

# The War and The Christian Church

Issued by the Assembly's Commission on the War

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A Commission was appointed by the Assembly to make a special study of the situation created by the war and to offer to the ministers and people of the Presbyterian Church in Canada such reflections and suggestions as may seem to be significant and helpful in a time of severe testing and trial for the Nation and for the Christian Church.

The Members of the Commission, in writing the paragraphs which follow, do so with a keen sense of their inability to interpret adequately the appalling catastrophe which has come upon the human race. They profoundly believe, however, that God is present in all history, both in judgment and in mercy; and they desire humbly to wait upon Him and to catch some of His meaning as He speaks to the world and to His Church in the terrors and agonies of this tremendous conflict.

## I.—AN UNPARALLELED OPPORTUNITY

In the first place, we believe that the war has created for the Church **an unparalleled opportunity** for her special ministry of comfort and of hope. It has done so in at least three ways:

(1) It has deepened in the hearts of multitudes the **sense of need** of Divine help and strength. There is sorrow in innumerable homes. A heavy load of anxiety rests on multitudes. The strain of the war is felt by thousands, and in many cases the war works pain and anguish beyond anything that is endured on the battlefield. For such a need there is no help or healing save in God.

(2) It has exhibited **the hollowness of a merely conventional religion**, the vanity of empty forms and the futility of phrases, however pious, which are not the expression of a real experience of God's saving power. It has demanded in thunderous tones, reality in religion on the part of all who make a profession of the Christian faith.

(3) It has called for, and it has produced, **moral qualities of the highest value**. The valor of our soldiers has been proved on a hundred blood-stained fields. The stories of individual heroism thrill the blood and awaken a just pride, and will form a splendid inspiration for generations yet unborn. In the homes whence the