

GRACE CHURCH, EPISCOPAL  
RADFORD, VIRGINIA

ST. THOMAS' CHURCH, EPISCOPAL  
CHRISTIANSBURG, VIRGINIA

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RADFORD, VIRGINIA  
July 27, 1945

Dear Robert,

It is rather interesting that you wrote to one of your future brother clergy concerning his remark in Time. I shall try to explain what I meant by it.

Most ministers are preaching a personalized sort of righteousness in that they are stressing the personal behavior of the individual and personal salvation for the individual. In some protestant sects this behavior is not to play cards, smoke, dance, etc. This is not Christianity because the life Jesus was positive and not negative. His ethical principle was that of love of God as Father and man as brother. All of our actions are to be governed by temperance. This is God's world and man's use of it makes it evil. There is nothing that goes into man that can defile but what comes out of his spirit defiles him.

This stress of a narrow ethical approach has created a religious introvert who is not interested in his fellowman or the society that creates and breeds his life. Christianity is a social religion that stresses the totality of life. The Kingdom of God has no limits. Your sins are my failures and my sins are your failures. The Christian life must always stress this social concept of salvation. Christian salvation is the saving of a lost world and the individual finds his meaning in that fight against evil.

My remark about most ministers being 100 years behind the times will have to wait for your Seminary days. Briefly what I meant is that you have your Jo/nathan Edwards' school of fundametalist Hell-fire damnation preaching. This was followed by the liberal school that all man needs is leadership and education and everything will be all right. Today the best theological thinkers are returning to the classical symbols of Christianity, accepting them as theological symbols and trying to interpret them for our age so that we may live by God's truth, really understand it, and rebuilt our society. This may be too difficult for you but when you begin your Seminary training you will understand what I mena.

I enjoyed hearing from you and I hope that these remarks will help you in your thinking. We all remember you each Sunday in our churches in our prayers and we hope that you will soon be able to continue your lives in your chosen fields of world service.

Best luck and wishes to you.

Faithfully yours,

*Wilfred E. Roach*

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