

Week 9 Documents – Civil War and Gilded Age Religion

Lincoln's 2nd Inaugural Address:

One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union even by war, while the Government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it. Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with or even before the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces, but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said "the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

From Booth Tuckers Description of the Salvation Army

As evangelists they could crowd the largest buildings with the vast crowds who flocked to their meetings. Their converts were numbered by thousands. Yet they could not fail to notice and mourn over the fact that those who came were mostly church-goers and professors of religion. The godless multitudes drifted past their doors. To reach them, other methods must be pursued. Their habits must be studied and they must be followed to their haunts and hiding places.

When, however, this had been done, it became daily more and more evident that the evils to be combated were of a temporal as well as of a spiritual character. Churchlessness was with these classes the natural outcome of homelessness, worklessness, and worthlessness. To combat the evil, its causes must be radically dealt with. The task was truly a gigantic one. But General

Booth was not the man to shrink from it. Cautiously and experimentally at first, and finally with the confidence that was the natural outcome of repeated success, he grappled with the problem.

In traversing and transforming these melancholy wastes of woe, root principles were discovered and laid down for the guidance of the legion of well-trained workers who had been rapidly enrolled.

The poor were to be treated with love, and not with suspicion or contempt.

They were to be classified, not as the worthy and unworthy, but as those who were willing to work out their own regeneration, and the unwilling.

They were to be encouraged in every possible way to become their own deliverers.

Each institution was to aim at self-support by the labor or payments of its inmates.

Social reform to be complete must include the soul as well as the body. In other words the man himself must be changed and not merely his circumstances.

To save a man for this world should be but a stepping-stone toward saving him for the next. . . .

Washington Gladden Hymn

O Master, let me walk with Thee
In lowly paths of service free;
Tell me Thy secret, help me bear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.

Help me the slow of heart to move
By some clear, winning word of love;
Teach me the wayward feet to stay,
And guide them in the Godward way.

Teach me Thy patience; still with Thee
In closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
In trust that triumphs over wrong.

In hope that sends a shining ray
Far down the future's broad'ning way,
In peace that only Thou canst give,
With Thee, O Master, let me live.