

***National Responsibility at This Crisis**
A MESSAGE FOR EVERY ELECTOR

By W. H. SMITH, B. D., Ph.D.

There was a time when human interests were largely individual and personal. The laying of the foundation of a new country calls for individual effort. The pioneer must be woodsman, farmer, builder, roadmaker, doctor, banker and minister all in one. The aggressiveness and success of this type of activity creates a standard of conduct which appeals to many as the one road to greatness. To conquer and reign over all opposition contains many elements of great value in every type of society. But as a country becomes settled the individual becomes more socialized and institutions take the place of the pioneer. The larger life flows through channels which exist apart from any individual effort. The result is that the common aims, sympathies and ideals become the standard of action. The worthy pioneer type has passed into the community life in which all share responsibility and make their contribution to the higher ideals of the race.

The trend of modern life has been growing in social emphasis. This has been well called the age of the social consciousness. No man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself. We stand and fall together. Wealth, labor, culture, business, governments are rapidly becoming universal in their higher relations. The ideal of humanity has become the standard of values by which all worthy citizens seek to mould their individual attitude.

PRINCIPLES, NOT PARTIES, AT STAKE

The war has served to call attention to the value of corporate and national interests as distinguished from the interests of the pioneer of the earlier days. It is not a question of any one individual now fighting his way to victory. It is not the question of any one class in any one nation fighting its way to victory. So far as the Allies are concerned it is not even the question of any one nation fighting its way to victory. It is the question of all the nations banded together to achieve the victory of certain great principles which contain the promise and the power of conferring upon all the nations of the world the higher blessings of real democracy. We are all involved in this awful struggle. Our interests are all at stake. Our own lives and liberties are all imperilled. There rests upon each a definite responsibility to these higher values.

The great danger in the present conflict is that individual and sectional interests may become so powerful that the common interests of humanity may be sacrificed. Germany has been able to do great things because all her resources and aims are directed by one idea and method. There is no question in Germany concerning the conscription of men and wealth, no question as to the part the individual shall take. This is all handed down from headquarters, and the people as individuals have no voice in determining their attitude. This has been Germany's greatest asset in the prosecution of the war. On the other hand the Allies have had to contend with the varying and per-

*Notes of a sermon preached in St. John's Church, Vancouver, December 9th, 1917, and published by request. Text: Matthew 5:14-16. "Ye are the light of the world. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

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