

Man Sent of God

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Jesus went down from Nazareth to Jerusalem with Joseph and Mary to attend the Passover. After the feast the parents started home with their kindred and neighbors. At the close of the first day's journey, they found the boy missing; alarmed and sorrowing they returned, and after three days of anxious, fearful searching they found their twelve-year-old son in the temple talking with the priests and teachers there. His mother gently but firmly reproved him saying, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold thy father and I sought thee sorrowing." Note his reply, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

This wonderful answer clearly reveals that he was deeply imbued with the purpose of his earthly mission, Already his soul was awakened to the divine responsibility of protection for others, a responsibility that is the very essence of manhood. Even then he felt that he was his brother's keeper.

These significant words, spoken by a mere child, give us a true index to the meaning of Luke's short account of the boyhood of the Son of God: "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." The earnestness and high purpose born of the noble conviction that he was sent into the world to do his Father's business were the life of the enthusiasm and inspiration which led him onward and upward to the highest destiny.

Every child should feel that he is a child of promise. Only so can he grow to the full measure of his manhood, and do his full part of the Father's business. The Father's work in this world lags and is slow in the doing, because his sons do not all feel that they are sent to do his will.

Once the boy's heart is fired with the testimony that God called and sent him here to do the Father's bidding, he will begin to rise to the high place in manhood's realm to which his divine sonship entitles him; and thus will he do his part of God's work. This will plant his feet firmly in the path of duty; it will save him in the hour of temptation, and hearten him during the nighttime of discouragement; it will guide him through the darkness of doubt, and keep him humble in the day of his prosperity and victory; thus leading him in the way of life until he attains the strength of the clean and pure.

We see that to be sent leads at once to accountability to the sender, God, for work of life entrusted. How this humbles and steadies one until his soul is imbued through and through with true reverence, the very fear of God, which fear is the seed that bears a harvest of faithfulness, an unyielding devotion to duty.

The conviction of "divine calling" is no less a power to sustain the man in the work, the struggles, and the sorrows of manhood, than it is to inspire the boy. In John's graphic account of the "Last Supper" Christ gives us his real prayer—the outpouring of his great

heart for the cause for which he had lived, and for which he was about to die. It may fittingly be called his dedication of that cause and of the men into whose hands he was committing his life's work. At the beginning and close of this eventful prayer he mentions the source and authority of his mortal mission.

Then, again, note that wonderful scene in the "garden," where Jesus had gone with his few chosen friends after this last supper and prayer, to the most vital struggle of the ages—the struggle upon which depended the redemption and salvation of the world. During the bloody sweat of such suffering as no other has ever borne, he turned to the Father, who sent him on his earth-mission, as the unfailing source of his help, as much as the judge of his work, and found comfort and strength to endure and go on by uniting his purpose with the eternal purpose of that Father. Thus in very deed becoming a full partner in co-operation with God for the salvation of man. How fully he became our Keeper, our Friend, our Savior! What else does his noble prayer, "Thy will be done," then and there, mean but this manly, yes, Godly recognition of the righteous authority of the One who sent him. Thus only could he be in the fullest measure the Son; thus only may we inherit the fullness of our Sonship.

In the life of our Prophet Joseph, in the marked influence that the noble conviction that he was sent of God had upon his whole life, we have an example that closely parallels that of the Master. It shaped the hopes and ideals of his boyhood, guided him in the way of truth, chastened him to purity in youth, and determined his devotions and godliness in manhood.

This sense of being sent into the world, divinely called to one's life-work, has not been confined to prophets or religious leaders alone. Washington bore suggestive witness that he must render accountability for his leadership to a higher power than man. He went to God for help in his stupendous task, and felt responsible to him for its successful accomplishment.

A living faith that he was destined to do great things was made part of Lincoln's every day life in his childhood; and the marks of this influence are seen throughout his remarkable career. In the hardest and darkest hours of the rebellion, he went to God for the strength and wisdom needed to save the Union.

During twenty years of close association, as friend and teacher, with our boys and girls just budding into manhood and womanhood, I have often listened to their hopeful, stirring words of life that came from hearts beating strong with the feeling that they were *sent* here each to do his special work. They were all imbued with the thought that God sent them to do some good, big work. Yes, I believe this feeling is an instinct planted of God, deeply rooted in life, even one of the abiding sources of life and character.

The peasant and the king, the unlettered son of toil and the scholar, the youth and the tried man of many years, the true man suffering defeat and failure, and the man of achievement, all bear witness to the mighty influence of the feeling of *being divinely called*. In 1913, before Columbia University, Pres. Henry Churchill King spoke these

words: "Still, so far as I can see, the essential fact of accountability forever abides. I can not resist the sense of calling, of divine vocation so involved. These plain facts of my nature themselves make me feel that in some high sense I am *sent* into the world."

I feel this sense of divine calling; you feel it; all who have attained in any high degree their manhood feel it; everywhere and always, all who have been dominated by the deep conviction that they are partners with God in the accomplishment of his great plans, feel it.

We are a blessed people in that we are not left to the witness of our God-given instincts and abiding impulses, nor the evidence of reason alone, for we have had revealed to us, through our own prophet, in certainty, that we are so *sent* into the world of God as messengers of salvation.

Just now, when all the world is shadowed by a deep sorrow, and most people everywhere are disturbed and shaken in their lives by the terrible world-war, can any son of "Mormondom," bearing the priesthood, escape the call of God to stand firm and unafraid before the world as a messenger of peace and truth and justice?

May we attain true fellowship with the Master, in the power to help every youth to feel with every fiber of his being that God *sent* him into the world to serve and share in the work of salvation. God bless us to stand in strength, like one of old, and say, "As God lives, and as we live, we will not return unto our Father, until we have done the work for which we were sent."

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Man Sent of God, *Improvement Era*, 1915, Vol. XVIII, September, 1915, No. 11.