

The Influence of the Bible

The roots from which have sprung the finest of our present concepts of manhood, of human relationships and of the social fabric are to be looked for in the Bible; fixed there centuries ago, they have been sending forth their growths until they have penetrated practically the whole earth. No storms of bigotry have ever been able to stop their spread, no attacks of hypocrisy, cruelty, sectarianism have been able to blight their vigor.

The Bible's ideal man is the man of the Beatitudes--hungering and thirsting after righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, meek in spirit, a peace-maker, willing even to be persecuted and reviled for righteousness' sake. This is the "whole" or perfect man in the Bible sense, and to produce him is its continuous concern. By personal histories, by parables, by contrasts of good and evil conduct, by maxims of the greatest beauty of form and of the most penetrating moral quality, it warns against those things which would poison the character and deform the conduct, it seeks to establish. Pride, greed, hypocrisy, cruelty, irreverence, cowardliness are moral diseases on which the Bible wars as a great physician wars on physical ailments which, uncorrected, would destroy the body's tissue. Wherever

men have come under the influence of the Bible they have yielded to this ideal of manhood. Imperfectly as it is realized, its power over human aspiration and actions spreads unceasingly.

The Bible seeks not only to perfect the man, but to perfect his relationships with his fellows. It is clear in its confidence that this is possible of realization. It points the way. It is a way free from dogma, schisms, sectarianism. It is wholly concerned with the attitude of mind and heart of one man towards another, and with the genuineness and the unselfishness of his efforts to translate this attitude. It gives rules for human relationships which have never been replaced or excelled, and which are universally accepted wherever the Bible has penetrated as the final solution of difficulties between men.

These rules include:--

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|----------------------------|---|
| The rule of Tolerance | - "Judge not lest ye be judged." |
| The rule of Direct Dealing | - "Let your communication be Yea, Yea and Nay, Nay." |
| The rule of Choice | - "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." |
| The rule of Coöperation | - "Whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." |
| The rule of Charity | - "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." |

These are the Bible's specific commands for human dealings. There is no qualifying or evasion of them. It declares them to be the law and declares the law inviolable--"Until heaven and earth pass one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law until all be fulfilled."

Nothing that human philosophy or science has ever devised appeals to experience, judgment or heart as so sound and so invincible. Put these laws into practice and you have the perfect human relationship. Let this man of the Bible, following in his relationships these rules of thought and conduct, prevail in the world and there will result, naturally and inevitably, that Brotherhood of Man which society has come to admit to be essential if it is to be perfected.

No social fabric can ever meet the needs of man which is not saturated with the spirit of Brotherhood. It is not enough that society provide bread for men, even bread with honey--"Man does not live by bread alone" is the reiterated warning of the Bible to those who govern and those who seek to soften or cure the world's distresses. There is a spiritual man, and more fundamental to his peace and happiness than bread and shelter are spiritual foods. All experience of human institutions demonstrates this.

All social and political undertakings have been found

to depend finally for their effectiveness upon the degree of their concern for the human mass, their success in sharing with all the fruits of the toil of all and in arousing in all mutual sympathy, understanding and good-will. Take out or ignore this spirit of brotherhood, and you leave mere dead machinery. The more elaborate this machinery is, the more inefficient and destructive it is when it is put into operation. Human experience is full of proofs, too, that any system, however crude and defective, animated by the law of brotherhood, will produce fruits of justice and peace.

No higher concept of society has ever been formed than that which would result from a realization of these ideals of character, conduct and relationships, for the concept grows clearer and stronger from century to century. It penetrates constantly deeper into all forms of human endeavor. It is this which persuades men to humanize the practices of industry, to seek to re-make rather than to punish the wrong doer, to substitute the idea of service for that of selfish advantage in their activities, to seek to live in peace and justice with their fellows, whatever sacrifice of worldly advantage it may mean.

No candid student of human affairs can follow man from century to century without the conviction that it has

5

been under the influence of the Bible's ideals of what a man should be, what his relations with others should be, and what should be the driving power of the institution he creates that the world has become steadily a better place in which to live. Nor can one find in human thinking, ^{doing} daring and imagining ideals, deeds, dreams which can take their place. They are the final solution. The vision of the new world for which men struggle and die will only be realized as they realize the Bible's golden law of life.

Copy 2, Religion

Impressional Letter
Scrup Book

Letter from Robert
Collins re L's Religion
Johnnie Hill
L Dr. Ray

Ranher say p: 134

I never knew a man who
I would have been more
willing to send to Heaven
on his own merit, nor
one who would be less
willing to go there on such
a recommendation.

Leah

you can't tell what's going on in a
man's heart.

Religious news -

See ~~the~~ Cong. Library
Scrap book for
many scraps on
subject.

Lincoln as churchgoer

Change of Dist:

See 185. Vol. 1

I sincerely hope father may recover his
health but at all events, tell him
to remember to call upon etc -

consider references to Bible
up to this period.

page 243 - Meditation.

1. 306 - Hooker,

1. 316 - Rosecrance.

See Meditation p 243. All the religion
of which I felt the need at war
that the Divine Commandment predominated
that in some way he held the balance of
power & would not fail to act & that
the best good would result. Feeling
thus he would with confidence God
might have an end quite different from
his (his) but that was not his business.
He was to do the right as he saw
& God would use his effort to obtain
the best possible end. The consequences
might be wrong. He might be wrong
but God would use them with
achieving a third invisible end. Confident
of this he needed nothing else - no
dogma - no creed, no ceremony - only
faith in the all-compelling right.
The details were huddled things - the
promise of the law - ~~nothing~~ He
needed none of them. He had his
part in this undefined yet perfectly
invisible "God" which might mean
good - truth - a dozen things

Religion of L.

L. & A. V.1. p. 92,

"In the early days of our race,"

^{Quincy}
"As to his religious nature, it seems to me
to have certainly been of the amplest,
deepest-rooted, loftiest-kind"
Walt Whitman in *November Bougla*
p. 99.

Religion

Letters & Speeches. p. 77, Vol.

"he whose wisdom surpasses that of
all philosophers"

id. p. 78.

the sagacious ones will believe & tremble

id. p. 80. His religious ideas an
element in his defeat for the
nomination of Congress in 1843.

Harvard Review of two years
July, 1895. P. 84 ago.

"The Religious Character of A. L."
By D. B. B. Ryer.

Brooklyn with articles in
English Character of A. L. (recent
numbers)

Looks for this summer & fall
articles in Lincen

L. 2 Review. "He who is not for us is against us. He who gathers
not with us scatters" - In company of '57

p. 57 3. Letter to Mr. Lumsy. Some things I know by heart

He whose will not nor shall we be done. after
Gathering -

also making an - compact with his conscience

LINCOLN Memo:

In story of Lincoln's Religion elaborate idea of his child-like confidence in God.

Dawson in "Carry On" writes to his family:

"I've become a little child again in God's hands, with full confidence in His love and wisdom, and a growing trust that whatever he decides for me will be best and kindest."

Religion of Lincoln ✓
L. & S. V. I. p. 48 ✓ to 49
"I always was superstitious" etc

Digital Image, 2011. The Ida M. Tabor Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

The Bible. 2 Lincolns

1.5-79. of C. 25. V 2 - the Great Book of God,
makers. felt so sorry for em - he told me about a
man called - from good man he said
she came to see him & wrote him - kept
prayer for him - & kept his name

Harney? get back - it - -

no truth of that - Riley. how good they are,
they don't believe in (war) slavery & they don't believe
in what a fix they're in - in doing the best & correct
for em - But missed out.
I'm pray for me just
the same - ~~they will~~
helped me a lot & will

but this man is going to and
saying so little something
very short. like out of
the way, since of course
rather help slavery which
would do any paper &
lasting than to and
it by man -

in always said always & especially that
realization appeared to be God's will to do - & 2
with Riley. But I can't say I know God's will -
later it was in the 2nd year at the start - It didn't
seem possible to me that it would be a war
seemed as if God would make men see reason -

2
 fix it up peacefully. There are ways - But the
 let-har come - that me - I never had any
 doubt - that ~~you~~ ^{not} ~~strip~~ ^{strip} ~~would come out~~
~~right-some time~~, I ~~have~~ Mullin Girl
 thought - me up - now you to win something
 I always believed that Billy - do work
 the common thing is my copy of see
 to believe that - I enough believe the
 same meat & old much I is after all
 they much down little in on their side
 I ever all along - I get all kinds of re-
 puts of since the start - during that -
 they press the problem thru it - I say
 estimate (234)

[illegible]

as you know it's always seemed to me
 that God was making things this way - h-
 for more men a chance than ever
 had before. In always looked on
 the man & the constitution as a
 step under what God would do
 but never would make strong square up man-
 with a free girl - I never should have
 been allowed under this sort - but I
 was true. It's always seemed to me
 that God would put it out of it - that
 would be the will of God - that in a
 world it be behind the or should
 live & strong all a 2 that hard with a
 do many things strong - you know that fully
h135

Christian & slavery

He lived most beloved in his - beloved
God made him a intelligent man to be
free & happy. Hadn't any use for a
lazy man or a man

He never could read anything
else with the Bible & when many old
slaves kept in church, talked of slavery
it was too much for him. He used to
say it was surprising how mean
a Christian could be for the public good.
He used to skin him in the late age -
& never knew anything more

Mu Li Religion.

What is the stead? sense of purpose in mind -
God is him

There ain't any question about it; He ain't
God nor ~~all~~ something = something.
good - & he meant men should find it
out & fall in with it - & do their
part - & men believed that - he was doing
fine on what God was up to - & that
he could get in line & help him along
looked on that as his mission
now later slavery - He always felt God
couldn't be in favor of it - meant it
would go -

He always kept in touch with God -
lots of men later their religion
second hand things the preacher -
& it always seemed to me the preacher
was too much given to prayer, that
my - instead of trying to put men plumb up against
God & turn it out with him -

27
 took 2 children but - you know how it was.
 men didn't always keep ^{the} ~~their~~ ^{children} ~~any~~
 more they do now & you could almost
 count on buying a cat in the street. That always
 needed him but - I don't think anything was
 so hard on him & when he felt like going out
 from any vanity - of vanity all it was. It
 was misery of his own - and if he wanted to
 work to the people who were his friends & his
 was lots of fun. He could not help but about
 from his own misery & upsetting his peace -
 all this made him difficult - every day - on
 never had much to say him up - that -
 he never did until he got tired of the
 slavery question - seemed as if ~~somebody~~
 when he got - his mind
 in that - he began to see he might be of
 some real use - it was many years
 how he felt about slavery - it was many
 he never had any doubt about that -
 when he began to see these men &
 chance for him to fight it a fight &
 see it would count - for with the whole
 country going up against little day almost
 why he just put his whole heart &
 mind into that fight. Didn't think
 about anything else day a night - &
 when he saw his all the time to

Enclosed find it - See Edmunds

RELIGION.

In Vol. I page 142 of Wells Diary is the story of the special cabinet meeting at which Lincoln said that he had promised God in case of winning of a battle to issue the emancipation proclamation.

COPY

Feb. 9, 1899

My dear Bishop Vincent:

Of course I will help you all I can, and I shall be very proud to do so. I have selected hastily, for I knew you must have this material at once, a few expressions of Mr. Lincoln which seem to me to show his religious feelings most perfectly.

In the first place, it is worth while noting, I think that Lincoln was, in his boyhood, thoroughly grounded in the Bible. It is one of the very few books which he knew almost by heart. I have made many notes on the phrases and sentences in his public speeches and letters which are framed on a biblical model. He constantly is giving his sentences the turn of some familiar expression of the Scriptures. It shows how thoroughly imbued he must have become with them in his youth. His parents were thoroughly religious. After he left home/ at about 21 years of age, he had no religious associations/ so far as I can make out, for a number of years. In this time, he fell in with a company of men who were pronounced, even scoffing, skeptics. They were men of some education, who had been influenced by Paine's "Age of Reason" Volney's "Ruins" and translations from Voltaire. Hr. Herndon claims that Lincoln became an atheist in this period. I think that there is no proof of this. But there is no doubt that he lost his faith in the Christian dogma. Early in the 40's, after his marriage, he became a church-goer. There is nothing, however, in his letters or speeches until 1851 that shows how he felt on religious matters. In that year he wrote a letter to his step-

brother concerning his father, a quotation from which I enclose (No. 1). During the period of the anti-slavery agitation in Illinois, from 1850 up to 1860, there is nothing in his letters and speeches to show his feeling on the subject, although there are evidences of his reverence for the Christian church? It was after his election, when he began to feel his fearful responsibility, that we have the first expression of his dependence upon a Divine Being. I enclose a paragraph (No. 2) cut from an article which I published in McClure's Magazine for December, which shows that he was seeking help in his difficulty by prayer. The speech that he made before leaving Springfield for Washington in February 1861 is worth attention. It is used in the December article (No. 3). The addresses to Congress and all his state papers for the first year after his inauguration contain evidences of his belief that the nation was under the guidance of God. It is not, however, until the Spring of 1862, after the death of his boy Willie, that there is any evidence that he was making a personal test of religion. I am enclosing the advance sheets of an article in McClure's Magazine for March in which I touch slightly upon this point. All through 1862 and the first part of 1863, when the Union cause was in such sore straits, there are many evidences of Lincoln's reliance upon God or upon a Divine Power, and of his seeking direction in prayer. I enclose (No. 4) a bit of testimony from ex-Senator J. F. Wilson. It shows how Lincoln felt in the very darkest part of McClellan's Peninsula campaign. No. 5 is a copy of a memo-

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Notice that this was written just after the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation was issued and at a time when every body was disheartened and discouraged. No. 6 is an interview given me by the Rev. Byron Sunderland of Washington. No doubt you know him. The interview occurred two or three days before the end of 1862, when people were fearing that Mr. Lincoln would not keep his promise and issue the Emancipation Proclamation. No. 7 is another proof that in every critical event the President prayed. There is a more generally known case, very similar to this, which occurred at the time that he announced to his Cabinet that he should issue an Emancipation Proclamation. He then said, "I promised my Maker to do this if we should have a victory, and I mean to keep my promise."

I do not know that these will be of any particular value to you. They are, however, as I said, the expressions which to my mind best illustrate Mr. Lincoln's religious feeling. No doubt you have heard stories of his conversion. Several have recently gone the rounds of the newspapers. I think that no reliance can be placed upon them. I have taken great care to investigate each that has come to my attention, and I would not be willing to give them a place in any of my work. So far as I know there is no expression in Mr. Lincoln's letters or speeches proving that he accepted the Christian dogma. As near as I can make it out, he felt that in some way a Divine Being holds the balance of power in the universe, and that, in the long run, good results from all things. Convinced of this he worked patiently and trust-

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fully through the Civil War. I think he felt that his business was to do the best he could, and that God's business was to take care of the result. I do not believe that he had any creed, - simply a profound faith.

I hope, my dear Bishop Vincent, that you can make something out of this. You are good enough to say that you will give me credit. That is quite unnecessary. I shall be only too well satisfied if you can make any use of what I send.

I am faithfully yours,

The Reverend

Bishop John H. Vincent.