

From The Pulpit

by Rev. Donald M. Clark

THE VOICES WE HEAR

Text: "A Voice of Noise from the City, a Voice from the Temple, a Voice of the Lord." Isa. 66:6.

We are conditioned by creation to respond to the voices we hear. This is the way we are made. And the voices we hear run a wide gamut, from the audible voice of authority spoken by our earthly father while we are still in our crib to the inaudible voice of our Eternal Father uttered incessantly as we make our pilgrimage from the crib to the grave. Between these two extremes we hear an endless variety of voices--the voice of animal drives within us, such as the call of hunger and the call of sex; the voice of the human herd, such as the call of friendship and the call of community life; the voice of the clan, such as the call of family loyalty and the call of national patriotism; the voice of custom, such as the call of tradition and the call of the group habits which we call "Morality"; and the call of conscience, such as the call of the true "oughtness" woven into the fabric of the universe and the call of an "evil conscience", which may make us miserable when we should be comfortable and comfortable when we should be miserable.

So long as each voice is sufficiently distinct as to be recognizable, we are in no real predicament. If we know for certain what voice we are hearing, we know what response to make. If we can distinguish the voice of love from the voice of lust, the voice of patriotism from the voice of paganism, the voice of the indulgence from the voice of conscience, the voice of moralism from the voice of Christ, the voice of the populace from the voice of popularity--if we can distinguish and identify the voices we hear, then we know the appropriate response.

Our predicament develops, however, when the voices we hear cease to be distinct and clearly recognizable. Then, instead of responding appropriately and sanely, we respond with varying degrees and types of neuroses and frustrations.

Our text calls our attention to three kinds of voices which are constantly seeking to direct and influence us, and which may prove unusually difficult to recognize and evaluate.

Take the first: "A voice of noise from the city." Here we have reference to one of the most constant, the most demanding and the most confusing voices we hear. Constant, because the "city" calls us with the same constancy with which the atmosphere presses upon us. Demanding, because the city's voice calls us to conform to its standards, to practice its habits, to serve its purposes. And confusing, because this call to conformity can sound like the call of conscience.

We hear it said that the modern man is "lost," however, we know we are not lost. We know that we are meant by our Creator to be a person, not a thing; to be a person, not an ant or bee conforming mechanically to the order of the hill or the hive; to be a person responsive to the voice of the Lord, not a social unit responsive only to the voice of the noise from the city. If we do not know this, then surely we sense that it is so and become uneasy when we realize that we are becoming like everyone else.

So here we are in our dilemma. We hear the voice of noise from the city, but we hear also the voice of the Lord calling silently from deep within. How are we to tell which voice is which? The voice of the city is louder than the voice of the Lord. It is at least as persistent. And it sounds as authoritative. Shall we take the easy way and say, "The voice of the city is the voice of the Lord?" If we do, then the city, which is to say our social group, becomes our God. Or shall we accept the fact that these voices are coming at us all the while and do



REV. D. M. CLARK



DEADLINE for church news and photographs is Friday noon preceding the next Thursday publication date, at the Rev. Mr. Clark's home, 1676 N. 'E' St., telephone 642-1560. All items submitted must be accompanied by the sender's name, address and telephone number.

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our best to distinguish the one from the other? The voice from the Temple. This is a voice which ought to help us, the second one which Isaiah mentions. It is the voice of "institutionalized religion," the voice of the organized church.

We find ourselves wishing that the voice from the temple were the voice of God. Then our confusion would be canceled. We would know, on the authority of the church, what the city is saying and what the Lord is saying. But wishing will not make it so. The voice from the temple can be as confusing and misleading as the voice from the city. Indeed, precisely because it pretends to be nearer to the voice of God, the voice from the temple may be more misleading.

Do not mistake what I am saying. By and large, the testimony of the Church through the generations has been a reliable guide to understanding the voice of the Lord. And the only way it can hope to guide at all, is to speak out what it most genuinely believes to be the voice of the Lord. But time and again the voice from the temple has more completely echoed the voice of interest in the status quo than in the living voice of God.

The voice of the Lord. Well, what is the demand of Christianity?

We have heard it said that Christianity is nothing more and nothing less than a set of

(See PULPIT, page 14)

CATHOLIC

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Sunday Mass--11 a.m. and 5 p.m.
Week Day Mass--7:30 p.m. each evening
Confession--Saturday 4 and 7:30 p.m.

CHURCH of GOD in CHRIST

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(All Churches of God in Christ)

Tuesday 8 pm - - - - - Bible Band
Wednesday 8 pm - - - - - *Young People
Friday 8 pm - - - - - Consecration
Sunday 10 am - - - - - Sunday School
Sunday 12 m - - - - - Morning Service
Sunday 6:30 pm - - - - - YPW
Sunday 8 pm - - - - - Evening Worship
*Progressive - - - - - Inspirational

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PENTECOSTAL

PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH
Eld. Hosea Coleman, 642-8741
Bartlett & Lexington Sts., Vegas Hts.

Old-Fashioned Revival At Pentecostal Church

AN OLD-FASHIONED pentecostal revival will be conducted at the Pentecostal Holiness Church of the Lord Jesus, Bartlett and Lexington Sts. in Vegas Heights, by Evangelist C. Sweat of Menlo Park, Calif., starting Nov. 16. The public is invited.

Elder Hosea Coleman, pastor of Pentecostal Holiness Church, announces the following schedule of services-- Sunday: Sunday School, 10a.m.; Mid-day, 12 noon; PYP, 6 p.m. Tuesday: Tarry, 7:30 p.m.; Wednesday: Mid-week, 7:30 p.m. Second Thursday: Foot Wash Communion, 7:30 p.m. First, third and fourth



ELDER COLEMAN

Thursdays: Mission, 7:30 p.m. Daily: Prayer Meeting, 12 noon.