

unique in that His influence has been exerted far more by His death than by His life. He Himself anticipated this, and the Apostles fully comprehended it. Almost the only thing common to all four Gospels is the account of His death. The cross is the best known symbol of Christianity. But the power of it lies not in the mere description of the fact. It is in the significance of the fact as an atonement for sin.

Here again Christ Himself gave His disciples their starting point, and they have put the Atonement in the very heart of all their teaching. Peter, John, Paul, all alike give it prominence. In many quarters it was distasteful, but they found that in spite of that it was the great attraction in the gospel for sin-burdened souls. It is still the element of greatest power. There is a disposition in some quarters to ignore it, but the preacher who does so loses his most effective weapon. It is, however, not speculations about the atonement that are needed, but the fact of the atonement itself should be emphasized.

3. A third element is the constant activity of the ever-living Saviour for the salvation of His people. Christianity proclaims a Saviour, but not a Saviour who is dead. The Apostles made much of the resurrection, not for its value, but as an assurance that the Saviour was now alive. The activity of the ascended Christ manifests itself under three forms. First, as a perpetual intercession, showing His sympathetic interest in the needs of His people; second, in the gift of the Holy Spirit, who is His representative and alter ego in the world, and thirdly, by His Church, which is His body. The Church is sometimes unduly exalted and almost substituted for Christ Himself, and sometimes unduly depreciated; but in any case it is an important and valuable organization, through which Christ perpetuates His activity in the world.

This thought of Christ's continued interest in the world's needs to be emphasized all the more because the Church has found it hard to retain a firm grasp upon it. More or less doubting it, a multitude of intercessors, saints, angels, the Virgin Mary, have been put forward to remind Him of our needs, and plead for His interest. These unscriptural cults have gained a strong hold even upon many intelligent minds. This shows the consciousness of need. But Christ Himself should be so preached as to render those unnecessary.

4. The fourth feature is the sure hope of the world's deliverance from sin by the second coming of Christ. The second advent is an essential part of the Christian faith. The main things to be looked at, however, are not the time or the manner of it, which seems to interest so many, but the objects to be obtained by it. The first object is the final judgment of all—a truth which gives tremendous solemnity to life, and

must always be one of the fundamentals of preaching.

But there is a judgment of things as well as of persons, which is going on all the time—a judgment of systems, institutions, customs, governments. Many of these have been already condemned and forced to disappear. Others will follow, and long before the final judgment of the world, this judgment of social systems will have so far proceeded that it may be said the Kingdom of God is established on the earth. This coming of the kingdom, whatever the form of it, will be virtually the coming of the King. This was the expectation which kindled the hope of the early Church, and it is this which must be relied on to kindle it still.

This truth is specially important at the present time in view of the prominence of social questions. The demand for this regeneration of society is not altogether without reason. Not that everything asked for can wisely be granted; still less is it that the world is growing worse. The very clamor of the present time arises from the belief that there is hope of relief. Any solution of these problems to be permanent must be along Christian lines. Christ must come into every relationship of life and sanctify it. The Church that preaches this holds the key of the future.

These four are the main features of the minister's working theology—his chief tools. They manifestly make a Christian theology, for they revolve around Christ. They make the common ground on which all evangelical Christendom may unite. It is thoroughly practical, and though it does not minister largely to the speculative interest in theology, it does minister to the needs of the human heart, and will not fail to find eager hearers.

\* This article is part of Dr. Scrimger's opening lecture at the Presbyterian College, Montreal, at the beginning of the present session.

### C. E. AND THE CHURCH.

The Christian Endeavor Society is not doing the work that it is designed to do unless it is making its members more and more faithful to the church. An Endeavorer's vacant seat in any of the regular services of the church is a stain upon the fair name of the society he represents. Loyalty to denomination and home church is one of the fundamental principles of the organization.

The work of its members in the prayer meeting is intended to train and prepare them for the more mature duties of the church. We can render the work of our society more effective then by being more zealous in the performance of our church duties. How many discouraged pastors would take fresh heart if their Endeavorers rallied to their support as they have covenanted to do. Pastoral relations would not be so frequently severed and vacant pulpits would not be so startlingly numerous if Christian Endeavorers were more loyal to their church vows.

*Pres. Messenger.*