

Editorial.

IN every sphere of life to-day realism is of paramount importance, it is equally essential for the Christian Church as it is for the Nation.

The Christian Church is facing what may be one of the most critical chapters in her history—it is a challenge which demands absolute reality, both in our thinking and in our witnessing. In this supreme hour of opportunity if Evangelicals are to be a vital spiritual force they must recapture the realism of the New Testament.

In the realm of theology the failure of humanism is an accepted fact, but yet in reality it is still the religious creed of many, who believe in the ultimate triumph of the power of good inherent in the flesh. Whereas the realist believes with St. Paul—"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing."

We must also be realists in assessing the relationship of the Christian Church to the world. The New Testament envisages the world as a system which is organised apart from and in opposition to the will of God and for realists it is a clear issue—Jesus Christ or the world. The vision of Jesus Christ was not a world christianised by a process of social reform, but a Church called out from the world, the Kingdom of God built up in the world through the preaching of the Gospel, but separated from the world.

There must be the same realism in our pastoral work—the plain truth of Scripture is that "The natural man is dead in trespasses and sin" and "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." The essential thing, if there is to be reality of spiritual life, is a new creation, man must be "born again".

Again in our preaching there must be the same note of realism if we hope to restore to the Evangelical pulpit the power and the prestige it once possessed. "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword", but it needs to be preached by realists. The spiritual power of the Prophets and the fire of the preaching of John the Baptist were due to the fact that they were realists in their day and generation. They knew the real issue, and their intense zeal for the truth in all its reality gave their message that note of authority which arrested and convicted.

The more implicit is our faith in the Word of God the more realistic we shall be in our witness—because the Word of God is supremely realistic.