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“Christian and Jew,” 1906 March 18.

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Sunday, March 18th, 1908.

- CHRISTIAN AND JEW -

I have been gratified by the general, and, for the most part, favorable discussion of my sermon on anti-Jewish prejudice. I have received a number of expressions of friendliness. I have some communications of which the writers themselves are ashamed, evidenced by the fact, that having nothing to fear, they are ashamed to sign their names. Anonymous letters are waste-basket literature. Usually I throw them into the waste-basket without reading them.

One who signs himself "A staunch American" writes me in form and substance so contemptible that every decent American would be disgusted with him. Another, who claims not to be prejudiced, writes me more courteously, but straightway shows pre-judgment, which is prejudice based upon ignorance of facts easily ascertained. The argument is neither sound in logic nor true in fact. The conclusion, however, is as usual - "No one but Jews would do such things; it is characteristic of the race". Call it pre-judgment, if one be sensitive about the word prejudice. How ridiculous to reason from one or a few to a whole people, from one Jew to all Jews.

What do I hope to gain by this discussion - what possible good can result? So many Jews are hopeless, saying prejudice and hatred always have been and always will be. I have faith that injustice cannot stand in the face of public opinion. It is good for people to think - good for Jew and good for Christian. We Jews may learn not to cringe, nor to apologize. We Jews will discover what we stand for in history. We will learn not to be ashamed of our birth and our religion. We will be honored either as Jews, or we must wait and work and teach the world a truer sense of justice.

Reflection is made - the Jews have no respect for their neighbors. It is my observation that Jews are far more respectful of the feelings and thoughts of others than others dream of being of the feelings and thoughts of Jews. Some people imagine Jews have no feelings and no convictions to be respected. Jews are

not angels or saints or even superior mortals. Neither are they devils and demons and inferior mortals. Jews are much like other human beings. The world may be surprised to discover that not all Jews are exactly alike. Not all Jews are rich, though the world sees nothing of our poor. We would be other than human if there were not amongst us distinctions of intellect and culture and character. The Jew is the Jew's severest critic. All Jews cannot be held responsible for every fault and sin and crime of every individual Jew. It would be just as irrational as to charge all Christians with the vices and sins and crimes of every Christian. Not every Jew is a paragon of virtue, or a model of culture; neither is every non-Jew. Jews have the same right as other men to be judged as individuals - to be measured by what they are.

The Temple, more than any individual, Rabbi or layman, is representative of the Jew. The Temple sounds clearly the call to the higher life. It has been and is active in the development of the moral and educational and civic life. It preaches no narrowness and no bigotry. It stands for brotherhood and for fellowship. We will fellowship with everyone who will fellowship with us in honesty and sincerity. We believe in the right of men to be free, free in life and the pursuit of happiness, and free to worship God. We defend our principles openly in the public forum of free America.

Christians and Jews have lived and striven side by side these nineteen hundred years. Still the world does not know or understand the Jew and his Judaism. Nineteen hundred years ago the Jews did not accept Jesus as the Messiah, and through nineteen hundred years, unparalleled in suffering, they have not accepted him as the Messiah, and the suffering has not yet ended in lands of ignorance and darkness and oppression, not even in the lands of knowledge and light and freedom.

Teachers of religion should not teach the story of the life and death of Jesus so as to implant and perpetuate hate of the Jew. They should not teach

Christianity contrasting it with Judaism so as to cause contempt for Judaism. It is unhistoric and unjust.

The first Christians all were Jews. The founders of Christianity were Jews. Jesus, about whose life and teaching all Christianity centers, was a Jew. Teach the true historic relationship between Christian and Jew.

Jew should understand Christian and Christian should learn to understand Jew. We should show reverence for the faith and customs of others. We have the right to ask reverence and respect for ours. I shall not speak of Jewish glory and Christian shame; nor of Christian triumph and Jewish defeat. It is not within my province today to tell what part Christian and Jew have played in the history of mankind. The record of history is written.

Whatever may be the story of the past, there is no justification for hate today. Bitter has been the life experience of the Jew. 'Tis the Jew more than Christian has historic cause for hatred. The Jew does not hate the Christian. With what justification of history or of reason does any Christian hate the Jew? Christian and Jew can be brothers. Christian and Jew are brothers, if God be Father. God is God of all men. Not God, but man, divides mankind into Jews and Christians. Christian and Jew have lived happily side by side, especially during the one hundred and thirty years since this Republic was mothered by Freedom and fathered by Justice, and together they are destined to live in peace and happiness. It is America's greatest glory. America will not yield her precious liberties, civil and religious, for which has been shed the blood of America's truest and best.

The Jew asks no favor of the world. He pleads for no advantage. He does ask, and has the right to ask that he be not disadvantaged almost from the very hour of his birth and through all the years of his life. He does plead for justice and for freedom.

The Jew stands upon his record. No single nation, race or religion has been so long or so steadily under the fire of searching criticism. He more than all other men of history has been tested by his enemies - none too gently and none too mercifully. The time will come when the teachers of religion and the teachers of history will make necessary acknowledgment of what the Jew and Judaism have contributed to the civilization of mankind.

Will Christian and Jew ever learn to be just and to love one another? Will prejudice and hate ever cease? There will be no end of hate and prejudice, There will be no love and justice until the men and women about us - our friends - become conscious of the injustice and have the courage to speak. Prejudice and hate will cease when the religion of love becomes less a profession of the lip and more genuinely the faith of the heart; when men obey Emerson's command - "Go put your creed into your deed".

Christian be Christian in love. Jew be Jew in justice.. Then mankind will cease to be divided by hates and prejudices un-christian, un-Jewish and un-American.