

RELIGION OR CHRIST?

“I need something more than religion now!” These were the arresting words of a sergeant in the Canadian Air Force to whom we had given a “lift” on our journey home from East Anglia towards the close of the Second World War. We had spent a few happy days with Christians in a Cambridgeshire town, meeting together for the reading of God’s precious Word – a Word which is not subject to change, but which “abideth ever.”

As our young friend got into the car he at once said; “Have you heard the news?” We had to confess that our knowledge of “the news” was some days old! He then related to us, in almost breathless terms, details of how the Americans had dropped the first atomic bomb on Japan, giving to us a most vivid account of the scene of carnage and death which followed.

Looking at us with an expression full of concern he continued. “I am a Roman Catholic, and I believe that to be the best religion in the world, but I need something more than religion now!” “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth” (Luke 21 v. 26), is the language of God’s unalterable, faithful word. This scripture refers to calamities of a future day, but looking back on the terrible incident which had disturbed our Air Force friend, we see how man has unleashed powers for destruction which are rapidly getting beyond his control, the fear and dread of which nothing seems to stem.

We were ourselves deeply concerned to hear such news, but even so could say to our friend that we were thankful indeed to hear him say “I need something more than religion now.” Astonished at such a reply he asked “What is there that we can depend upon when such things happen?” It was our joy to tell him that, whilst God’s Word said very little indeed about religion, the same Word was full of references to a blessed Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Creator of all things, the “Upholder of all things by the word of His power” (Hebrew 1 v. 3).

No one could sensibly seek to belittle the mighty power for destruction which men had now discovered; but in this blessed Person there resides an infinitely greater power for salvation. “He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him” (Hebrews 7 v. 25).

He came down to this earth in lowly grace, going Himself into death in order “that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil” (Hebrews 2 v. 14). Rising from the dead, having broken its power, and brought deliverance to those who were held in bondage by its fear, He again said “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth” (Matthew 28 v. 18).

But more than this, infinitely more, He has brought to men the knowledge of God’s eternal love – a love which longs that all who read this simple story “should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3 v.16). He is presented now as a Saviour, and as accepting Him as such, and confessing Him as Lord, we are safe for time and for eternity.

Listen to the words of a man who had proved the reality of Christ as Saviour and Lord; “I am persuaded, that neither death...nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8 vv. 38-39). Will you not seek refuge in this glorious Saviour today? “Safety is of the LORD” (Proverbs 21 v. 31).

F.A.H., *contributed by D.L.* ◻