

God has made in His own image and likeness. There are occasions when an individual can serve society best and most fittingly, not by yielding to its conventions nor to its historic customs and estimates but by standing out under the compulsion of some vision of advance in the championship of an ideal which ought to prevail but does not yet prevail. If there is vitality to this vision of advance and if it is grounded in eternal reality, it will awaken a response in the souls of others and gather a group of loyal supporters, and thus produce a remnant." The real mission and service of the remnant, concludes Rufus Jones, is to "go forward with a venture of faith and to put its vision of advance, its ideals of what ought to be, into practice here and now. It often means moving along the line of greatest resistance. And it is likely to entail much suffering."

A Responsible Remnant

The true remnant does not seek privileges but rather is completely willing, even eager, to accept responsibilities. Nor does it wish to withdraw from the world, however unpleasant it may appear to be. A true remnant, if it is to live, must embrace the world, must ever go out into the world performing its rightful mission, working as a leaven in the lump.

A true remnant must do its work with joy. Yes, even in an age such as ours when things seem to be getting worse, not better — "a time of turmoil, war, economic catastrophe, cynicism, lawlessness, and distress," writes R. J. Rushdoony. But, he continues, "it is also an era of heightened challenge and creativity, and of intense vitality. And because of the intensification of issues, and their world-wide scope, never has an era faced a more demanding and exciting crisis. This then above all else is the great and glorious era to live in, a time of opportunity, one requiring fresh and vigorous thinking, indeed a glorious time to be alive."

Shouldn't we reflect, wrote John Bright, "that times that seem evil to us may serve a better purpose than times that are good? This may seem a strange thing to say, but there is much truth in it. The good times that we desire are times of freedom from disturbing bother. But perhaps from the divine point of view they are not. For the purpose of God for us is not the comfort of our bodies or the preservation of our interests, but the discipline of our spirits that we may become truly his people. Let it never be forgotten it is precisely in suffering that the people of God are selected; in suffering they are *known*. The tragedy

of the times, therefore, becomes to us a personal summons to decide for the calling of God and, in tragedy, to serve him. And though we may not see how that Kingdom could come soon, or prove that it will come at all, we will face the dark future with faith and pray for its coming. And we

will take courage. As civilization and material property, nations and churches, are tossed into the caldron of history and seemingly destroyed, we will reflect upon Isaiah's words: "There is always a Remnant, a people of God, a true church. And with these God works his will." ♦

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