

"It's Better To Hear The Music"

"Believe me, my boy, when I say what happens on the outside is not as important as what happens on the inside---." The young man looked up into the soft, gentle eyes of the man of God who had uttered these words. He found comfort there; but as soon as he turned his eyes away, he felt cold and bare once again.

He was the marginal man. Doubt clouded his mind. Should he accept the scientific explanation of the Universe and God, or should he hold on to the religious teachings which Society had forced him to accept? He had gone to the Bible for solace, but he was dissatisfied with what he had found. There were too many contradictions. After all, he reasoned, The Bible is only a history formulated by man. Its stories were written by men who supposedly knew the facts. But did they? It was too probable that these Biblical accounts were but folktales handed down from generation to generation by mouth and finally put on paper much altered and exaggerated. No**the Bible was not enough. Still he had been taught religion since his birth, and it is difficult to let go of something with which you have so long been associated.

Were the scientists right? The reasoning of Newton, Einstein, and Leibnitz was almost perfect, yet their theories were but the opinions and ideas of men. They could easily be mistaken. Science, however, had logic to offer. Religion appealed to his soul,--Science to his mind.

He was unhappy. That is why this young man of eighteen had come to his preacher to speak frankly. He wanted to know the truth. To his active mind uncertainty was torture. He did not want to form a definite philosophy, however, that would not satisfy him. The explanation he finally accepted must be concrete and lasting. It must be invulnerable to all attacks--to all doubts and fears.

He looked up again into the comforting eyes of the man to whom he

had come for help.

The preacher spoke once again, "Religion is concerned with what is on the inside. Science treats of what is on the outside. Both are a means to the same end. Both are part of an intensive search for Truth. Both seek to part the veil of mystery that surrounds God and the Universe. Both ask who is God? What is He? One takes the beauty of it all and moulds it into an interpretation that satisfies the soul.--that is Religion. One accepts nothing, analyzes everything, and forms only involved theories that appeal not to the soul but to the mind--that is Science.

"Scientists sometimes ridicule the possibility of a hereafter. Scientists claim that a man and a mouse are made of the same stuff, and that they mean the same thing. They are of equal unimportance.

"Well, if a Moses and a mouse are of equal unimportance, and there be nothing after, I could but preach of the world as Dante of his Hell-- 'Abandon hope, all ye who enter here.'

"To me, my son, Science seems to solve nothing. The more and more men of Science learn, the farther they seem from their goal. The more they see the light, the greater the darkness becomes. What they know is pitiably little of what they never will know.

"Science is not enough, because it isn't a smileable of singable plan of meaning. He who believes in Science only can see nothing but facts and dust. But he who believes in Religion sees Beauty; he can hear the music. That is why we should all follow Religion, son. It is better--much better--to hear the music, to hear the band playing and know that you are in step in this vast parade of humanity than to hear the music not ^{at} all--but to see only dust."

From time to time the young man was wont to interrupt this humble speaker and express unsatisfied doubts lingering in his heart. "What of prayer?" he asked. "Does prayer actually do any good? Does God hear

our prayers?"

To this the preacher answered frankly, "Does prayer do any good? Ask almost any woman, and she will tell you--'Yes'. Ask any man who has had to fight against circumstances, and he will tell you--'Yes'. Some of us are skeptical when we are enjoying good fortune and call upon God's name only to curse Him. But how quickly we turn to our Heavenly Father and ask Him to help us when we are in trouble. We pray to Him, because he is the only thing to which we can pray. He is listening, my boy, listening---because someone must listen to the pleas of pitiful man. There must be a God who must listen,--or there is reason in nothing."

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The boy held the gaze of the speaker for a minute longer. Slowly he turned his eyes away. He was no longer afraid. No longer uncertain. ~~This kind man of God had given him the answer to his fears in one sentence:~~ God is because He must be. If believing in God meant comfort, why not believe in God? It was foolish of him to rack his brain over something he could never prove. God and Religion are beautiful; therefore, they are surely the most acceptable answer.

The young man thanked his benefactor. He bade the preacher good-by. The door leading from the preacher's study to the street closed. On the outside stood a young man imbued with hope, resolved to go good, impressed *as he had never been impressed* by the word-- "God". He would go out into the world a righteous, resourceful soul, well-satisfied.

On the inside of that door the elderly man, the preacher, stood where the boy had left him. It was not distinguishable whether it was a tear or a sparkle that caused his eyes to gleam. He seemed to be praying, and it sounded something like, "Dear God, please let him believe. Spare him the torture of uncertainty that I once had. Let him not doubt. Show him as You showed me that You are the One and ~~sixx~~ Only. Erase his fears

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Let him be able to say, "I have heard of Thee, and now mine eyes have
seen Thee."--- ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ and neither time nor circumstances
can rob him of his convictions!"

HvB