

May 15, 1937

Dr. Karl Barth
Bonn, Siebengebirgstrasse
Germany

Dear Sir:

As far back as 1930, a seasoned missionary, E. Stanley Jones, in his "Christ of Every Road," declared: "The world-ground, I am persuaded, is being prepared for a spiritual awakening on a very extensive scale." A similar belief has been recorded by Dr. Albert Buckner Coe, and by other competent observers of divergent faiths. But there are those whose current messages sound as a voice "crying in the wilderness." I am wondering how the spiritual outlook reads to you today.

For my part, I have always been an optimist; but the later years of contact with the world, especially with my own (the legal) profession, have revealed symptoms of a discouraging indifference to the things of the spirit. There looms on my horizon a definite drift to lower ideals; and sometimes I feel that this moral lapse is the real "depression" that still besets the world.

"Watchman, what of the night?" is a question not alone for preachers and priests. The thought of the secular mind, it seems to me, is an indispensable factor in a fair appraisal of our moral and spiritual state. Hence it is that I am addressing both clerics and laymen of elect groups, in an attitude not of idle curiosity, but of earnest and friendly inquiry.

Do you see any sound reasons for entertaining the prospect of an early spiritual awakening? Is such a revival desirable? What is your general reaction upon the present moral outlook? May I use your reply, in whole or in part, in a book or magazine article?

I shall really appreciate a frank expression of your views, even though brief, in response to the hungering desire which has prompted this unconventional approach.

Sincerely,

Geo. Vaughan

George Vaughan,
Professor of Law,
University of Arkansas,
Box 145, Univ. Sta.,
Fayetteville, Arkansas

GV:MF