

Educators the means; Religion I
the Dynamic. (Sermon I)

Scripture. Ps. 37¹⁻¹⁰. James 1¹²⁻¹⁵

Text. Ps 37³. "Trust in the Lord, and
do good."

So many, and so complicated
are the problems of a social
nature which confront the
people of this country to-day
that any man who is
at all interested in the
public well-being is often
brought face to face with the
question. "How are we going
to solve these difficulties?"

In fact so pressing are
these problems, that it is
not uncommon to hear

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the discouraged cry of a
feminist declaring that
all is wrong, that our social
condition is fast reaching
the point of no return.
Of course no man of common
sense will admit for one
moment that his gloomy
outlook is true. But one
the other would no man of
common sense say that
his eyes to the plain facts
that are presented to us.
The problem does exist, and
the question is still pressing.
"What can we do about it?"

Aside from those evils which³
must of necessity exist in
any community of human
beings, who are slowly evolving
from savagery, there are
three general causes which
may explain the peculiar
nature of our social problems.

In the first place we are
a growing developing democ-
ratic community. We are
living under a free Govt.
in which individual
right, and individual
initiative are the basic
principles. So many
of us, the type of mind

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the strength of character
which are necessary in
living under such a
Govt are natural inheri-
tances, bred into our
very nature by generations
of good blood, and by
lines of self restrained
freedom. For generations
we have been learning the
lesson of self assertion
and self sacrifice, the
lesson of self control which
must be learned by every
citizen of a democratic
community.

But on the other hand each
year thousands upon
thousands of people, attracted
to our country by higher
fortune and freedom, come
to us from their foreign
homes to settle and live here
in a democratic community.
They have been living in a
different world. They are
not accustomed to our ways
to our habits of life. They
have not the power of self
control that are ours by
inheritance. They do not
know how to govern them-
selves. It is our great

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problem to absorb these
people, to reword them
and imprint upon their
natures the seal of democ-
racy. - self-control.

Another aspect of this same
problem, perhaps more serious
and threatening still is the
so called Southern Race Problem.
You know its issues and
its threatening developments.

Here is an explanation for
many of the gloomy and
discouraging but yet en-
couraging out looks in our
American life.

But in the second phase

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we must not forget to
emphasize the fact that
we are a growing, devel-
oping community, made up
of men of ambition and
hopes.

The evils of self-indulgence
and decay, which slowly
undermine the the worst
fiber of a nation which has
risen to the height of its
former, are not present here
It is true that here and
there we find the fairs spots
of festering evils of idleness
and luxury, but the great
worse of our people are open
to the evils which come

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from too great eagerness
of ambitions and desire to little
self restraint. Being actually
alive, alert, and trying to
accomplish something, we
are not able to adjust to
a mixture of ^{our} selfish ends
with the conflicting desires
of others. Witness the struggle
for mastery in ^{the} growth of young
flant life, as compared with
the evils of decay in a forest
which has begun its decline.
We have the evils of a ~~for~~ rapidly
growing people.

But over and above all
this, we must recognize
one other great movement

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of our time, It is perhaps the
fundamental cause with
explains the other two. Within
the last hundred and 50 years
men of thought have been
changing their mode of operation
from a system of Philosophy
which has obtained for 1800
years or more, to a new
system which is sometimes
called Idealism, but more
faintly, may be called the
philosophy of common sense.
This new way of looking at things
the new way of searching upon
and God is revolutionizing modern
life. Scientific investigation,
historic study, new methods
in education, modern

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philanthropic ideas, and
over and above all Liberal
Religion are but manifestations
of this great transformation.
The spirit of this new habit
of mind is working its
way into the every day
habits and customs of our
people with such rapidity
and certainty as to seem
quite incomprehensible.
Our colleges, our public
schools, our libraries, our
periodicals, our daily papers,
all these are the agents
which are carrying into
the minds of the great mass

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of people, there ideas of which
liberal religion is about the
expression on the religious
side of our lives.

Quickly the effects of it are
being felt. The churches
are complaining of the
great unbelief, and working
changes of infidelity, and
lack of religious faith. The
heaven is at work, and no
power can stop the progress
of God's spirit working within
our souls. Just as surely as
the sun is in the heavens
must the atmosphere of this
new philosophy, become the
atmosphere of the life of all

people. Great dangers are involved in the process of this transition. Many of the evils accompanying the change are still upon us now, but still greater ones I believe are ahead of us.

Within the limits of these three larger movements may be grouped may be grouped all the more apparent evils of our present age. Spoils systems in Politics, bribery, dishonest use of money, abuse of social freedom, religious bigotry, moral laxness, are concrete evils attendant upon these larger movements. While

we may become discouraged
 at low conditions, at
 artificial lines. we
 must always remember
 that these lines are not
 permanent. They are the
 fair incident upon a great
 growth and readjustment
 of a great body of people,
 lifting in us of his capital
 insignificant stories. The ship
 that found herself." describes
 the onset, the disintegration
 of the different parts of
 the ship as it starts on
 its first voyage. Each
 part of the ship is complain-
 ing, finding fault because
 the other parts interfere.

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But soon the curves wear
off. the facts become acquainted
and adjust themselves to new
conditions; the friction grows
less and less, until finally
all settle down to work,
each doing its ^{own} part, and each
helping the other; all working
harmoniously together. The
evils, the wickedness of this
people of ours are the workings
the groanings of a humanity
which is trying to find itself.

These conditions present
to us concrete problems
to be solved. It is not
for any one of us to

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to be upon himself the
responsibility of the whole
movement. One must not
imagine that this worm-
tain of evil is to be removed
by the faith of one life or
one generation. Fortunately
for us we do not have
to meet the entire problem
at one moment. But not
a day passes that we
do not come in contact
with concrete cases which
are expressions of the greater
evil. Daily we hear of
people who are abusing
their political privileges

who betray a political duty,
who characterize themselves
and their community
by these unrighteous deeds.
All too common are the
evidences of a lack of self
control and self respect,
such as should mark
every citizen of a demo-
cratic community. How
frequently, too, we meet
a person who has mis-
judged the significance
of liberal religion. Of
course you and I know
that liberal religion is a
call to free moral living.
But many people, as they

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We see the old religious
shells shattered, we jumped
to the conclusion that
religion also ~~sh~~ been
shattered. Free from the
restraint of old ideas, they
live, unguided and un-
bridled, little realizing
that the new point of
view means ~~demands~~
a free devoted life, un-
spotted from the world.

In these concrete forms we
meet these great problems.
In our own personal life,
in the life of our friends,
in the community in which
we live, around us

on all sides these evils ¹⁵
exist in varying form and
intensity.

In these some concrete forms
we must solve the problem,
Wherever we find evidences
of self indulgence, of self-
ishness, of sin, there is the
opportunity for you and
me to take hold of this
great perplexing form of
evil, and at least we may
remove something of the
debris ^{of} which the mountain
which the faith of the ages
will finally destroy. People
may advance wonderful
theories and issues for

the regeneration of the world
 but they are all theories and
 nothing more. If a man
 has an acre of potatoes
 to lose, he may talk as
 much as he pleases about
 transforming the weeds into
 potatoes, but there is only one
 way of facing the potato, and
 that is the old fashioned way,
 hill by hill, row by row. There
 is but one way of solving the
 social problem. "Trust in
 the Lord, and do good," says
 the Psalmist.

There are two forms which
 are at one disposal, as

we attempt the solution of this problem. The one is education and the other is religion.

Already systems upon systems are at work, educating our people into the standards of lives of self control. Public schools, universities, colleges, correspondence schools, evening schools, libraries, etc., the systems of education are simply astonishing. Then over and above all these we must remember that the greatest and most powerful university, is the university of life, where men learn the truth by the real experience of life.

In the hands of almost every child is being placed the material by the use of which he may develop into a man of strength and power. The lessons of history, the facts of science, and the ideals of great souls are finding a resting place in the minds of all our children of all grades of social development. By these means of education we are conveying to all classes of our people the ideas of truth, goodness, and beauty by which our ancestors lived by which we are trying

to ward and direct ourselves
in this generation. We may
say then that education
~~is the~~ furnishes the material
to be used by individuals
in their self development.

But education in itself is
inadequate. It is not
enough to know what a good
life is; it is not enough
to know what a good
habit should be; it is not enough
to know what the laws of
music are. The products
of education may rest inactive
or be devoted to evil and
crimes most atrocious. The
educated criminals are

the most cunning, that side
 of education itself we must
 look for a power which shall
 direct the mind and souls
 of men into avenues which
 lead to righteousness, and
 peace and nobility. We
 do not sufficiently realize
 that beneath all the more
 or less occasional aims
 of life, there is the one great
 fact of ^{the} religious hope. which
 is our anchor in time of trouble
 and our inspiration in every
 thing that we do. We may
 doubt this religious truth, and
 that religious truth, we may
 assert that we do not

believe in religion, but deep down beneath there was stolten appearance of our life there is the fervent reality of the ultimate religion truth, — the impulse to grow ~~up~~ to something better. It is this truth that is the motive force in every effort of our life. — the deep conviction of a truth which is nothing less than the consciousness that we are seeking a common cause with God, one father,

You and I go to inspect a great machine, Mr. Studd is wonder as we watch the great wheel revolve, and transmit

the power over the belts and shaftings
out into the machines of the
factory. You may say, "Oh cer-
tainly, the power of the machine
is in the great fly wheel. That
is what makes it go." An friend
says, "The power is in the piston
rod. That is what makes the
wheel go. Then I say "That
the steam is the source of the
power." But the engineer, who
knows what is going on in that
machine turns to us and says, "The
power is an unseen energy.
The wheel, the rod, the steam
transmit the power, but the power
is unseen.

So it is with these two
means that we live with
which to solve our problems.

Education is the material, the mechanism, the machine which transmits the power, which manifests and reveals the power. But the power, the dynamic is the unseen spirit of God in our souls. The most perfect machine is worthless unless there is present the unseen power.

Now we have our problem and the working tools, and our work, how shall we go to work? In the first place I take it that each one of us is more or less deficient and I do not know of any worse trouble being to begin

our reforms on than ourselves. We must look over our educational material and see if we know the few essentials of a rational life.

Do we know what we can do? Do we know what we cannot do? Are we wise enough to confine ourselves to doing what we can? Do we know what honesty is?

Is self respect and self-control a part of our working knowledge?

These are the essentials, and other bits of wisdom might be added to our educational means.

Then if we are to help solve the problems, if we are to be

active agents of right living, we must keep ourselves in touch with the great source of all truth and all power. As we would make our lives the expression of the Christ-like possibilities within us, we must keep open the avenues of communication between our soul and God, our Father. That close relationship with God through prayer is the only way of getting that power which must be ours, if our life is to be the full fulfillment of the divine spirit within us.

But we live in communities, where we meet there some problems in other people. In our daily life we are bound

to come in contact with men
 who are not awake to the
 responsibilities and duties of
 a free life; we are bound to
 come in contact with conditions
 where we have the opportunity
 to take our stand for the
 higher life. ~~Even~~ it is
 our duty to come forward
 in strong defense of purity
 and nobility. Wherever we
 find the unhealthy diseased
 souls, to them we are called
 as men, as citizens, as
 upholders of a noble life, to
 do all in our power to make
 their lives more complete.

If they lack education

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we must educate them;
if they lack the religious
inspiration, we must supply
the truth. But we must
remember that our only means
of transmitting to them the
religious insight is by
being religious ourselves the
living witnesses of the
religious life. Through
all the ages the voice of
God has been speaking
to the world through fine
souls. You and I must
wake our souls free
and with purity and
sympathy carry to

hungry souls the needs of wisdom
and to the thirsty, the living
water of life. As members
of a town or city, then, we
must wake our higher strong
wobles sensible. We must
let for us opportunity for
helping the untrained to
grow into the fullness of
work and necessary for
the duties and obligations
of political and religious
freedom.

As members of this narrower
circle of the church within
the community we stand
especially for that former

for that dynamic which
 comes of the religious life.
 The church is the central
 station house of spiritual
 power. You and I are
 the transmitters of that
 power into the outer
 world. The help, the in-
 spiration, the impulse to noble
 life that you and I get
 from worshipping God here
 together, that must we
 give expression to outside.
 Charged with a great
 power in our common
 service here, we go

to our homes, to our business life, to our social life, transmitting by the volatility of our lives, the religious spirit here received. Thus in our capacity of bearers of spiritual power to the world, we stand come in contact with men out of whose life has gone the inspiration which is in ours. To them all is dark and unmeaning. In their uncertainty they are level here and there by chance desires and fancies. To them we must be

the father of light. By a ³³
simple quiet noble
life, rather than by word,
leading rather than directing
let us bring them into full
consciousness of the spirit
of God within them. As
we live trusting in God
and doing good work we
show them that real life
is to trust in God and do
good, as the wise Prophet
as told us.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S RELIGIOUS UNION
ROOM 11, NO. 25 BEACON STREET
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

East Boston. Jan 10. 1904

House 2. .. 14. 1904. (Pine & Elm)

Duxbury Sept. 18. 1904.

Methuen

Saco.

Coulton, Woodford farm, Seneca House,

Pittsfield

Severus T.

Education the means; religion the end

(9)

E. C. Davis. Dec 1903
Methuen Jan 1899 &c.