

The Blessing of Friends

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the laws in themselves will be of no avail. Again as a minister and in order to perform this paradoxical function, I must, at the risk of being misunderstood by the more legalistic members of the churches, forego the self-preservative comforts afforded the legalist. I must accept the social responsibilities that come with the kind of religious interpretation that seeks the spirit rather than the letter of Divine Truth, its meaning and purpose rather than merely its language and symbols. The one gives life; the other kills and destroys.

Those against whom legislation is passed, are usually termed by the legislators the sinful hence are forced into taking advantage of the situation brought about by the legalist and their minds are beguiled and are forced to make their acts, not usually so terrible, all the more sinful in the eyes of the legalist by devising ways and means of skirting the laws enacted.

The ethical teachings of Jesus, the moral and ethical code of the Jewish people, the same of the Buddhists or members of any other ethical religion, never intended the minister to assume the role of a legalistic judge. When one does, he places himself in the seat of one whose only function is to penalize and excommunicate. People must be allowed the privilege to convict themselves or the meaning and philosophy that we as children of one Creator have a free will has no meaning.

Let us be very certain we who perform this pioneering work do not place ourselves in the seats of judges and render decisions more terrible than those rendered by our present civil courts against the Minority for whom we are setting ourselves the task to liberate.

Wallace David.

(By Kind permission of «One».

The Blessing of Friends

«They seem to take away the sun from the world who withdraw friendship from life; for we have received nothing better from the Immortal Gods, nothing more delightful.» (Cicero.)

Most of those who have written in praise of books have thought they could say nothing more conclusive than to compare them to friends. All men, said Socrates, have their different objects of ambition — horses, dogs, money, honour, as the case may be; but for his own part he would rather have a good friend than all these put together. And again, men know «the number of their possessions, although they might be very numerous, but of their friends, though but few, they were not only ignorant of the number, but even when they attempted to reckon it to such as asked them, they set aside again some that they had previously counted among their friends; so little did they allow their friends to occupy their thoughts. Yet in comparison with what possession, of all others, would not a good friend appear far more valuable?»

«As to the value of other things,» says Cicero, «most men differ; concerning friendship all have the same opinion. What can be more foolish

than, when men are possessed of great influence by their wealth, power, and resources, to procure other things which are bought by money - horses, slaves, rich apparel, costly vases - and not to procure friends, the most valuable and fairest furniture of life?» And yet, he continues, «every man can tell how many goats or sheep he possesses, but not how many friends.» In the choice, moreover, of a dog or of a horse, we exercise the greatest care: we inquire into its pedigree, its training and character, and yet we too often leave the selection of our friends, which is of infinitely greater importance — by whom our whole life will be more or less influenced either for good or evil — almost to chance.

Much certainly of the happiness and purity of your lives depends on our making a wise choice of our companions and friends. If badly chosen they will inevitably drag us down; if well they will raise us up. Yet many people seem to trust in this matter to the chapter of accident. It is well and right, indeed, to be courteous and considerate to every one with whom we are brought into contact, but to choose them as real friends is another matter. Some seem to make a man a friend, or try to do so, because he is in the same business, travels on the same line of railway, or for some other trivial reason. There cannot be a greater mistake. These are only, in the words of Plutarch «the idols and images of friendship.»

(Avebury: «The Pleasures of Life».)

«Of course the United States are not the land of honey and tolerance. And if we are now in the category of dope-addicts I'd say things are looking very fine for us. Only ten years ago we were considered to be among the criminally insane! In ten more years they may decide we're harmless entirely like idiots and morons!

My best wishes to the Swiss editor and my prayers for his enterprise's continued success.»

(From the letter of an American friend.)

The Heart in Exile

a new Novel on the homosexual theme by Rodney Garland

It is with very great pleasure that we make readers of «Der Kreis» acquainted with an exceptionally good new novel on the homosexual theme. It is Rodney Garland's «The Heart in Exile», (W. H. Allen and Co., London, 12/6 sh.) Among the ever increasing number of fiction dealing with the same theme this book ranks very high indeed, both in its literary quality and the message it conveys. The story of the book, told with nearly all the tense excitement of a detective story, runs briefly as follows: a London doctor is asked by a young woman to try and find out why her fiancé has to all appearances committed suicide. This request meets the doctor on an unexpected level. Without the young woman knowing anything about it, the dead man and the doctor had been lovers, some ten years earlier, when they had both been students. The doctor