

"THE FALSE DIVISIONS"

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I am most pleased to be here this evening in your quietly yet potently reverent sanctuary. I am pleased because your Minister, his wife, my wife, and I have been welded together in friendship in our mutual participation in the causes of our community. I am pleased to be here because I am a resident of this particular neighborhood, and it is important to me as a resident - that my community have its full share of active churches and synagogues dedicated to the service of God.

I am honored to be here because I am a witness to another faith, and it took a special openness and magnanimity on your part to invite me to share this moment with you. Such hospitality is not common.

I suspect that one of the reasons I have been asked to say a few words tonight is that your Minister knows that I hold a certain view about the world and its people. It is my view that the world is split by false divisions. Most people think that one of the necessary divisions of our world is that of national blocs. As a result of this thinking, North Vietnamese hate South Vietnamese, and vice versa. Russians hate Americans, and vice versa. Israelis are suspicious of the Arab nations, and vice versa. It seems to me that these national enclaves are false divisions which separate some people who think very much alike. DeGaulle, for example, as the French leader, seems to be solidly

anti-American, but many of the French people are pro-American and are envious of our working democracy. Some of the Arab leaders, for political reasons, wish to eliminate the Israelis, but many of the Arabs cannot help but admire the way in which the Israelis have made a garden of their share of the desert, and these Arabs long to imitate the productiveness of the Israelis, if only their leaders would help them to do this. Even while North and South Vietnamese soldiers shoot guns at each other, the vast majority of the population of both North and South is concerned primarily with raising enough rice in order to keep body and soul together. National divisions have pitted people against each other when they really ^{pray} for and need the same kind of things.

The real divisions of the world are in other kinds of categories than those which seem to prevail. There is, for example, a category of men who think that might makes right. They are a small minority in every country, and, in some countries they control the military. Over against them is a category of men who think that all men must share in the important labors of mankind, and there is a group of these people in every country. There is a category of men who seek materialistic gain above all else, and there is a category of men who prefer to give allegiance to spiritual values. Some men in each of these categories are found in every country. The real divisions in our world are not geographical but on a value basis. The true categories are not ~~spatial~~ ^{SPATIAL} but qualitative.

The true categories have to do with ideals, with human feelings, with understanding and sensitivity. Some people are capable of sympathy, others are not. Some people are able to give love. Others are not. I have said to the Rev. Zimmerman that in one sense, the division of men into religious groupings, by title, is a false division. For not a large percentage of Jews are true to the Jewish religion, and if I may say so, not a large percentage of Christians are true to the Christian religion. Hypocrites abound in every religious group, and Pharisees who play the game of empty ceremonialism are found in every religious group in every age. Religious denominations are not the true boundaries setting men apart. The true categories, in this sense, are not nominative, but qualitative, spiritual. There are some Jews who truly seek to love their neighbor and God. There are some Christians who truly seek the same. These minority groups, within their own larger groups, have more in common with each other, than they have with some of their own compatriots. The true division of men is into one group that believes that man is made in the image of God and the other that believes that man is just an animal to be manipulated to one's own ends. The true division of men is into one group that believes God authored this world for a continuing purpose, while another group believes that we are just a dried out cinder shot off from the sun, a queer arrangement of atoms which began for no good reason and exists for no valid reason.

I think your Minister invited me here tonight because he senses

show I believe *he believes*
~~of me~~, as I sense ~~of him~~, that the most meaningful and enduring categories

cut across some of the older categories that previously we have thought to be unchangeable and inviolate. This does not mean that we can not each continue as Christian and as Jew, each seeking his distinctive road to God, but it does mean that in this world of hydrogen bombs, racial civil war, and genocide of peoples it is now mandatory that all men accept the fact that in addition to operating within our self-chosen, and particularistic categories, we have also to operate in the more universal categories. In brief, we must not only love our neighbors, we must truly love mankind. It is because I know that this is the mood in which this Sanctuary is dedicated that I am honored to be here tonight.