

Patriotism

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My Own, My Native Land

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WE LIVE now in a world where every country touches every other country. Travel is as sound, and sound as swift as light. The nations are as a family within the walls of a single house, brushing one another at every turn. Never again can we enjoy the national privacy or isolation which once was possible.

This does not mean that a man need love his own country less. In fact to the degree that he learns to treasure his own country will he be able to appreciate countries other than his own. He must be a patriot in his own country first if he is really to be a patriot of the family of countries.

Can I love a stranger if I have not first learned love within my own people? I must begin in a small laboratory and first learn small lessons. It is so with nations of people too. If I know how to love my own country, then can I understand another man's love for his country; and together we may embrace the love of all the nations of the earth.

True patriotism does not mean hatred for other nations. Whenever patriotism parades as disdain for another country and another people, it no longer is patriotism. Patriotism is a strong, positive and generous passion. It has its birth within a man's own country, but it circles the earth.

By the same token, internationalism is not a denial of a man's love for his own land. There is always the danger that nationalism may become a sickness, and nation may be arrayed against nation. No longer can we enjoy the luxury of such ruthless rivalry. We are too intertwined with one another. The destruction of one will destroy the others. The nations of the earth will either survive and prosper together or they will be destroyed together.

In our love for our own land we will learn the love of all lands. For God is the Giver of each nation on the earth.

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