

Readers Views

JESUS IS NOT CONCERNED WITH SOCIAL INJUSTICES

Dear Sir,

The letter from P. M. Harker fills one with melancholy thoughts.

It is only too true that not only the majority, but practically all white people are Christians "more by tradition than by conviction" — if only for the reason that they were made to be Christians before they had a mental development capable of being "convicted".

Mr. Harker also says that Christianity cannot offer a solution to society "until we have convinced ourselves and our fellow Church members that we Christians, though in the world, are not of it."

If this was really his honest belief then he should have realised that a Christian, like Jesus Himself, should not be concerned with matters of government, or State and Politics and such like. Only the souls of men and their salvation can possibly have meaning for him.

Jesus told us to give to Caesar what belongs to him. He made no remarks about the social injustices which were as rife, and even more rife, in His day than they are in ours. He did not complain about lack of voting and other 'human' rights. He did not even seem to find anything wrong in slavery, for no critical word of His has been passed on to us about it.

The real Christian is not of this world. He can have no more money and clothing and housing than is the minimum necessary for him to survive during the time allotted to him in this vale of tears for, as Jesus told the rich young man, Mr. Harker and anyone who would be a real follower of Christ should "go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor". If your correspondent has not done that he should have had the honesty of that selfsame young man and have "gone away sorrowfully". He in that case has not been willing to pay the price for being a Christian. Despite his words he is also still of this world like the rest of us and he has no right to criticise those who take a Christian teaching to be unacceptable because it is "unrealistic".

Finally, even if he has given everything away so that, like the Son of man, he hath not where to lay his head (St. Matthew 7:20), he still has the very definite and clear injunction from St. Luke chapter 14, verse 26 to face up to.

In these things lie the roots of Christianity and Christian behaviour, not in **telling others** how they should behave in this world of which they claim no longer to be a part.

That kind of thing is the private domain of the worldly men, of politicians, kings and tyrants — and of the 'man in the street'.

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Die Gereformeerde Kerk van Suid-Afrika en die Sending

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die verhouding daar anders was en dat die Indonesiër nie sommer met die Bantoe van Suid-Afrika gelyk gestel kan word nie. Maar daar is egter 'n sekere ooreenkoms. Ek het in die vroeër Neder-

lands-Indië menige Hollanders in verskeie bedrywe, dikwels hoor skel op die dom en lui Inlander, wat geen sin vir verantwoordelikheid ken nie en nes 'n kind behandel moet word. Na baie jare van arbeid in die land, kom ek meer en meer tot die gevolgtrekking dat ons nie die geweldige krisis waarvoor ons dié mense te staan gebring het, genoeg in gedagte gehou het nie. Ons het skole gebou, hospitale en wat nie nog alles meer nie. Maar waarvan ons hom te min gegee het was 'n ware meegevoel met sy nood,

opregte liefde en 'n begrip van sy begeertes. Daar is geen middel in die wêreld wat die liefde kan vervang nie, hoewel daar natuurlik allerhande plaasvervangers op die mark is. In die botsing van die rasse blyk die ontstellende waarheid maar alte duidelik. Ons, die blanke, dink in sterling, ons reken alles uit in geld. Ons het presies uitgewerk hoeveel pond sterling ons bestee aan die naturelle, en ons staan verstom dat hy nie daarvoor meer dankbaar is nie. **Maar daardie dinge waarom dit werklik gaan: liefde, meegevoel, simpatie, kan nie in syfers uitgedruk word nie — dit is van 'n heel ander gehalte.**

Ek sê nie dat ons nie die skole en hospitale moet bou nie. Dit moet ons ook doen, maar ons moet meer doen, iets wat die skole en hospitale dan eers waarlik mooi sou maak, ons moet aan hulle daardie onvervangbare dinge gee, dit wat die Bybel liefde noem. En dit kan ons oor die algemeen nie aan hom bring nie. Ek is geneig om te dink dat die verskriklike toestande in lande soos Sjina, Japan, Indië en Indonesië, as ons dit ernstig in oënskou neem, dui op die skrikwekkende verskynsel van ons Westerse blanke beskawing toe ons met ander rasse en volke van 'n laer kultuurpeil in aanraking gekom het, hulle wat alles geken het, behalwe daardie een ding wat heil sou verskaf het. Ons was eintlik te materialisties, en nie genoeg dissipels van Jesus gewees nie. Nou kan ons agteraf skel op die „Inlanders“, die „kaffers“, die ondankbare „swartes“ — maar ek glo dat ons eers tot 'n ware oplossing van die probleem sal kom wanneer ons in ootmoed en met ware skuldbesef ons knieë sal buig voor ons Hemelse Vader wat al ons sonde, ook hierdie ontstellende groot sonde, sal vergewe om Jesus Christus ontwil, en dat hy ons die weg sal aanwys om 'n nuwe lewe te begin.