

# Christ or Chaos?

by Russell DeLong

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*The sermon emphasizes the need for a moral and spiritual renaissance in the face of the atomic age, and presents Christianity as the solution to the problem of sin and destruction.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:10, Isaiah 1:18, Romans 6:6, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 4:22, Titus 3:5, Hebrews 10:22, James 4:8, 1 John 1:9, Revelation 21:5

**Topics:** "Personal Repentance", "Spiritual Revival"

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## Description

Russell DeLong preaches about the urgent need for personal confession of sins and the cleansing of our innermost nature to avoid the destructive power of sin and the potential devastation of the atomic bomb. He emphasizes the importance of full salvation, which includes both forgiveness of sins and purification of the heart, as highlighted in 1 John 1:9. DeLong calls for a revival of religion and moral practice to bring about a spiritual renaissance that is essential for the survival of humanity in the face of technological advancements like the atomic bomb.

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## Transcript

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9)

"I'm a frightened man," says Dr. Harold C. Urey, Professor of Chemistry at the University of Chicago, writing in a recent issue of Collier's magazine (January 5, 1946). He opens his sobering article with these astonishing words, "I write this to frighten you. I'm a frightened man myself. All the scientists I know are frightened -- frightened for their lives -- frightened for your life." Dr. Urey played an important part in the discovery and development of the atomic bomb. He says, "As a scientist I tell you there must never be another war." Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, Professor of Physics at the California Institute of Technology, says, "There are no specific counter measures for atomic bombs." He adds, "There never will be." Dr. Arthur Compton, Nobel prize winner, told Congress that "control must insure that nations which have atomic bombs will never

use them." But how can this assurance be guaranteed?

It is all very dangerous and very frightening business. Dr. Urey is justified in being

frightened and is doing a valuable thing to frighten us to the danger of the present situation.

There is a better way to live than the world has yet discovered. The history of the human race has been that of perpetual crime, horrible murders, cowardly suicides, and constantly recurring wars. And now the atomic bomb. Humanity has progressively and scientifically devised better and more terrible means to obliterate the enemy. Look at the record -- stones, bow and arrow, spears, swords, firearms, machine guns, increasingly large caliber guns, tanks, aircraft, rocket bombs, battleships, and finally atomic bombs. For every offensive weapon a new defensive implement was devised -- shields, forts, heavy-armored warships, antitank guns, antiaircraft guns, radar.

The past century has witnessed phenomenal scientific progress in the fields of mechanics, hygiene, and medicine. But little progress, if any, has been made morally and religiously.

Someone has aptly suggested that we declare a scientific holiday for one hundred years until we can bring our morals abreast of our science. To retard scientific progress arbitrarily is unthinkable, but to increase moral practice and religious life is absolutely imperative if the race is to survive.

A revival of religion is not merely the cry of churchmen but is the demand of scientists if we are to escape complete annihilation.

Not only are scientists and religionists sensing the necessity of a moral and spiritual renaissance but also statesmen and politicians, educators and criminologists, jurists and businessmen, statisticians and columnists.

President Truman, in his Christmas address at the lighting of the White House Christmas tree, said to the nation, "I do not believe there is one problem in this country -- in the world -- today which could not be settled if approached through the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. Would that the world would accept that message in this time of greatest need."

Drew Pearson, the famous columnist in his Christmas message entitled, "World Choice --

Christian Principles or Destruction," says, "The atomic bomb offers the world two alternatives: (1) We can get into another war and see the globe made into a ball of fire by the hand of man himself, or (2) We can use practical Christianity to prevent war, and by harnessing the energy of the atomic bomb make the world a virtual Garden of Eden."

A very interesting and suggestive cartoon appeared recently graphically depicting old man 1945 making his exit and the babe 1946 making his entrance. Unrolling a scroll listing the outstanding events of the past year with the atomic bomb blown up in large type is a man representing the Future. He is pondering on the problem, "How can we control the Atomic bomb." Down in the lower left corner of the cartoon the artist has drawn a fierce, desperate sensuous, cruel appearing man who defiantly asserts, "No way has been found to control the old Adam." The old Adam plus the atomic bomb can turn this world into a hell.

What is the old Adam? It is called by various names -- "old Adamic nature," "the old man," "native depravity," "carnality," "the principle of sin," and "inbred sin." In brief, these terms refer to the nature of

man. Sin is twofold -- inherited and committed. The bent toward sin is constitutional. The act of sin is volitional. The sins I premeditatively commit must be forgiven before I can be justified before God. But my sinful nature which causes me to commit sinful acts must be cleansed. Complete salvation is a two-fold matter.

If a man is drowning I have two necessary things to do -- I must get the man out of the water and then I must get the water out of the man. In bringing to man full salvation -- first I must get the man out of the ocean of sin and then I must get the sin out of the man. If I get the man out of the water and neglect to get the water out of the man he will expire. If I get the man out of sin but fail to get the sin out of the man, it will not be long until he is back committing sins. St. John puts it thus in his First Epistle: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

There we have full, complete salvation -- forgiveness and cleansing -- justification before

God and purification of the heart. Forgiveness of our sins -- plural -- our committed acts - thank God, He will forgive -- wipe out -- cast them in the sea of His forgetfulness to be remembered against us no more forever. We then stand legally before God as though we had never committed a sinful act. But St. John also says that God will do more than forgive us our sins, He will also "cleanse us from all unrighteousness." That corrupt, depraved nature -- the old Adam -- that which causes us to commit sinful acts -- can be cleansed. Forgiveness is a forensic, judicial, legal act changing our relationship to God from a sinner -- a rebel -- to a son. Cleansing is a work wrought in us whereby the old Adam is crucified, killed, extirpated, eradicated -- and our innermost nature

is purified.

The Wesleys taught and spread this glorious truth resulting in a sweeping revival which

saved England from a revolution. Toplady incorporated it in that great universally loved hymn, "Rock of Ages." Notice this verse:

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,

Let me hide myself in Thee;

Let the water and the blood,

From Thy wounded side which flowed,

Be of sin the double cure,

Save from wrath and make me pure.

There it is -- twofold deliverance -- "save from wrath" by forgiving my transgressions, and "make me pure" by cleansing my innermost nature -- the double cure.

The control of the atomic bomb is possible by the elimination of the old Adamic nature.

The old Adamic nature can use the new atomic bomb to annihilate the race. Or the old Adamic nature can be cleansed and man can use the new atomic bomb to rejuvenate the race. Atomic power can bring a new day to civilization. Adamic use of atomic power can bring an end to civilization.

Yes, Drew Pearson's article is timely, "Why not try Christianity?" President Truman's

Christmas plea is vital -- we must solve our problems as he says, "In this time of greatest need," by putting in operation the "teaching of the Sermon on the Mount." True.

But how? You can't just "try Christianity." You can't just resolve to follow the Sermon on

the Mount. You can't just say, "I'll forget the past," and resolve to live differently. You must repent of your sinful acts and stop your sinful living. The Reader's Digest carried this pertinent quotation recently, "Repentance was perhaps best defined by a small girl: 'It's to be sorry enough to quit.' "

You must be a Christian before you can successfully "try Christianity." You must have

Christ in your heart before you can carry out His ideals. Here is the promise made by God, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This is personal. It is for you.

Our nation -- our world -- needs God. We need to humble ourselves and seek Him. We

must come away from our sinfulness and kneel at the foot of the Cross of Calvary seeking His forgiveness. We need the purifying fire of God's Holy Spirit to burn out of our nature the old Adamic tendencies.

Will we pay the price for vital, soul-transforming, life-changing religion or will we pay the price of complete and terrible destruction by the atomic bomb in the hands of sinful men?

The cleansing of human nature is a personal matter. I must confess my sins. God will

forgive me. I must acknowledge my need of inward cleansing. The blood of Christ is available for complete cleansing. Do you believe it? Can you cry out with Phoebe Palmer

Oh! now I see the crimson wave,

The fountain deep and wide;

Jesus, my Lord, mighty to save,

Points to His wounded side.

I see the new creation rise,

I hear the speaking blood;

It speaks! polluted nature dies!

Sinks 'neath the cleansing flood.

I rise to walk in heaven's own light

Above the world and sin,

With heart made pure, and garments white,

And Christ enthron'd within.

Amazing grace! 'tis heav'n below

To feel the blood applied,

And Jesus, only Jesus know,

My Jesus crucified.

Let us all approach Christ just now. If you need forgiveness, confess your sins to Him. If

you need to have that internal, Adamic nature cleansed, make your prayerful plea. His blood can avail for you.

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