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And It Worked!

By Mrs. Paul E. King

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"Something must be done, I tell you!" shouted the leader from his place behind the podium in the center of the mammoth amphitheater. His nostrils dilated and his frame trembled violently with rage. "These Christians must be exterminated!" Again his frame shook violently, as if possessed by a raging fever.

For a long while silence reigned. The speaker, his keen shrewd eyes scanning the capacity crowd in the elliptical building with its rows of seats sloping upward and backward around the podium, knew each being was deep in thought.

Knowing the value and effect of silence at a proper time and utilizing all his cunning and wit, he allowed his word-command to sink deep into the thinking minds of his henchmen.

At length one of those listening stood to his feet. "Master," he said loudly, "We cannot exterminate the Christians. We tried it once... long years ago; and the flames of martyrdom served merely to fan the Christians into action and to add more believers to their number. They worshipped God in spite of all our persecution upon them; in out of the way places such as the mountains and the catacombs, it is true, but they maintained their integrity in God and..., and they ... multiplied too! Have you forgotten, Master? No, your method will not work! There must be another way. A better way!"



The one-time thunderous messages against sin were replaced with essays and lectures.

A wicked look filled the leader's eyes. His nostrils dilated fiercely and his eyes were as gleams of fire. "Have you a better solution, most faithful comrade?" he shouted.

"We need a different approach, Master."

"Like what?"

"A subtle, insidious, and completely unsuspecting approach; but one which will, ultimately be totally and fully successful!" and the speaker-comrade's eyes went suddenly into a fixed stare of devilish concentration.

From a seat high in the amphitheater and to the right of the speaker and the podium, another arose. Like his fellow-being who was now deep in hellish concentration, he was characteristic of all who were present. "We must use strategy, O great Master!" he proclaimed feverishly. "Let us not make a mistake this time..."

"I have it! I have it!" shouted the podium speaker. "We will cripple the church!" He laughed a high-pitched laugh that reverberated with an eerie echo round the amphitheater.

"That was my thought," the speaker in the audience said with satisfaction. "We must use strategy though. Those Christians are wise. They are no fools. They know THE BOOK!"

"It will be a gradual process, faithful comrade!" the leader exclaimed with certainty and deep satisfaction. "So gradual, in fact, that the average Christian will not be aware of its deadly, devastating effects. But in the end we will win. Up, men; to the fray! We have no time to lose. Our time is short!"

There was a moment's hesitation. "Some will not go along with your scheme," another being shouted from the ranks. "They are loyal and faithful subjects to the Almighty. They live close to Him and to His heart and He will warn them of our scheme, O Master."

"True! True! But who cares about the minority! The majority will be swept up in our strategy. We will make it look appealing and innocent enough. We must be convincing! Every last one of us. If we are, the great bulk of the church world will fall in line with our plan. Already many of the professors of religion are going to sleep spiritually. They are becoming:sluggish and lazy. They don't work at the job like we do. They are lazy! Now is our hour! Make them believe that the 'old-time way' always has been out-dated and too 'far-fetched;' Convince the ministers that the old time way is totally and completely irrelevant for this 'modern' day and age. Now up! We have no time for delay. We must work while the church world is going to sleep. Go into all the world and make disciples for me and my cause. The ministers must be first! Mind you, heed my advise! Did you hear me, Comrades? Get to the minister first! When once the man behind the pulpit is

convinced and deceived the rest will be easy: the flock will follow. Get to the spiritual leaders and advisers!"

"You mean?" one began.

"Get him to 'tone down' his messages!" the podium speaker shouted impatiently. "Convince him that the thing called sin is a mere figment of man's thinking. Make him tolerant where sin is concerned; then gradually very, very gradually . . . convince him that a loving God would never, never send any of His creatures to hell. Ease the sports programs slowly, subtly but surely into his church activities. Begin it gradually, Comrades. At first there will be some rebuttal by some of the 'old liners' but stick to your job and never relent . . . line upon line, precept upon precept, you know . . . Some day the church world will be greatly involved with sports. Her teams will participate freely with others . . . intercollegiate sports will so fill her thinking that the Master's great commission will be all but forgotten."

"And think it's all right, too!" one shouted from somewhere in the vast amphitheater, laughing hellishly.

Sudden combined and spontaneous laughter rang out devilishly and seemed to rock the enormous building with its force and vibration.

At length the podium speaker shouted, "Get busy, Comrades. See that the world and the church mix! Indoctrinate the unsuspecting and already-dead ministers first. First, I repeat! Teach them to be tolerant where sin and wickedness and worldliness are concerned. Get them busy with things such as programs, committee and ministerial meetings . . ."

"And watching television," one shouted.

"Ah-h television!" the leader sighed with deep satisfaction. "We were wise indeed when we inspired man to devise and invent this piece of innocent looking equipment. It has been one of our greatest assets! Already many ministers and their laymen spend the greater bulk of their time in front of the screen. This thing's going for us, I tell you! Like mad! Our hour has come! We must strike . . . now! It will be easy to convince the great bulk of the ministers to see our way. Television's our big medium and the church is neither hot nor cold. They're too far gone to be suspicious and suspecting."

"O great leader," one spoke up, "I foresee even greater things for our cause"

"What is it, Comrade?"

"An ecumenical move! Why not? It too must be gradual but it will be a success. We will propose, through the ministers of course, that the clergy mix with men of all faiths . . . priests, rabbis, Hindus, and all . . . and have 'great city-wide campaigns'; not

revivals, mind you! (but a sort of shadow-semblance of them to fool the people.) Ministers from all denominations and faiths must be taught to participate. It will be a form, Master. A form, that is all! O some who are open and honest may get help but we'll take care of those few by having the instructors to send them back to their original, dead churches and leaders . . ."

"Good! Good! Great idea! Get busy. Every one of you! We have no more time to lose."

A shriek of devilish delight resounded in the enormous amphitheater as, with clenched fists raised upward, the meeting was dismissed and brought to an abrupt end.

Rapidly, and not wasting a moment of precious time, the creatures dispersed and scattered in all directions, covering the four corners of the earth. Time was of greatest importance.

They stole subtly into large, expensively-built and elaborately-furnished churches and religious colleges and remained constantly with the lukewarm ministers in their study and calling, convincing them that the message of the cross and the shed blood was obnoxious and revolting to 'thinking man' and that sin was not nearly so bad as it had seemed at one time.

And it had worked. How it worked!

In no time at all, messages which had at one time been proclaimed from pulpits with no uncertain sound were gradually being replaced with 'Love Themes' and a mere 'Accept the Lord.' Gone now were the thundering cries of 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die' and 'The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.' No longer were men urged to confess their sins and to utterly and completely repent of their wicked, sinful past; instead, essays on 'How To Get Along With Our Fellowman,' and 'Man's Ecological Problems and How to Face Them,' fastly replaced the once God fearing, God anointed messages of the cross. The pulpit was suddenly silenced, tearless and dead . . . twice dead! ... and the listeners were lulled to sleep with spiritual apathy and a 'God is Love' theme.

Nor did it stop in the larger more fashionable churches.

Very, very subtly, shrewdly, and cunningly, the demon-beings worked their way into the lesser costly and less elaborate places of worship. Having become so busy with the church 'program' and church 'machinery', committee and ministerial meetings, etc. etc., linked with the 'new approach', the once radical, old line Holiness preacher, his body, soul, and spirit no longer renewed and refreshed by the Dew of Hermon in prolonged visits of sweet communion in the secret closet, now dragged his exhausted body and tired mind to his bed of ease and slept soundly with an inner delight at how 'broad' the church and the ministry was finally growing.

Instead of old time mourners benches withseekers admonished to 'Pray Clear Through' to salvation or to 'die out to the old man' of sin and self, a radical but damning change took place. Any who had a desire to seek after God were now admonished by smiling'counsellors' to "Accept Jesus" while the once radical terms of ,death to self, dying out, crucifying the old man' and such like obnoxious (? ? ?) terms dealing with entire sanctification were now replaced with the more appealing titles of 'the deeper life,' and 'a closer walk with God.'

In no time at all the church and the world were on the best of speaking terms and soon it was evident that they were courting. Heavily so! Laughing gleefully and lightly as they worked hand in hand and stopping every now and again to compliment each other on plotted, planned and schemed, revised and re-revised God's Holy Word to suit their 'New Approach' and 'Broader Views.'

Prayer closets were rapidly emptied and filled with ping-pong tables and gleaming white kitchens while church annexes sported mammoth gymnasiums to 'hold our young people!' Shouts of worldly laughter and hoarse voices rooting for 'their team' now replaced the agonized groans and moans of the saints over lost souls. Soup suppers, weiner roasts and marshmallow toasts now filled once fasting stomachs.

Surely, surely the church was dead! She died! Her ministershepherds, too involved in 'things! and campaigns and such to stay long on their knees, were sucked into the devil's planned machinery . . . and their congregation with them!

"So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Rev. 3:16.

Dear church of God, awake. To your knees! Ask God to stir you!

"Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:20.

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THE END