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Why Mr. Moto Fights That Way

The Present Conflict in the Light of Japanese Religion and Ethics

By the REV. FLOYD E. HAMILTON

For Twenty-One Years a Missionary to Korea

ONE of the difficulties that we Americans have in understanding the Japanese is that we assume that all men look at life with much the same ethical standards that we do. That is, we assume that other men regard the same things as right or wrong that we do ourselves. To us, honesty in business is taken for granted as the right thing, no matter how many dishonest men there may happen to be in business. Lying is naturally assumed to be wrong, no matter how common lying may happen to be among Americans. Justice and fair play are so ingrained in our national and personal consciousness that, whenever examples of injustice and chicanery appear in public life, it makes our blood boil with indignation. We simply cannot understand brutality in private or public life, and the terrible atrocities that are being committed in this war in the Pacific arouse horror and a grim determination in our hearts to avenge the treatment given by the enemy to white men and women in Hongkong and, no doubt, elsewhere. The point is that Americans still accept as valid the ethical standards of the Word of God, no matter how irreligious individual Americans may be, and we cannot understand how any people can reject these apparently self-evident ethical standards. As a people we fail to comprehend that ethical standards are not *innate in human nature!* The standards we accept are those which we have inherited from our Christian ancestors, and are derived directly from the

Bible, the revealed Word of God! When nations reject the Bible as the Word of God, or never so accept it, then the ethical standards derived from the Bible simply *disappear* from the picture! In America that has not happened yet, because we were trained by God-fearing ancestors; but it *will* happen here, just as it is happening in Germany, if the Bible continues to be rejected as the Word of God.

Now the thing that we must realize about the Japanese is that they as a people have never accepted the Bible as the Word of God, and consequently have never accepted as valid the Christian system of ethics. Their ethical system, if it can be so called, is as different from ours as night is from day. Their ethical system, though it can hardly be called a system, springs directly from their Shinto religion. There is a smattering of Confucian ethics interwoven with it, because the Chinese classics used to be more or less studied in Japan, but in the main it is unadulterated Shinto. To understand this ethical system, then, we must know something about Shinto.

This is not the place to go into any long discussion of Shinto or to trace its origin. The important thing for our purpose is to know that Shinto teaches that the Japanese people and the islands themselves have sprung from the gods, and are therefore to be regarded as divine. The emperor, for example, is said to embody in his own person the spirits of all his imperial ancestors

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EDITORIAL

The Cross and the Kingdom

THE question whether or not the Christian pulpit should discuss the social and political problems of the day is always urgent, but especially so today. What should be the Christian's attitude to war in general and to the present world war in particular? What are we to think of state totalitarianism and to what extent are we in duty bound to obey the government? Does the Bible condemn or approve of private ownership and that profit system which has come to be known as capitalism? Questions like these are uppermost in the minds of men everywhere. Is it, or is it not, the duty of the Christian pulpit to answer them?

A good way to word the question is whether the Christian minister should preach only the cross of Christ or also the kingdom of Christ? Granted that he must preach the cross, must he, or must he not, preach the kingdom? Is it his duty, or is it not, to proclaim the kingship of Christ over every sphere of mundane life and to demand of men everywhere recognition of that kingship?

In the main, Protestants give three answers to this question.

The liberal proclaims his version of the kingdom with might and main; witness the preaching of E. Stanley Jones and the social gospel of Modernism generally. So strong is the liberal emphasis on the kingdom that the cross is crowded into the background. And when the cross is named, it is grossly misinterpreted. The Scriptural teaching that Christ's death on the cross was a vicarious sacrifice for the expiation of sin by the satisfaction of divine justice is arrogantly denied.

Many Fundamentalists, notably the dispensationalists of our day, stress the cross in their preaching but have little or nothing to say about Christ's present claims as king. The reason is obvious. They distinguish sharply between this church age and the coming kingdom age. For the present, Satan is said to be prince of the world; Christ

will establish His kingdom at His second coming. In consequence the Christian preacher's message need not now concern itself with the problems of society.

The Reformed preacher agrees with neither the liberal nor the dispensationalist. At the very center of his preaching is the cross. Like the chief of the apostles, he would know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. But he is well aware that this emphatic declaration did not keep Paul from preaching Christ resurrected from the dead, ascended into heaven, and seated at the right hand of God, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. 1:21). Here too the Reformed preacher follows the chief of the apostles. He proclaims the cross of Christ, and, founded upon His cross, the kingdom of Christ, according to the word of God by Isaiah: "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12), and the saying of the resurrected Christ Himself: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26)

The liberal preaches a kingdom severed from the cross. It is a kingdom without foundation. He is building castles in the air.

The dispensationalist preaches the cross severed from the kingdom. He lays a foundation, but the superstructure is lacking. His is a truncated gospel.

The Reformed preacher aims to proclaim both the cross of Christ and His kingdom, the latter founded upon the former. He has set himself to the stupendous task of declaring the whole counsel of God.

"Who is sufficient for these things? . . . Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, . . . but our sufficiency is of God".
—R. B. K.

Libraries

HAVE you sent in your contribution to the Library Fund of The Presbyterian Guardian?

The Best Kind of Preaching

RECENTLY there has come into my hands a book which is worth its weight in gold. In fact, its value cannot be computed in terms of gold.

It is entitled *My Sermon Notes on John's Gospel* and was written by the Rev. William P. Van Wyk, a prominent minister of the Christian Reformed Church. It contains twenty-four full outlines of sermons on the fourth gospel, all of them actually preached by this exceptionally able expositor of Holy Scripture.

What makes this booklet so valuable is the fact that every one of its outlines affords an excellent example of that method of constructing sermons which is most conducive to sound Scriptural preaching—the exegetical, expository, or textual method.

That this mode of preaching is completely out of vogue in liberal pulpits is not surprising. Only he who accepts the Bible as the very Word of God and believes in the plenary inspiration of Holy Writ will care to employ it. But why is it that so few Bible-believing ministers follow it with any degree of consistency? That is a puzzle indeed. No doubt, a partial answer is to be found in the fact that this method requires most painstaking exegetical labor and strictly logical organization of material. In a word, this way of sermonizing, of all ways, demands the hardest study. But the ministry of our day, as a class, can hardly be charged with too great intellectual activity. On the contrary, it may safely be said that most ministers are kept so busy with social functions, organizational activities, and church management—to say nothing of truly important pastoral work—that they hardly devote a tenth of the time they should to the preparation of their sermons. Would to God that the ministry might wake up to the realization that its one great task is to teach men the Word of God!

As was already said, the expository method is most conducive to truly Scriptural preaching. A stronger recommendation of this method is hardly conceivable. Did not Paul charge his spiritual son Timothy "before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom", to "preach the Word"?

To state in a slightly different way the advantage of this method of