Christians went on to become present-day Communists, because in the name of Christianity they were taught equality, justice, and brotherhood which the Communists establish more quickly — if these mission schools had presented the doctrines of the New Testament and the true Kingdom of God as a spiritual kingdom, they would have served the cause of Christ and liberty instead of the caus eof Communism.

LESSON 2

In "Men and Ideas" we have a comparison and also a contrast between "Jesus" and Marx. Here Jesus Christ is "a young revolutionist." He is simply going to do a better job than Marx in the same field where Marx operated. It must be said, first, that the parallel is an insult to Jesus Christ. And, second, that the contrast fails to present the true contrast between Christ, the eternal Son of God, and Marx, who is nothing more than a son of Satan and who has been doing the works of the Devil.

Blasphemous Comparisons

What is said here concerning Jesus Christ ought to be offensive to anyone who looks to Him as his personal Saviour and Lord. The commandments of Jesus Christ are not related in any way to Marx or his Manifesto.

Under the subtitle, "Two Revolutionists" we are told: "Jesus and Marx each lived in a time of social crisis, when old patterns of political power and social organization were breaking down. Each believed that a new order lay within the reach of man. One called this the kingdom of God; the other called it a classless society." There cannot possibly be any parallel or likeness between the Kingdom of God as offered by Jesus Christ, and a classless society as offered by Marx. One is free and spiritual, the other is a slave compound.

Then we are told: "Both men were Jews. Both recognized the reality and importance of the material world, the force of history, the need for social and moral reform." They did nothing of the kind. Jesus Christ talked about the power of God, not the force of history. He talked about men being dead in their trespasses and sins, without any power of their own.

Then the lesson continues with what could not possibly be anything more than blasphemy, "Both revealed a messianic sense of destiny, of purpose for their lives."

We move down into the next paragraph and Marx is hailed as a profound scholar with certain critical gaps of inconsistency; but, "In cultural and historical terms, Jesus' outlook was more limited." And then, "To be sure, both men," we are told, "drew on their heritage of Old Testament prophecy to denounce evils in the world. But Marx filled his tirades with hatred; Christ tempered his condemnations with love."

The conclusion of this second lesson says, "Where Marx attacked individuals, groups, and nations with scorn, Jesus has won them with love."

Apparently the author of this article has never read the 23rd chapter of Matthew where those whom Jesus rebuked and attacked because of their sin joined in the cry, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" We are told, "But where Marx offered class warfare, Christ offers reconciliation." But not reconciliation between those who defend freedom and those who champion tyranny, because the two cannot be reconciled.

It is impossible to believe, as this Methodist quarterly says, "Indeed, both were humanitarians who held out to all mankind the promise of a more abundant life." Marx was no humanitarian, never was, and it is impossible even to consider him as such. His system is a slave system.

In conclusion, it should be observed that what this lesson seeks to do is to win men to follow the Christ who was like

LESSON 2

Men and Ideas

Daily Bible Readings

Monday: Deuteronomy 32:16-22; the consequences of worshiping false gods.
Tuesday: Isaiah 53:1-12; the mission of the Suffering Servant.
Wednesday: Matthew 4:1-10; the temptations of Christ—and of men.
Thursday: Matthew 23:1-12; on why the greatest shall be the servant of all.
Friday: Luke 9:18-25; "Who do you say that I am?"
Saturday: Matthew 5:1-13; the Christian Manifesto.
Sunday: Matthew 5:14-24; the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

The Question

Today's lesson is the second in a five-session unit (Unit X) on "Christianity and Communism," by Creighton Lacy. The purpose of this unit is to help adults understand the origins, history, and teachings of communism, to compare the teachings and systems of communism with Christianity, and to show the religious nature of communism.

Today's question is: *In what respects have Christians been guilty of a wide gap between theory and practice?*

A SPECTRE IS HAUNTING EUROPE—the spectre of communism. All the powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre." These are the opening words of *The Communist Manifesto,* a brief tract which may rival the Sermon on the Mount as the most influential writing in human history. Substitute "the world" for "Europe" and it will sound like 1962 instead of 1848. However, this was not a dire warning, as we would interpret it today; it was a stirring call to action. The document ends with a challenge which still echoes around the globe: "The workers [proletarians] have nothing to lose . . . but their chains. They have a world to win."

Communism was not a formidable threat to Europe when two young Germans, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, got together to draft an appeal to working men. Ideals of equality and brotherhood had existed for many centuries in many forms. Old Testament prophets had warned the rich against exploiting the poor. New Testament communities had experimented, briefly at least, with "possessing all things in common" (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-37), as an expression of the love they had found in Christ. Monastic orders and Utopian societies based on sharing had waxed and waned.

The early nineteenth century witnessed a succession of movements termed socialistic, including Christian Socialism, but the Communist League which commissioned this far-reaching *Manifesto* was only a few years old. It is doubtful if any member, even Marx himself, realized what a propaganda bomb had exploded in 1848.