

Is Protestantism in the Midst of a Revolution?

E. C. Davis

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Matthew 10:26. "Fear them not therefore. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known."

Status of religious bodies.

25 in Lancaster

Catholic

Protestant

Liberal

For 1800 years religion offered men an infallible guide of life, to be found in the Church, the Bible, and Christ. Object—Salvation in the world to come.

Situation today

- a. "The Church," the Bible and even the teaching of Jesus are no longer regarded as infallible.
- b. The present betterment of this world for coming generations.

Lincoln. 1856.¹

"In my opinion it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.'² I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect that it cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other."

- a. In the case of Protestantism, it is possible that the process of division may continue to go on. The house may be divided.
- b. It may become all slave, and agree, accept the dogma of the Catholic Church.

¹ This quotation comes from a speech by Abraham Lincoln on June 16, 1858, after he accepted the Illinois Republican Party's nomination to run for U.S. Senator.

² Lincoln here is quoting from Matthew 12:25.

c. It may accept the principles of freedom of thought, and intellectual honesty.

Protestantism now divided into denominations and sects. Also, denominations and sects are divided into

- a. Conservatives, Fundamentalists.
- b. Liberals, Right, Left.

The importance of this lies in the effect of it on life. Authority—intellectual and moral slavery. Performing rites.

Protestantism—Intellectual and moral confusion, resulting in confused conduct. Juggling.

Liberalism—straight. No infallible guide? But integrity. Straightforwardness. Loyalty to truth.

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Matthew 10:26. "Fear them not therefore. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known."

There are about 200 divisions, denominations or sects, of Christians in this country. There are about twenty-five such divisions in this city. They are divided into three main groups: The Roman Catholic; the Protestant Evangelical; and the liberal.

For 1800 years Christianity offered to men an infallible guide to life to be found in the Church, the Bible, and in Christ. By obediently following this guide men would be assured of their salvation in the world to come.

The Catholic Church has constantly emphasized the importance, and final interpreting authority of the Church. Some branches of the protestant churches have emphasized the authority of the Bible, and others the authority of Christ, but all have said that religion was a supernatural revelation of an infallible guide to life, for the purpose of attaining a future salvation.

Modernism.

But for four hundred years a strain which has always been present, has been gaining in influence and in its appeal to

human life. That strain which has become so powerful as to have an organized expression, of which this church is an illustration, has also developed within the churches that have tried to maintain the idea of an infallible guide and standard. It may be described as centering about two ideas or principles.

The first, in its negative statement, would be a denial of the infallibility of the Church, the Bible, and Christ as guides to life; and in its positive side, it would affirm that the world is intelligible, and that we have capacity to, and responsibility of, determining for ourselves what is true and what is right.

Second. The purpose of life is not primarily to secure salvation in the world to come, but to so live and so labor that this world may become better for coming generations.