

talks to suppose Christ himself as the one speaking to modern society on its sins, its needs, its opportunities, its responsibilities, its everyday life. I shall try to be entirely loving and just and courageous in giving what I believe Christ himself would give you if he were the pastor of Calvary church in Milton today. So, during the talks, I wish you would, with me, try to see if you think Christ would actually say what I shall say in his place. If Christ were in Milton today, I believe he would speak to us about a good many things in Milton, and he would speak very plainly, and in many cases he might seem to be severe. But it would be for our good. Of course I am but human in my weakness. I shall make mistakes. I shall probably say things Christ would not say. But always going to the source of all true help, the spirit of truth, I shall, as best a man may, speak as I truly believe Christ would if he were your pastor. These talks will be given on the first Sunday of every month. I cannot announce the subjects, for they will be chosen as the opportunities arise."

During the week Philip spent several hours of each day in learning the facts concerning the town. One of the first things he did was to buy an accurate map of the place. He hung it up on the wall of his study and in after days found occasion to make good use of it. He spent afternoons walking over the town. He noted with special interest and earnestness the great brick mills by the river, five enormous structures with immense chimneys, out of which poured great volumes of smoke. Something about the mills fascinated him. They seemed like monsters of some sort, grim, unfeeling, but terrible. As one walked by them he seemed to feel the throbbing of the hearts of five creatures. The unpainted tenements, ugly in their unfeeling similarity, affected Philip with a sense of almost anger. He had a keen and truthful taste in matters of architecture, and those boxes of houses offended every artistic and homelike feeling in him. Coming home one day past the tenements, he found himself in an unknown street, and for the curiosity of it he undertook to count the saloons on the street in one block. There were over 12. There was a policeman on the corner as Philip reached the crossing, and he inquired of the officer if he could tell him who owned the property in the block containing the saloons.

"I believe most of the houses belong to Mr. Winter, sir."

"Mr. William Winter?" asked Philip.

"Yes, I think that's the name. He is the largest owner in the Ocean mill yard."

Philip thanked the man and went on toward home. "William Winter!" he exclaimed. "Is it possible that man will accept a revenue from the renting of his property to these vestibules of hell? That man! One of the leading members in my church! Chairman of the board of trustees and a leading citizen of the place! It does not seem possible!"

But before the week was out Philip had discovered facts that made his heart burn with shame and his mind rouse with indignation. Property in the town which was being used for saloons, gambling houses and dens of wickedness was owned in large part by several of the most prominent members of his church. There was no doubt of the fact. Philip, whose very nature was frankness itself, resolved to go to these men and have a plain talk with them about it. It seemed to him like a monstrous evil that a Christian believer, a church member, should be renting his property to these dens of vice and taking the money. He called on Mr. Winter, but he was out of town and would not be back until Saturday night. He went to see another member who was a large owner in one of the mills and a heavy property owner. It was not a pleasant thing to do, but Philip boldly stated the precise reason for his call and asked his member if it

forth. To all of which Philip opposed the plain will of God, that all a man has should be used in clean and honest ways, and he could never sanction the getting of money through such immoral channels. The man was finally induced to acknowledge that it was not just the right thing to do and especially for a church member. But when Philip pressed him to give up the whole iniquitous revenue and clear himself of all connection with it the property owner looked aghast.

"Why, Mr. Strong, do you know what you ask? Two-thirds of the most regular part of my income is derived from these rents. It is out of the question for me to give them up. You are too nice in the matter. All the property owners in Milton do the same thing. There isn't a man of any means in the church who isn't deriving some revenue from this source. Why, a large part of your salary is paid from these very rents. You will get into trouble if you try to meddle in this matter. I don't take offense. I think you have done your duty. And I confess it doesn't seem exactly the thing. But, as society is organized, I don't see that we can change the matter. Better not try to do anything about it, Mr. Strong. The church likes you and will stand by in giving you a handsome support, but men are very tough when their private business is meddled with."

Philip sat listening to this speech, and his face grew white and he clenched his hands tighter as the man went on. When he had finished, Philip spoke in a low voice:

"Mr. Bentley, you do not know me if you think any fear of the consequences will prevent my speaking to the members of my church on any matter where it seems to me I ought to speak. In this particular matter I believe it is not only my right but my duty to speak. I would be ashamed before my Lord and Master if I did not declare his will in regard to the uses of property. This question passes over from one of private business, with which I have no right to meddle, into the domain of public safety, where I have a right to demand that places which are fatal to the life and morals of the young men and women of the town shall not be encouraged and allowed to subsist through the use of property owned and controlled by men of influence in the community and especially by the members of Christ's body. My brother," Philip went on after a painful pause, "before God, in whose presence we shall stand at last, am I not right in my view of this matter? Would not Christ say to you just what I am now saying?"

Mr. Bentley shrugged his shoulders and said something about not trying to mix up business and religion. Philip sat looking at the man, reading him through and through, his heart almost bursting in him at the thought of what a man would do for the sake of money. At last he saw that he would gain nothing by prolonging the argument. He rose, and with the same sweet frankness which characterized his opening of the subject he said: "Brother, I wish to tell you that it is my intention to speak of this matter next Sunday in the first of my talks on 'Christ and Modern Society.' I believe it is something he would talk about in public, and I will speak of it as I think he would."

"You must do your duty, of course, Mr. Strong," replied Mr. Bentley, somewhat coldly, and Philip went out, feeling as if he had grappled with his first dragon in Milton and found him to be a very ugly one and hard to kill. What hurt him as much as the lack of spiritual fitness of apprehension of evil in his church member was the knowledge that, as Mr. Bentley so coarsely put it, his salary was largely paid out of the rentals of those vile abodes. He grew sick at heart as he dwelt upon the disagreeable fact, and as he came back to the parsonage and went up to his cozy study he groaned to think that it was possible through the price that men paid for souls.

"And this because society is as it is!" he exclaimed, as he buried his face in his hands and leaned his elbows on his desk, while his cheeks flushed and his heart quivered at the thought of the filth and violence the money had seen and heard which paid for the very desk at which he wrote his sermons.

But Philip Strong was not one to give way at the first feeling of seeming defeat. He did not too harshly condemn his members. He wondered at their lack of spiritual life; but, to his credit be it said, he did not harshly condemn. Only, as Sunday approached, he grew more clear in his own mind as to his duty in the matter. Expediency whispered to him: "Better wait. You have only just come here. The people like you now. It will only cause unpleasant feelings and do no good for you to launch out into a crusade against this thing right now. There are so many of your members involved that it will certainly alienate their support and possibly lead to your being compelled to lose your place as pastor if it do not drive away the most influential members."

To all this plea of expediency Philip replied, "Get thee behind me, Satan!" He said with himself, he might as well let the people know what he was at the very first. It was not necessary that he should be their pastor if they would none of him. It was necessary that he preach the truth boldly. The one question he asked himself was, "Would Jesus Christ, if he were pastor of Calvary church in Milton today, speak of the matter next Sunday and speak regardless of all consequences?" Philip asked the question honestly, and after long prayer and much communion with the Divine he said, "Yes, I believe he would." It is possible that he might have gained by waiting or by working with his members in private. Another man might have pursued that method and still have been a courageous, true minister. But this is the story of Philip Strong.

not of another man, and this is what he did:

When Sunday morning came, he went into his pulpit with the one thought in mind that he would simply and frankly, in his presentation of the subject, use the language and the spirit of his Master. He had seen other property owners during the week, and his interviews were nearly all similar to the one with Mr. Bentley. He had not been able to see Mr. William Winter, the chairman of the trustees, as he had not returned home until very late Saturday night. Philip saw him come into the church that morning, just as the choir rose to sing the antiphon. He was a large, fine-looking man. Philip admired his physical appearance as he marched down the aisle to his pew, which was the third from the front, directly before the pulpit.

When the hymn had been sung, the offering taken, the prayer made, Philip stepped out at one side of the pulpit and reminded the congregation that, according to his announcement of a week before, he would give the first of his series of monthly talks on "Christ and Modern Society." His subject this morning, he said, was "The Right and Wrong Uses of Property."

He started out with the statement, which he claimed was verified everywhere in the word of God, that all property that men acquire is really only in the nature of trust funds, which the property holder is in duty bound to use as a steward. The gold is God's. The silver is God's. The cattle on a thousand hills, all land and water privileges and wealth of the earth and of the seas belong primarily to the Lord of all the earth. When any of this property comes within the control of a man, he is not at liberty to use it as if it were his own and his alone, but as God would have him use it to better the condition of life and make men and communities happier and more useful.

From this statement Philip went on to speak of the common idea which men had that wealth and houses and lands were their own to do with as they pleased, and he showed what misery and trouble had always flowed out of the great falsehood and how nations and individuals were today in the greatest distress because of the wrong uses to which God's property was put by men who had control of it. It was easy then to narrow the argument to the condition of affairs in Milton. As he stepped from the general to the particular and began to speak of the rental of saloons and houses of gambling from property owners in Milton and then characterized such a use of God's property as wrong and un-Christian it was curious to note the effect on the congregation. Men who had been listening complacently to Philip's eloquent but quiet statements, as long as he confined himself to distant historical facts, suddenly became aware that the tall, pale faced, resolute and loving young preacher up there was talking right at them, and more than one mill owner, merchant, real estate dealer and even professional man writhed inwardly and nervously shifted in his cushioned pews as Philip spoke in the plainest terms of the terrible example set the world by the use of property for purposes which were destructive to all true society and a shame to civilization and Christianity. Philip controlled his voice and his manner admirably, but he drove the truth home and spared not. His voice at no time rose above a quiet conversational tone, but it was clear and distinct. The audience sat hushed in the spell of a genuine sensation, which deepened when, at the close of a tremendous sentence which swept through the church like a red-hot flame, Mr. Winter suddenly arose in his pew, passed out into the aisle and marched deliberately down and out of the door. Philip saw him and knew the reason, but marched straight on with his message, and no one, not even his anxious wife, who endured martyrdom for him that morning, could detect any disturbance in Philip from the mill owner's contemptuous withdrawal.

When Philip closed with a prayer of tender appeal that the spirit of truth would make all hearts to behold the truth as one soul, the audience remained seated longer than usual, still under the influence of the subject and the morning's sensational service. All through the day Philip felt a certain strain on him, which did not subside even when the evening service was over. Some of the members, notably several of the mothers, thanked him with tears in their eyes for the morning message. Very few of the men talked with him. Mr. Winter did not come out to the evening service, although he was one of the very few men members who were invariably present. Philip noted his absence, but preached with his usual enthusiasm. He thought a larger number of strangers was present than he had seen the Sunday before. He was very tired when the day was over.

The next morning as he was getting ready to go out for a visit to one of the mills, the bell rang. He was near the door and opened it. There stood Mr. Winter. "I would like to see you for a few moments," Mr. Strong, if you can spare the time," said the mill owner, without offering to take the hand Philip extended.

"Certainly. Will you come up to my study?" asked Philip quietly.

The two men went up stairs, and Philip shut the door, as he motioned Mr. Winter to a seat and then sat down opposite.

TO BE CONTINUED.

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 "Why will she?"
 "Her hair is all done up in curl-papers."—Tit-Bits.

Friendly Criticism.

Dr. Thirdly—How do you enjoy my sermon this morning, deacon?
 Deacon Jones—I enjoyed a portion of it very much indeed.
 Dr. Thirdly—What portion of it did you enjoy most?
 Deacon Jones—That part where you said: "And now, brethren, one word more and I have finished."—Chicago Record.

From Bad to Worse.

She—I would like to call you by your Christian name, love, but Tom is so hateful and common, you know. Haven't you some pet name?
 He—No, I—er—haven't.
 She—Are you always known as Tom among your friends?
 He (brightening up)—No, the boys call me "Shorty."—Harlem Life.

Her Incredulity.

Delbetz—You are the only girl I ever loved.
 Miss Haddum—I don't believe you!
 Delbetz—That's funny! All the rest of 'em did.—Puck.

Cause and Effect.

He trod on the corn of the bull of the hall. And then—so the other girls tell—Slobbering swines were crossed in the hall. Because of the bawling of the bell. —Chicago Daily News.

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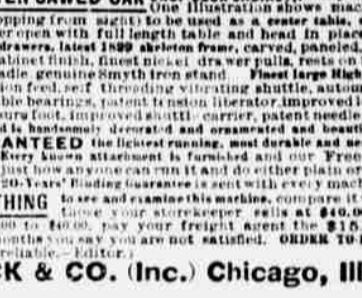


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