

## *Ministry Methods*

**O**nce the prophet, the apostle, the reformer, saw a vision or heard a voice, or in later times had an encounter with God through the holy Scriptures and went out firm and sure to declare the Word of the Lord. Now we watch the world to get our next cue and when we have been tipped off as to what our latest "*burden of the Word of the LORD*" (Zechariah 12:1, KJV) shall be, we rush out and breathlessly declare the expected message as if we had been with Moses on Mount Sinai. It takes a war, an election, race tensions or an outbreak of juvenile crime to afford subject matter for our modern prophets. . . . The world always moves first and the church comes meekly after, trying pitifully to look and sound like her model and at the same time maintain a weak religious testimony by inserting a dutiful commercial now and then to the effect that everybody ought to accept Jesus and be born again.

**S**ecularized fundamentalism is a horrible thing, a very horrible thing, much worse in my opinion than honest modernism or outright atheism. It is all a kind of heart heterodoxy existing along with creedal orthodoxy. Its true master may be discovered by noting whom it admires and imitates. The test is, Whom do these Christians want to be like? Who excites them and makes their eyes shine with pleasure? Whom do they go forth to see? Whose techniques do they borrow? Never the meek soul, never the godly saint, never the self-effacing, cross-carrying follower of Jesus. Always the big wheel, the celebrity, the star, the VIP--provided of course that these persons have given a "testimony" in favor of Christ somewhere in the midst of the fleshly, vain world of artificial lights and synthetic sounds which they inhabit.

**T**he sad thing about all this is its effect upon a new generation of Christians. Whole companies of young people are growing up who have known nothing else but the degenerate brand of Christianity now passing for the religion of Christ. They are the innocent victims of a condition which they did not help to create. Not they but a spiritually emasculated leadership must answer for their plight.

**W**hat is the remedy? It is simple. A radical return to New Testament Christianity both in message and in method. A bold repudiation of the world and a taking up of the cross. Such a return on any wide scale will mean a reformation of vast proportion. Some that are now high will be brought low and many of the humble will be exalted. It will mean a moral revolution. How many are willing to pay the price?

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