

# THE LAYMAN'S PLACE IN THE KINGDOM.

BY SAMUEL ZANE BATTEN, D.D., PHILADELPHIA.

The outstanding fact of our time is the rediscovery of the Kingdom of God. For nineteen hundred years men have believed in this Kingdom and have prayed for its coming. But this generation is entering into a larger and truer conception of that Kingdom and is learning to interpret all life in its light. In the long future when men look back through the ages and consider the contributions of each generation, it will appear that this generation has made as large a contribution to the increasing knowledge of the things of Christ as any age since the Son of Man walked our earth.

It is not possible or necessary here to consider all of the meaning of this great discovery. But no one can overestimate either the significance or the power of this great idea. It will mean a new outlook upon the world, a new conception of our work, a new standard of life and duty. But one notable corollary of this great idea may be noted here. This is nothing less than the coming up of the laymen out of the place of obscurity and silence into the place of leadership and service. In one sense it is the special task of our generation to complete the work of the Protestant Reformation and to take up the dropped thread in the loom of history. But beyond this it is also the work of our generation to inaugurate a new movement that shall explore new fields and open a new page of human achievement.

## I. THE CHURCH CONCEPTION OF LIFE.

The Son of Man gave to the world the great idea of the Kingdom of God and charged men to seek that Kingdom first of all. For a time the early disciples cherished

this idea and interpreted all duty in its light. But as we pass from the first century into the second, we find that a change is coming over the minds of men. The idea of the Kingdom is falling into the background and other ideas are taking its place. This process continues and by the close of the fifth century it is complete. The idea of the Kingdom of God in Christ's conception of it disappeared, and the idea of a church fills the foreground. This conception has become historic in the Roman Catholic branch of Christendom, though it appears also in the Protestant world. The rank and file of Christian people always think of the Church when they think of the Kingdom of God. This appears in a very beautiful hymn which we all love to sing:

"I love thy Kingdom, Lord,  
The house of thine abode,  
The church our blest Redeemer saved,  
With His own precious blood."

According to this conception, the church is the Kingdom and the Kingdom is the church. To be a member of the church is to be a member of the Kingdom; to be outside the church is to be outside the Kingdom, without God and without hope. To seek the Kingdom of God means to be loyal to the church and do its work.

This substitution of the church for the Kingdom, this merging of the Kingdom in the church, has wrought havoc in the minds of men and changed their whole conception of life and duty. It changed their conception of the purpose of Christ and their outlook upon the world. It narrowed their programs and misplaced the emphasis in their lives. The Kingdom conception of life disappeared and the church conception of life took its place. Under the influence of this conception Christian life and duty were construed almost wholly in terms of church membership and church duties.

According to the church conception, *service* in the church was religious and spiritual; and this implied that

service in the other relations of life was secular and common. The church was regarded as a divine institution and the great agency in the making of the Kingdom. And this implied that the other institutions of life, as the family and the state, were secular institutions with little relation to the Kingdom of God. Thus it came about that men made a distinction in spiritual value between service in the church and work in the other relations of life. To do religious and spiritual work meant to do church work. This implied that all other forms of service not directly related to the church were secondary in value if not wholly unspiritual. To do religious and Christian work was to attend church, take part in its services and help in its enterprises. The other relations and institutions were regarded as secular in meaning and secondary in value, and the spiritual Christian world would have as little to do with them as possible.

Further, a distinction was made between the clergy and the laity, and in time the two classes became wholly distinct. There grew up the belief that the clergy were a separate class of beings with a special call from Heaven and a special place allotted them in the church. By the rite of ordination, this distinction was made emphatic, and this position was confirmed. More and more the laity became distinct from the clergy; and less and less place was given to them. The clergy were called to do religious work and the laity lost all share in church service. The time came when even the reading of the Scriptures was denied them. They became spectators and hearers and not partners and equals. Thus came, what Gibbon calls, "The memorable distinction between the laity and the clergy". Along with this change another distinction is made. The priest and preacher were religious men performing a spiritual service. But the laymen were secular people. There was little religious value in any form of lay activity, and there was no lay element in any form of religious activity.

This is not all, but the work of the church has been interpreted almost wholly in terms of preaching. Men have made much of the preaching service and have believed that it had pre-eminent value. This is shown very clearly in the type of church building that has prevailed. The church building was an audience room, large, attractive, well adapted for preaching purposes; but that was all. Little provision was made for the educational work of the church; and no provision whatever was made for the social life of the people. In fact, it is only in recent time that these have been generally recognized as necessary parts of the church's work. More than that, the preaching of the gospel has been regarded as the church at work. The church was organized around the pastor and for the sake of preaching. The work of the church in large part consisted in the choice of a pastor and the attendance at preaching services. For generations men have been urged to do church work; and this has been interpreted to mean, attend the services of the church and support the preaching of the word. With this the layman's work began and with this it ended.

The church has honored the one talent of preaching and has regarded this as the supreme gift. But in so doing it has practically ignored all the other talents of men and has treated them as very secondary and subordinate. There is some reason why this over-emphasis should be found in Protestant churches. Most of the churches are wholly voluntary organizations and depend upon the freewill offerings of the people. The average church has not found it easy to raise the funds for the necessary expenses, of which the chief item was the pastor's salary. Thus preachers naturally and unconsciously have magnified their office. And so they have not equally honored the other talents of men.

The consequence is that laymen have found little scope for their talents in the church. The church has created colleges and seminaries for the training of pastors and

preachers, but it has done little to develop other types of workers. The preaching talent has been honored and trained, but the other talents of men have not been honored and used. The result is that there has been very little for laymen to do in the average church beyond attending church services and keeping the institution running. Many men have kept up a nominal connection with the church and have been satisfied to have their Christian work done by proxy. Men have come into the churches with their talents, their vigor, their manhood, ready to serve Christ and seek God's Kingdom, but in many cases they have found that there was little for them to do in the church. Some five men were wanted as trustees of the church; seven more or less were chosen as deacons; several men were needed to act as ushers and take up the collection. Beyond this there was little for the rank and file of the men. Sometimes committees and organizations have been created to find places for men and to keep them interested, but in most cases such men were simply expected to fill a place, to attend a service, to listen to a sermon; but they had no divine call to work; their talents were not honored and no task was assigned them.

It is true that the Protestant churches have denied many assumptions of the Catholic clergy. Ever since the Reformation the larger Christian truth has been seeking place and has found expression. Some of the old medieval conceptions have been cast aside and many old distinctions have been discarded. And yet in many divisions of Protestantism the old ideas of distinctions persist; men still make a distinction between clergy and laity, between religious church work and secular common work. The average member of the church thinks of himself as a secular person. He thinks of work in the church as spiritual and work in the community as secular. The natural result followed. Many men lost interest in the church and fell out of its fellowship. Not finding scope for their talents in the church they have employed them in other

lines of activity. Very often these activities were not related to the church; sometimes they worked at cross purposes with the church; in many cases they were carried on with little reference to the Christian ideal and without the inspiration of the Christian hope. All unconsciously a distinction has been made in religious value between work in the church and work in the community. All unconsciously men have regarded all other types of workers except preachers as secular and common. The results of all this have been most disastrous, both on the side of the church and the community. Many men of large ability have dropped out of the church and have used their talents elsewhere, and the main lines of interest and activity in community redemption have been carried on without relation to the Kingdom of God and the Spirit of Christ. In theory, the churches have believed in the Priesthood of Believers and the sacredness of every man's service, but in practice they have honored but one kind of talent and one type of service. The church has been regarded as the Kingdom of God; the church at work has been interpreted to mean the church preaching the gospel; doing church work has meant attending church services and listening to preaching. The church has been regarded as the special field of the spiritual life and the special guardian of religion. Work in and for the other agencies and institutions of life has been regarded as secular and secondary. Today we are still mastered by the spell of the ancient tradition and unconsciously think and speak in those terms.

## II. THE REDISCOVERY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

In the generations of the past some fundamental Christian ideas dropped out of the current of church life and were almost unknown to men. Two central Christian truths have suffered this fate: the Priesthood of all Believers and the Kingdom of God. But during the past

five hundred years there has been an effort to regain the primary truths of the gospel and restore them to their rightful place in the church. The first truth it was the province of the great Reformation to regain and restore. The second truth is the special discovery and inspiration of our time.

The Reformation was one of the great movements of all time and did much both to recover the Christianity of Christ and to liberate the soul of man. There is one aspect of this Reformation movement that has direct bearing upon the question before us here. It did much to re-establish the layman in the church and give him his task in the Kingdom. The Reformation, as history shows, was motived by two great ideas and projected on two great lines. The one was somewhat doctrinal and the other was intensely practical. These were Justification by Faith and the Priesthood of all Believers. The first truth sweeps away every obstacle between God and man and gives man an immediate access to the Most High God. The second, the Priesthood of all Believers, sweeps away many of the barriers between men and guarantees the equality of all disciples. By the one the salvation of the soul is made to depend upon man's personal relations with the living God. By the other man's life is given a divine meaning and he is sent out into the world to repeat and continue the life and work of the Son of Man.

The first truth has been quite fully interpreted and applied and has entered into the very warp and woof of Christian thought. The second truth has remained more or less in the background of thought and has never been fully interpreted or applied. According to the Scriptures, believers are a chosen generation and a royal priesthood; through Jesus Christ they are made priests and kings unto God; and they are now called to fulfill a priestly office and offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God. To Martin Luther the words, "Ye are a holy priesthood", were among the most precious and significant texts in the

Scripture. He called these and similar texts "thunderbolts of God, against which neither long continued usage nor all the world combined shall be able to prevail". Such texts were in his hands as great hammers with which he broke in pieces the false notions of his day. The Roman Catholic Church saw the significance of these texts as used by the Reformers, and at the Council of Trent it issued its anathema against them, declaring them false and destructive. "Ye are all priests unto God", said Martin Luther; "each believer is called to perform a priestly service; each believer has the priestly access to the very throne of God, with the priestly anointing and with a sacred ministry. This ecclesiastical priest who would come between you and God", said Luther, in bold and confident words, "is an impertinence and a sham, and you must not be misled by his claim. This honor have all the saints and not any special class within the church."

This truth of the Priesthood of all Believers was one of the characteristic ideas of the early church and one of the most potent ideas of the great Reformation. But for some reason or lack of reason it soon dropped out of the current of Christian life and thought, and as a consequence men have lost much of the inspiration of this mighty truth. It is true that this idea has never been wholly lost; but it is also true that it has been interpreted in a meager and partial way and has never yet produced its full fruitage. Some aspects of it have appeared in the thought of the Protestant churches: thus the peasants of Germany in 1524 drew up a resolution in which they say: "Every man redeemed by Christ's blood is a free man; we are therefore free and we will be free. Every commune has the right to choose its own pastors who shall teach the pure Word of God." Beyond this some significant applications of this truth appeared in the political world and have given impetus to the democratic movement. Modern democracy, it has been shown by such men



as Borgeaud and Jellinek, is the direct product of the Reformation and finds its sources in the great ideas of Christianity. And yet strangely enough the great doctrine of the Priesthood of all Believers dropped large-out of sight in the Protestant churches and men have largely lost the impulse of this great truth. The reason for this is that men have lost the full conception of the Kingdom of God; and so the truth of the Priesthood of Believers had no background and scope.

It is true that all through the centuries we have talked of the Kingdom of God and have prayed for its coming. But while we use the New Testament term we give it a different meaning. It is true also that the idea of the Kingdom has never been entirely lost or that we have wholly gone astray. As a matter of fact, the idea of the Kingdom was ever and forever seeking expression, and now and again it has come into the foreground. In the time of the Reformation it seemed that the truth of Christ was at last to break its fetters and come forth into the light of day; but in a real sense the rediscovery of this truth is the significant fact of our time, and the re-establishment of this truth in its central place is the supreme obligation.

It is too early in the day for anyone to set forth all the meaning and power of this great Christian conception. But some things are becoming clear. The Kingdom of God is the Alpha and Omega of the Christian revelation. It was the master thought of Jesus' life and the inspiring ideal of His teaching. It is the theme of the Christian's prayer and the goal of all his effort. This Kingdom is an all-inclusive whole and binds the universe into a unity. The universe is the one great empire of the Father, and this little earth is but an outlying province in it. So far as this world is concerned, the Kingdom of God means a divine society on earth organized according to the will of God. It implies the reign of God in men, over men and through men. It implies a human fellow-

ship where men know God as Father and live together as brothers. Its coming involves daily bread for all, reconciliation and peace among men, the removal of needless temptation and the deliverance of men from evil. In short, it finds its consummation in the building up in the earth of a Christian type of social life.

The Kingdom of God sums up the whole redemptive and beneficent purpose of God for man. It implies the winning of men unto Christ, the development of their character, their upbuilding in knowledge, the permeation of life with the Spirit of Christ, the adjustment of human relations in terms of justice and love, the building up in the earth of a Christian type of human society.

The Kingdom of God covers the whole life of man. That Kingdom is made up of real people, of living men and women. These people eat food, wear clothes, cultivate the ground, build homes, live together in communities and manage industries. There is a right way and a wrong way of doing all of these things. The men who would honor God must be taught the right way of doing all of these.

This is not all, but the Kingdom of God includes all the relations and institutions of man's life. The Kingdom, we may say, is the reign of God in man, over men, and through men. The great institutions of life, such as the family, the church and the state, are all so many realms and agencies of the Kingdom. Each of these is implied in the nature of man. Each is an agency through which man seeks the Kingdom of God. Each has its own function to fulfill in the economy of life. To serve in the Kingdom of God man must serve in and through these relations and institutions of his life.

This rediscovery of the Kingdom of God throws light upon a hundred questions. But in no place is its result more significant than in the meaning of man's life and the work of the layman. The Kingdom of God in Christ's conception was a family of brothers; a spiritual democ-

racy based upon the principles of brotherhood and equality. The Son of Man had no place in His thought and life for masters and bosses, whether political or spiritual. "Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Master and all ye are brothers. And call no man your father upon earth; for one is your Father who is in Heaven. Neither be ye called man-masters, for one is your Master, the Christ" (Matt. 23:8-10), "Among the nations, the rulers lord it over men and the great ones exercise authority, but so shall it not be among you, for whoever wishes to be great among you is your servant; and whoever among you wishes to be first, is to be your slave. As the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:25-28). And in the Kingdom conception of life every man's work was a spiritual ministry. This is made very clear in the teaching of Paul and Peter. Thus Paul teaches that the Christ has given various gifts unto men; and each man's gift is a dispensation of the spirit. Peter lays emphasis upon another truth—the Priesthood of all Believers. "Ye are a chosen generation, a spiritual priesthood, a holy nation, a special people, that ye may be unto Him praise who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9, 10). Thus every man is called to be a citizen of the Kingdom, a child of God, a brother in a family, a worker for his fellows. Every man has a divine call; every man is a priest; everyone is called to fulfill a spiritual ministry; every man's work is sacred: the same honor have all the saints.

There are several things implied in all this which are most significant. Every disciple has a divine call and a special gift; his talent is his call; his use of his talent is a spiritual service. Men are to do God's will along the line of their daily work. They are to seek His Kingdom in and through the relations of their lives. Further, religion is not something apart from life, but something in life. Religion is no special accomplishment like music

or painting; it does not belong to special days and special places, but to all days and all duties. Man has no special faculty with which he can be religious. The word "spiritual" applies not to things but to the spirit of man. To the spiritual man all things are spiritual. To the secular spirit all things are secular. One man may be secular, preaching sermons, teaching a class and officiating at the Lord's Table; and another may be wholly spiritual, cobbling shoes, sewing tents, or casting a ballot. And even more significant than all the field of religion is life itself. The church is an institution of religion; but so also is the family, the community, the state and the industrial order. Men are under the same obligation to be religious and to do God's will in these relations as in the church and the prayer meetings. Whatever one does in word or in deed is to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus and for His glory.

### III. THE LAYMAN'S WORK IN THE KINGDOM.

Growing out of all this are several most vital and practical things. In the great Christian idea of the Kingdom of God we see at once the meaning and scope of our work; and we see also the call and task of all the children of the Kingdom.

1. Men are to seek the Kingdom of God in and through the institutions of which they are a part. The making of the Kingdom of God implies the making of the institutions of man's life. The Kingdom of God, it cannot be too strongly emphasized, is very much larger than any one part of the Kingdom. Thus the full program of the Kingdom includes the state and the family no less than the church. More than that, these institutions are so many agencies and means through which men are to seek the Kingdom of God. In all times there has been a tendency to narrow the boundaries of the Kingdom to the sphere of the church and make the two coterminus. This

is an error and is contrary to the whole purpose of Scripture. It has beclouded the whole purpose of God in the world and has caused endless confusion among men. The Church, we say without hesitation, is a divine institution and is an important agency in the making of the Kingdom. But the church is only one of several institutions which are realms and agencies of the Kingdom and so are all vital and necessary. The *family* is an important agency in the work of human redemption and the making of the Kingdom. The family can do much to prepare the life for the gospel, to bring it into relations with the divine and fit it for social living. Through the mother's prayer and the mother's love the grace of God may be conveyed to the child quite as fully and effectively as through the preacher's sermon or the church's teaching. The *state* no less than the family and the church is a divine institution with a divine function to fulfill in the Kingdom of God. It can do much to prepare the life for the Kingdom and induce it to walk in the way of righteousness. It can determine in large measure the quality and color of the environment. It can make vice and dishonesty dangerous and unprofitable and so can create a strong presumption against them.

Since this is so, each institution has its place and its function. Each ministers in some way to the life of man. No one institution alone can ensure the redemption of the world. It takes all of them together to make and serve a human life. It is not fitting and it is not Christian therefore for those who would magnify the church to make light of the other institutions of the Kingdom. Since each is here in the will of God it is necessary that men learn to seek the Kingdom in and through them all. The church, the family, the state and the industrial order are all means of the Kingdom's advance. They are all agencies through which men are to co-operate in the work of human redemption. Since this is so we must say that work in and through the state and the family is quite as

Christian and necessary as work in and through the church. We must therefore say that the people who in the family and through the state are seeking the Kingdom of God are doing Christian and spiritual work and must be honored as servants of the Kingdom.

2. The varied talents of men are to be enlisted in the work of the Kingdom of God. It was a sad day for the world when the church came to regard itself as the whole Kingdom of God, and when work for the Kingdom was narrowed down to the priest and preacher. We mean to say that the evangelist, the preacher and teacher are not the only workers that God has given to the world. We mean to say that the other lines of service are no less essential in the Kingdom of God.

According to the Apostle Paul the Lord has given all kinds of gifts to men that the whole work of the Kingdom may be done and the whole life of man may be served. He has given to His people apostles, prophets, evangelists, and preachers, but He has given also teachers, helpers, gifts of healing, governments, divers kinds of tongues. (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11). He has given these varied talents and workers for the work of the Kingdom, the perfecting of the saints unto the work of service, unto the building up of the body of Christ and the fulfillment of His redemptive purpose. These talents are all gifts of the Spirit and each has its meaning and its place. The work of the evangelist is necessary; but perhaps quite as necessary is the work of the teacher and magistrate. Even if the church were equivalent to the whole Kingdom of God there would still be need of other workers than evangelists and preachers. But since the Kingdom is co-terminus with life and is to be sought in and through all the relations and institutions of life, workers are needed for all the relations and agencies of the Kingdom. Preachers alone can never make the whole Kingdom of God or serve the whole need of man. God uses many workers in extending His Kingdom, and one is quite as

essential as another. The man and the woman uniting their lives to make a Christian home; the mother teaching her child to pray and say, "Our Father who art in Heaven"; the teacher in the public school seeking to unfold mind and train character; the physician working for sanitary home and healthy bodies; the citizen working for good laws and removing stumbling blocks; the social worker studying the causes of disease and poverty and working for industrial brotherhood; the farmer planting his field and the baker making bread, all have their place in the work of the Kingdom. It is not right for us, therefore, to pit one class of workers against another, and to say that one is more necessary than another. At any rate, the apostle censures those who magnify one talent and make light of all other men's work. (1 Cor. 12:15-25.)

3. Thus far under the influence of the misconceptions of the past, only a small fraction of the dynamic of Christianity has really become available in the work of human redemption. The program of the average church ignores three-fourths of life and provides no place for nine-tenths of human talents. The result is that a whole reservoir of Christian dynamic has found no channel of expression and has been wholly untapped. The further fact is that only a fraction of the Christian dynamic has become effective in the work of human redemption. Thus far the church has not emphasized the sacredness of all life; it has not honored the different gifts of men and has not sought to train them for effective service in the Kingdom; it has not furnished the agency and the opportunity through which the whole impulse of Christianity might be effective. In every church there are vast resources of unusual power, good impulses that are never geared up to any real tasks. Talents that are undeveloped for the reason that they have never been given a task. In every church there are men with great possibilities of power standing all the day idle, because no one has shown them any work. One is familiar, of course, with the stock argu-

ment that is used: let such men honor the church and make it more effective. By all means, let men honor the church and put their lives into the work. But we must recognize the fact none the less in much of this current talk there is a lot of pious twaddle that may deceive the talker but does not convince people.

In the first place, the program of the average church—where it has any program at all—has no call or use for nine-tenths of the gifts and talents of its members. In the second place, the average church does not offer a task for one per cent of its total resources of talents. That the church may live and prosper it must have some workers as pastors, deacons, trustees, ushers, teachers. But in few churches are there offices enough to go around. And many of these offices are at best purely nominal and make small demands upon men. At any rate, they are not large enough to claim the whole services of men in the Kingdom. No wonder that many men lose interest in the church and feel that it has no task worth while.

We must recognize the meaning of all the institutions of man's life and must use all of the talents of men. It is time that we have done with the notion that the church is the whole Kingdom of God, that the preacher is the whole church at work, and that preaching is the only means of blessing men and making the Kingdom. It is time that we honor the example of the Master, accept the whole commission that He has given and enlist all workers in His service. It is time that we frankly accept the whole Christian program and confess that the grace of God can flow out to men through many channels. It is time also that we fully honor the service of every man and give him a task for his talent. What might not Christianity do for men and for society if men would only understand its great purpose and furnish opportunity for it to achieve results?

In all this we are not levelling down but levelling up. We do not mean to make less of the church than the de-



vout ecclesiastic; but we do mean to make more of the family and the state. We do mean to say that the church is not the whole Kingdom of God, and we mean to say that the family and the state are equally divine institutions with a divine function to fulfill. We do mean to say that men miss the larger meaning of Christ and misread His purpose when they construe the whole meaning of life and the whole program of service in terms of church life and church services. We do not mean to make less of the work of preacher and evangelist; but we do mean to make more of the work of laymen and citizens. We refuse to believe that the tongue is the only member which the Spirit can use in the work of the Kingdom, and affirm that the work of the eye and hand are no less important. We affirm that one kind of service for the Kingdom is just as sacred and as necessary as another. We maintain that it is just as necessary to provide a good atmosphere for the child as to teach it the Scripture; that it is just as necessary to take up stumbling blocks out of the way of the people and to make straight paths for men's feet as to preach a sermon or lead a prayer meeting.

We say further, that since every man is called to serve God and seek His Kingdom along the line of his daily life and through the institutions of which he is a part, every man has a divine calling and may perform a spiritual ministry. It is a part of the questionable heritage from the past, that one line of service should be monopolized by the name Christian and all others should be regarded as secondary. As a matter of fact, the work of the Christian ministry cannot be limited to the clergyman, nor can the operation of the Spirit be confined to the pulpit. We mean that the work of all men in all relations of life may be equally a ministry and equally spiritual. If men had believed in the Kingdom of God and Priesthood of all Believers, they would have seen and known this from the beginning.

## IV. THE ENLISTMENT OF LAYMEN.

The laymen are coming to the throne for such a time as this. It is confessed by all that something is wrong with our modern Christianity. The churches are not fifty per cent efficient. The work of the Kingdom is going forward very slowly. Great areas of life are almost wholly untouched by the Christian spirit and unredeemed by Christ's power. The results of our activities are not at all commensurate with the power of the gospel. Some truth is forgotten or ignored, and the trouble is just here: the church has forgotten some essential Christian truth. It has fallen away from the idea of the Kingdom of God and the Priesthood of all Believers. It has failed to emphasize the layman's place in the Kingdom. It has no efficient and definite plan for the development of lay work and leadership. This shows very clearly the work before us. Four illustrations may be given showing the possibilities of service before laymen.

First, laymen must be enlisted in the whole work of the church. We have gone about as far as we can go under the present system of church life. If there is to be any large advance in the Kingdom of God it must come through the development and enlistment of lay workers. Beyond question, we need more men for the pastorate; abler men, more eloquent preachers and more efficient pastors. But the advance desired is not to be ensured through the increase in the number and quality of pastors. As a matter of fact the pastor is overworked today and cannot carry any additional burden without breaking. He must be prophet, evangelist, pastor, manager, general utility man and wise leader. He is overloaded now and cannot assume many new responsibilities. If there is to be any great advance it must come through the general enlistment of men in the work of the church. We must recover the great truth of the Priesthood of all Believers and must give it a central place in our church life and thought. We must get over the notion that when

a church calls a pastor it has hired some one to love men for the whole church. We must get rid of the mediæval heresy that attending church services is the church at work. We must have a division of labor and must give each his task. We must show men the meaning of their talents and must bring talent and task together. In so far as we do this will we win an advance and achieve great victories. In so far as we follow present methods and depend wholly upon the minister, will we fail in the future.

Second, the church must raise up a generation of lay preachers. All through the centuries in every great religious movement, in each time of social advance, the lay preacher has played a large part. In the early church all disciples were witnesses and heralds of the Good News. In the Jerusalem church the most effective preachers were deacons, as in the case of Stephen and Philip. And those were times when the work went forward with power. The Reformation in Europe was in a real sense a laymen's movement. A large number of men followed Peter Waldo, and "The Poor Men of Lyons" who carried the gospel everywhere were laymen. John Wickliffe sent out his peasant preachers into all parts of England to preach the gospel of the Kingdom. The Anabaptist movement in Germany was in large part a lay movement and its preachers went everywhere with "The gospel of the common man". Wesley raised up a generation of lay preachers and much of his success is due to this fact. To this day nine-tenths of the preachers in the Wesleyan churches of England are lay preachers.

The churches must raise up and train a generation of lay preachers. In all parts of our land we are faced by the sad fact that the people are unreached by the gospel. There are millions of people in the cities who are unreached by present agencies. They do not know enough of Jesus Christ to make any intelligent judgment with respect to Him. So far as I can see, there is just one way of reaching these people. We must have lay preach-

ers who will go to the streets and lanes with the gospel message. They must interpret the gospel of the Kingdom in terms of life and love. They must speak in a language the people can understand, and thereby give them a knowledge of God.

In the country we are faced with the equally ominous fact that the people are unreached. Ten thousand country churches have died within the past few years; ten thousand more are in a dying condition. Other thousands are declining in numbers and power. So far as I can see, there is just one thing which can meet this crisis. We must train and enlist lay preachers who will minister to the needs of the people. The city and town churches must send out men who will carry the gospel message to their neighborhood.

Third, in the missionary enterprise, we need to regain the great idea of the Kingdom and send out workers to meet the whole need of man. By missions, we mean the taking the whole blessing of the Kingdom to the backward peoples of earth. The missionary goes out to reveal the love and will of God to the nations. He goes out to help those who need help. He goes out to interpret the love of God in terms of life and service. He goes out to show the sacredness of all life and to build up a new and Christian social order. Thus far we have assumed that the missionary should be a preacher first and last. It is true that we have sent medical missionaries and missionary teachers, and these have been honored by the churches and blessed in their work. But the main emphasis has fallen upon preaching, and all other things have been secondary. We must accept the Kingdom idea of missions and must send out workers who will represent the whole blessing of the Kingdom. In a word, we must send out missionary preachers and teachers, missionary farmers and mechanics, missionary housewives and merchants. We must touch life on all sides and transform all human relations. We must bring the whole blessing of the Kingdom to meet the whole need of man.

Fourth, men must be taught that their daily work is their divine calling, and they must know how to seek the Kingdom of God through their industrial activity. Thus far we have believed that the preacher and the missionary have had a divine call to their life work; but we have not supposed that the farmer and merchant had an equal call and mission. So men have been free to choose a commercial life without any respect to its Kingdom value. They have felt free to spend their life and talents in money-getting, provided, of course, they kept within the law. The churches have taught that man is a steward in the use of his money and they have expected him to be generous with his contributions. But the Christian principle of stewardship goes far deeper than this. This truth teaches that man's life is a stewardship and his talents contain his divine call. He is to use his life and talents in such a way as to serve mankind and advance the Kingdom of God. The merchant and the industrial leader are to use their talents not for self-gain but for Kingdom service. He is to conduct his business by the law of Christ, and through it is to seek the Kingdom of God. He is to organize industrial life in such a way as to promote human brotherhood and ensure the welfare of society. He is not free to make money as a pirate that he may give it away as a Christian.

This means that he is to enter upon a business life with the same motive as the preacher and missionary. He is no more free to plan his business for money profits than the missionary or the teacher. He is rather to manage his business in such a way as to serve man, and for the same ends that moved Christ up Calvary. The industrial order represents an important factor in man's life. And it is quite as necessary that this be organized on a Christian basis as the prayer meeting and the missionary society. It is a necessary agent in the fulfillment of the Father's purpose, and it is quite as essential that men seek the Kingdom of God through the industrial order as through the church and the family.

This suggests one of the most urgent tasks that lie before the church today. The church as the training school of the Kingdom must train people for life and service in and through all the relations of life and the institutions of society. The church must make men know the meaning of the great institutions of life; it must interpret the relation of each to the purpose of God; it must show men what are the ends they are to seek through each; it must show men how to work through all in behalf of human redemption. It must inspire men to go out and seek the Kingdom of God in the calling of their citizenship. The church that fails here—and the most significant failure has been at this point—fails in a primary duty. Several definite and practical suggestions may be made as showing the line of advance.

The denominational colleges must train young men and young women for direct service in the Kingdom of God. If the denominational college has any reason for existing, that justification is found just here. The church college has no call to duplicate the work of the state university on a small scale. Its reason for existence is found in the fact that it possesses a marked religious life and gives a special training that is not given elsewhere.

We must have lessons for church and Bible school that are designed to interpret Christian truth in terms of life and lead to definite and practical service. This is especially true in the case of young people and adult classes. We must have special lessons which shall interpret the Kingdom value of all the institutions of life and prepare the people to go out and give an efficient service to the world.

Some years ago an Eastern pastor told me this incident: A member of his church, a man employing some five thousand men, said: "Pastor, I want to get my business on a Christian basis. I cannot increase the wages of the men with competition as it is; and, after all, that will not solve the problem. I try to treat the men justly; but there must be something beyond this. Tell

me what to do and I will do it." And the pastor confessed to me, "Batten, I did not know what in the world to tell him." We must teach men what to do in order to get their family life, their community, their business, their politics, their industry, on a Christian basis. In a word, men must be taught to serve God and seek His Kingdom along the line of their daily work and in and through the institutions of which they are a part.

The success of a church is to be measured by the way it trains and uses workers. Some of the largest churches in the country may not be making the largest contributions to the Kingdom of God. The fact that a church has an eloquent preacher and large congregations, tells little or nothing about its real success. The fact that a church has large additions to its membership may mean something to the Kingdom of God, but it may not mean very much. How far is the Church training its people for membership and service in the Kingdom of God? How far is it giving them an adequate ethical equipment and sending them out to service in all the relations and institutions of life—in the church and in the family, in the community and in the industrial order? How far is the church interpreting to men the sacredness of all life, showing them the meaning of their talents in the work of the Kingdom and training them for effective and fruitful service in all the relations of life.

All around us are men of ability and devotion waiting for some one to show them a task worth while. They are capable of enthusiasm and heroism and are willing to serve the Kingdom and its uses. But the vision of the Kingdom has been veiled from their eyes; no appeal has been made to their manhood; no task has been set for their talents. For the sake of these men, therefore, for the sake of their larger development, for the sake of dying men, for the sake of the Kingdom of God, we must honor the work of the laymen and must enlist them in the great enterprise of the Kingdom.