

# The Church Man in the World

by Walter S. Goode

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*The church man has a great responsibility to be a positive influence in the world, representing Christ and the church.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 31:8, Micah 6:8, Matthew 5:13, Ephesians 5:8, Colossians 3:12

**Topics:** "Christian Living", "Social Justice"

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## Description

Walter S. Goode delivers a powerful sermon urging men of the church to embrace their responsibility as the salt and light of the world, emphasizing the impact of their actions on others' perception of Christ and the church. He calls for purity in speech and life, strength in facing challenges without surrender, a commitment to justice as a form of true charity, and kindness towards all as a reflection of the common kinship among humanity. Goode highlights the urgent need for church men to address societal injustices and uplift the marginalized, echoing Christ's call to be beacons of light in a dark world.

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## Transcript

Luna Park, Tuesday Afternoon, October 12.

Men of the church, yours is a great responsibility; yours is a priceless privilege; yours is a precious trust. Upon you the world's welfare largely rests. "You are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

The church man in the world is an unanswerable argument for or against Christ and the church.

Brethren, we are "epistles known and read of all men." We may tell many things to men. We teach men only what we are.

My brothers, this world that we would win is no empty weakling. It has a mind of its own; it has ideals. We have a message for it. It has a word for us. It makes demands of us. It says:

1. Men of the church, you must be clean--pure in speech and life. It knows instinctively that purity is an essential part of worthy religion. Cæsar was not pure, but Cæsar's wife must be above suspicion.

We are men, but we are Christian men; we are in the world, but we dare not be of the world. Its evil communications, its shameful speakings, its filthy, foolish jesting, are not for us. These are ours no more

than is its spirit of sordid, selfish gain and sinful pleasures.

2. Men of the church, you must be strong. The world worships strength, and is led only by strong men. The strong man is he who knows his task and gives himself to it. In the language of the day, he "does things." He "brings things to pass." He "gets there." He "delivers the goods." He is no "quitter." Difficulties inspire him. Obstacles and enemies enthuse him. His wishbone is all backbone. He may be defeated, but is never conquered. He may lose a battle, but not the war. He may die, but never surrenders.

3. Men of the church, you must be just. The world's finest ideal to-day is justice among men. Once the church stood for sweet charity; to-day it must stand for clear-eyed, clean-handed justice, or lose its leadership.

Dimly the world sees that justice is the only true charity, for justice is of Jesus Christ.

Is there industrial injustice to-day? Who should be so awake to it as church men!

Are the weak oppressed by force and fraud? Are the poor, the ignorant, exploited,

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sold by graft and greed? Who should know and feel it like the church man? And who first should sound the war-cry and unsheathe the cleansing sword of right?

Do housing conditions condemn multitudes of men, women and little ones to lives of filth and weakness, shame and crime? Who, if not the church, should hear the bitter, silent cry of these submerged ones for whom Christ died?

4. Men of the church, you must be kind. The world begins to feel a common kinship, to realize the oneness of the race.

We must be kind. We must correct error, but we must remember it is a brother's error we correct. We must denounce wrong, but we must not forget it is the wrong of a brother. We must destroy injustice, but it must be done with the sympathetic heart of the surgeon who seeks to save, who wounds to heal.

That church man who lends his tongue to venom and vituperation, who fills the air of holy conflict with unholy epithet and unbrotherly accusation, or who dips his pen in acid when he writes [95] of the mistakes and failings of his fellows, forgets his Christ, betrays his cause, loses his case in the judgment of this world.

To-day our world-wide fight is on. The hosts of death and darkness grapple with the hosts of light and life. The conflict deepens. The crisis comes. Our captain, Christ, is signaling, "The destiny of the kingdom, the destiny of the world, the destiny of countless millions of the souls of men, depend upon to-day. Let every man of mine give forth his best. Lo, I am with you. Follow me."

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