

# A SERMON FOR SUNDAY

AN ELOQUENT DISCOURSE ENTITLED  
"THE UNIVERSAL IN RELIGION."

The Rev. C. L. Palmer Directs Attention to Certain Forms or Doctrines Common to All—Every System of Religion Has Some Conception of God.

KINGSTON, N. Y.—In the Reformed Church of the Comforter on Sunday morning the Rev. C. L. Palmer delivered a scholarly discourse entitled "The Universal in Religion."

By which he means, that one cannot adequately appreciate any system of faith and practice without some knowledge of the history, doctrines and customs of systems other than his own, any more than one can master his native tongue without any knowledge of its cognates. It is undeniable that a study of the various systems discloses a religious substratum and phenomena, of which no intelligent student is willing to be deprived.

The population of the world is estimated at 1,392,000,000. Of this number 100,000,000 are pagan or heathen, which represents the very lowest grade of humanity. There are supposed to be 600,000,000 Brahmins. The nominal and professed followers of Buddha and Confucius are estimated at 420,000,000. Mohammedans number more than 200,000,000. Christians, including Roman Catholic, Greek Church and Protestant, are computed at 400,000,000. The whole of Eastern Asia is occupied by the Buddhists, India by the Brahmans, Africa by the pagans and the South Sea Islands by the pagan tribes. Parts of Europe, Asia and Africa by the Mohammedans, the largest part of Europe and America by Christians.

The conservative traditions of the religions of the world were such as these—true and false religions, natural and supernatural, pagan and revealed, spiritual and superstitions. Such a classification is not only confusing to the student of comparative religions, but is unjust, for every system contains some truth. A better classification is: 1. Tribal. 2. Ethnic. 3. Catholic. The tribal includes all systems which have no ritual, priesthood, creed, sacred writings, architecture or music. The ethnic religions are confined to one nation; such, for example, was the religion of Egypt, which for a thousand years was limited to its national borders. The system of Assyria was confined to Assyria; the religion of Greece was confined to the Hellenic race; that of Rome to the Romans; of Confucius to China; Brahmanism is confined to India, and the faith of the Eldas was limited to the Scandinavian or Teutonic races. The Catholic systems, in spirit and method, know no limit in either time or territory. They aspire to conquer the whole world. Such were Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Mohammed and Jesus. Ethnic religions were evolved out of their own life. Catholic systems were formulated, introduced and promulgated by an inspired prophet.

It is not my purpose to trace the origin of religion, the evolution or development, or to compare the various systems, but very briefly direct attention to certain forms or doctrines common to all.

Such conception is either just or unjust, true or false, right or wrong, though faith, even among the most degraded, is entirely destitute of some truth concerning God. Christianity is the one system which has an adequate disclosure of the attributes of Jehovah, because Jesus became incarnate the reveal the Father. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." And even Christianity cannot condense in a single definition a comprehensive revelation of the Supreme Being, for the idea is not simple but complex. The lowest conception of God is known as animism, which is belief in spiritual powers as opposed to materialism. It is the universal religion of the most undeveloped tribes, and has no place in the Christian system except as clarified and perfected in angelology and demonology. Polytheism was found principally in the ethnic systems. In Egypt the divine elements were seen dwelling in nature. The Greek deities were not personifications, but persons of vine men and women. In the Vedic Hymns of India the forces of nature are spiritualized into objects of reverence and love. The most marked form of pantheism appears in the Hindu religion, which in its extreme development, that the universe is God, and God is the universe. Christian science savors of it. The doctrine of the divine nature may be traced, as to eliminate the personality of God. Dithemism is belief in two hostile powers which was a tenet of Zoroastrianism. It appears in the ethnic and Catholic systems. The Christian doctrine of the trinity is a necessary and natural conception of God, and becomes clear if it is understood to represent Him as one in essence but three in form, and that the personality characteristic of the Catholic systems, though traces are found in the pagan and ethnic. Deeply imbedded in every heart is the sense of infinity, but its mighty personality, and that such personality is back of all forms and images, and that the latter becomes efficacious because of the power of God.

At possible theories about the origin of the universe are reducible to four: 1. That it had no beginning, but has always existed either in its present or another form. While the eternity of matter has been advocated by some, it never became a popular belief, and it does not appeal to modern science. But among the primitive tribes we presume, many think that the handwork of God without commencement and culmination. 2. That it came by a process of evolution. This theory had been modified in recent years by Biblical scholars and philosophical thinkers, with the result of a most hearty acceptance on the part of some thorough students and devoted scientists. 3. Another view is that it came by a process of emanation. The difference between evolution and emanation seems to be, that the former is a growth up to and including a certain completeness, while the latter began "with the dark abyss of infinite being, and by means of a series of emanations or fallings away from this inconceivable first essence, gradually reached an intelligent Creator and an intelligent creation." This theory is Oriental in its origin, appearing first in the cosmogony of the Hindus. 4. Conservative Christian scholars are divided on this doctrine. Some hold that God created, that is, actually made, brought into existence, the material out of which all things were formed. Others hold that He simply cut, carved and fashioned the universe out of pre-existing material. It is difficult to say just what form is acceptable to the majority of Christian scholars. Evolution as we now understand it is certainly accepted by men whose sincerity we cannot question and whose scholarship commands universal admiration.

There is a spirit in man and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth it understanding. The lowest and most ignorant pagan, and the most intelligent Christian is born in possession of it. The practice of the human family from the very first confirms the statement, "that the spirit of man goeth upward." All believe in a spirit world and that access is had to it through prayer. Men pray either because they obtain what they ask for, or because the act is a blessing in itself. The Sioux Indians pray—"Spirits of the dead, have mercy on us." The Zulus of Africa pray to their ancestors—"People of our house, people of our house, cattle, people of our house, good luck and health." A Delaware Indian prayed thus—"O Great Spirit above! have mercy on my children and my wife.

Let them not mourn for me. Let me succeed in this enterprise, slay my enemy, return in safety to my family and friends, that we may rejoice together. Have pity on me and protect my life. The negro of the gold coast prayed—"God give me to-day rice and yams, give me slaves, riches and wealth. Let me be brisk and swift."

The Karens of Burmah pray to the harvest goddess thus—"Grandmother! thou guardest my field look out sharp for thieves. If they come bind them with this rope."

Such are a few forms used by the childlike races; the ethnic systems disclose a higher and more enlightened conception of invocation. The Vedic hymns are filled with adoring homage—Of which God now, of which of the immortals, shall we invoke the amiable name? Let us invoke the amiable name of Aditi. Agni, the god of fire, is addressed as the Divine Monarch. In China the worship of ancestors is constantly practiced. On an Assyrian tablet are found these words: "May I never feel the anger and wrath of God." The ancient Mexicans addressed God, "The God by whom we live, Thou omnipresent. Who knoweth all our thoughts, and giveth all gifts." They baptized children with this formula, "Let these holy drops wash away reading that it received before the foundation of the world, so that the child may be new born." In the Catholic religions we discover an element less conspicuous than in the others. It is pardon for past sins, reconciliation with God and growth in grace. It would be interesting to trace under this division the practice of sacrifice, hymnology and other forms that enter into worship, but we pass on.

Inspiration implies that man must have a capacity to be inspired, which makes it a human faculty and therefore common to all. Inspiration in its largest sense is the sight of inward truth, a truth which is seen within the mind. A thought will come while one is walking, conversing, reading or meditating. It is a kind of inspiration. Poets have been inspired to write poetry. Scientists have been inspired to formulate the sciences, musicians to compose music, Columbus to discover, Newton and Edison to both discover and invent. Inspiration differs in quantity and quality, religious being the highest. The Vedas and Zend Avesta are considered inspired by their cult. The Mohammedans believe the Koran is inspired of God and therefore infallible, and Christians make the same contention for the Scriptures.

There is a low and crude form of inspiration among the undeveloped races, which is not committed to writing. The Samoids of Siberia have diviners who work themselves into a frenzy before delivering oracles. The notion of inspiration appeared in the insanity of the Pythian priestess and the Greek diviners who fell into trances. In the religion of Greece it appeared as an alien element. The wild dances of the Bacchantes, the shriek and self-lacerations of the Corybantes were considered forms of inspiration. In the Hindu religion it appears in the Yoga, that is one who seeks God by withdrawing from the things of sense. Painful positions are assumed, contortions of the limbs, suppression of breath and other incredible mortifications. The Greenlanders have their prophets, who abandon the converse of men and remain in fixed intensity of thought until they hear and see the spirit.

Balaam was compelled to utter an involuntary prophecy, and the priests of Baal cut themselves with lances. Sometimes in our own country, at protracted meetings, we have the "jerks." The Shakers dance the Mohammedan whirl. These seem absurd to us, but they disclose this, that all mankind would ascertain the will of God. From time immemorial the human race has had some intuition of an endless life. The most degraded savages and the most enlightened philosophers share the conviction that death does not end all. The Hottentots and the Fiji Islanders agree with Plato and Aristotle. The Eskimoes in the Arctic circle, the natives of Siberia, the Australians, the Patagonians believe that the grave is the cradle of another life. All the religions of antiquity believe in immortality, Egypt, China, India, Persia, Greece, Rome, Mexico, Peru, the Tartar tribes of Central Asia, the negroes of Central and Western Africa and the islands of the Pacific, all contented that while the body returns to dust, the spirit goes to God. Who gave it? The North American Indian believes in duplicate souls, one remaining with the body, the other departing during sleep. It has been claimed by some that Buddhism is an exception, but it is not. The teaching of Buddhism is to annihilate by the destruction of desire. It is not claimed that this is successful, but that the spirit becomes incarnate in one form or another until it rests in Nirvana. The transmigration of souls was taught by the religion of Egypt, which they embalmed their dead. It is found in Brahmanism, among the Greek philosophers—Pythagoras, Empedocles and Plato. By the Neo-Platonists, Jewish Cabala, Arab philosophers, by origin and other church fathers. Also by the Gnostics, Manichaeans, Dualists and in more recent times by Fourier. Christianity believes in eternal life, and that Jesus became flesh, not only to disclose God, but to bring life and immortality to light.

Man is a moral being, because he has a moral nature. He has a moral sentiment, moral ideas and a moral power. The moral sentiment is the sense of right and wrong, which produces a feeling of duty and obligation. Moral ideas consist in the belief that certain acts are right, others wrong. Moral power is the ability to do the right and not the wrong, feeling, thought and will cannot be eliminated from any moral test. Even the childlike races have some conception of right and wrong, though often very faint. The Christian standard is high enough, however, to be classed among those who are not without God. But few, if any, have been discovered without enough moral ability to say yes to the right and no to the wrong. It is not denied that the moral standard is different in each system, and that what may be right in one may be wrong in another. The temples of India and China encourage virtues which are too low to mention. The underlying principle of Brahmanism is to gratify every desire. The test of Christianity is the type of life it produces.

1. Christianity is destined to spread, because it has the Bible, church, Sabbath, and has produced a type of civilization that satisfies the enlightened mind and renewed heart.

2. All the aggressive systems have the inspiration of an inspired prophet. We have the greatest of them all. Christ is seeking the nations, and they are seeking Him.

3. Christianity not only contains all the truth of all other systems, but much not possessed by others.

Be not anxious about to-morrow. Do today's duty, fight to-day's temptation and do not weaken and distrust yourself by looking forward to things which you cannot see and could not understand if you saw them.—Charles Kingsley.

## WHERE IT RAINS EVERY TEN YEARS.

Almost as Bad as Verkhoyansk, with Variation of 176 Degrees.

Should the western citizen be asked to name the hottest and coldest places on earth he would most likely mention Yuma, A. T., for the former, and some spot in the northwest territory for the latter. In such selections, he would be some considerable distance out of the way, though neither has a great deal in the way of climate to recommend it.

For instance, says the Chicago Chronicle, neither the Bahrien islands in the Persian Gulf, nor Yakutsk, Siberia, would be a wise selection as a place of residence. In Bahrien you cook and in Yakutsk you freeze. Bahrien is said to be the hottest place in the world. The thermometer often registers between 110 and 120 degrees, night and day, for months at a time. This rather beats Fort Yuma, A. T., which is considered the hottest place in the United States.

Yakutsk is called the coldest city in the world. The thermometer frequently registers 73 degrees below zero. Though it is the coldest city in the world, Verkhoyansk, in northwestern Siberia, claims to be the coldest inhabited place on the globe, the thermometer registering 90 degrees below zero in January.

It also claims to be the place possessing the most variable climate, for while it is 90 degrees below in January, it is 86 above in the shade in August during the day, with a drop down to freezing every midsummer night.

The wettest place in the world is Greytown, Nicaragua, where the annual rainfall is 269 inches. The driest place in the world is probably the rainless coast of northern Chile. They have a shower there about once in every 10 years. Nothing grows on the desolate strip of barren coast, and the dreary towns from which the nitrates and minerals mined in that region are shipped depend for their subsistence upon food brought to them in the ships from the fertile strips to the north and south of the desert.

Northern Russia and the shores of the French Congo are said to be the cloudiest places in the world, and for fog there is no region like the Grand Banks, the southern coast of Newfoundland and the waters of Nova Scotia.

This region is one of fog for a large part of the year, and the very home of the fog is the island of Grand Manan, at the entrance of the Bay of Fundy.

England's Self Made Men. England, long disparaged by American boasters, particularly by those American boasters who thing America the only land of unlimited opportunity, is beginning to count up her self-made men. Says the St. James's Gazette: "We hear so much of American captains of industry, of John D. Rockefeller, the farm laborer's son; of Edison, the newspaper boy; of Yerkes, the youthful soap jobber, that we are apt to forget British giants of perseverance. Livingstone worked as a factory hand until twenty-five; the man who sought and found him in the wilds was born in a workhouse. The great firm of W. H. Smith & Sons was begun by two brothers so poor that the wife of one had to go into domestic service. The house of Tangye began in a little workshop, whose rent was but 4s. a week; that of Lever Brothers had a scarcely more pretentious start at Bolton. A coffee stall on a London curb was the fount and origin of Pearce & Plenty; 700 pounds once formed the total capital of the 'universal' Whitley. Bass's brewery was founded by a carrier; the Elder Dempster's Line of steamers by a ship's apprentice, now Sir Alfred Jones. The inventor of Bessemer steel was once a poor, almost starving, boy in London, the poorer for having devoted his labor to an invention of whose profits the government robbed him. So one might go on throughout the whole range of our industries. The sergeant and the plain constable of life's affairs who have made this nation industrially great, and carried its flag and fame to the needs of the earth."

Costly Keys. Under Philip II of Spain and his successors the ministers of the crown were possessed of what the Spaniards termed a clave maestra, or master key, which gave them admission to the royal palaces. During the reign of Charles II (1675-1700) gilt master keys were conferred on the nobles and gentlemen in attendance on the king. These keys corresponded with and gave admission to all the rooms of the royal palaces. They had huge, oblong bow handles, which projected from the right-hand pocket and were attached to the person by a ribbon. The subordinate members of the royal household were honored with similar keys, though they were not gilt. It is recorded that if one of these keys was lost the unfortunate loser had to warn a high official of the court, who at once had all the locks changed at a cost of over 10,000 Spanish dollars. This large sum had to be paid by the unlucky individual who lost the key. Another curious custom in vogue in the peninsula at that time was the giving of dummy keys as badges to officials and to certain nobles who held no court post as a mark of favor and distinction.

Won, Only to Lose. "After he married that rich widow she made him resign from all his clubs."

"Poor chap—and all he married her for was so he could pay his club dues."—7uck.



### Open Work the Vogue.

The open-work doilies, tablecloths, centerpieces and napkins show the vogue for openwork designs as much as the gowns do.

### A Word to the Child.

Train your child to always wipe his face on his own individual towel. Begin when he is very small, too. It will prove a good habit to get into.

### Unbecoming Eyebrows.

About the eyebrows which spread unbecomingly at the ends, it is better to consult a first-class operator of the electric needle. He will be able to narrow the line of the brows permanently. The best one can do for oneself is to remove the undesirable hair with tweezers and to keep on removing it as it reappears. Peroxide of hydrogen does not destroy superfluous hair. It acts upon it just as it does upon the hair of the head, bleaching its color. A growth of down upon the face or arms can be made almost imperceptible by this method, but it would not help one out of the difficulty.

### Repose of Manner.

The air of distinguished repose so sought after by nervous society women may be acquired by any one if they will remember that the secret of a reposeful manner simply means the power to totally relax. Much of your nervous energy is lost in nervous fidgeting. One beauty specialist goes so far as to declare that nothing will make wrinkles quicker than the habit of moving and jerking, and that nothing is so fatal to beauty as coughing and wheezing. All such habits are really nervous complaints. To cure all these fidgety movements cultivate the habit of sitting perfectly still, keeping the hands and fingers motionless as long as possible and relaxed.

### The Women's Clubs.

The Hull House Woman's club of Chicago will soon have a clubhouse and unlike all others, it will be used exclusively by the club. The building is a gift from a generous friend of Hull house, Joseph T. Bowen, and the members hope to occupy it next fall. Eight hundred people can be accommodated in the new building, which will be an English basement house. In the lower part will be the library, sewing and cloak rooms, kitchen and several committee rooms. On the floor above all will be a large assembly room, with a gallery. The room will have stained glass windows and decorated walls, and will be a beautiful apartment.

### An Unusual Gown.

An unusual gown in cream and brown was worn at a fashionable restaurant at a small dinner. The foundation was of the cream silk, and the brown taffeta was used in strappings, a stripe the bodice and the upper part of the skirt. The large hat worn with this gown carried out the brown and cream idea, it being a large round affair, with a wide brim that curved down a little all the way around, and was raised from the hair by a ban-lean. It was also set back a bit on the wearer's hair, which was also brown, as were her eyes. Brown ostrich tips, with cream-colored stems, the tips themselves shading to cream toward the centre, rodded from the crown over the brim, and wide ash ends of brown messaline ribbon were brought from the back around to the front, where they hung below the knee.

### Remember Your Silhouette.

The trouble with loose coats and, indeed, with the style of dress in favor just now is that the lines of the figure are too apt to be neglected. In other words, the wearer is swamped in her own clothes. The best known of dressmakers, Redfern, said a clever thing in describing his methods: "My specialty," he said, "is the line of a woman's figure, but always to see it through her dress. Whether gown or coat or mantle, for street or evening wear, simple or elaborate, I insist upon the preservation of certain lines. I start with the old Greek lines. I modify them in a thousand ways, but I never lose them."

### The Neat Little Darn.

"I love to see a neat little darn in household nappery or garments of any kind," said an observant old lady. "It always suggests to me care and neatness and good management. Silvers never darn tidily or take the proverbial stitch in time that saves some useful possession. When I was a little girl nurse used to tell us a story about a beautiful and rich and altogether delightful and desirable young man, who liked two sisters. One was much prettier and livelier than the other, and naturally he rather preferred her to the quieter sister, but on one unlucky day for her he took a walk with her. Her slipper stuck in the road and came off, and he was horribly shocked to see a great hole in the heel of her stocking. Of course, he did not like her after that. And the next day, by a strange coincidence,

## PEARLS OF THOUGHT.

There can be no affinity nearer than our country.—Plato.

Nothing can be truly great which is not right.—Johnson.

The most profound joy has more of gravity in it.—Montaigne.

Better to die ten thousand deaths than wound my honor.—Addison.

He only employs his passion who can make no use of his reason.—Cicero.

Half the truth will very often amount to absolute falsehood.—Wheatley.

We trifle when we assign limits to our desires, since Nature has set none.—Brand.

How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done!—Shakespeare.

The man who has too little confidence in himself generally has too much in others.

"Health brings wealth," but this is another of those rules that will not work both ways.

No man ever did a designed injury to another but at the same time he did a greater to himself.

When a man has not a good reason for doing a thing he has one good reason for letting it alone.

The hours we pass with happiness in view are more pleasing than those crowded with fruition.—Goldsmith.

Many a man who has the reputation of knowing a lot manages very successfully to conceal his knowledge.

## MEN GROWING TALLER.

### Our Ancestors of Mediaeval Times Puny Compared With Athletes of Today.

A walk through the Tower of London will convince any person that the armor-clad knights of mediaeval days were puny men compared with the athlete of today.

The experiment of getting into suits of old armor in country houses has often proved that the "legs" are far too short for the average man of the present generation.

A well known anthropologist at the British museum says that undoubtedly the British race is taller than it was several hundred years ago.

"I think, however, that the mediaeval man was deeper chested and broader in the shoulders," he said.

"The old armor, if a man of good average height could squeeze into it today, would be found loose fitting in the shoulders and at the chest."

"The tallest men in the world come from Galloway and Perthshire and Yorkshire, average is a fine one. Even that of southwest England and South Wales—5 feet 6 inches—is far higher than that of many of the continental nations."

"The tallest men after the men of Galloway, who have an average of nearly six feet, are the Fulahs of the French Sudan, and the Patagonians are believed to hold a very good average."

In London the average is as low as in South Wales, and the little man frequently asks why he should have to pay the same price for a suit of clothes as a country bred giant.

This question was answered by a West End tailor "What we make by the little man we lose on the big man," he said; "for we pay our men extra when they are working on a giant's suit."

"We have been compelled on one or two occasions, however, to charge more when a man is exceptionally tall or stout. One of our customers, who is over six feet high and 44 inches around the chest and 47 inches round the waist, takes five and a half double width for a lounge suit. We ask another guinea, and he pays it readily."—London Express.

## Growing Pains Distract Giant.

Sixteen years old, 5 feet 9 inches in height and 150 pounds in weight, Charles Heim of New York city has grown so fast of late that his mother believes "growing pains" have temporarily affected his mind. The giant boy disappeared a few days ago, and came back to his parents yesterday with tales of sleeping and eating with elephant keepers. An investigation of his stories showed that after he left home he went to Coney Island and mingled with the animal men who are preparing for the opening of the season on next Saturday. He spent two days and two nights there, and then stayed a night at Brighton Beach. On Monday night he crept into the hayloft of a stable close to his own home, and after cutting a hole in a board so that he could look into his bedroom, he went to sleep in the hay. Last night he walked into the room where his parents were grieving at his disappearance. Mrs. Heim said the boy had grown so fast that his head had bothered him as a result of the attending pains.

## There Is Plenty of Coal Yet.

It does not look as if we shall get out of coal, at any rate this winter. It is estimated that beneath the earth's crust there are about 8,000,000,000 yards of coal at depths available for the use of man—in round numbers a little over 7,000,000,000 tons.

Of this store Great Britain has available for use about a fifteenth part, or, according to the best estimates, 145,000,000,000 tons. One would hardly believe that Great Britain, though it has hardly reached the fullness of its growth or the full development of its civilization, consumes more than 150,000,000 tons each year, at a rate of consumption that would exhaust her whole store in about 300 years. The world's store, it is estimated, will be exhausted in about 2000 years.—Boston Globe.