

Church Attendance

Attendance at Church, and particularly at the service of Holy Communion, is the barometer of the spiritual life of a parish. One hears it said that there has been a lot of sickness, and that it has been wet and cold. But these are only excuses. There has been sickness, but no more than is seasonable; and it certainly has not rained all of the last six months! The real reason is a general slackness and apathy. The Christians are just falling down on the job.

A vicar as he moves about his parish on a fine Sunday cannot but help noticing the many so-called Christians, apparently in good health, who seem blissfully unconscious of the fact that it is Sunday. He sees them yarning over front gates, out riding on horseback, or pottering around the farm or garden, while down the road the Church bell rings. Seemingly just for the sake of making a noise. Our religion has become a very flabby, futile thing, when we go to Church only when we feel like it, or because we have nothing better to do.

Worship is not just a luxury line, something to indulge in occasionally ("It would be nice to go to Church to-day" sort of thing). It is our bounden duty to worship God; to offer unto the Lord and Master of life, the Creator and Sustainer of all things, the praise and thanksgiving and honour due to Him. Moreover, it is our supreme need, for without God we cannot live to any purpose or profit.

The world to-day is a veritable hell and only because we have tried to run it without God. Sack God and it's the devil who takes over the job. Until Worship has its proper place in our lives; until we recognise the sovereignty of Almighty God and acknowledge His authority over every department human affairs, all our talk about Rehabilitation and Post-War Reconstruction and New World Order is so much humbug. Without God our best-laid schemes are mere makeshift. We want a new world not just a rearrangement of the old, and only God who maketh all things new can help us there.

In the last analysis a better world means that you and I have got to be better men and women — better Christians. We cannot be that by staying away from Church on Sundays. It is not enough to give the Church our moral support; it is not enough to give God a certain finan-

cial backing, we have got to give Him ourselves. We certainly won't do that, won't be able to do that, until we have learned to worship Him. It is high time we realised that neglect of public worship, non-attendance at Church is a sin—just as much a sin as murder, theft or adultery. It is a sin because it is refusal to recognise the worth of God. **That is just what worship means—recognising the worth of God.**

And now for the greatest act of worship, the offering of the Holy Communion. Do you realise that, maybe, you have only made your communion once this year; perhaps only half-a-dozen times in the last five years? Don't you think it's about time you did something about it? It is a matter of urgent necessity if you really want to be a better man or woman.

If there is one way which Christ can be found, it is surely in the way which He Himself has ordained—in the receiving of His Body and Blood in the Great Sacrament of the Holy Communion! We cannot be better Christians, more like him, if we do not take Him regularly unto ourselves.

(Rev. H. A. Childs, M.A., Rural Dean, in the "West Coast Churchman.")

Don't stay away from church

Because:

It rains. Would it keep you from work or business?

Company came. Take them to Church. They shouldn't be surprised at the suggestion on a Sunday.

The Church is imperfect. Should you find and join a perfect Church its perfection would cease.

You won't be missed in the crowd. God misses you.

You think you don't need the Church. Take a day to examine the clouds or ponder over the mess the world is in.

The Church doesn't need you. Never did the Church need more and better men. The stay-at-home citizen loses the election.

The Church is cold. Bring your Blaze. It may set the crowd on fire.

The Church is miles away. So is the Picture Theatre and the Dance Hall.

TO THE CLERGY.

At different clergy meetings which I have been invited to attend, various subjects have come up for discussion, and I think it will help if I give the following directions.

1. Request that the Order of Confirmation be used exactly as it stands in the Prayer Book. Hymns or addresses are quite appropriate but should come before or after the Service itself. The Priest who presents the candidates should call the names.

2. When conducting funeral by cremation the words "we therefore commit to His care the mortal remains of His servant" should be used in place of those words in the Order for the Burial of the Dead "we therefore commit his body to the ground, etc." The remainder of the Committal to follow as in the Prayer Book Office.

3. For the benefit of those Clergy who may have any matter which they wish brought before the various Executives, which are due to meet in Wellington this month, I append a list of the meetings, and request that I may have all such subject matter in writing not later than August 10th.

Tuesday, 21st August—

Board of Missions Executive, 9.30 a.m.
Bishops' meeting, 2.30 p.m.

Wednesday, 22nd August—

Board of Missions Annual Meeting, 9.30 a.m.
Military Affairs Committee, 2.30 p.m.
Church Army, 4.30 p.m.

Thursday, 23rd August—

Standing Committee of General Synod, 9.30 a.m.
Pensions Board, 2.30 p.m.

Friday, 24th August—

St. John's College Trustees, 9.30 a.m.
Public and Social Affairs, 2.30 p.m.

Craig, Waiapu.

Rt. Rev. G. V. Gerard In England

The Right Rev. G. V. Gerard, C.B.E., previously Bishop of Waiapu, has arrived in England to take up his new position of Canon of Sheffield and Rural Dean of Rotherham, under Bishop Hunter. He will be very much missed in New Zealand especially among the men of the Armed Forces to whom he has rendered such faithful service. His many friends wish him every success in his new position. His family will join him in England when circumstances permit.