

up preaching, for it was useless. The exiles were so complacent and so skeptical that for the time they could not be moved. When the shock of the fall of Jerusalem occurred, they turned with eagerness to the prophet whom they had previously despised.

We should be open to new light on the Bible, we should welcome new methods of doing Christian work even if they mean the disappearance of denominational distinctions. We must lift up our eyes to the mighty truths that God is teaching our generation by means of the War.

The second class of hearer is *the superficial, emotional type*. One one occasion a man approached Jesus, saying, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." He was full of enthusiasm, completely captivated by Jesus. But the master saw how slight was this man's conviction, and how evanescent was his feeling. Therefore he replied, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." It was as if he had said: "Are you prepared for this?" Jesus was not anxious for quick results. He was more concerned with permanent results.

The question is: "Will this Christian life endure unto the end?" The beginning of the other life may take place quietly, or it may take place amid storm and conflict. Paul's own conversion was of the explosive character, but it held. Samuel Hadley was a drunkard. He was convicted of sin in a whiskey saloon. His own testimony is: "All of a sudden I seemed to feel some great and mighty presence. I did not know what it was. I learned afterwards that it was Jesus, the sinner's friend." He was so afraid of failing that he went and had himself locked up in prison. He became one of the most famous evangelists in the city slums. His conversion went down to the roots of his life. Long ago there was trouble in the city of Florence. The Puritan party held a meeting and in a transport of enthusiasm it was moved that Jesus Christ should be king of Florence. They put it to the vote; there were 1,800 votes for and less than 20 against. But such an emotional demonstration accomplished nothing. No, decision to follow Christ must have deeper soil than that. It must be so

securely rooted that it will meet anxieties and persecutions without wavering.

The third class of hearers consists of people *who feel the truth of the Christian message, but other interests choke the word*. The worries of the world, the prospect of being rich—these are the "big interests" that crowd out the message of Christ. The rich young ruler had a desire to follow Christ, but the desire that was predominant was for wealth, ease, softness of living, and he went away from his interview with Jesus, sorrowful.

Browning has a poem entitled *Andrea del Sarto*. The story is that this famous Italian painter had superb mechanical genius,—he could draw every line with accuracy—but he lacked the "soul," the passionate devotion to truth which belongs to the highest artists. He lacked one thing. He missed, as he himself sadly confesses, fellowship with Raphael and Michael Angelo just because other and worldly interests smothered the profoundest artistic nature. It is so easy to allow the religious life to be buried by our employment and by our business. The celebrated Dr. Cuyler had an extraordinary ministry of usefulness in New York. He said: "When I recall the joys of forty-four years of life spent in the gospel ministry, I shudder to think how near I came to losing them. Tempted to other pursuits, my decision lay trembling in the balance. But a single hour in a village prayer meeting, and the influence of my beloved mother tipped the scale, and in the right direction."

The fourth class consists of those *who hear the word with joy and bring forth abundant fruit*. There is the test—the bringing forth of fruit. That is the test we are applying to everything to-day. The Czar and his clique did not produce happiness and freedom for the people. They were discarded. The Y.M.C.A. has done great things in Flanders for the soldiers. It has justified itself. It has brought forth fruit. Can the Christian church escape this test of Jesus? No. The church must produce the fruit of devoted lives and consecrated service for the sake of the world. We are asking of the Christian that he should not be content to say, "Lord, Lord," but that he should do the will of our Father in heaven.