

**ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH IN THE TOWN OF TONAWANDA, NY**  
**The Rev. Fr. Arthur W. Ward Jr., Rector**

**“THY KINGDOM COME: THE WITNESS OF CHURCH HISTORY”**

**THE MODERN AGE: “Revival, Revolution, and to the Ends of the Earth” (5)**

**IV. The Age of Ideology (the challenges of modernity)**

**C. Social Consequences of the Industrial Revolution**

If France had had a political revolution and Germany an intellectual revolution, it was Great Britain that had the Industrial Revolution. The Industrial Revolution caused tremendous social change. Factories meant cities, cities meant more people, and more people meant more problems. If new ideas in modern thought challenged the Christian Faith, so did modern technology. Since Britain had the markets and money for industrial production, one invention after another propelled it into the modern industrial age. The most important involved the harnessing of steam. **James Watt (1736 – 1819)** found a way to control the supply of steam and drive a piston back and forth in a closed cylinder. This allowed for the manufacturing of textiles and the driving of trains and ships. Now for the first time there was a way to power things without dependence on climate – wind and water. This led to the creation of factories which brought people into the cities from the country. Small town life and work dependent upon the sun were replaced by the regimentation of factory life and the factory whistle. The Industrial Revolution greatly increased wealth for a few but kept most in poverty. Long workdays (12-15 hours), unsafe working conditions (horrible cases of mangle were common) with no workman's compensation or health insurance available, plus the employment of women (even those pregnant) and children as young as four or five all contributed to terrible work and living environments.

**1. laissez faire capitalism** - the economic philosophy of *laissez faire* capitalism held that a “hands off” policy on business was best to allow for competition and that eventually everything would work out for the greater good for most people. This belief arose from Adam Smith's work, *Wealth of Nations*. The idea was that the state should not interfere in business and simply allow the laws of supply and demand rule. This, however, made the rich richer and the poor, poorer.

**2. socialism** - In response a new concept called socialism arose. It called for public or worker ownership of business. Harmony and cooperation should control economic affairs. Many early socialists believed in the goodness of the human heart and believed humans would naturally share and love each other. It was capitalist competition that was the problem. Of course, the real issue involved property. Does an individual have the right to own property? The Church had always taught that one does. God had given Abraham and his descendants land in what is known as the Abrahamic Covenant. The seventh and tenth commandments call on us not to steal and not to covet something that is another's.

Unlike the time of the Roman Empire, there were no bread or circuses to give the people. Rather, millions became dispossessed of property while a very few owned most of the land. Since the US Constitution, the French Revolution, and the English reforms of the 1830s which had stripped the Anglican Church of many of its traditional privileges all limited Church involvement in the government, the Church had been sidelined! And with it, its voice – for a time.

**3. communism** - one of the most rabid proponents of this new theory of socialism was **Karl Marx (1818-83)**. Born to German-Jewish parents who had converted to Christianity, he obtained his doctoral degree but failing to become a university professor he struggled as a journalist. He

traveled to France where he met a fellow German, **Friedrich Engles (1820-95)** son of a wealthy German factory owner. They began a lifelong friendship which centered around their proposals for establishing a socialist society. In 1848 they published their *Communist Manifesto* in which they presented scientific socialism or communism. It would be based on violence and class warfare. Those with wealth had to be overthrown. Christianity was seen as part of the problem, a tool used to oppress people with visions of reward in heaven for suffering on earth. In his *Manifesto*, Marx's following words of warning became a prophetic warning of what was to come: *"The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that all their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite!"* One hundred years later almost half of the world's population would be under communist governments.

**D. The Christian Response** – with many Christians capitalists and others holding to socialist views, the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches struggled with how to deal with both the shortcomings of capitalism and the goals of socialism. What developed among both Catholics and Protestants was desire to improve working conditions. Four lines of action took root: **1) the excesses of laissez faire capitalism could be challenged in the name of the gospel and Kingdom of God principles 2) establish ways to relieve the suffering of the poor and powerless 3) support the formation of labor unions 4) work for government legislation to protect workers and improve their working conditions.**

### 1. Roman Catholic

**a. German Bishop Wilhelm Ketteler (1811-1877)** addressed the plight of workers in his sermons and books. He wrote a book talking about what he called the *"Catholic Solution"* included highlighting the dangers of uncontrolled capitalism as well as state controlled socialism. He believed that state intervention for the former and the protecting the right of private ownership for the latter was necessary to check the abuses of either side. He insisted on the right of workers to form unions, and called for reasonable working hours, sufficient rest days, factory inspection, and the regulation of female and child labor.

**b. English Roman Catholic Archbishop Henry Edward Manning (1808-1892)** showed public support for farmworkers - a first for a Roman Catholic prelate. His work led to the passage of laws prohibiting the labor of children and regulating work hours. In the United States, Terrence Powderly became the leader of the first effect labor union, *the Knights of Labor*, mainly comprised of Roman Catholic members but open to all Americans. As noted earlier, due to the Revolutions sweeping Europe in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Pope Pius IX took a hostile stance toward labor unions. **Archbishop of Baltimore, James Gibbons (1834 – 1921)**, intervened on the side of the Knights and saved that union from papal condemnation. Finally, in 1891, **Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903)** addressed the questions of labor and economics. In his encyclical *"Rerum Novarum"* he acknowledges the terrible consequences of the Industrial Revolution. In it he rejected socialism and strongly affirmed the Christian family as the essential unit of society. He also affirmed the rights of Catholic workers to organize and bargain with owners, to earn a living wage and to have time off. This was the obligation of all capitalist businessmen and employers.

**2. Protestant** - there were many Protestants in Great Britain and the United States that supported the labor movement. Such support first came among the nonconformist (those who were not Anglican) denominations such as Methodists and Baptists. Labor unions were illegal until the 1850s. many Methodist lay preachers were the first leaders of the labor movement using the same organizing and communicating skills they used to spread the gospel and plant churches. Protestants were also instrumental in forming Christian orphanages and associations to promote temperance.

**a. William Booth (1829-1912) and the Salvation Army** – probably one of the most effective examples of Christian ministry to the poor and disenfranchised in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Booth began as a street preacher and by 1864 his preaching to the poor in London’s East end met with great success. A decade later he had established 32 stations promoting evangelism and social service among London’s destitute. He organized his workers like a military unit and as a result, were soon called the Salvation Army. His wife, Catherine, also preached alongside her husband which led to the recruitment and deployment of thousands of women for evangelism and service. Soon Evangelist Booth became “General” Booth. By 1888 Booth had one thousand British corps and had sent numerous “patrols” to many nations, including the US. His 1890 book, *“In Darkest England and the Way Out”* compared the social darkness of England to Africa’s darkness portrayed by David Livingstone, the famous explorer. He gave stark examples of London’s plight cataloging the following for one year – 2157 souls found dead, 2297 suicides, 30,000 living in prostitution, 160,000 convicted of drunkenness, 900,000 classed as paupers. Booth went on to describe his army’s expansive rescue efforts.

**b. The Church of England** – was slow to respond to the social crisis and the plight of urban growth. New churches could only be established by an act of Parliament, so the time and cost involved often meant that much of the lower classes remained outside the influence of the Anglican Church. However, within the Anglican Church three laymen – theologian F D Maurice (1805-72), novelist Charles Kingsley (1819-75), and lawyer John Malcom Ludlow (1821-1911) arose to form the Christian Socialist group which became the Christian Socialist movement. They criticized the *laissez faire* aspect of free enterprise. Kingsley wrote, *“Competition is put forth as the law of the universe. That is a lie. The time is come for us to declare that it is a lie, by word and deed.”* These men were not true socialists but rather believed that the gospel presented the true law of the universe which is that people are made to live in community and build and improve the environment around them through cooperation and compassion as fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. People are made to work with one another not compete against each other. Their movement lacked organization and was probably too idealistic in its view of human nature. However, their ideas took root in the United States in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see below). Eventually, reform came to Great Britain due to the efforts of many within the Body of Christ. Laws were passed in which no child under ten could work, women and children were limited to a ten-hour day, safety inspections were introduced in factories, as well as other protections. Such reforms came a bit later in the United States (see below) but like the abolition of slavery efforts a generation earlier were undoubtedly influenced by what first happened in the British Isles.

### **c. social action in the United States**

**1) the Social Gospel movement** - the ideas of the Christian Socialism movement spread to the United States and this desire for social justice led to what became known as the *Social Gospel* movement. It took root among liberal Protestant pastors and theological professors. It held that God’s saving work included addressing the corporate structures of society, not just the individual heart. Christians are not just called to repentance of individual sin but also called to work for the reordering of society for a more just and fair state. While revivalism of the earlier years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century led to personal spiritual transformation and the subsequent involvement in the anti-slavery and anti-alcohol crusades, as well as passion for overseas missions, more had to be done to address the plight of the urban poor and worker. The father of the movement was a Congregational minister named **Washinton Gladden (1836-1918)**. He wrote and published many books addressing the need for social action. He believed that the teachings of Jesus contained the principles for the right ordering of society. He supported the right to private property and enterprise but believed that many industries like railroads, mines, and public service industries of the cities should be operated by the government.

**2) Walter Rauschenbusch (1861-1918)** – a young Baptist pastor who served in a tenement section of New York City called Hell’s Kitchen. He later served as professor of church history at Rochester Theological Seminary where he published three major works that made his views nationally prominent. Unlike many liberal churchmen at the time, he did not see human progress as the hope but rather the principles of the Kingdom of God. He wrote, *“The social gospel is the old message of salvation, but enlarged and intensified. The individualistic gospel has taught us to see the sinfulness of every human heart and has inspired us with faith in the willingness and power of God to save every soul that comes to him. But it has not given us an adequate understanding of the sinfulness of the social order and its share in the sins of all individuals within it...The social gospel seeks to bring men under repentance for their collective sins and to create a more sensitive and more modern conscience.”* Such sentiments led to many seminaries changing their curricula to address social concerns. In 1908 the Federal Council of Churches was formed. Its first act was the adoption of a *“Social Creed of the Churches.”* It called for occupational safety, old age security, minimum wage, and the rights of arbitration.

**3) Phoebe Palmer (1807-74)** - unusual for the time, Phoebe Palmer was a Methodist woman evangelist who began her ministry by leading Bible studies in her home. She encouraged fellow believers to submit their whole lives to Christ, praying *“My all is upon Thine altar.”* Her spiritual awakening took hold after her daughter died in a crib fire. It moved her to fall on her knees before the Lord and cry out, *“Use me in whatever way you want.”* Eventually, her ministry led to speaking engagements in front of thousands. Her preaching led to revival with nearly a million coming to Christ. But spiritual holiness for Palmer involved more than just individual repentance, it also meant social justice. Ministering in New York’s notorious Five Points slum, her *Five Points Mission* provided housing, clothing, food, and education. She is considered the link between Wesleyan revivalism and modern Pentecostalism, and she is known as the mother of the Holiness movement within Methodist Christianity.

## V. The Church Becomes a Worldwide Movement

**A. Christian Witness in Africa and Asia** - as noted in earlier studies, the revivals in Great Britain and the United States spearheaded new endeavors in Christian overseas mission. William Carey with the help of others took the gospel to India. Thus, the passion that came for the lost, the improvements made by the Industrial Revolution, and the optimism of what became known as the Age of Progress, all led to the belief that the whole world could be evangelized. Voluntary Missions Associations cropped up everywhere. One notable example was *The Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions* whose motto was *“the evangelization of the world in this generation.”* Further motivation came from reports of those who visited lands in Africa, Asia, and the South Pacific.

**1, David Livingstone (1813-73)** – an Scottish doctor who sought to alleviate human suffering who prepared himself to be a missionary. He joined Robert Moffat in South Africa in 1841. However, he couldn’t settle down and set off to explore much of Africa documenting the various tribes and topography of the continent. Before he set out on his great journey, he wrote, *“I place no value on anything I have or may possess, except in relation to the kingdom of Christ.”* His reports of the spiritual darkness of Africa and the evils of the Arab slave trade motivated many to establish missions to Africa. His kind demeanor and patience paid off as he never had to resort to violence during his travels. He realized that the slave trade could not end unless the African tribes stopped in supplying slaves from weaker tribes.

**2. Mary Slessor (1848-1915)** – is one example among thousands of Protestants who became missionaries to Africa and Asia. Born in Dundee, Scotland to an abusive father and factory-working mother she worked twelve-hour shifts in a textile mill at age eleven. Later she taught Bible

classes for slum children. In 1876, the *Scottish Missionary Society* sent her to Calabar, Nigeria where she served with other missionaries for twelve years, adopting the language and customs of the natives. Later she worked among the Okyong tribe and the Ibo people, large numbers of whom became Christians. Her ministry helped end the practice of witchcraft and human sacrifice. She established a hospital and homes for abandoned and abused children, and abused women. She helped end an intertribal war and because she was the only white person, the tribes in the area trusted, she became the first female vice-consul of the British Empire.