

AN OLD MESSAGE FOR THE NEW YEAR

The International Sunday School Lesson For January 4 is "Peter Preaches at Pentecost"—Acts 2:14, 22-41, 32-42

By WILLIAM T. ELLIS

Religiously, there is something new on the horizon for Nineteen Twenty. Practically all of the denominations of the United States and Canada are united in a concerted enterprise, more comprehensive and radical than anything they have heretofore undertaken, called the Interchurch World Movement. It enters the new year with an audacious program, a huge organization and practically unlimited money. All Christians should wish it well; some even dare hope that it may be the solution for the present problem of social crisis and religious decadence.

At the beginning of a momentous year, as we take up a course of Sunday school studies that face the fundamentals of faith, it is well to deal frankly with ourselves and with conditions. Let us admit freely the temptation to do spiritual work by material methods. And, to prevent later disillusionment, let us, also, in perfect candor remind ourselves that the Church is not going to meet successfully the present emergency in the world by means of money or machinery or methods of modernity. The Church may take on all the business resourcefulness of the Standard Oil Company, all the public relations of the circus, all the many-sided adaptability of a political party and all the propaganda ingenuity of the German government, and still leave her great task fairly untouched. Science, efficiency on the part of the Church is not enough to save our distraught times. However useful a subordinate place all these modern appliances may fill, the truth needs to be drawn straight home that they are merely incidental. Nothing that worldly wisdom can devise is able to deliver our enmeshed and imperiled world.

Back to Peter's Way
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he solemnly warned and entreated them, saying: "Escape from this crooked generation." "Those, therefore, who joyfully welcomed his Message were baptized; and on that day about 3,000 persons were added to them, and they were con-

stant in listening to the teaching of the Apostles and faithful attendance at the Communion, that is, the Breaking of Bread, and at prayer." "Telling the Best We Know" Books by the hundreds have been written about Peter's model sermon. It was largely a telling of what he

know—a testimony to reality. Also it was steeped in Scripture. It had for driving power the twin engines, consciousness of the Christ and consciousness of the crowd. Filled and thrilled by this sense of remedy and need, Peter preached to his hearers, assuredly, but concerning the eternal verities. Four truths concerning Christ—

No beautiful essayist he; he was after votes for his Master. He did not hesitate to call his hearers murderers, nor did he tone down the great spiritual interests and sublimities of his sermon. He talked to his hearers, assuredly, but concerning the eternal verities. Four truths concerning Christ—

the four pillars upon which the Church stands—were strongly put by Peter. One was the Messiahship of Jesus. The other was his crucifixion and death. The third was his resurrection. The fourth was the Messiahship of Christ, his right to rule that day, with its 3,000 converts, a new social unit in the world.

a fellowship which has increased to this day and is still increasing. Some of the persons present were hunted into wildernesses and caves by the Roman government, but their cause overturned and outlived. Today that cause and its Christ are the one sure hope of our perplexed and suffering world.

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