The theory, though surely not the practice of Communism challenges us to be more concerned about social justice. With all of its false assumptions and evil methods, Communism arose as a protest against the injustices and indignities inflicted upon the underprivileged.

The Communist Manifesto was written by men aflame with a passion for social justice. Karl Marx, born of Jewish parents who both came from rabbinical stock, and trained, as he must have been in Hebrew Scriptures, could never forget the words of Amos: "Let judgment roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."

Marx's parents adopted Christianity when he was a child of six, thus adding to the Old Testament heritage that of the New. In spite of his later atheism and anti-ecclesiasticism, Marx could not quite forget Jesus' concern for "the least of these." In his writings, he champions the cause of the poor, the exploited, and the disinherited.

> ***"We must honestly recognize that truth is not to be found either in traditional Capitalism or in Marxism. Each represents a partial truth."***

Communism in theory emphasizes a classless society. Although the world knows from sad experience that Communism has created new classes and a new lexicon of injustice, in its theoretical formulation it envisages a world society transcending the superficialities of race and color, class and caste.

Membership in the Communist party theoretically is not determined by the color of a man's skin or the quality of blood in his veins.

Christians are bound to recognize any passionate concern for social justice. Such concern is basic in the Christian doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. The Gospels abound with expressions of concern for the welfare of the poor. Listen to the words of the Magnificat: "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good tidings; and the rich he hath sent empty away."

No doctrinaire Communist ever expressed a passion for the poor and oppressed such as we find in the Manifesto of Jesus which affirms: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering the sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Christians are also bound to recognize the ideal of a world unity in which all barriers of caste and color are abolished. Christianity can repudiate racism. The broad universalism standing at the center of the gospel makes both the theory and practice of racial injustice morally unjustifiable. Racial prejudice is a blatant denial of the unity which we have in Christ, for in Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, Negro nor white.

In spite of the noble affirmations of Christianity, the Church has often lagged in its concern for social justice and too often has been content to mouth pious irrelevances and sanctimonious trivialities. It has often been so absorbed in a future good "over yonder" that it forgets the present evils "down here." Yet the church is challenged to make the gospel of Jesus Christ relevant within the social situation.

We must come to see that the Christian gospel is a two-way road. On the one side, it seeks to change the souls of men and thereby uniting them with God; on the other, it seeks to change the environmental conditions of men so that the soul will have a chance after it is changed. Any religion that professes to be concerned with the souls of men and yet is not concerned with the economic and social conditions that cripple them is the kind the Marxist describes as "an opiate of the people."

Honesty also impels us to admit that the church has not been true to its social mission on the question of racial injustice. In this area it has failed Christ miserably. This failure is due, not only to the fact that the church has been appallingly silent and disastrously indifferent in the realm of race relations, but even more to the fact that it has been an active participant in shaping and crystallizing the patterns of the race-caste system. Colonialism could not have been perpetuated if the Church had really taken a stand against it. One of the chief defenders of the vicious system of apartheid in South Africa today is the Dutch Reformed Protestant Church. In America slavery could not have existed for almost two hundred and fifty years if the church had not sanctioned it, nor could segregation and discrimination exist if the Christian Church were not a silent and often vocal partner. We must face the shameful fact that the church is the most segregated major institution in American society; and the most segregated hour of the week is, as Professor Liston Pope has pointed out, eleven o'clock on Sunday morning. How often the church has been an echo rather than a voice, a taillight behind the Supreme Court and other secular agencies, rather than a headlight guiding men progressively and decisively to higher levels of understanding!

The judgment of God is upon the church. The church has a schism in its own soul that it must close. It will be one of the tragedies of Christian history if the future church was one of the greatest bulwarks of white supremacy.

In the face of the Communist challenge we must examine honestly the weaknesses of traditional capitalism. In all fairness, we must admit that capitalism has often left a gulf between superfluous wealth and abject poverty, has created conditions permitting necessities to be taken away from the many to give luxuries to the few, and has encouraged smallhearted men to become cold and conscienceless so that like Dives before Lazarus, they are unmoved by suffering, poverty-stricken humanity. Although through social reform American capitalism is doing much to reduce such tendencies, there is much yet to be accomplished. God intends that all of his children shall have the basic necessities for meaningful, healthy life. Surely it is unChristian and unethical for some to wallow in the soft beds of luxury while others sink in the quicksands of poverty.

The profit motive, when it is the sole basis of an economic system, encourages a cutthroat competition and selfish ambition that inspires men to be more concerned about making a living than making a life. It can make men so I-centered that they no longer are Thou-centered. Are we not too prone to judge success by the index of our salaries and the size of the wheel base or our automobiles, and not by the quality of our service and relationship to humanity? Capitalism may lead to practical materialism that is as destructive as the theoretical materialism taught by Communism.

We must honestly recognize that truth is not to be found either in traditional capitalism or in Marxism. Each represents a partial truth. Historically, capitalism failed to discern the truth in collective enterprise and Marxism failed to see the truth in individual enterprise. Nineteenth-century capitalism failed to appreciate that life is social, and Marxism failed, and still fails, to see that life is individual and social. *The Kingdom of God is neither the thesis of individual enterprise nor the antithesis of collective enterprise, but a synthesis which reconciles the truth of both.*

> ***"Racial prejudice is a blatant denial of the unity which we have in Christ, for in Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, Negro nor White."***

Finally we are challenged to dedicate our lives to the cause of Christ even as the Communists dedicate theirs to Communism. We who cannot accept the creed of the Communists recognize their zeal and their commitment to a cause, which they believe will create a better world. They have a sense of purpose and destiny, and they work passionately and assiduously to win others to Communism. How many Christians are as concerned to win others to Christ? Often we have neither zeal for Christ nor zest for his kingdom. For so many Christians, Christianity is a Sunday activity having no relevancy for Monday and the church is little more than a secular social club having a thin veneer of religiosity. Jesus is an ancient symbol whom we do the honor of calling Christ, and yet his Lordship is neither affirmed nor acknowledged by burning in the hearts of all Christians with the same intensity as the Communist fire is burning in the hearts of Communists! Is Communism alive in the world today because we have not been Christian enough?

We need to pledge ourselves anew to the cause of Christ. We must recapture the spirit of the early church. Wherever the early Christians went, they made a triumphant witness for Christ. Whether on the village streets or in the city jails, they daringly proclaimed the good news of the gospel. Their reward for this audacious witness was often the excruciating agony of lion's den or the poignant pain of a chopping block, but they continued in a faith that they had discovered a cause so great and had been transformed by a Savior so divine that even death was not too great a sacrifice. When they entered a town, the power structure became disturbed. Their new gospel brought the refreshing, warmth of spring to men whose lives had been hardened by the long winter of traditionalism. They urged men to revolt against old systems of injustice and old structures of immorality. When the rulers objected, these strange people, intoxicated with the wine of God's grace, continued to proclaim the gospel until even men and women in Caesar's household were convinced, until jailers dropped their keys, and until kings trembled on their thrones. T.R. Glover has written that the early Christians "out-thought, out-lived, and out-died" everyone else.

Where is that kind of fervor today? Where is that kind of daring, revolutionary commitment to Christ today? Is it hidden behind smoke screens and altars? Is it buried alive in a grave called respectability? Is it inextricably bound with nameless status quos and imprisoned within cells of stagnant mores? This devotion must again be released. Christ must once more be enthroned in our lives.

This is our best defense against communism. War is not the answer. Communism will never be defeated by the use of atomic bombs or nuclear weapons. Let us not join those who shout war and who through their misguided passions urged the United States to relinquish its participation in the United Nations. These are days when Christians must evince wise restraint and calm reasonableness. We must not call everyone a Communist or an appeaser who recognizes that hate and hysteria are not the final answers to the problems of these turbulent days. We must not engage in a negative anti-Communism, but rather in a positive thrust for democracy, realizing that our greatest defense against Communism is to take offensive action in behalf of justice and righteousness. After our condemnation of the philosophy of Communism must with positive action seek to remove those conditions of poverty, insecurity, and racial discrimination which are the fertile soil in which the seed of Communism grows and develops. Communism thrives only when the doors of opportunity are closed and human aspirations are stifled. Like the early Christians, we must move into a sometimes hostile world armed with the revolutionary gospel of Jesus Christ. With this powerful gospel we shall boldly challenge the status quo and unjust mores and thereby speed the day when "every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill be made low: and the crooked shall be make straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed."

Our hard challenge and our sublime opportunity is to bear witness to the spirit of Christ in fashioning a truly Christian world. If we accept the challenge with devotion and valor, the bell of history will toll for Communism, and we shall make the world safe for democracy and secure for the people of Christ.