatever tends to set the race in a bad light, to discredit it in the public estimation, to make it odious, is set forth in great headlines, and given the most prominent place; while that which is creditable to it, which tends to put it in a favorable light, is either suppressed entirely, or is barely noticed, and even then shoved away in some obscure part of the paper where it is most likely to be overlooked. This tendency of race prejudice is one of its most despicable features. It reveals not only its wickedness, but its exceeding wickedness.

(3.) Where it exists, underlying it is the assumption of race superiority on the one side, and race inferiority on the other, and in connection with this assumption is the feeling that everything must be done to accentuate this difference. In other words, the supposed inferior race must be made to feel, by every possible device, its inferiority. And it is out of this feeling, this tendency, that all the discriminations that we see taking place about us—Jim-crow cars, Jim-crow schools, laws against intermarriage, disfranchisement, segregation in theatres and other places of amusement, grow. The whole aim and purpose is to impress upon this Negro race that it is inferior to the white race, and that there must be no mingling and intermingling on terms of equality. Hence everywhere these lines of demarcation must be set up, and kept up. In other words, race prejudice says to the colored man: You are down and you must stay down; so far as we are concerned, it is our purpose to keep you down. That, of course, is a very commendable spirit; nothing could be more magnanimous, more generous. How our respect for human nature goes up as we think of this noble spirit that is working through race prejudice to destroy the self respect of a race, to put into it the idea that it was made to go only so far and no farther. Isn't it strange that any one should ever have thought of finding fault with race prejudice with such a noble task before it? It is a great thing; it is a praiseworthy thing, is it not to fetter a race, to limit its aspirations, to say to it,

Thus far and no farther! And that is what race prejudice is doing in America. What fools we be! Why don't we see that—the beauty, the nobility of race prejudice; the exalted nature of the spirit that is seen in the effort to trample a race down, and to keep it down!

(4.) Where it exists, it has no regard for the feelings of those against whom it is directed. It walks rough-shod over them; it denies them even the common courtesies of life. And in return exerts a reflex influence upon those who yield to it, blunting their finer sensibilities, the nobler instincts of their natures. I remember once coming from Philadelphia to this city. Before the car left the depot, a child in the other end of it from where I was sitting began crying, and seemed to be in very great pain, almost in a kind of spasm. She was in charge of two young girls. As the crying went on, one of two white women, sitting just in front of me, seemed greatly concerned, and kept saying, What can be the matter with that child? Finally unable to endure it longer, she got up and started towards the child. When she reached the seat, greatly to her surprise, she found that it was a colored child. Without saying a word she wheeled around and came back and took her seat. The thing that prompted her to go and see if there was not something that she could do to relieve it, was her motherly instinct. But the fact that the child was colored was sufficient to dry up at once the fountain of her sympathy, and led her to withhold the help which she might have rendered, and which, had it been a white child, she would have gladly rendered.

(5.) Where it exists, any attempt on the part of the supposed inferior race to assert itself, to claim its rights, to stand up for what it is entitled to, to repudiate the assumption of its inferiority, is bitterly resented, intensifies the feeling of opposition to it. Race prejudice not only acts on the assumption of inferiority, but wants that inferiority perpetuated; it doesn't want the race discriminated against ever to stand on the same plain with it, or to enjoy the same advantages which it enjoys—the same privileges, the same opportunities.

(6.) Where it exists, there is the feeling that those against whom it is directed have no rights which it is bound to respect, that any treatment accorded to them is justifiable. You see this feature of it clearly illustrated all through the South, where a black man is absolutely at the mercy of any white ruffian who may choose to insult him, or to assault him. Race prejudice has no conscience, no sense of right or decency, either, it has no mercy, no bowels of compassion; it is devoid, utterly devoid, of all humanity. Its spirit is that of the lion, the tiger, the vulture, the venomous reptile. It growls, and hisses, and is always in a menacing attitude. At heart it is cruel and murderous; there is isn't anything that is wicked, abominable that it is not capable of doing, as this poor race of ours has every reason to know from bitter experience.

(7.) Wherever it exists it always engenders bitterness, hatred, ill-will in those against whom it is exercised. This is its natural, its inevitable tendency, this is the way it almost invariably works, human nature being what it is. The people who are discriminated against, who are looked down upon, who are treated as inferiors, are not likely to feel kindly towards those who treat them in this way. I do not say it is right, that such should be the case, that people are justified in allowing the prejudice of others to engender bitterness in their hearts towards them. It is to the fact only, however, to which I am directing attention. People who are discriminated against do not feel kindly towards those who treat them in that way. The effect of race prejudice always is to arouse bitter and unkind feelings.

Race prejudice when viewed, in its nature, in all its bearings and ramifications, in its effects upon those who yield to it, and upon those who are its victims, I know of nothing that embodies so much of evil, that is being so effectively used by the evil one in undermining the kingdom of God, and in postponing the realization of the great hope of brotherhood throughout the world. It is Satan's supreme device for keeping men apart, for setting up walls of separation, for encouraging animosities, for engendering strife, bitterness, hatreds, for the encouragement of everything that is evil, in this evil heart of man already too much given over to evil.

This is only a partial analysis of race prejudice, only a partial insight into its character as an active, aggressive force in the great struggle of life, as we see it among men as they mingle and intermingle with each other in society, in business, in politics, in religion.

II. LET US NOW LOOK AT CHRISTIANITY. What is it? It is the religion of Jesus Christ; the religion that embodies the great principles for which he stands, and in accordance with which character and conduct are to be regulated and tested.

(1.) It is the religion of Jesus Christ. Who was Jesus Christ? You have the record of his life in the four gospels; read them, and you will find out who he was. He was the God-man. In him dwelt all the fullness of the God-head bodily; he was the brightness of the Father's glory and the expressed image of his person." He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. It is impossible to read that record and not to be impressed with the singular beauty and nobility of his character. There was nothing small about him: he was big in every way—big of soul; he lived on the loftiest plain; he saw things as God saw them—from the high vantage ground of truth, of justice, righteousness. There was nothing narrow, provincial about him; his sympathies were world wide; his great scheme of redemption was all-embracing. When he came to send out his disciples, after his plans were consummated, he said to them: "Go ye, into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every crea-

ture." The whole world, every creature, were embraced in his great scheme of redemption.

It is impossible to stand in the presence of Jesus Christ, to become fully conscious of what he was, in his singularly pure and beautiful character, in the great sweep of his noble thoughts and sympathies, without feeling ashamed of all that is little, mean, contemptible, ignoble within us. No wonder Peter exclaimed, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man." Christianity is the religion of Jesus Christ. It is the religion that he practiced; it is the religion for which he stood while upon earth, and for which he stands to-day. It is the religion that reflects his character and life.

(2.) It is the religion that embodies the great principles for which he stands and in accordance with which character and conduct are to be regulated and tested. What are some of the great principles for which he stands?

(1.) There is the great principle of the Fatherhood of God. Jesus Christ taught us to say, "Our Father, who art in Heaven." We are all the children of God; we all came from God; He created us; we were all made in his image. Jesus Christ wanted men everywhere, irrespective of race or nationality, to drink in that great thought; he wanted men everywhere to know and to feel that they were the children of God; that in a real true sense, God was their father. And that meant that God felt a father's interest in them, and an equal interest in them all. The connection began in Adam, and was continued through Noah, and has remained ever since. In the genealogical table of Jesus, as given in Luke, you remember Adam is spoken of as "the son of God." And so we are all sons and daughters of one common father. The Fatherhood of God! That is a great thought. How it lifts the whole plain of humanity! What dignity it gives to every human being, however humble, however lowly! It doesn't make any difference how poor, how ignorant we may be, to what race we belong, whether we were in bondage or not, the relationship exists all the same. Poverty, ignorance, race affiliation can not change, in the least, the fact that God is our Father. All men are children of God, Jesus taught. The time was when I used to speak of the cracker element of the South, as poor white trash; it is the manner in which many persons still speak of them, but I never do it any more. We have no right to call any human being, anyone who bears the image of God, however ignorant and degraded, trash.

In this fact, of the Fatherhood of God, is found also the warrant to every individual of whatever race or nationality, to move onward and upward. A child of God may and is justified in aspiring to anything. There are no limits to be set to his aspirations. It is not for anyone to say to him: Thus far, and no farther. Before him lies the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. There are no metes and bound to be set up

for him; no barriers to be erected against him. The stamp of divinity is upon him, and that gives him the right-of-way whenever he chooses to claim it. This doctrine of the Fatherhood of God is not only valuable because of the dignity with which it invests every human being, but also because it opens up to every individual an indefinite sweep of great possibilities, and, therefore, lays the basis for all noble aspiration.

(2.) There is the principle of the brotherhood of man. This grows naturally out of the former principle. If God is our Father, then, of course, we are all brothers. Jesus Christ taught the brotherhood of man. Literally this is true—men are brothers—the human race is one. It began with Adam; and, although it was nearly wiped out by the flood, it survived in Noah and his three sons and their wives, from whom the whole earth was afterward peopled. Hence the statement, "Of one, or of one blood God hath made all the families of the earth." The doctrine of the brotherhood of man, as taught by Jesus, involves just two things: 1st. That all men, however widely they may differ in appearance or circumstances, are members of the same great family, have all come out of the same original parent stock. And, 2d. That all men should feel toward each other as brothers, and treat each other as brothers. The bond that unites all men should be the bond of true brotherliness. We are to recognize in every man a brother, and treat every man as a brother. This is what Jesus taught.

(3.) Another one of his great principles was what is known as the Golden Rule: "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." That is put yourself in the place of others, invest yourself with their circumstances, and then whatever it would be right, just, humane for you to expect from them, render to them; treat them, as under similar circumstances, you would have a right to expect to be treated by them. Jesus says, Put yourself in the place of the man that you have to deal with, and treat him, not according to your likes and dislikes, not according to the promptings of the evil within you; but according to what you know to be right, and what it would be the duty of the other man to accord to you, if he were in your place, and you in his.

(4.) Another one of his great principles is set forth in what he calls the second and great commandment, namely, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

What he meant by neighbor he explains in one of his most notable parables. The question was directly put to him, "And who is my neighbor?" And then he told, in answer to that question, the story of how a Samaritan befriended a Jew—a Samaritan who was despised by the Jews, with whom the Jews had no dealings, for whom they had the utmost contempt. This despised Samaritan found this Jew by the road side, where he had been robbed, beaten, and left to die; this Samaritan had compassion on him, bound up his wounds, put him upon his own

ass, carried him to an inn, cared for him, and when he got ready to leave gave orders to the proprietor to look after him, and give him whatever he needed, and that he would be responsible for it. Jesus says: That Samaritan was neighbor to the Jew, and that just as that Samaritan treated the Jew, so ought men everywhere to treat each other, whatever may be their race or nationality.

“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” The love which a man feels for himself is a very genuine love, and a love that makes one very sensitive as to one’s rights and privileges, as to how one is treated, as to the estimate in which one is held. Self-love leads us to desire for ourselves whatever will advance our interest, will increase our happiness, will give us a larger outlook, a brighter future. To love our neighbor as ourselves is to wish for him the same good, and to do for him as the opportunity presents itself, whatever we can to help to forward his interest, to enlarge his opportunities, and to open up to him a brighter future.

(5.) Another great principle of the religion of Jesus Christ is that set forth by the apostle Paul in the statement, “So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.” The things that make for peace, and the things that tend to edify, are the things to be followed. The things that have the opposite tendency—that tend to produce strife, dissension, bickerings—that breed ill-will and hatred are to be avoided.

(6.) Another great principle of the religion of Jesus Christ is, that all Christians are one in him—together they constitute one family.

The record is: “There is one body, one Spirit, even as also ye were called, in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.” And again, it is written—“Lie not one to another; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him who created him: where there can not be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all.”—Col. 3: 11. In I Cor. 12: 12-13 we also read, “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit.”

As to the spirit that should bind the members of this body together, as to the bond that should unite them, we have this statement: “That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care for one another. And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice

with it." And then follows this statement, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof." Here is the great doctrine of the unity of all believers, stated in the strongest terms possible, leaving us in no doubt as to what this unity means, and what is involved in it, in our relation one to another.

These are some of the great foundation principles of the religion of Jesus Christ; these are some of the things for which it stands—some of the things that it seeks to emphasize, and to bring the world in subjection to. It stands for the Fatherhood of God; for the brotherhood of man; for the Golden Rule; for the Second great commandment which calls upon us to love our neighbor as ourselves; for the things that make for peace, and for the unity of all believers in Christ.

III. Having now clearly before us what race prejudice is, and what Christianity is, we are now prepared to take up the question—WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF CHRISTIANITY TOWARDS RACE PREJUDICE? How is race prejudice to be regarded? How is it to be treated by Christian men and women?

In the light of what race prejudice is, in its nature, in all of its manifestations and effects, and in the light of what Christianity is, as seen in the character of Jesus, and in the great principles which he enunciated and exemplified in his life, I do not hesitate to say that race prejudice is contrary to every known principle of Christianity; that there is not to be found anywhere in the religion of Jesus Christ anything upon which it can stand, anything by which it can be justified, or even extenuated. There is absolutely nothing in the Christian religion upon which it can rest—nothing which even the bitterest Negro hater can find in it, if he is truthful, if he is conscientious, upon which it can rest.

Take the great principle of the Fatherhood of God. If God is the Father of all; if he regards all as his children; if he, as Father, does not discriminate against any of his numerous children on account of race or color, how can the children themselves be justified in doing it?

Take the great principle of the brotherhood of man. If all men are brothers, and are all to be treated as brothers, how can race prejudice, with all its meanness and offensiveness, be consistent with brotherliness? Is that the way brothers, members of the same family, are to treat each other, to regard each other?

Take the great principle embodied in the Golden Rule. "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Is race prejudice consistent with this rule? Can it, in any way, be reconciled with it? Where race prejudice exists, where it shows itself, where it tries to make things just as unpleasant as possible for its victims, where it walks rough-shod over their feelings, where it ignores their rights, is that doing by others as we would be done by? Can that kind of treatment be brought under the sheltering wings of the Golden Rule? Is there any

man, of any race anywhere, if he were treated in this way, who would feel that he was being dealt with in the spirit of this rule, that he was being treated, as those who were inflicting the treatment would like to be treated under similar circumstances?

Take the great principle embodied in the Second commandment as enunciated by Jesus, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." How can race prejudice—race prejudice which at heart is a feeling of aversion, of hostility, of contempt—a feeling that leads us to draw our skirts up and say, You are not good enough to associate with me, not good enough to enjoy the same rights, the same privileges, the same opportunities, how can that kind of thing be reconciled with loving our neighbor as ourselves? Is that the way we treat people that we love, to say nothing of those that we love as ourselves? Is that the way the love that we bear for ourselves shows itself? Is it the things that vex us, that make us unhappy, that hamper us, that narrow our opportunities and curtail our privileges that it prompts us to seek? No, emphatically no, but just the opposite. How then can it be reconciled with race prejudice? How can the two things coexist?

Take the great principle, embodied in the statement, "Follow the things that make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another." Is race prejudice a thing that makes for peace? Is it a force that harmonizes discordant elements, that heals differences, that brings people closer together, that breaks down walls of separation, that makes people feel kindly towards each other? The answer to this question is to be found in the history of race prejudice the world over; and that history shows that everywhere, and necessarily so, it has had just the opposite effect. It has been a source of evil, and only evil, out of it have come bitternesses, and hatreds, and animosities, dissensions, strifes, murders. There is no blacker record to be found anywhere than the record of race prejudice. Look over our own country and see what it has done, and is still doing to stir up strife, to keep the white and black races apart, and to feed the flames of bitterness and hatred between them. The things that make for peace we are to follow; and the things which do not make for peace we are to repudiate, Christian men and women are to set their faces against, to resist in every possible way, Christian men and women are to give no quarter to, are to countenance in no shape or form.

Take the great principle of the unity of all believers in Christ. If all believers are one in Christ, if together they constitute one organism, the animating principle of which is the Holy Spirit. Or, to change the figure to the one used by Jesus himself, where he says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." If we are all branches of the true vine, if the same life-force courses through all, and binds all together in unity with Christ and in unity with one another, how is it possible for race prejudice which insists upon separate churches, and separate pews, and

separate presbyteries, and separate conferences, and separate cemeteries, and separate every thing, to be reconciled with that kind of unity, that oneness of life? It is true, the unity spoken of here, is a spiritual one, but it is a unity in which are included all races and colors and nationalities, and in which, therefore, all these differences should be forgotten, should be lost sight of.

We are to follow not only the things that make for peace, but also the things whereby we may edify one another: that is, that tend to build each other up in Christian character, in the graces of the Spirit. Is there anything in race prejudice—in the preaching of it, or in the practice of it, or in the silent acquiescence in it, that will enable the man who is under its influence to edify the man against whom it is exercised; anything in it that will raise Christianity, religion in the estimation of the man against whom it is exercised? You know, and I know, and we all—everybody knows that it has just the opposite tendency. It doesn't build up; it doesn't edify, it doesn't enhance the attractive power of religion. It pulls down; it destroys; it undermines confidence in religion, it drive men away from Christ. Again and again I have heard people say: It is a wonder that colored people have any faith in religion at all, in the presence of what is going on all around them—in the ever recurring exhibition of race prejudice on the part of so many so-called Christians. Race prejudice in the heart, race prejudice on the part of one race towards another, destroys absolutely that race's power to help the other race Godward and Heavenward. People who are despised, who are discriminated against, who are made to feel that they are less than men, will not receive the message of the grace of God from such messengers. The man who has race prejudice in his heart, who allows himself to be influenced by race hatred never can become a source of edification spiritually, to the man that he hates, to the man that he discriminates against. There is an indisposition, a positive aversion to receiving the message from such a source. I speak from experience, and from what I know from others, there is a very decided feeling, in many colored congregations, against having their pulpits occupied by white men, unless they know beforehand, that they are all right on the Negro problem, that they are free from race prejudice. And this feeling is growing; more and more the colored people are acting upon the assumption that the average white professor of religion, both in the pulpit and out of it, is a hypocrite—that he doesn't believe what he preaches, and, therefore, they don't want to hear him; won't hear him if they can avoid it.

Let no man, in this country or out of it, in the pulpit or out of the pulpit, however strongly he may feel personally about the matter, however he may wish to justify race prejudice, dare to do so, on any principle in the Word of God, or anything in the spirit or teaching of Jesus Christ. If he does, he lies; he tells what is not true; he tells what he knows to be untrue. He

knows also, if he has had any real experience of the divine life in his soul, that there is nothing in that experience that furnishes any ground or justification for it. Every principle of Christianity, every sentiment of true religion is opposed, utterly and absolutely opposed, to race prejudice in every shape and form.

I have already spoken long enough, and yet there are some important aspects of the subject that I have not touched. I shall be obliged to defer it therefore until next Sabbath. In the meantime let us think on the subject, calmly, dispassionately. The time has come, it seems to me, when Christian men and women all over the world, should begin to look this evil squarely in the face, and to set themselves earnestly to work to combat it, to deal with it as Christian men and women ought to deal with it; as Jesus Christ would have it dealt with. We should consider it prayerfully, and with the fixed purpose and determination of following the lead of Jesus Christ regardless of personal consequences, whether it meets the approbation of the world or not, whether men are pleased or not. The one dominant and all determining factor should be, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" It is the will, the wish of Jesus Christ only, that we should consider in regulating our own conduct in this matter, and in seeking to influence the conduct of others.

Christianity and Race Prejudice.

II.

How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.—JOHN 4: 9.

In the sermon on last Sabbath I spoke of what race prejudice is; of what Christianity is; and of the attitude of Christianity towards race prejudice, as indicated in the character of Jesus Christ, and in the great principles of the Christian religion, such as the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the Golden Rule, loving one's neighbor as one's self, following things that make for peace and edification, and the unity of all believers in Christ. The discussion brought out the fact, that every principle of Christianity, every sentiment of true religion was totally, absolutely opposed to race prejudice in every shape and form.

IV. Such being the case, I pass on in the next place to ask: **WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH TOWARDS RACE PREJUDICE?** By the Church I mean the religious denominations that stand as the visible and organized representatives of Christianity, of the great principles of which I have been speaking; I mean the men and women who make up the membership of our churches—the men and women who profess to be Christians. There are, in this country, thirty millions of such professing Christians; and in connection with these churches, under their care and supervision, are some fifteen millions of Sunday-school scholars, who are being instructed in the knowledge of the Word of God, who are being trained for membership in the kingdom of Jesus Christ. The question that I am asking is, What is the attitude of this great body of Christians who have pledged themselves to loyalty to Jesus Christ, who have pledged themselves to embody, in their own personal character and lives, and to endeavor to get others to do the same, the great principles of the Christian religion—who have pledged themselves to follow Jesus Christ, through evil report, and through good report: what is their attitude in regard to this evil, to this ever-growing evil in this great Republic of ours?

The information that I am seeking here is not, as to what public declarations have been made, occasionally, in the form of

resolutions or otherwise, by denominations, or public gatherings, touching this matter; but what is the practice of the congregations that make up these denominations and of the men who occupy their pulpits? Do they welcome people of all races to their places of worship, to their Sabbath schools, to their Endeavor Societies, and to membership in their churches? Do they treat people of all races, when they come into their assemblies with the same courtesy, the same cordiality? What is the practice as individuals, of the millions of professing Christians in their contact with men of other races? Are they influenced, in the treatment which they accord to them in the street, on the cars, in places of public resort, in all the relations of life, by this feeling of race prejudice, or by the principles of the religion which they profess to accept and to believe in? Are these millions of professing Christians in their homes, in their places of business, in public and in private, throwing the weight of their individual personal influence for or against this evil of race prejudice? Are they exemplifying in their individual personal character and lives, in dealing with this question, the spirit of the Master whom they profess to be serving, or the spirit of the world, of the evil one, of the prince of the powers of darkness? In other words, Is the attitude of the average white church in this country, and the average white professor of religion, on this subject, consistent with the religion which they profess?

In seeking an answer to these questions, it is the truth that we want to know, and nothing but the truth, whether it makes for us or against us, whether we like it or not; for it is the truth alone that will make us free; what we want to know is, what the facts are in the case. What are the facts?

(1.) So far as the practice of churches or congregations is concerned, race prejudice is in almost absolute control. In the whole southern section of our country it dominates absolutely the situation. In all that southern land there is scarcely a white church, be it said to the shame of those churches, where a colored person would be accorded anything like decent treatment; there is scarcely one in which a colored person would be received as a brother beloved, however exemplary might be his conduct, however saintly might be his character. In most of them he would not be received at all; in a few he might be received, provided he was willing to be thrust away into the gallery or some obscure corner, set apart particularly for his kind. The reception of colored children into Sabbath schools and Endeavor societies in these churches would not, of course, be thought of for a moment.

As to other sections of our country, things are not quite so bad, but they are bad enough, and are getting steadily worse. The white churches of the North, as a general thing, are no more kindly disposed towards the attendance of colored people upon their services than the churches in the South. They may

not decline to seat a colored person if he goes, but they will treat him in such a way as to make him know very distinctly that he is not welcomed, that his absence would be preferable to his presence. That is not true of all, but it is true of a very large number, and a growing number. Even in a church like Trinity, Boston—the church over which the sainted Phillips Brooks once presided, and where during his pastorate men of all races were equally welcomed, the brother in black no longer feels at home there, is no longer made welcome there. The simple fact is, colored people are not wanted in white churches, in white Sabbath schools, in white Endeavor societies, in white religious societies of any kind. The simple fact is, when they venture, occasionally, into these churches, they are not treated with the same courtesy, with the same cordiality as white people are treated. The feeling is, Why don't you colored people attend your own churches. Jesus said, "My house shall be called the house of prayer for all nations;" but that is not true of the average white church in this country. It is not a house of prayer for all nations, but only for white men, and white women, and white children, only for members of the white race. That is the feeling that pervades them, that dominates them. "For white people only," is what is inscribed over the portals of most of them, as interpreted by the prevailing sentiment within them. This may be denied, but no denial can alter the fact. An honest expression of sentiment, on the part of the members of these churches, however deplorable it might be, however unfavorable may be the light in which it may place them as professing Christians, will be found to be in accord with what I have said. Most of these churches have built into them the idea that they are for white people and not colored people; most of these churches are pervaded by the sentiment which does not look kindly upon the idea of the introduction of colored people into their religious organizations and gatherings; underlying most of them is the caste feeling, growing out of race prejudice. If any one has any doubt on the matter, all that is necessary to be done in order to get at the truth, is to let some colored person apply for membership in most of them, and see what the result would be. I venture the assertion, that, with here and there an exception, it may be, such an application would not be received with favor, with any degree of cordiality, as would be the case had it come from a white person. The application, if it were not out and out denied, action on it would be deferred, and efforts would be made to dissuade the applicant from pressing it—to induce him to change his mind and seek admission elsewhere. I have in mind now such an application that was made to one of the prominent churches in this city. A letter of dismissal was requested, and was given by the proper authority, and presented: everything was in due form; but the application was not received; the party did not succeed in getting in. One excuse and another was found, and

among them that she would feel more at home among her own people. In other words, she was given to understand, if not in so many words, just as clearly, that that church was for white people and not for colored people.

The spirit that this incident brings out in connection with that particular church, is true of most of the white churches. It is clearly understood by their officers, by their members, by the men who fill their pulpits, that they are for white people and not for colored people. And the reason why we have white churches and colored churches, white Sunday schools and colored Sunday schools, white Endeavor societies and colored Endeavor societies, is because of race prejudice. This line of cleavage has been drawn, this difference has been made, out of deference to race prejudice, this aspect of the churches policy has been dictated by race antipathy. Everywhere this hydra-headed monster has not only intruded itself, but is in control. Why should there be churches made up of white Christians, and churches made up of colored Christians in the same community, and, where all speak the same language; why should white Christians and colored Christians not feel perfectly at home with each other in the same religious gatherings, if they are all Christians, if they all believe in the Fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man, in doing by others as they would be done by, in loving each other as they love themselves, in their oneness in Christ Jesus, and if the same Holy Spirit dwells alike in all their hearts? With these great principles guiding, directing, influencing them, it would be just what you would naturally expect to find, just as in all churches you find all classes and conditions brought together—rich and poor, high and low, educated and uneducated. Any attempt to build the Christian church on any of these lines exclusively would be recognized at once as wrong, as contrary to the spirit of Jesus Christ. You can't say this church is for rich people only, or for educated people only, or for people of position, of high social station only, and call it Christian. A church run in any such spirit would be obviously against every principle of Christianity. And yet, all over this country are churches, calling themselves Christian, in spirit and practice, for white people only; are churches where colored people are not desired.

The fact that such is the case and it is a fact, calls for an explanation. What is the explanation of this unnatural condition of things that we find all over our land, in so-called Christian churches? Why are all on the inside of some of them, white, and all on the inside of others, black? Why this indisposition of one group of persons to mingle with another group, in churches in religious gatherings, in the worship of God? The great reason—there may be others—is to be found in race prejudice. The underlying fact out of which it grows, is this difference of race; and this difference has been one of the great determining factors in the organized church life of the nation, one

of its most conspicuous characteristics. The lines have been set up, not where Jesus Christ directs them to be set up, but where race prejudice dictates that they should be set up; the principles of the world have controlled, have been allowed to determine what shall be, and what shall not be, instead of the principles of the great Head of the Church.

2. As to the practice of the individuals who make up this great body of professing Christians, in their contact, in their relation with men of other races, the same is true, race prejudice is in almost absolute control, its influence almost everywhere dominates.

(1.) People who are content to be identified with churches, such as I have been describing—churches that don't want colored people in them, that would rather have them stay away from their services, are not likely to treat them with any more consideration when they meet them elsewhere. If they are not good enough to worship with them in the same sanctuary, they are not likely to think any better of them when they meet them on the outside. People who want separate churches, are likely also to want separate schools, and separate hotels, and separate restaurants, and separate cars, and separate every thing. If churches, which are supposed to be the center of the religious life of the community, and therefore to represent the highest standard of what is right in their very structure, in the lines upon which they are organized, teach that men are to be shunned, are to be excluded, are to be discriminated against because of race, color, the individual members are not likely to have any higher standard, are not likely to act on any higher principle. People who in their church life, get the idea of race superiority, of race exclusiveness, will be likely to carry it with them in the wider relations outside of the church.

(2.) This, as a matter of fact, is what we find to be actually true. Race prejudice is not the monopoly of the infidel, of the atheist, of the man of the world. It is shared equally by so-called professing Christians. The men who have been most active in promoting Jim-crow car legislation, in bringing about all forms of discrimination, in holding the race up to contempt, in saying the bitterest things against it, have not all been outside of the church: no, many of them have not only been in the church, but have held high places in it. The simple fact is, there is no appreciable difference, in the great majority of cases, in the exhibition of race prejudice, in the treatment that is accorded to people of color, between those who profess to be Christians, and those who make no profession. The fact that they are members of Christian churches, that they are professing Christians, exerts no appreciable influence over them. It is a thing entirely apart from their religion, a thing which does not involve, in the least, to them any religious principle. They do not seem to see any inconsistency between the two things. All the high, and holy principles of the Christian religion, they

seem to think, have reference only to, or are in force only when they have dealings with members of their own race. It is surprising how little influence the religion of Jesus Christ has had in controlling the prejudice of men, in lifting them above the low plain upon which race prejudice places them.

In the block where I am living, which is one of the longest blocks in the city, a few years ago every house in it, on both sides, was occupied by white people; to-day there is only one white family to be found in it. There has been an almost complete exodus. Just as soon as one colored family got in, the excitement began; and when a second got in it created almost a panic. One by one these white people,

"Folded their tents like the Arabs,
And silently stole away."

Many of them were members of Christian churches; one of them was the family of a retired minister of the gospel. These church members, these professing Christians, were unwilling to even live in the same block with colored people, though they had no personal contact with them, and though among those colored neighbors were three colored ministers pastors of three of the leading colored churches of the city. This indisposition to live even in the same block with colored people, is just as prevalent among professing Christians as among non-professors; and it doesn't make any difference as to the grade of colored persons, as to how intelligent, how refined, how well-to-do, how unobjectionable in point of character, they may be, the indisposition is just as strong.

These are all facts indisputable facts. And these facts of experience and observation—facts that lie all about us, within easy reach of anybody, prove conclusively that the Christian church in this land, in its organized capacity, and in the life of the individuals that go to make up its membership, is very largely under the power of this degrading and un-Christian sentiment of race prejudice. It is a humiliating confession to make, but it is true, the church to-day is the great bulwark of race prejudice in this country. It is doing more than any other single agency to uphold it, to make it respectable, to encourage people to continue in it. It not only upholds it within its own peculiar institutions, but furnishes an example to the non-believing world, to do the same. So that both within, and without, its influence, its example tells mightily in favor of these discriminations, these invidious distinctions, based upon race, upon color.

V. In the light of these facts, in view of the actual condition of things as we find it in this land, I raise the question, and it is a question which the church itself ought to consider, Is it occupying the position which it ought to occupy in this matter? Is it standing where it ought to stand? Is it standing where Jesus Christ would have it stand? In other words, Is its present attitude on the race question, right or wrong? To this question, in the light of what Christianity is, in the light of what Jesus

Christ is, in spirit, in temper, in all that he said and did, there can be but one answer, a negative one. Its attitude is not what it ought to be; it is not standing where it ought to stand. It is recreant to its great trust, as the light of the world; the light within it, on this point, is darkness, is misleading.

One of two things therefore the church ought to do: (1.) It ought to disavow any connection whatever with Christianity; to repudiate it; to give it up entirely; to break absolutely with it, to say frankly: I believe in race prejudice, in these discriminations, I don't want to worship with colored people, I don't want to live on the same street with them; I don't think they are entitled to the same treatment as white people are entitled to; I am not willing to receive them as brothers religiously or otherwise. At the same time I know that Christianity teaches the Fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man, teaches that we should love our neighbor as ourselves, that we should do by others as we would be done by; I know that race prejudice is not in accordance with the spirit of Jesus Christ. I am not going to give up race prejudice, however; I am not going to treat these people differently. If I can't hold on to race prejudice, and also to Christianity at the same time, I will give up Christianity; I will not live a lie; I will not misrepresent it by continuing my connection with it. White American Christianity is in honor bound to take that position, to cease to call itself Christian. Or

(2.) It ought to repent; it ought to do differently; it ought to strive to bring its actual life in harmony with the great principles which it professes to accept, to believe in. There is need today for some John the Baptist to go out all over this land, in all of the white churches, among the millions of professing Christians in them, and cry aloud—Repent, repent, cease to be ruled by race prejudice, to make race, color, the condition of entrance into your religious activities, your organizations and gatherings, cease this anti-Christian race feeling, and let brotherly love prevail. "Let the wicked man forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts," is what God says; and that has reference to the man within the church as well as the man without it. If race prejudice is wrong, then the church must forsake it, must give it up. There is no option left to it. It must repent, it must do differently; it must change its course, if it is to remain Christian.

VI. Assuming now that it is willing to do this, that it recognizes the un-Christian character of race prejudice; that it sees that it is wrong; the practical question remains to be considered: How, in what way may it set itself to work to overcome it? What can it do? What ought it to do?

(1.) It ought to wake up to the fact that it can do something, and that it ought to do something. Race prejudice is an evil that the church of God ought to grapple with. It ought not to sit quietly down in the midst of it, and do nothing. Its very

silence, its lack of effort, its non-interference with, to put it in its mildest form, would be misinterpreted, would be construed as approving of it, or, at least, as not disapproving of it. The church of God can do something. There are thirty-two millions of professing Christians in this country, and there are over two hundred thousand men of education, many of them of the highest culture, in the pulpits of the land. These millions of professing Christians wield a tremendous influence; there isn't anything that they set their minds upon that they cannot bring about, that they cannot accomplish. The fact that it has done little or nothing towards fighting this evil, has been not from lack of power, but from lack of disposition. And this lack of disposition has arisen from two reasons: 1st. Because of the presence of race prejudice in the church itself, in the hearts of those who make up the church; and 2d. Because of cowardice, because to have done so would have run counter to an adverse public sentiment, outside of the church.

That the church, the membership of the church, collectively and individually, have done little or nothing towards fighting this evil, is evident from the great damning fact, that while the membership of these churches has gone on steadily increasing, side by side with that fact, of an increasing membership in the churches, is also the fact that race prejudice has gone on steadily increasing. The church has grown, and with its growth, this diabolical spirit of race prejudice has also grown. The very opposite of this is what we would naturally have expected to find—that with the growth of the Christian church, not an increase, but a decrease of race antipathy. This strange fact, for it is a strange fact, there is nothing in the nature of Christianity that would lead us to expect any such result, ought to be an eye-opener to Christian men and women all over this country, ought to give them pause, ought to lead them to ask themselves the question, What must be the quality of the Christianity which is represented in their character and lives if such be the case. Of this strange fact there are only three possible explanations: Either Christianity is no match for race prejudice, is powerless before it; or, the Christianity represented in the white churches of America, is a ~~spurious~~ spurious Christianity, is not genuine, is not what it purports to be; or, else the church has not been doing its duty, has been putting its light under a bushel, has not been faithful to its divine commission.

That real genuine Christianity is powerless in the presence of race prejudice, is not true; back of it is the mighty power of God. The gates of hell can not prevail against it. That the Christianity represented in white America is spurious, I am not prepared to say. That the church has failed to do its duty, in this matter, I am prepared, however, to say. Had it been true to its great commission; had it lived up to its opportunities; had it stood squarely and uncompromisingly for Christian principles, the sad, the humiliating, the disgraceful fact of which we are

speaking, never would have been possible. The fact that in Christian America, in this land that is rolling up its church members by the millions, race prejudice has gone on steadily increasing, is a standing indictment of the white Christianity of this land—an indictment that ought to bring the blush of shame to the faces of the men and women, who are responsible for it, whose silence, whose quiet acquiescence, whose cowardice, or worse, whose active cooperation, have made it possible. The first thing for the church to do, I say, is to wake up to the fact that it can do something. Its present attitude is a disgrace to it, is utterly unworthy of the name which it bears.

(2.) The church ought to begin to do something. What can it do; in what way or ways may it help to overthrow this giant evil? It can help to do it in the same way as Jesus sought to meet race antipathy, and an adverse and unrighteous public sentiment, in his day. Race hatred was just as strong in his day as it is to-day; the Jews had the same contempt for the Samaritan, felt the same aversion to him, as the white man feels for the Negro in this country. If possible the feeling of antipathy was even stronger. In the midst of the society in which Jesus lived and moved there was the strongest possible feeling of aversion to certain classes known as Publicans and sinners. When he said Zaccheus, "Come down for I must abide in thy house to-day," they threw their hands up in holy horror, saying, "He is gone to be guest with a man who is a sinner." When he permitted the woman to anoint his feet, as he sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, the Pharisee expressed his astonishment in the words, "This man, if he were a prophet, would have known what manner of woman this is that toucheth him, that she is a sinner." In the midst of such conditions Jesus began his great life's work. Did he fall in with the prejudices of his time? Did he allow himself to be controlled by the unrighteous public sentiment about him? No; he did the very opposite of that; he showed clearly, unmistakably where he stood; what his principles were. And this he did in two ways—by what he taught, and by the life he lived.

(1.) By what he taught. The great principles which he declared, which he everywhere promulgated, were directly, fundamentally opposed to the evils about him. These principles could not be accepted, could not be followed without changing conditions for the better, without bringing men closer together, without breaking down walls of separation, without infusing into all a more kindly spirit. Jesus gave a great deal of time to teaching. The rubbish of tradition—men-made opinions—had covered up the truth of God: and Jesus gave a good deal of time to clearing away this rubbish, and letting the truth shine forth. In the Sermon on the Mount we have a specimen of the kind of work he did. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old, thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good

to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use and entreat you." Jesus was a teacher; he was a teacher sent from God. What he taught were the truths of God; his aim was to bring men in contact with the mind of God, with the great thoughts, feelings, sentiments which tended to lift men Godward and Heavenward, instead of encouraging them in their evil inclinations and desires, in their petty prejudices and meannesses. What he taught tended ever to make men broader, more liberal, more humane, more sympathetic, more kind, more loving. Jesus was a great teacher—great in the manner in which he taught; and in what he taught—in the character of the truths which he declared. In what he said, in the words that fell from his lips, men knew where he stood on all the great moral issues of his day, knew what his sentiments were, where his sympathies were.

(2.) Jesus revealed his attitude and thus sought to improve conditions, not only by what he taught, but also, and particularly, by the life which he lived, by his personal character and conduct. In no way did he ever give countenance, by anything he did, by the manner in which he conducted himself, to the unjust sentiments, the unholy prejudices about him. His life, as he lived it day by day, as he came in contact with men of all classes, was always, and everywhere a living protest against all the evils about him. He never allowed himself to be influenced by the prejudices of those about him, by their likes and dislikes. Jesus was all the time doing unpopular things, things that public sentiment did not endorse; and he did them in order that people might know where he stood, that he was not in accord with public sentiment, that he did not approve of popular prejudices. Hence he went to dine with Zaccheus; hence when he came to select his twelve disciples, he chose Matthew, the Publican, to be one of them; hence when he was on his way to Jerusalem, instead of going around Samaria, he went through it; and, when he met the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, instead of shunning her, although the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, he talked to her, he asked her to give him a drink of water; and when the Samaritans, in large numbers, came out to meet him, instead of running away from them, received them gladly, and permitted himself to be entertained by them in their village for a day or two.

After all, the most effective way of working in the interest of reform, in seeking to change conditions for the better is the one set forth here. It is well enough to preach, to make public declarations, to issue manifestoes bearing upon the evils to be removed; but after all, these public declarations, these generalized statements, are soon forgotten; but where the individual life is all right, where it meets the issue squarely by consistently and persistently living out the principle which it wishes to triumph, you have a force that is ever active—silently, it may be, but ever and always working towards the end. It is the

individual life, set right in regard to this or any other matter, that counts most. And no one understood this better than the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, in his individual personal character and life, he was always true to principle; his life always pointed in the direction of the principles which he advocated; he was always a living embodiment of what he taught; and hence he became a force, in the regeneration of society, which no mere words, however wise or eloquent, ever could have made him.

In dealing with this matter of race prejudice, if the church in America, I mean our white fellow Christians, really want to get rid of it, really want to begin in earnest a crusade in the interest of true Christian brotherhood, regardless of race, color or previous condition of servitude, the way to do it is clearly indicated in the course pursued by Jesus Christ, in dealing with similar conditions in his day:

(1.) There must be careful instruction. The great principles of Christianity that are opposed to race prejudice, everything in the Word of God that runs counter to it, that tends to set it forth in its true light, as a thing hateful to God, and injurious to man, should be carefully set forth, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. Some teaching must be done, careful, painstaking instruction as to the mind of God on this matter, as revealed in his character, and in the teachings of his Word, must be given. If race prejudice is wrong, if it is un-Christian, unbrotherly, then that fact ought to be declared. There ought to be no blinking of the matter, no dodging of the issue. It ought to be properly characterized; it ought to be set forth in its true character. And it ought to be done, not with bated breath, not behind closed doors, not in secret where no one will hear; but openly, publicly; it ought to be proclaimed from the house tops. God directed the prophet to "cry aloud, and spare not, to lift up his voice like a trumpet." And race prejudice, as an evil, as an evil hateful to God, and injurious to man, ought to be proclaimed in trumpet-tones all over the land, in every city, and village, and hamlet.

This work of education, of instruction, in regard to this evil, should be from the pulpit, should be in the Sabbath schools, in Christian Endeavor societies, in all Christian homes. What an opportunity is here presented to Christian ministers, to Sunday-school teachers, to leaders of Endeavor societies, to Christian fathers and mothers, to pour in the light of Divine truth, to begin the work of regeneration, by implanting in the hearts and minds of those who are entrusted to their care, who come under their influence, correct ideas on this matter.

The opportunity along these several lines, of helping in this matter, is great. To what extent is it being utilized? How many of the more than 200,000 ministers in the pulpits of this land have sought to instruct the members of their congregations, to set them right on this matter? How many are doing it now? In how many of these pulpits has there been any

serious attempt made to stem this tide of race prejudice by patient, painstaking instruction out of God's Word? How many of the thousands upon thousands of Sabbath-school teachers in the Sunday schools connected with these churches have done anything, directly, or indirectly, to help their scholars to see the evil of race prejudice, to lead them to think more kindly of people of color? How many of the leaders, in the thousands of Endeavor societies in all these churches, have done anything to set the millions of young people over whom they preside, right on this matter?

"Onward, Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before,"

we hear them often singing, as their battle cry. How far, to what extent is this great army of young endeavorers, being trained to wage war against this ever active, ever present foe of God and man—race prejudice? How far are they being trained by the leaders, to look upon race prejudice as an enemy against which the forces of religion ought to be directed? How far are Christian parents, in their homes, with their children about them, seeking to put into their hearts and minds such principles as will lift them above race prejudice, as will set them right on this matter?

There is every reason to believe, that in none of these directions, that neither ministers, nor Sabbath-school teachers, nor Endeavor leaders, nor Christian parents, have done very much in this direction. The children, the boys and girls, the young men and women who are coming up, are just as full of prejudice as the older ones. And yet these children, these young people are members of these churches, of these Sabbath schools, of these Endeavor societies, of these Christian homes. If any instruction is going on in them at all, with this end in view, there is no visible evidence of it. Those who are doing the teaching must be very poor teachers, or else these young people must be very inapt scholars, must be very dull of apprehension. The simple fact is they are not learning to look upon race prejudice as an evil in these churches, in these Sabbath schools, in these Endeavor societies, in these Christian homes; they are learning the very opposite. The older white Christians are dying out, but race prejudice is not dying out; it survives in their children, and it survives in their children because it lived in them, and it will continue to survive in the children as long as it lives in the parents.

I am fully persuaded that if there is ever to be a change for the better, this process of education, of careful instruction has got to be begun—in the pulpit, in the Sabbath schools, in the Endeavor societies, in the home; in all these centers of influence the good work has got to be begun, and ought to be begun at once. Definite, specific instruction as to the un-Christian character of race prejudice ought to be given, and given by the

Christian church, by the men and women who profess to be Christians, and given to their children, and to the young people who are growing up.

(2.) Jesus Christ not only taught the truth, by word of mouth, but lived it—his life, his personal character witnessed to the truth which he proclaimed. He wasn't afraid of public sentiment, he wasn't afraid to do the unpopular thing when duty required it, when loyalty to principle made it necessary. And this is the kind of testimony that our white fellow Christians must bear to the evil of race prejudice, if their influence is to count for anything, if this evil is to be overcome. It isn't what they say, but what they do, how they act, that will tell most. It is the testimony of the individual life, free from race prejudice, that is the important thing in this warfare that is to be waged in the interest of true brotherhood, of a larger charity. It is only as the individual Christian separates himself or herself from the accursed thing, that any real progress will be made. It is the protest of the individual personal life that is needed in all these churches, and Sabbath schools, and Endeavor societies, and Christian homes.

Let me now, in closing, revert for a moment to the text of Scripture with which I began this discourse. "How is it that thou being a Jew, askest drink of me who am a Samaritan woman." This woman recognized at once, that there was something here quite out of the ordinary; that here was a Jew that was entirely unlike the Jews that she was in the habit of meeting. Here was a Jew that not only talked with her, but asked of her a drink of water, a personal favor. The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, the Jews despised the Samaritans. She finds nothing like this, however, in this man; she finds in him an entirely different spirit. It puzzles her, she doesn't know what to make of it; and so she says frankly to him: How is it, explain yourself, that you, a Jew, treat me in the manner in which you do? So unlike your fellow countrymen? And the question is an interesting one, and has in it an important lesson for our white American Christians. What was it that made the difference between Jesus and the ordinary Jew? The answer comes out in what follows. In answer to her question Jesus began to reveal himself to her. (1.) In his wonderful knowledge, in the insight which he had into her past life and history. "Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did" is what she said. She saw that he was no ordinary individual.

(2.) Impressed with his wonderful insight, she said, "I perceive that art a prophet," a man of God; and then naturally she glided on to the great thought of the Messiah, the hope of all the ages, the long promised deliverer. And then it was that Jesus said to her "I that speak to thee, am he." She was talking with the Messiah, though she knew it not.

(3.) And then as the conversation went on he spoke of a wonderful water which he had to give—the water of life, which, if

a man drink he would never thirst, but would be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. And then he went on to declare to her the great truth "God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers." Not at Jerusalem, nor yet in Samaria would it be necessary for men to meet in order to render acceptable worship to God, but that everywhere, among all races and nations, the sincere worshipper was acceptable unto him. The conception which he gives us here of God, and of what constitutes acceptable worship, transcends the thought of race or nationality, lifts us at once out of the narrow racial groove in which both Jew and Samaritan were in the habit of moving, into the higher conception of fitness, of character, in which all men must stand in order to be acceptable to God. It was not as to whether a man was a Jew or Gentile about which God cared, and which counted with him, but as to the character of the worship which he rendered, as to the state of his heart. This was the way God felt, and this was the way Jesus felt as his representative on earth. The reason why his treatment of the Samaritan woman was different from the treatment which an ordinary Jew would have accorded her is manifest therefore:

(1.) It was because he was the Messiah; and, as such stood in relation to all the races of mankind. He was the light of the world—the light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Israel: and therefore Jew and Gentile alike appealed to him. (2.) It was because he was what he was in point of character, because his principles were what they were, because of the great purpose which dominated his life.

He came to redeem the world; to bring men back to God—to a recognition of him and of the great standard of character and conduct which he had set up for the government of all; he came to break down walls of separation and to make all men brethren. Being what he was, his principles being what they were, his treatment of the Samaritan woman was perfectly natural, was just what was to have been expected.

The latter part of the text is, "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." And this represents substantially the condition which exists between whites and blacks in this country. So far as their religious and social relations are concerned, the white people have no dealings with the colored people. This is true of the whites within the church as well as those without it. Just as the Jews felt towards the Samaritans, in these respects the whites feel towards the colored people in this country. If, however, the church was all right, if these white professors of religion were all right, if they were true to the principles of the Christian religion, they would stand apart in their treatment of the colored people, from the other white people of the country, just as Jesus stood apart from the rest of the Jews about

him, in his treatment of this Samaritan woman. But they do not stand apart, they are indistinguishable from them, they are in no respect different from them. To how many of the white Christians in this country could it be truthfully said by any number of colored people: How is it, that you, being white, treat us as brethren, as children of one common Father? How is it that you, being white, do not discriminate against us because of race, of color? To how many white Christians could this be said? Not a great many. And yet if these white professors of religion were really, truly Christian, if the same mind that was in Jesus was in them, not one, or two, or a dozen, but the whole Negro race would be able to say it; these white professors of religion would stand apart from the rest of the white people of the country, would stand on a higher plain, would exhibit a nobler spirit, a more Christ-like spirit.

It is important, it seems to me, not only in dealing with race prejudice, but in dealing with every other evil, that Christian men and women should understand, that Christianity is not clay in the hands of the world-spirit to be moulded by it; but is itself to be the moulder of public sentiment and everything else. It isn't the meal, but is the leaven put into the meal that is to leaven the whole lump. It is salt—not salt that has lost its savor, but the salt of the earth that is intended to arrest corruption, to put an end to the forces that mean moral decay, that tend to break down the tissues of the spiritual life, and to degenerate into festering sores of race prejudice and all the other brood of evils that grow out of it. The mission of the church, of Christian men and women is to mould, not to be moulded by encircling influences of evil. To the shame of the millions of white Christians in this land, the brother in black is still a social and religious outcast.

As I look over this land of ours everywhere I see churches, and these churches in full operation, on week days and on the Sabbath. There seems to be no end to religious activities of one kind and another—meetings by day, and meetings by night, preaching services, prayer-meetings, revival meetings, religious conventions, men's gatherings, great missionary meetings for the conversion of the world, for carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth, and yet right here in America, in the midst of all this missionary activity, this religious zeal, this seeming devotion to Jesus Christ, race prejudice stalks on unhindered; race prejudice flaunts itself everywhere, and unrebuked, as if the kingdom of Jesus Christ had nothing whatever to do with it, as if it were a thing entirely apart from it. Anxious to bring the world to Christ, overflowing with enthusiasm for the conversion of the heathen, and yet indifferent to this giant evil right here in Christian America!

On the top of the Central Union Mission Building in this city, near Seventh street and Pennsylvania avenue, is a great sign. It consists of a star, and under the star in large letters are the

words "Jesus the light of the world." It is illuminated by electricity, and night after night flashes out its message to the passers-by. It may be all right to put up such signs; but that is not the way to teach men that Jesus is the Light of the world. The way to do it is not through colored electric lights, but through the life—by living the religion which we profess, by showing in our daily walks that he is our light, that we are walking in the light, are being transformed, through his influence, into likeness to him. Thousands of such electric signs scattered everywhere, piled up to Heaven, isn't worth as much as one life that is being saved by Christ, in commending him to a sinful world.

And so if our white Christian brethren would give a little less attention to the type of Christianity represented by these religious electric displays, the type of Christianity that is concerned about putting up such signs, but not concerned about this ulcer of race prejudice that is eating out the very vitals of the church; if they would give a little less attention to the evils that are away off, and address themselves a little more to some of the evils that are right about them; if they would shake off their indifference, and show a little interest, just a little, in having the kingdom of God come in their own hearts, and in the hearts of their race-hating brethren at home, we would have a little more confidence in their sincerity, and the outlook for the real coming of the kingdom of God in this land, would not be so discouraging.

"What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? saith Jehovah: I have had enough of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to trample my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with antiquity and the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me. I am weary of bearing them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

This is God's message to white Christian America to-day, I believe, on this matter of race prejudice. Let us hope that it will heed the message, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. A change in the present attitude of the church would be to the interest of both races; would lay the basis for a truer Christian civilization in this land; and would free it from the just imputation which now rests upon it, as an abettor, an encourager of race prejudice.