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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

### The King of Glory Stands and Knocks

A Sermon by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, October 31st, 1926

(Stenographically Reported)

(This sermon is taken from our files of hitherto unprinted sermons, and is printed verbatim as delivered. Dr. Shields has had no opportunity either to see or revise it since its delivery.)

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."—Rev. 3:20.

**T**HIS text is very frequently made the basis of appeals to the unconverted — and I think it may logically be so used; but its special application is not to those who have never known the Lord: it is part of the message which the Spirit conveys to the churches. It is a picture of the Lord of glory excluded from His own house, shut out of His own church, standing at the door and knocking, asking to be re-admitted to the hearts of men who have professed His name.

#### I.

Those who are thus GUILTY OF HAVING EXCLUDED CHRIST are described as being lukewarm — they are neither cold nor hot; they are temperate people — they are very moderate in their religious expressions; they are middle-of-the-roads — they are neutral on all matters of importance. They are neither one thing nor the other, they are merely lukewarm; and this condition comes about generally through no flagrant wrong-doing, but merely through neglect, a gradual cooling of religious zeal, a diminution of religious activity, an imperceptible decline of spiritual temperature, a gradual letting down of everything, until the life is no longer a flaming torch, it is not a burning and a shining light, there is no glowing hospitable hearth awaiting the advent of the truth; but just a few dull embers, a flickering light, a smoking flax. *The life is just religiously lukewarm* — not without religious interests, the temperature has not dropped to the level of a frigid religious indifference. People still go to church, they still carry their Bibles under their arms, they still hold fast the profession of their faith; but there is no glowing love for the Lord. Or, to keep to the figure

of the text, their worship, heated by love's fire, is not an acceptable drink offering unto the Lord, the output of their life is lukewarm. "So then," said He, "because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" — a horrible figure! But it suggests that there is a type of religious life that is utterly disgusting, nauseating, to God Himself — this spiritual lukewarmness which relegates our Lord to a secondary or even lower place in a professedly Christian life.

The outstanding symptom of that condition is that *the person so affected is utterly unaware of it*, for they say, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." How often do you hear of a religious meeting to-day, a gathering of the representatives of churches in conference or convention, where anything is said about departure from God, where any word is spoken to call men back to God, or to remind men of the requirements of God? Instead, such services are a kind of mutual admiration conference in which every speaker is expected to congratulate those who have preceded him, and where every report is so framed as to give the impression that we are "rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing", though knowing not that they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked".

And yet our gracious God issues this invitation: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich" — He comes to make us rich; He would give us, not a debased currency, but He would bestow upon us gold that is tried in the fire, for He Who was rich for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich — "and white raiment, that thou may-

est be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear" — He would clothe us in heavenly garments, He would fit us for the divine Presence, so that we may stand unabashed in the company of angels — "and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve" — poor, blind, self-satisfied, self-righteous, soul — "anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see", that you may know just what you are, and where you are.

And then, pathetically, He says, "Behold, I, who ought to be the Lord of the house, stand at the door and knock — I am outside." I wonder if there are professing Christians here this morning to whom the principle of the text applies — a picture of the neglected Christ? — no ill word spoken against Him, no flagrant sin committed, but just neglect! reckoned out! and ultimately put out, outside the door, knocking for re-admittance! How does it come to pass that men and women, and boys and girls, who have professed the name of Christ, come into such a sad and impoverished condition?

I want to be very, very simple. It comes about in this way that, very often, *we begin things without him*: we do not wait for Him, we do not wait upon Him; but we plan the affairs of life without Him, without taking His Word and His will into account. The man is a religious man, and he reads his Bible; but he does not bring some contemplated course under the judgment of God to know whether this is the way of the divine appointment; he simply plans his life, his business, his family affairs, as though he were not the bondsman of Jesus Christ; and he goes on about it without reference to His will, only to discover later that he has plunged into something that has led him off the track, and out of fellowship, and that he is far along the road, and the Master is not with him — he did not ask Him to go, he did not wait for a knowledge of His will, he simply began without Him. I used to hear a prayer, in the days when I was more conversant with the Anglican ritual than I am to-day, which petitioned that "all our works may be begun, continued, and ended in Thee". It is a good prayer to pray, that everything should be begun, continued, and ended in Christ. Is there someone here who has begun something without Christ? You have just neglected Him, you have not consulted Him.

Another thing — and this has special application to the young people present this morning — Christ is neglected in our pleasures. It is perfectly legitimate for us to desire to enjoy life; — He has given "us richly all things to enjoy." I don't believe He wants boys and girls, and young men and women, to have long faces, and to spend their lives in sighing; we ought to be spending our time in singing, we ought to be happy, we ought to be full of joy. He said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you." But, my friends, if we are going to have His joy, then we must keep company with Him. And some of you, perhaps, have been seeking your pleasures apart from Him, you did not invite Him to go along, you did not ask whether the thing you planned was in accordance with His will — and you lost Him in the pursuit of pleasure; and you have become sadly aware of a distance between you and Christ.

And so, to be very practical and simple, He is neglected in this sense, that *men have not talked with Him*. Do you say, "Good morning", to the members of your family when you come down in the morning? Do you greet them with a kindly word? Or, when you go into the office or shop, do you say to your associates, "Good morning, it is

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a fine morning"? It is a very simple matter, but still there is a cordial greeting. Surely you are not impolite enough to walk into your place of business, or into the presence of the members of your family, without a word! If you did, what would they think of you? They would wonder what they had done to offend you. But, alas, how many of the Lord's people fail to greet Him in the morning, and fail to greet Him at the evening hour! I wonder how many of you remember that great preacher we once had in our Denomination, and who, on many occasions, has preached from this pulpit? He has been dead many years now. I never knew him personally, but I heard him on one or two occasions when I was a lad. His name was Alexander Grant, a rugged Scotchman, a man who walked with God, and I heard a friend say that one night he was sleeping with Alexander Grant, they were delegates, I think, to a Convention, or something of the sort. They had been having a very happy time together, and they were sleeping together in the same room. The conversation had ceased, and this friend was lying awake supposing that Grant was sleeping; but occasionally he caught a whisper, almost as though he were talking in his sleep. And then he said, "Grant turned over and said, 'Well, good-night, Lord Jesus,' and in a moment he was just sleeping sweetly like a little child."

Have you learned to say, "Good morning," to the Lord? and to say, "Good night", to Him? Or has there been, my friends, a long silence between you? Listen: this word is spoken to the church, to the church of the Laodiceans; and I can find you many churches in this city that do not talk to God, they have not even a prayer meeting; sometimes they have a meeting which they call a prayer-meeting — in some cases the pastor does all the talking, and instead of the church talking to God, communing with its Well-Beloved, they come and talk to each other about everything but about the Lord Jesus. Is it any wonder that He should feel neglected?

The ministry of collective prayer is a very important one. Where that is neglected, the Lord Jesus will soon

be on the outside of the church, let me tell you that. Whatever He may be in respect to individuals, let the church neglect to talk with Him, and soon He will be offended. Oh, may I emphasize the importance of that, that you and I should learn daily to talk with Him.

And, my friends, *He is neglected in this sense that men do not hear His Word.* Do you know it is possible to read the Bible, and not to hear Christ speak? There may be some here this morning who pride themselves on being students of the Word, and you may know the letter of the Bible, and be able to repeat it from Genesis to Revelation, and yet not hear the voice of God. What I want to know is, not only, Are you talking to God, but; is He talking back to you? Is He speaking out of this Holy Book to heart and conscience every day, and are you listening to what He has to say? Oh, Jarvis Street members, my responsibility is specially in relation to you, I must be faithful with you. You profess faith in Christ, you have come into the fellowship of the church, you have made a bold and a great confession in the day that you were buried with Him by baptism, and raised again to walk in newness of life; but let me urge you to answer this question, Are you listening to catch the faintest whisper of His voice? Amid all the Babel sounds with which we are surrounded, is the still small voice of the Spirit of God being heard? and is the Word of God directing your daily life? If not, you are not in right relationship to Christ. It is of no use to say that you had an experience years ago, if you are neglecting Him Who is your Lord. A woman told me once of the experience she had with her husband after she was converted. She said that for two weeks he never spoke a single word, she did not hear his voice: he lived in the house, came down to breakfast in the morning, came home to lunch, came home again at night — but for two weeks he never broke the silence. I wonder what you women would think if your husbands did not speak to you for two weeks? How would you men get along if you never heard your wife's voice for two weeks? According to the funny editors, there is more than one man who hears his wife's voice too often! I don't know, I hope that is not true. Our Lord Jesus is the Bridegroom; the Church is the bride. Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it, and He desires to live in fellowship and communion with His beloved; but, alas, too often He is utterly neglected, and stands in an attitude of waiting, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock." If you are really a Christian, the Lord Jesus has not forsaken you; if you are really bought with His blood, if you have really been quickened into newness of life, if you are really a child of His, He will never let you go — never! He may be outside, but oh, He has a plan for you, and He is standing at the door and knocking.

## II.

HOW DOES HE KNOCK? How does He knock? How does the Lord Jesus knock? "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten," He says — and listen, "be zealous, therefore, and repent." Before I got into the bad habit of driving a motor car, I used to use a walking stick, — they cost less, and I believe they are far healthier if one has time — but I used to use my stick very often as a knocker — when these electric bells were out of order, and I did not want to hurt my knuckles, I just took my stick and rapped on the door, it made a louder noise. Sometimes our Lord Jesus knocks with a stick, sometimes He knocks

with a rod: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten."

I wonder if there is someone here this morning who is bitter of spirit, like Naomi when she came back saying, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me. I have lost everything, yet I tried to serve Him" — and she was bitter of spirit. I wonder is there someone "down in the dumps" this morning? You have come to church, and you are in an attitude of antagonism toward God; you say, "This last week has been the most uncomfortable week I have had; it has been a week full of trouble, full of losses and disappointments" — "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." My dear friends, that does not mean that you are necessarily a greater sinner than someone else: it means that God loves you supremely, and He says, "I am going to make something of that man." And so He stands at the door and knocks, and if only your ear were trained to hear it, you would discover that behind all your difficulty, behind all your troubles, behind all your griefs, there is the loving purpose of a gracious God Who wants to get back into your life, and get the first place which once you accorded Him. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock." If you are face to face with such a condition this morning, will you bow before Him and ask for an explanation, and listen to the knock until you find out who is standing at the door? for remember this, the Hand that holds the rod is the Hand that has the nail print; the Hand that chastens, is the Hand that was extended on Calvary when Jesus died for you. And behind it all there is His throbbing heart, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock."

## III.

And He not only knocks, HE SPEAKS. You remember in the Song of Solomon when the spouse was wakened, and her beloved was on the outside, she said, "I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. Won't you let me in?" And she said, "I sleep, I am trying to forget him, I am trying to be comfortable in my separation from him — but my heart won't sleep, it wakes, and I can hear him all the time knocking, knocking; it is the voice of my beloved." O God give us wakeful hearts that we may never sleep while He is outside. "It is the voice of my beloved."

I wonder if you have heard Him in these poor words this morning? I wonder if the Spirit has brought to your attention some point at which you parted company with Jesus Christ? I wonder has He shown you that your fellowship with Him was broken right there, and are you facing the issue just at this moment, as to how you shall get back? He knocks, and He calls, for He says, "If any man hear my voice" — Oh, I beg of you, when the Word of the Lord comes to you, whether by these unworthy lips or some other, or from the reading of the Book itself, when you hear Him knocking and speaking, I beg of you pay heed to that divine admonition. He stands at the door and knocks, and what does He say? — "If any man hear my voice" — "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." It is always the Word, my friends, that is the great corrective,

as we listen to God's Word, as we submit ourselves to the authority of God's Word, we shall find out what is wrong with us; He is the divine Physician.

"If any man hear my voice!" Will you hear it? Oh, let me pause. There may be an unconverted one here this morning. He knocks for you too, you know, and He calls for you too. If you have never opened the door before, will you open it this morning? "If any man hear my voice" — what else? What must we do when we hear the Word? Open the door. What does it mean? It means to deal with the barrier between ourselves and Christ. I don't know what the door is in your case. It means, of course, the surrender of the will; it means the submission of the judgment to His superior wisdom; it means the yielding of the guest-chamber, of the affections; it means the enthronement of Jesus Christ in heart and life — but at the particular point where there has been an interruption of fellowship between us and the Lord, it means surrender at that point, it means right-about-face at that point — and if the offence has been open, it means open confession too.

I will tell you what it may mean: there may be someone here this morning who has some grudge against someone else — I don't know how it is that people are made that way, but they are. Long ago a man got cross with his pastor about something. They both wrote to me and asked me to be arbitrator, to hear the evidence on both sides and give them a little bit of advice. So I got the two brethren together, and I got all the facts as well as I could, and played judge. I had to say to this brother — I had known him years before — that he had been very untrue to his pastor. However, I gave them advice — they asked for it, I did not volunteer it — and they shook hands, and I supposed the thing was settled. But do you know, years after that — it must have been twelve years after, at least — one day I heard a knock at my door, and I opened it, and there stood this deacon! He came in, and I told him I was glad to see him, and asked him what he wanted. He said, "You know, I was never satisfied with that judgment you gave about twelve years ago, and I want you to re-open it." "Why," I said, "I have forgotten all about it, and I am sure Mr. So-and-So has too." "Well," he said, "I have not!" I said, "You look as though you had not!" I have not seen him for years, and I saw him voting at the Convention — and you know which side he was on. Think of it! — a professing Christian man had been nursing that grudge in his heart all those years until it had become as big as a mountain, and he had lost his blessing — for you cannot entertain that feeling toward any mortal for twenty-four hours, and keep company with Christ at the same time. Don't tell me you can, for I know you can't: "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." And if you have any grudge against any mortal on earth in your heart, you are kept out of fellowship with God — I don't care who you are — you might just as well stop your praying and put that thing right here and now, for you will never be right yourself until it is right. "I stand at the door, and knock." If there is anything like that, and you hear His voice, will you open the door, by just getting rid of that thing, until there is nothing between you and Christ?

And what then? "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. I will come in the minute you open the door." My friends, the Spirit of God is

all about us as the air is about this building, and if you want some fresh air, do you know what to do? Just open the windows — you don't have to invite it in; it will come; just open the windows. All we have to do is to open our hearts to Christ, yield our wills to Christ, yield our imaginations to Him — all there is of us — and He will come in, and we will have a meal together. Well now, if some people were standing at your door and knocking, making a proposal of that sort, you would say, "That is a very good reason why I should not open the door, because there is not much in the pantry!" You women like to have advance notice when you are going to have guests, do you not? I used to know a certain man who came from England, and when He came to this country he was often invited out to tea. He had not got used to Canadian ways, and there were certain things that he never found in the homes of his friends, so whenever he and his wife went visiting, they always carried something with them! Sometimes it offended the hostesses, because when they invited them to dinner they did not expect them to come with a basket on their arms. But now what shall we do? How shall we entertain the Prince of Glory, for you see we are poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked, and we have not the proper clothes to wear nor food to put on the table, and we have nothing of ourselves to entertain the Lord Jesus?

Someone says this morning, "I am afraid that if I were to let Him in I would give Him such poor fare that He would go out again." Oh, but He is unlike any other guest, He is the Prince of Glory, and He brings all His provisions with Him. Everything? Yes, He brings all His provisions with Him. You know the story of Elijah when he came to the woman who had no meal — or, just a little meal and a little oil in the cruse, and she was going to make one little bit of a cake for herself and her son, and they were going to eat it and die, they were so poor? It was in the day of famine, and the visitor said, "You make me a little cake first, because I have come to you in the name of the Lord, and the Lord gives you this promise, that if you make me a little cake first, the barrel of meal shall not fail, nor the cruse of oil, until the Lord sends rain on the earth." And so, as she let Elijah in, he brought plenty with him, and instead of being stricken with famine in the midst of famine, she enjoyed Heaven's fulness.

And, my dear friends, whatever we need this moment, it is in the hand of our gracious God; and if we will just open the door He will come in: if you need forgiveness of sins, He will give it to you; if you need peace, He will give you that; if you need power, He will bestow that on you — whatever you need He will give; and He will sit at the table with you. To have fellowship with Jesus Christ means to be in heaven itself.

Now that is a very simple word, and it is designedly simple. It is just like the milkman or the baker at the door, and the little girl hears the knock and she calls upstairs, "Mama, there is someone at the door"; and Mother calls down and says, "Tell him no bread to-day", or, "Tell him one loaf to-day" — you know how it goes, don't you? The Prince of Glory is at the door. What will you tell Him, boys and girls? What will you tell Him this morning? Have you heard Him calling? What will your answer be? Will you just open the door and let Him in? Will you go home with the Lord Jesus to dinner to-day, and have such a feast as you never had in all your life before? And the angels will play in the orches-

tra, and all Heaven will come down to bless you, if only you will open the door.

Let us bow in prayer:

O Lord, our God, we confess before Thee that we are  
 "Prone to wonder, Lord we feel it;  
 Prone to leave the God we love, —

and we believe that many come saying this morning,

"Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it,  
 Seal it for Thy courts above."

If any of Thy dear children have missed the clear view of Thy countenance, if any have crowded Thee out of their lives, Lord Jesus, we pray that by Thy Spirit they may be enabled to open the door. Wilt Thou not come in as we open the door now? And if there are those here this morning — and there are many — who ought to confess that they have now opened the door, wilt Thou give them grace so to do? And may be there are some who have never yet known Thee, O Thou Spirit of God, if Thou hast spoken, wilt Thou not constrain them to come? Bless us now for the very few minutes we tarry in Thy presence here, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

### LEST WE FORGET

Exactly four hundred years ago on February 9th, 1555, John Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester and Worcester, was burned at the stake for his faith in Christ. He was the first of four English reformers, all bishops, who were martyred during that year, the others being Robert Ferrar, Bishop of St. David's, Hugh Latimer, a former Bishop of Worcester, and Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London. But for the mercy of God there would have been a fifth, Miles Coverdale, the famous translator of the Bible and Bishop of Exeter, who had been granted a passport to leave England.

Foxe, in his "Book of Martyrs", describes John Hooper as a scholar and a saint. A graduate of Oxford, his zeal for the Lord and his spiritual activities during the reign of Henry VIII brought him into disfavor with the University authorities, who summarily dismissed him. He fled to France and then to Germany. During the peaceful reign of Edward VI he returned from exile, and while preaching in London to the crowds who waited upon his ministry, he "corrected sin, and sharply inveighed against the iniquity of the world and the corrupt abuses of the church". Being appointed Bishop of Gloucester and Worcester, he preached with unction, always greatly beloved as "a careful and vigilant pastor".

When bloody Queen Mary ascended the throne, "religion being subverted and changed," the bishop was among the first to be sent for to answer charges against him. When called before a council of bishops and officials, in London, he refused to forsake the evangelical doctrines which he had been preaching, to return to the Roman church or acknowledge the pope as head of the English church. Good Bishop Hooper claimed that since the pope taught doctrines contrary to the doctrines of Christ, he "would not condescend to any such usurped jurisdiction". He was therefore degraded from his office, imprisoned and then burned to death.

We honour the memory of Bishop John Hooper for his constancy, love and devotion to the Lord and to the truth of His word even unto death. Like the Apostle Paul he was willing to say, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

—O.L.C.

### MAY IT NEVER BE!

OF LATE the newspapers have carried despatches of an alarming nature. We are told that the St. Laurent government has approached a Roman Catholic prelate and requested him to accept a seat in the Canadian Senate. The churchman apparently is willing to accept but the Roman Church will not consent to the appointment. For once, THE GOSPEL WITNESS finds itself in agreement with the Church of Rome, although our reasons for reaching this similar conclusion are very different.

There was a time when such an announcement would have aroused a storm of protest so that the Ottawa politicians would have rushed for shelter. The government now seems to be so complacent about such matters that it fears no repercussions at the polls and very little has been heard from a complacent or cowardly opposition.

The Conservatives are so busy courting Quebec that they must feel that discretion is the better part of valour, while the C.C.F. party has made an abject surrender in apologizing for some true words spoken by one of their B.C. members about the province of Quebec. Thus the once-startling announcement that a clergyman was asked to sit in the Senate was greeted with a deafening silence. Protestants, have you lost your voice? Rest assured, if such a thing is allowed, you will soon lose your religious liberty!

Whenever there is an alliance between any church (Protestant or Roman) and the state, trouble is in store for dissenters. This latest move may be said to be not an alliance but a goodwill gesture, but rest assured that it represents the thin edge of the wedge that can soon separate a citizen and religious liberty.

Of course the feelings of Protestants are to be soothed by the intimation that some prominent Protestant clergyman might be asked to sit in the Senate. Small consolation! No true Protestant will rejoice at such news for he desires to see neither an active Protestant clergyman nor a Roman priest appointed to the Senate. Any such an appointment reflects governmental favour toward one or more religions, and while it may seem, for the moment, to be inconsequential, a bad precedent is established which in the future might be exploited to rob citizens of their liberties.

We would hope that any Protestant clergyman approached would refuse to accept a Senate seat. Acceptance would leave the door wide open to Rome and would nullify the effect of Protestant objections to union of church and state.

—L.K.T.

### THE LORD'S DAY IN JARVIS STREET

Splendid congregations assembled at both services on Sunday, February 6th. Rev. H. C. Slade preached a fine sermon in the morning on the text, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." In response to the invitation a young girl from the Bible School publicly acknowledged her faith in Christ. In the evening, Dr. Robert Dubarry spoke with earnestness and grace on the theme, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." As a Communion Meditation the message prepared the hearts of the people for the Lord's Supper which followed.

Next Sunday, February 13th, Rev. George B. Fletcher from Newport News, Virginia, will preach morning and evening.

—O.L.C.

## Who Owns a Baptist Church Building?

THOSE of us who are Baptists glory in the great Baptist distinctives which we hold in addition to the generally accepted principles of the evangelical faith common to all true believers. Among these distinctives is the absolute autonomy of the local church composed of baptized believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Others may choose drastically to modify their freedom of action by employing a presbyterial system, an episcopal system or variations of these but we are persuaded that the Baptist system is firmly rooted in scriptural grounds.

Commonly it is said that a more rigid, autocratic and central control would eliminate many of the difficulties that arise through an independent system of church government. Thus the argument of expediency is used. Surely for a believer the highest appeal is — "What saith the Scripture?" Having determined that, at all costs the scriptural example is strictly observed. Those who argue from the standpoint of expediency would do well to remember that of all political systems, the dictatorial concept is the one which produces fewer quarrels and insures a rigid uniformity. Yet despite these pretended advantages of either political or religious dictatorship we would prefer to accept a free religious or political system together with the minor risks involved.

Under a Baptist system of church government who owns the church building and property? — the pastor? the association? the convention? No, the people of the local church both own and control their own property. The members at a given time in history have the sole voice in the control and disposition of the property. We dare to declare that this is basic to true Baptist polity and any deviation from this is a serious infringement of Baptist principles.

### Tendency Toward Centralization

Increasingly however the tendency toward centralized control is seen in the midst of Baptists. The trend of the age is toward bureaucracy in government, centralization in industry and uniformity in thought. Unfortunately some Baptists are in a hurry to leap aboard this shaky bandwagon.

### Case in U.S.A.

While this can be seen in Canada, a really striking instance occurred in the United States. We use it to illustrate our point. In North Carolina was the North Rocky Mount Baptist Church which was *voluntarily* associated with the Southern Baptist Convention. This church, under the leadership of Rev. Samuel W. H. Johnston, voted to sever its connection with the Southern Baptist Convention. The vote was 241-144. Any informed observer would feel that this was the end of the matter and that the local church was now free from any association with the Southern Convention.

### Minority Rule

Not so! The minority group took the matter to court and actually obtained a ruling that the "true congregation of the North Rocky Mount Baptist Church is the *minority group* of its members who have remained loyal to the Southern and State Baptist Convention!" The majority appealed the decision but again the minority was upheld in a court of law. This is a serious matter and one which should concern Baptists very much for in

reality the courts have ruled that the local church is to be deprived of its power to withdraw at will from what at first was a voluntary association. Conventions are to become Baptist popes and no pope is so tyrannical as a self-styled Baptist pope!

### Modernists Happy

As soon as this decision was made known, the modernists rejoiced and their mouthpiece in the United States, *The Christian Century*, lectured Baptists on church government. Of course the modernists could rejoice for the decision could mean that they could not only control but expropriate the property of evangelicals within any convention. (Incidentally in this article we are not discussing the merits or demerits of the Southern Baptist Convention but rather examining an historic Baptist principle which has been defied in a case in which the Southern Convention happens to be involved.)

Of course, evangelical Baptists, for the most part, raised their hands in horror. No one could have dreamed that such a decision could be made in the face of Baptist history.

### The Watchman-Examiner

In the latest issue of the *Watchman-Examiner*, "A National Baptist Paper", the issue is discussed in an article "Who Owns a Baptist Church?" This paper traces its beginning to the year 1819 and has had a glorious history: if, however, this article indicates the direction in which it is now travelling, then the ultimate destination is the far country of religious bureaucracy and blind denominational dictatorship. In fact the article is conspicuous chiefly because of its utter lack of understanding of Baptist polity, its sheer disregard for Scripture and a blind adherence to religious uniformity and mediocrity. Seldom have we read a weaker argument.

### Building Not the Church

The very title of the article shows a lack of understanding of the Baptist position — "Who Owns a Baptist Church?" Obviously what the writer meant was — "Who Owns a Baptist Church Building?" The Lord alone owns the blood bought children who compose local churches. The building is not the church.

The article is a subtle defence of modernism for its great court of appeal is "historical connections" or "denominational connections". Not one mention is made of the possibility of their denominational connections being absolutely at enmity with historic Baptist principles. After all, the great concern is not about past affiliation but with present principles. No matter how honoured be the past of any denomination, if its present be characterized by departure or deviation from the truth, then the believer and the local church are honour-bound to protest and, if need be, withdraw.

### Court Definition of a Baptist Church

*The Watchman-Examiner* actually has the audacity to quote with seeming approval the court's definition of a true Baptist church as being, "those who *adhere* and *submit* to the regular order of the church, local and *general*, whether they are a majority or a *minority* of the membership." Popery! By no stretch of the imag-

ination does such a definition leave room for independence in the local church. "Oh," says someone, "the local church is to be absolutely independent *except* with regard to the disposition of property." The moment that we allow any exception, we have destroyed the principle.

Like the proverbial ostrich the *Watchman-Examiner* buries its head in the ground and chooses not to see any evidence of modernism or bureaucracy and attributes all divisions to selfish pride and carnal temper. We would not deny that such may sometimes be the case but we know that in the instance of the Northern Convention, which the *Watchman-Examiner* supports, most of the divisions were according to truth and have been honoured of God in the salvation of souls and establishment of vigorous churches.

The plain fact is, however, that the local church is to be guided by the majority. If the minority of the members disagree on a basic matter, they are free to leave and go elsewhere. No one would force them to stay. To admit the right of minority rule by those aided by an outside authority is to ape Rome.

#### Baptist "Apostolic Succession"!

The epitome of nonsense is contained in the final paragraph of the article where the writer says — "The problem of *Baptist continuity* is at the very centre of the problem. We do not find anywhere in Baptist history that this difficulty has been faced with frankness or justice, or moral completeness. It must be done. Our Baptist people, in their capacity for reason and justice, equal any other group of churchmen. Why cannot we have a completely representative group from the various Baptist bodies to work out a philosophy of *Baptist church continuity* so that our churches shall not become the prey of propagandists, religious exploiters, and schismatics?" Fortunately the author does not put his name to this piece of nonsense. We wonder if he is even a Baptist!

Dr. Armitage in his history of the Baptists well observes that there need not be any visible continuity among the Baptists. Even if there had been no true New Testament churches until 1955, one formed in this year and modelled on the New Testament ideal has the best conceivable credentials. Don't let Baptists be misled by the papal argument of visible succession or continuity. The writer of the article in the *Watchman-Examiner* should extend his reading for the New Testament is the best book we know on this subject and the difficulty of the author will be relieved.

If as he says, "our Baptist people, in their capacity for reason and justice, equal any other group of churchmen," then why does he insult their intelligence by suggesting that they, in their local assemblies, cannot choose to their best advantage and the glory of God? Surely if these "denominational connections" provide such a strong historical stand, they have no need of worrying about losing the affiliation of local churches. We suspect that the Baptist paper recognized that these conventions are not what they used to be and hence local churches are looking elsewhere for fellowship with those who hold the historic Baptist position.

Briefly then — Who Owns a Baptist Church Building? — the local members and no one else! Under God, they are responsible for its care and should see that it is used to the glory of God. To all else — hands off!

—L.K.T.

#### A MORE CONVENIENT SEASON

"Not yet, go thy way for this time; when I have a more convenient season, I will call for thee."

—Acts xxiv. 25

Delilah sheared the locks of Samson; Salome danced Herod into the pit; Drusilla blocked up the way to heaven for Felix; and unless some of you repent, you shall likewise perish. Yet when I present the subject, I fear that some of you will say: "Not quite yet. Don't be so precipitate in your demands. I have a few tickets yet that I have to use. I have a few engagements that I must keep. I want to stay a little longer in the whirl of conviviality—a few more guffaws of unclean laughter, a few more steps on the road to death, and then, sir, I will listen to what you say. 'Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.'" Do you know that your boat is on the edge of the maelstrom, and that the foam on the wave is the frothing lip of the destroyed; and that the gleam in the water is the glaring eyeballs of the banished; and that the roar of the wave is the groan of the damned? Oh! I know that it is a great deal easier, when you are in a boat, to pull ahead the same way you are going; but if you see that you are within a few yards of the vortex, and that this may be your last hour—aye, your last moment, you had better turn around in the boat, you had better clutch with both hands the handles of the oars; as with a death grip, and putting the blades down into the black waters, pull for your eternal life, crying, "Lord, save me, I perish!" Can you not offer such a prayer, O man! long wandering away from your God? Who is that I see running up and down in the prison-house of the lost, now trying to break through this gate, and failing, turning around and rushing to the other gate, and beating against it, and in despair crying, "Let me go out?" Who is it? Some soul that cannot give up his indulgences; some soul that is bound hand and foot by the powers of darkness; some soul that has a darling sin that he cannot sacrifice, and who says to me, when I present the great themes of God and eternity to his soul: "Not yet; go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." —T. DEWITT TALMAGE

Discrepancies exist, not between statements of the Bible and facts of science, but erroneous interpretations of Scripture and immature conclusions of science.

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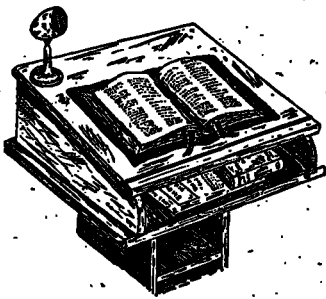
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By Rev. C. D. Cole

Thursday, February 3rd, 1955

PAUL'S GREAT APPEAL

Romans 12

**WE**'HAVE reached the practical part of Paul's letter to the Romans. If the doctrinal part has not been relished, the practical part is very apt to be even more distasteful. He who despises the mercies of God is sure to rebel against the commandments of God. Practical Christianity must rest upon a doctrinal basis. You cannot divorce doctrine from life and duty. It does matter much what a man believes. If he believes falsely he will live badly. What a man believes will always affect his conduct. As G. Campbell Morgan puts it, you cannot grow the tulips of the Kingdom of God unless you get the bulbs from Heaven. And the word of Christ must dwell in us richly if we are to live the Christian life as it ought to be lived. The strength for a godly life is in God and the Word of His grace. The flower of godliness has its roots deep in an experience of grace.

### I.

#### Paul's Appeal

The Roman letter is the greatest exposition of the grace and mercy of God ever to be written. After dilating on the mercies of God in human salvation the apostle gives expression to adoring wonder at the ways of God, and then follows with earnest exhortation for becoming conduct on the part of those who are the recipients of such marvellous grace and abundant mercies.

In verses one and two we have Paul's great appeal: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Notice that the apostle beseeches; he does not command like Moses. The pastor cannot give orders, or compel men; he can only get things done by beseeching. The pastor's only weapons are arguments drawn from the arsenal of truth. His only sword is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. His only rightful contention is contention for the once delivered faith. Martin Luther writes interestingly with reference to this passage: "Paul does not say, 'I command you,' for he is preaching to those who are already Christians, who are not to be forced with commands, but to be admonished to do willingly what is to be done. For he who does it not willingly, solely as the result of admonition, he is no Christian, and he who compels it from the unwilling with laws, he already is no Christian preacher or ruler but a worldly club-wielder." A Christian hierarchy, whether in the form of a Baptist board, or a Methodist Bishop, or a

Roman pope, is opposed to the very norm of New Testament Christianity. So Paul beseeches as he applies the doctrines of the Roman epistle to our practical every-day living.

Paul beseeches "by the mercies of God". This is the greatest argument for a consecrated life. The mercies of God absolutely demand it. Paul wants the mercies of God to bear fruit to the glory of God in human lives. The highest and purest of all motives is to act out of appreciation for the mercies of God in Jesus Christ. Paul has been discoursing on the mercies of God from election in eternity past to glorification in eternity future. He has been expounding the glorious theme of redemption from beginning to end, and exhibits it all under the label of "the mercies of God". And now he turns from teacher to beggar, and intreats us to show our gratitude to God. "I must live right", is a blessed word coming from the lips of a thankful spirit of one who is rejoicing in the righteousness of God which he has by faith in Jesus Christ. But the same word is a dangerous word coming from the lips of a man who is going about to establish his own righteousness.

#### Consecration of the Body

Paul beseeches us to present our bodies to God. The body is to be a living sacrifice, in contrast to the dead animals that were offered under the law of Moses. We have to use our bodies in all that we do, and we either use them for Satan or for God; we either use our bodies as instruments of righteousness or we employ them as instruments of unrighteousness. Under the law the animals to be sacrificed had to be physically and ceremonially clean, and under grace our body must be morally clean. A whiskey-soaked, tobacco-stained, foul-mouthed body is not morally clean. We are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service.

The sacrifice must be acceptable to God. It is not man, but God, we must endeavour to please. Consecration is primarily to God, — not to a cause, not to a good work, not even to a church. A person may become so wrapped up in a good cause, and a good work, so as to forget God. Consecration is to God. We must take care that our sacrifice is acceptable to God, and this requires that it must be done for His glory. The sacrifice must be offered in the Name of Jesus Christ our High Priest; and purified by the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit.

#### Christians Must Be Different

And such a sacrifice is our reasonable service, says the apostle. To be the beneficiary of such marvellous blessings that have come to us through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and then refuse Him our hearts and our lives, is to act most irrationally. In the light of the cost, and the value, of our salvation, nothing less than full devotion makes any sense.

The second verse makes the meaning clearer: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." The "world" here is the world morally considered; it is the world of the unregenerate, with all their ways and maxims. This world is bad, it lies in the lap of the wicked one. Satan has dominion over it; he is the god and the prince of this world. This world is self-centered, and Satan-controlled. The believer must not be like it in its ways and in its maxims. The aim of the world is not to



please and glorify God, but to advance self. The believer must not be guided by worldly maxims, but by the Divine commandments. "I would give the world if I had your experience," said one woman to another. "That is exactly what it cost me; I gave the world for it," said the other woman.

"But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." The word "transformed" here means to change the form or the appearance of something. It is a word that was used for the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus Christ, when His face shone like the sun, and His raiment was white as the light. The word as used in our text means a moral change that can be seen, a change that is manifest, that can be observed. Let the drunkard, or any other profligate, be converted, and there will soon be a change in his very appearance. Let the wicked godless home become a Christian home, and almost overnight everything about the place will take on a new look. Dr. Andrew Bonar was once told that a woman in the neighbourhood had been converted. "I doubt it," he replied, "for I called on her the other day and her house was as dirty as ever."

This change is to be effected by the renewing of the mind. Transformation must begin in the mind and the heart. If a man's conduct is to be right his thoughts must be right, "for as (a man) thinketh in his heart, so is he." Conduct is the fruit of thinking. The transformed life will discover and demonstrate the Word of God to this lost and gainsaying world. The commercial world uses demonstrators in making sales. The car salesman will put you in his car and drive you over the country to show you the riding and driving-comforts of his car. The refrigerator man will put a box in your home to demonstrate its freezing qualities and other features. The radio and television people will put their product in your home to demonstrate its performance. And we, as the people of Jesus Christ, are His demonstrators to this lost world. It is not enough to profess to love Him, and profess devotion to Him; we must demonstrate our love and our devotion with a transformed and changed life.

## II.

### Duties Based Upon Specific Gifts

In verses three to eight we have exhortations concerning the right use of spiritual gifts. First of all the believer is to have a just estimate of himself. There is to be no going beyond the measure of his faith, there is to be no self-elevation, no personal ambition, no desire to be pre-eminent. Faith here is viewed as the inlet to all other graces, or the foundation of all Christian graces, or the receptive faculty of the renewed soul. God has given to each a proportion of faith; He has given to each of us a spiritual capacity, and we must not think it greater than it really is. In discussing the exercise of the various gifts Paul uses the parable of the human body. "We have many members in one body," he says. Each member has his own place in the body, and must exercise his own gift. And there are seven of these gifts mentioned in this twelfth chapter of Romans.

The first is the gift of prophecy, the ability to utter Divine truth. Now it strictly signifies the foretelling of future events, but it is used in a wider sense in the New Testament, including those who have ability to expound, or open up, or unfold, the Scriptures. The prophet was

not to go beyond his proportion of faith; he must not go beyond what he actually knows.

Another gift is that of ministry. The word here means service, and is used in a very wide sense. When it refers to an office it refers to the office of deacon, according to Philippians one and one. It is used of preachers of the gospel in Second Corinthians, six and four, and the same word refers to the work of Phebe in the church at Cenchrea, according to Romans sixteen and one. In the passage before us the particular kind of service is not named. It does not refer to any office.

Another gift is that of teaching. This is the gift a pastor or a bishop must have, according to First Timothy, three and two. A mere exhorter should never be ordained to the office of bishop or pastor. Exhortation is the next gift mentioned. To exhort is to incite to duty, and dissuade from sin, and requires a peculiar talent. It does not require an office, however, to exhort. Laymen can exercise the gift of exhortation as well as the pastor, and sometimes to better effect. I have seen laymen stand up in their churches and exhort their fellow-members to greater and deeper spirituality, and to better co-operation, and challenge them to a greater work. And I have seen laymen exhort with most telling effect in the church of Jesus Christ.

Then giving is mentioned as one of these gifts. It is the duty of all to give, but it is a special gift to some who have ability, and who have been blessed of God so that they are able to make large gifts to the cause of Jesus Christ. Let us never despise the rich man in the church of Jesus Christ, if he be really a man of God. But giving is to be done with simplicity, as well as with liberality, and it is to be done without any ostentation. There should be no desire for publicity; there should be no blowing of the trumpet in making large gifts to the church of Jesus Christ.

The one who rules is to do it with diligence. The word here for ruler refers to one who is placed over or before. It is used of the bishop in Paul's letter to Timothy. The one who is placed over, the one who takes the lead, must be diligent; he must make haste, in the good sense of the word. The church will never get in front of the leader, who is the pastor, the one who is placed over them, and who is given to go before them. If the leader is slow the church will make little progress. The one who rules must do it with diligence.

Then we come to one of the most difficult of all Christian duties. "He that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness." The original literally means, "with hilarity." Mercy is to be shown with much pleasure and joy. Mercy now is for objects of misery, mercy is for those who are destitute, and in distress. Mercy is to be shown with a smile, to spare the feelings of the one who is unfortunate, and who needs help. A little boy once seriously offended his sister, and after he had reflected on what he had done he went to her and asked her for her forgiveness. She rather laconically said, "Well I forgive you." But he was not satisfied, and he came back directly and said, "I want you to forgive me." She said, "Well I told you I have forgiven you," "Yes, but you didn't say it with a smile." Oh, when God stooped to give us the kiss of reconciliation He did it with a smile. And when we show mercy to objects of misery we must show it with cheerfulness, with hilarity; we must be glad of the opportunity to show mercy. I have some embarrassing reflections when I think of the

few times that I have shown mercy, and rendered a little help to the unfortunate, when I realize that I did not show much hilarity or cheerfulness in doing it.

### III.

#### Duties Based Upon Spiritual Relationships

Verse nine begins a new section. It treats of general duties based upon spiritual relationships. The apostle says, "Let love be without dissimulation." Love is to be sincere, without hypocrisy. Feigned love, as someone has said, is nothing better than disguised hate. The hypocrite was the term for a show actor. In ancient times the actor always wore a mask; he was never the man he pretended to be. And so Paul warns against stage-actor love. And then he says, "Abhor that which is evil." Abhor is the strong word for hate. All believers must have depth and strength to their moral feelings. We must hate evil, and cleave to that which is good; or, as somebody has rendered it: "Be glued to the good." The Christian is not a mere negation. There is a positive side to Christian character. It is not so much what a man does not do, as what he does do, that counts. It is not enough to say, "I do not do this, or that, or the other." When a man was talking to Mr. Spurgeon in a sort of a praise-worthy manner, and reminding Mr. Spurgeon that he did not do this, and he did not do that, and he did not do the other thing, Mr. Spurgeon listened till he was tired, and said, "Pray, man, tell me what you do do?" There is a positive side to the Christian character.

Then he says, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another." The brother love of Christians should be like that of members of the same family, in which all are on the same level. And such affection will lead us to prefer one another in respect to honour. When someone is to be honoured, where honour is due, every one should try to take the lead in bestowing that honour. A large part of church trouble would vanish overnight if this injunction were heeded and practised. What a scramble for positions of honour goes on in religious circles, and particularly among the larger denominations, where positions of prestige and honour carrying a good income are sought after! It is far better never to be honoured if honour must be sought. It is a mark of the world to vie with one another in receiving honour. The people of God ought to be characterized by vying with one another in bestowing honour upon others.

Verse eleven: "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit serving the Lord." Now the word "business" here has no allusion to secular business. The word literally means haste or speed, or, as some render it, zeal. It is rendered "diligence" five times in the New Testament. As regards diligence we should not be slow. Weymouth translates it: "Let not your zeal slacken. As regards the Spirit there should be fervour." Mr. Stifler renders the whole verse like this: "In zeal, (the outward) not slothful; in spirit, (the inward human spirit), fervent: serving the Lord." The thought suggested is this: when we are serving the Lord all the speed we have in our diligence, and all the steam we generate in our spirit, is directed in the right channel, — serving the Lord with fervency of spirit.

Verse twelve speaks of hope, and tribulation, and prayer. Those three things make up the bulk of many a life. "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer." We may not be able to rejoice, in present conditions, but we can rejoice in hope

of better days. And every child of God under the inflicting hand of a Sovereign Heavenly Father can be assured that better days are ahead. "Rejoicing in hope" when present conditions are bad. And this hope will give patience in the day of affliction, for hope sees an end to all afflictions. And while hoping and waiting the believer should be continuing instant in prayer.

Verse thirteen: "Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality." Or, to render it more literally: "To the needs of the saints communicating, hospitality pursuing." No community of goods is hinted at here. Some will be better off than others, and let those who have share with those who have not. But indolence should not be encouraged. For a balancing truth to this we need to think of what Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, when he said that if a man would not work he should not eat. Hospitality pursuing. The Christian home should be an inn where strangers of the household of faith might find a welcome in time of need and emergency.

The next injunction is repeated, and the reason for the repetition is self-evident. "Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not." This injunction is too much for flesh and blood, but the Christian is supposed to have something beside flesh and blood. And the grace of God is available for every task that is too much for human nature. This injunction is in harmony with what our Lord said in the Sermon on the Mount: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." We should pronounce benedictions rather than maledictions on the heads of our enemies. But I can hardly go as far as Francis of Assisi did, when a young nobleman complained to him about a thief. "The rascal," cried the young nobleman, "has stolen my boots." "Run after him quickly," exclaimed Francis, "and give him your socks." I think I would have called the police.

Verse fifteen tells us that we should share in the experiences of others; we should be glad to see others happy, and feel sorry for those who are in sorrow. Someone has made the striking statement that divided joy is doubled, while divided sorrow is halved. There is so much truth in that in actual experience. Then we are exhorted to "be of the same mind one toward another." Let your mutual relations be harmonious. The thought is, I must wish for you what I would wish for myself if I were in your circumstances. It is mutual regard for the welfare of others. Seek not great things for thyself, but go along with the lowly. A preacher once said that he was never able to find his place in the service of God until he learned that God did not mean to make a great man of him. And that may be hindering some of us from finding our place in the service of God.

### IV.

#### Duties Towards Non-Christians

The last five verses treat of our conduct toward non-Christians. Paul says, Do not pay evil for evil. Expect persecution, but do not return it. Let it never be a case of tit for tat with you. Do not pay back in the same coin. The Christian is to do his best to live in peace with all men. Let us be sure that we are not at fault if peace is destroyed. If preaching the truth brings war, let war come, but in that event the responsibility is on the one who opposes the truth. But let not the believer be a contentious person, always picking a fight with somebody. "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather

give place unto wrath! for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." What a needed admonition! The believer must never seek revenge against an enemy. To take vengeance is to usurp the prerogative of God. To take vengeance is to steal, for vengeance belongs unto God. To try to get even with an enemy is to take yourself out of the hands of your Heavenly Father. Leave it with Him, wait for Him to act; He will set things right in His own time. To give place to wrath means that you are not to exercise wrath, but remember vengeance belongs to God. We must never seek the injury of those who injure us. It is one of the most dangerous things a Christian can do. This does not preclude turning the wrong-doer over to the law for protection of human society, but even then personal vengeance should step out of the way. Vengeance is not our work, and we get in God's way when we undertake that sort of work. Personal enmity and malice have no place in the bosom of a child of God, or a Christian heart. What is before us does not apply to human courts, but to individual personal feelings. It does not apply to church action; it applies to the individual in his personal attitude and feeling toward an enemy.

#### Coals of Fire

We are to befriend our personal enemy. "If he hungers, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." A woman was once complaining about the trouble she was having with her husband. He was a terrible sort of man. And someone said, "Have you ever tried heaping coals of fire on his head?" And she said, "No, but I dashed some scalding water on him the other day." Now that is not what Paul is enjoining. This is a figurative expression, and is not to be practised literally. It is a quotation from Proverbs, the twenty-fifth chapter, and twenty-second verse. Literally speaking, putting coals of fire on a person's head would cause intense pain. That is the way the ancient confessors were punished, that is the way they were tortured in the long ago, by having coals of fire piled upon their head. The expression is figurative here, and in the light of the context it cannot refer to any injury, and will not allow of any malicious motive in our dealing with our enemies. If the Christian does good to his enemy in hope of hurting him in any way the proper motive of goodness is lacking. What does it mean to heap coals of fire upon your enemy's head? I think it must mean that by doing good to one who injures us we may melt him into contrition over his sin, and thus bring him to salvation. Heaping coals of fire is not to hurt or to injure.

#### Overcome Evil With Good

The whole duty of Christians in reference to injury is summed up in the one comprehensive precept with which this chapter closes: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Do not let the injuries inflicted on you by an enemy defeat you, but be a conqueror, not by returning evil, but by doing good to the enemy. I recognize, as all of us do, that this sentiment is peculiar to Christianity. Nothing like these moral precepts can be found anywhere in heathen classics, and nothing like it was ever enjoined among heathen nations. It is utterly peculiar to Christianity.

Now to guard against being misunderstood, and lest someone should be wrongly taught, let me say again that these injunctions apply to Christians in their indi-

vidual and personal relations to their enemies. It does not apply to human courts in their function of protecting life and property, nor does it forbid our turning an enemy over to the law for the protection of society, and just punishment of the crime. What it does forbid is our carrying malice in our heart, and seeking personal vengeance against someone who has wronged us. We do not lose interest in the man who has wronged someone else, and why should we lose interest in him if he has wronged us? We should seek the salvation and the spiritual good of all men, and not merely all those who have been friends to us, or who have not wronged us. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

#### NEW GOSPEL WITNESS BOOKLETS

Often there appears in THE GOSPEL WITNESS an article of more than usual interest. Frequently readers write asking for extra copies or express the wish that the particular article or sermon could be printed in pamphlet or booklet form. We too recognize the need for wider distribution of all such articles and therefore have initiated a policy of reprinting them in booklet form.

*Calvinism Defended*, by C. H. Spurgeon, is in this category. We have therefore had this concise exposition of true Calvinism reprinted in booklet form. The booklet is twenty pages in length and is printed on high quality book paper. The cost is only 10 cents each or 12 for \$1.00. We predict a wide distribution for this little messenger and urge all interested readers to order their copies early.

Another projected pamphlet is *Israel's Future According to Romans Eleven*. Readers will recall that this was the Bible Lecture in last week's issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. Personally we felt that it was the soundest and most charitable exposition of that chapter that we have ever heard. Expository novelties and prophetic extravagances are noticeably absent.

We recognize that both of these pamphlets will not be considered light reading, but all diligent students of scripture will welcome them. We trust that in the near future THE GOSPEL WITNESS will be enabled to publish increasing numbers of such small publications covering a wide variety of subjects. Your earnest prayers are solicited.

—L.K.T.

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# Liberty and the Roman Threat

By Rev. John W. Orr, B.A.

(An address delivered in Belfast, Ireland)

**W**HAT is liberty? The Oxford English Dictionary defines civil liberty as "freedom from arbitrary, despotic, or autocratic rule or control." It is the intention of this article to examine some claims and ramifications of the Roman Church which deny people such freedom.

A witty Roman Catholic, when faced with the striking contrast between freedom in Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic lands, summarised the attitude of his Church in this way, "When we are in power we behave on our principles; when you are in power we expect you to behave on yours." That sounds fair enough until you enquire into the respective principles concerned. We, as evangelical Christian people, believe in a freedom which extends tolerance to all types of religious opinion and practice, provided, of course, that nothing subversive of the safety of the State or the well-being of its life is practised. The principles on which the Roman Church proceeds are very different however.

First, the Roman Church claims to be an infallible Church with an infallible leader. This means that in all matters of faith and morals (which cover almost every area of life) the Roman Catholic is free to obey the law of his land only if, and so far as, his Church approves of it. There are times when any of us may feel opposed to the decrees of our rulers for sincere reasons of conscience. But a Roman Catholic living anywhere outside the Vatican City takes his directions, not from conscience in the final analysis, but from the prince of a foreign state, i.e., the Pope. Moreover, that foreign prince claims the ability and the right to give infallible guidance to all the faithful everywhere. Lord Acton, the Roman Catholic lawyer and historian, seeing the implications of this claim, strenuously opposed the introduction of Papal infallibility as a dogma of his Church in 1870. He said, "It makes civil legislation on all points of contract, marriage, education, clerical immunities, mortmain, even on many questions of taxation and Common Law, subject to the legislation of the Church, which would be simply the arbitrary will of the Pope. *Most assuredly, no man accepting such a code could be a loyal subject, or fit for the enjoyment of political privileges.*" (Quoted Blanchard, "Freedom and Catholic Power," p. 27).

On all vital State issues the devout Romanist will vote and act always, and primarily, for the furtherance of "true" religion, which for him means one thing only — the strengthening of the grip of the infallible Roman Church upon the life and controlling influences of his land.

Secondly, the Roman Catholic believes that he alone has the truth from God which sets men free. "Ye shall know the truth," said Jesus Christ, "and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32). But if only within the teaching of the Roman Church is this truth to be found then all non-Roman teaching, however faithful to the Word of God it may be, is dangerous perversion of the truth, to be avoided and stamped out if possible. The logic of this is unassailable: but alas, or fortunately, the major premise is indefensible.

An interesting correspondence was carried on in the columns of an Irish daily newspaper within the past year. A Roman Catholic lady who had organized a meeting in Dublin for the purpose of exposing Protestant "error" was invited by a Protestant correspondent to read Salmon's "Infallibility of the Church". He himself promised, on the lady's recommendation, to read a book by Sir Henry Slessor giving the Roman side. In her reply she wrote, "I believe I have the truth. Why should I put it in peril by reading the book of a person who would try to destroy my faith . . . That would be inconsistent of me. On the other hand it is inconsistent for 'Member' (the pen-name of her correspondent) who is a religious wayfarer, a searcher for the 'whole truth', to refuse to read Slessor, who might help him in his search." Further on in the same letter she guesses her anonymous correspondent to be a clergyman, yet she unhesitatingly declares him to be "a religious wayfarer; and a searcher for the whole truth." This is just a typical example of the closed and fixed mind which Rome produces, perfectly convinced that outside Rome there can be nothing but error and darkness.

Now that is serious enough, but what makes it many times more alarming is the fact that Rome allows for the suppression of all opposition to her version of the truth and provides for the winning or coercing of outsiders by methods of fear and force. An authoritative Roman Catholic work, "The Church and the State," quoted by Paul Blanchard (p. 54), states: "If there is only one true religion, and if its possession is the most important good in life for states as well as individuals, then the public profession, protection, and promotion of this religion, and the legal prohibition of all direct assaults upon it, becomes one of the most obvious and fundamental duties of the State."

Father Ronald Knox, in his book, "The Belief of Catholics," writes, "a body of Catholic patriots, entrusted with the government of a Catholic state, will not shrink even from repressive measures in order to perpetuate the secure domination of Catholic principles among their fellow-countrymen." (p. 242).

It becomes clear, then, what the Roman Catholic means when he says, on the surface so graciously, "When we are in power we will behave on our principles; when you are in power we expect you to behave on yours." The respective principles will not bear comparison. All perversions of Roman truth are to be discouraged and suppressed. Roman truth only may prevail and the State should be the Church's instrument in seeing to this. Conditions and events in Spain, Italy, and the Latin American States to-day are grim examples of how that policy works out in practice.

The third characteristic of Roman Catholicism, where-in lies peril to human liberty and toleration as we cherish them, is clericalism. What is clericalism? "Roman clericalism, as distinct from Roman Catholicism as a faith, is the pursuit of power, especially political power, by a religious hierarchy, carried on by secular methods and for

purposes of social domination." (Dr. Mackay, "Theology To-day," July, 1951, p. 223).

Dr. John A. Mackay, President of Princeton Theological Seminary, a widely-read and widely-travelled observer of religious affairs all over the world today, says: "A totalitarian hierarchy which puts itself in the place of God and becomes the virtual patron of Jesus Christ, a hierarchy which so identifies its acts with the will of Christ that it does not contemplate the possibility of being challenged by Christ, constitutes today, as far as the traditional democracies are concerned, the greatest single menace to what Evangelical Christianity and democratic society have both stood for."

The memory is still fresh of an occasion when this power and threat of clericalism precipitated a government crisis in the southern part of our own land. Only a short time ago Dr. Noel C. Browne, then Minister of Health in Eire, resigned and had his Mother and Child Welfare Scheme turned down because of pressure by the Roman bishops. As a Roman Catholic member of the Dail, Capt. Cowan, observed at the time, "Eire's real rulers are the Roman Catholic bishops." It will be recalled that Mr. Costello, the Taoiseach at the time, made it clear that "the government would readily and immediately acquiesce in a decision of the Hierarchy."

Paul Blanchard, in his "Freedom and Catholic Power," has given an alarming exposure of Roman clericalism as it seeks by cunning policy and massive organization to wrap its octopus tentacles around more and more of American life and affairs. He boldly alleges, on evidence, that "Catholics are taught to offer no resistance to the American policy of freedom at the present time but to take advantage of this freedom while working to destroy it." He shows us clericalism working on the grand scale through what is called in America, "The National Catholic Welfare Conference." "Its offices," writes Blanchard, "are full of young priests, lobbyists, journalists, and lawyers, who co-ordinate the Catholic population of the country as one great pressure group when any 'Catholic issue' arises."

Many examples could be adduced to show this dark power of clericalism at work in foreign countries and within the British family of nations. In some cases it can be detected as an influence in a country's administrative services; sometimes it skilfully sets the scene for bitter opposition to Protestant minorities, even to persecute, and then leaves it to the incited Catholic loyalist to commit the act and carry the blame.

On the subject of Rome and Freedom it is important to note that Rome is not the great bulwark of liberty against godless Communism in the world to-day which she so loudly claims to be. Rome, as much as Soviet Communism, cultivates the totalitarian mentality in its people. The complete subservience of every devout Catholic to his Church with its still medieval, feudal organization is itself a peril to true liberty as we have learned to know and love it. Dr. John A. Mackay, already quoted above, completed a tour of European lands a short time ago and, commenting upon the varied situation from land to land, he said he found those countries where Rome is all-powerful, like Portugal, Spain, and Italy, to be Europe's chief breeding grounds of Communism. The obvious reason is that if a Roman Catholic tires of Rome's authoritarian rule he turns easily and eagerly to the Russian version of the same thing, mass direction from

above. His spirit having been trained in servility he is still quite happy to be less than free.

"Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free," wrote St. Paul to the Galatian Christians. Christ had delivered them from the dead, formal, and legalistic religion of Judaism; He had made them "heirs of God" and "more than conquerors" through His own redeeming love for them expressed in His death and resurrection. They were free men because Christ had made them God's men. "Plant your feet firmly therefore within the freedom that Christ has won for us," exhorts Paul, "and do not let yourselves be caught again in the shackles of slavery." That same word comes ringing out from God to us in our day — we who are heirs of the Reformation by which God delivered our fathers and their children and their children's children to live in the light and freedom of His Truth. That Truth we have in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (let us make sure that we use them!) and supremely in the Lord Jesus Christ (let us be sure that, standing in Him by faith, we have the liberty with which He alone can set men free).

—The Christian Irishman.

## ➤ From Our Files ➤

THE GOSPEL WITNESS, *Thirty Years Ago, February 12, 1925* — In this issue there is an inspiring account of the services on the previous Lord's Day: "Sunday was another day of high-tide in Jarvis Street. The morning congregation, beyond all question, must have been the largest Baptist congregation assembled anywhere in Canada at that hour. The great Bible School, with the rest of the congregation, practically filled the great auditorium of Jarvis Street.

"In the evening another great congregation assembled; and in response to the invitation twelve came forward, among them a ripe saint and his wife, with their granddaughter. The grand-father is eighty years of age; and has been an elder in three churches. He, his wife, and their grand-daughter, with a large number of others, will be baptized together the first Sunday in March. A few weeks ago it was our privilege to baptize a man and his wife who for years have been members of another denomination. (He plays the bass horn in the orchestra). A week ago his youngest daughter was converted, and last Sunday evening another daughter, two sons, and a daughter-in-law, came forward together and yielded themselves to Christ. These five will be baptized the first Sunday in March."

The following paragraphs form the introduction of an excellent Editorial entitled, "Unused Paths to the Shining Light".

"Where the golden grain is waving, or the luscious fruit hangs in clusters, or the garden is painted and perfumed with floral beauty, ordinary eyes can discern more wealth than where only bleak, barren, inhospitable rock appears. Not very long ago the price of a peach orchard in the Niagara Peninsula would have purchased perhaps hundreds of acres at Cobalt. 'Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place for the gold where they fine it. Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stone . . . But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?' Is contentment learned only by considering the lilies? Are lessons

of trust instilled nowhere but in those fair fields where we may behold the fowls of the air? May we not be instructed by the great and wide sea, where go the ships? Is it useless to examine the refuge of the wild goats in the high hills? Are we so 'modern' that we may give ourselves to the study of spiders in kings' palaces, and fear to fare forth into the wilds to learn from the conies, the feeble folk, who make their houses in the rocks?

"In that great continent of truth we call the Bible, there is an infinitely varied topography, and a variety of climates and products suited to every degree of spiritual health. It is not every one who can live in the hill country, and there are many who are constitutionally unfitted for life on the plains. Perhaps if it were remembered that the Bible was designed to minister to the spiritual needs of that multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, we should be a little more modest in esteeming those parts of the Book which we cannot understand. The editor of the latest edition of the 'Encyclopedia Britannica' in a speech said, 'No editor could possibly have all the knowledge to control all the departments.' The Bible is incomparably a greater book than the 'Britannica,' and it is not easy to admire the modesty of those gentlemen who, after the contributors have been dead, all of them for centuries, and some for thousands of years, profess to know all that may be known about the whole Book.

"Walk, if you will, as did the disciples anciently, through the corn fields in company with the Master on the Sabbath day, and pluck the ears and eat. But do not suppose they are spending their time to no purpose who chose instead to explore what you regard as the barren tracts, the rocky wastes, of Scripture. Remember, He has promised 'honey out of the rock', as well as 'the finest of the wheat'. If the two explorers lovingly share their experiences, each will have bread and honey. This is the purpose of the 'diversities of gifts' in the church of Christ."

—O.L.C.

In hell everyone drinks his own cup, and can never exhaust its contents; but behold, on Calvary, one man drinks the cup of millions, and cries — "It is finished!" Not a drop is left, not a particle of any of its ingredients, for his people.

—CHRISTMAS EVANS

#### REMEMBER THE SEMINARY IN YOUR WILL

We suggest that our friends should remember Toronto Baptist Seminary in their wills. The proper form for this is: "I give, devise and bequeath the sum of ..... to Toronto Baptist Seminary, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto 2, Canada, associated with Jarvis St. Baptist Church." We are laying foundations for the future, and we are determined to make it as impossible as it is within human power to do, that not one dollar given to Toronto Baptist Seminary shall be used for anything but the propagation of the gospel. No amount would be too large, and certainly no amount would be too small. We earnestly solicit the gifts of those who believe in ministerial and missionary education.

#### CHASTENING LOVE

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. (Heb. 12:6).

"Whom the Lord loveth" — "My, what a strange and unnecessary expression," declares the unbelieving soul, "for it is obvious that if there is a God, He must love everyone. After all, is not the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of all men the first principle of religion?" Thus the natural man professes to have no surprise on hearing that God has love toward the children of men; indeed, he seems to think that the supreme being owes this to the creature.

"Whom the Lord loveth" — How differently the believer views these stirring words! Having caught a glimpse of his own heart, he wonders not that God does not exercise His love toward all men, but that He loves any at all. Only in the mystery of sovereign grace does he find the explanation which enables him to appreciate the poet's words:

"Amazing grace! How sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me . . ."

An oft-told story perhaps best illustrates these two different views of God's love. I shall seek briefly to recount it as nearly as I remember it. It seems that a proud infidel once approached a godly minister and announced that he had found a monstrous assertion in the Bible and challenged the preacher to explain it. "Where is this offensive passage?" inquired the man of God. Romans 9:13 was pointed out — ". . . Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Triumphantly the unbeliever asked how God could possibly hate anyone. "My," replied the old believer, "I too have a problem in that verse, but it is not yours. I do not wonder how God could have hated Esau, but I do wonder how he could have possibly loved Jacob!"

"Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." Once more the unbeliever and the troubled Christian, too, find this an enigma. How can it be that God could love someone at the same time chasten that soul? Is not the believer to be carried through the skies on flowery beds of ease? Much of modern, sentimental religion might leave the impression that regeneration carries with it an assured immunity from trial, struggle, doubt or suffering. Yet this scripture and many others, including the whole of I Peter, declare plainly that the chastening process is both probable and necessary in the life of the believer.

Those who believe that they have achieved a sinless perfection cannot understand this and hence are tempted to complain against God. Yet the believer who knows his own lack of true holiness and is aware of his many failings must marvel that the chastenings are not more frequent and more severe.

For instance, each of us is prone to pride at what we deem our own accomplishments. Left to itself this pride could only lead to self-righteousness and finally a total lack of usefulness in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence God must remind us of our dependence upon Him and that our sufficiency is *of the Lord*. Thus trial, affliction, suffering or persecution are sent from His hand. Spurgeon truly observed that "affliction is the stone which our Lord Jesus throws at the brow of our giant pride, and patience is the sword which cuts off its head."

When we see this process in its true light we better appreciate it. Unfortunately we always view events in their immediate surroundings and consequences. Trial

spells only trouble in our vocabulary. In the light of our own spiritual pilgrimage, however, it will be seen as being not only to God's glory but to *our own good*. Then we shall rue the frame of mind which led us to doubt the goodness of God.

Ultimately, of course, we shall be able to understand these things fully only in "the land that is fairer than day." Then the veil of time will be rent, and the prejudices and shortsightedness of earth will be removed and we shall see that He doeth *all things well*. Just as we do not perfectly view an oil painting while we stand close to it, so too we cannot perfectly view the experiences of earth while we are in the midst of them. At the moment when we step back from time into eternity we then shall wonder at our own lack of perspective, for then we shall no longer see through a glass darkly.

It is the writer's earnest desire and prayer that these words should fall beneath the gaze of some troubled child of God. We make no pretensions at advising you, for we are only too keenly aware of our own lack of patience and our own much complaining. Singly we would point you to the Word for your explanation. If you are being tried, afflicted or chastened, you have cause for rejoicing in the knowledge that God loves you, for "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth."

—L.K.T.

## Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 19 First Quarter Lesson 8 February 20, 1955

OLIVE L. CLARK, Ph.D. (Tor.)

### JEHOSHAPHAT'S VICTORY

Lesson Text: 2 Chronicles 20:10-22.

Golden Text: "The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."—Exodus 14:14.

#### Introduction:

The First and Second Book of Kings and the First and Second Book of Chronicles record the history of the children of Israel from the reign of Solomon in 1019 B.C. to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. First Chronicles is parallel to Second Samuel, and Second Chronicles is parallel to First and Second Kings. The Books of the Kings record the events from the standpoint of the prophets and the kings, whereas the Books of Chronicles record them from the standpoint of the priests and the people. The Books of Chronicles deal with the southern kingdom of Judah exclusively, mentioning the rebellious northern kingdom of Israel only in its relation to Judah. Hence, these books do not describe the ministry of Elijah and Elisha, who prophesied in Israel.

Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, reigned 918 - 893 B.C., and during this time Ahab, Ahaziah and Jehoram were the kings of Israel (1 Kings 21:29; 22:40; 2 Kings 3: 1, 6). Elisha, whose career has been the subject of our study, ministered during the reign of Jehoram or Joram. As God gave to Israel victory over the Syrians (2 Kings 7), so did He grant victory to Judah over Moab and Ammon (2 Chron. 20).

#### I. The King's Prayer: verses 10-13.

Jehoshaphat, the son of good King Asa of Judah, was a prosperous, efficient and wise ruler, walking in the ways of David. He established the kingdom, strengthened its defenses, instituted reforms, encouraged education and led his people in worshipping Jehovah (2 Chron. 17). He compromised, however, in joining affinity with Ahab, the wicked king of Israel (2 Chron. 18:1), for which sin he was rebuked by the seer Jehu (2 Chron. 19:2).

The children of Moab (2 Kings 1:1; 3:4, 7) and Ammon (Judg. 3:13; 1 Sam. 11:1) and other tribes dwelling near

Mount Seir in Edom invaded Judah (2 Chron. 20:1, 2). Some of these peoples were descendants of Esau, Jewish in blood but idolaters in religion, representing the forces of the flesh, with whom the people of the Spirit are ever at war (Deut. 2:5; Mal. 1:2, 3; Rom. 9:13). The king summoned the people of Judah to a solemn service in the sanctuary, that together they might seek the Lord and humble themselves before Him (2 Chron. 20:3, 4). He Himself led them in prayer (verses 5-12).

As believers we are never free from the assaults of our enemies—Satan, the flesh, the world, and sin in every form. This narrative suggests the path of victory.

In seeking the Lord, Jehoshaphat remembered the history of the children of Israel. Time after time the Lord had delivered them from their foes (verse 7; Exod. 6:6, 7; 15:1-5, 15-19). Therefore, they might expect victory in this crisis also.

The king based his request for help upon the Lord's own promises to His people (verses 7-9; 1 Kings 8:33, 37; 2 Chron. 6:28-30). The Lord delights to have us plead His own Word, as with faith we ask Him to do what He has already said He would do (1 Chron. 17:23; 2 Chron. 6:17).

King Jehoshaphat in his earnest plea expressed confidence in the Providence of God (verses 10, 11). Through no fault of their own the Israelites were in dire straits. In obedience to the Lord they had not punished these same peoples who had once stood in their way, forbidding them passage (Deut. 2:4, 9, 19; Numb. 20:21). The Ammonites and Moabites remained strong, and now they were attacking those who had in mercy spared them. Jehoshaphat, with no complaint upon his lips bowed to the Divine will, trusting that the Lord Himself would judge the wrong-doers (Psa. 9:3, 4; 10:4-14; 99:8; 140:12; Rom. 12:19). Because of their obedience to His Word the Israelites might justly claim the Lord's protection (Deut. 28:7; 2 Chron. 6:34, 35). We should maintain a similar attitude toward those who are our enemies because they are the enemies of the Lord (Psa. 70:1-3; 71:1-5; 1 Pet. 4:19).

The people of God who are in danger should humbly acknowledge their own weakness, as did Jehoshaphat on behalf of the men of Judah, who knew not what to do. We must not underestimate the power of our Adversary. The next step is to call upon the Lord for deliverance (Psa. 50:15; Jer. 33:3). All our hope is centred in Him (verse 12; 1 Sam. 14:6; 2 Chron. 14:11; Psa. 73:26; 121:1, 2).

All Judah stood together before the Lord, presenting themselves before Him (verse 13; Josh. 24:1). In union there is strength, and united intercession in the name of the Lord will prevail (Matt. 18:19, 20; Acts 1:14; 2:1).

#### II. The Lord's Answer: verses 14-22.

The Lord revealed His answer to the cry of the king through a chosen prophet, a Levite upon whom He caused His Spirit to rest (Numb. 24:2; Judg. 3:10). So, too, does He speak to His people to-day through His Word, His Spirit and His messengers.

The people were exhorted to have faith, confidence and courage; they were strengthened within (Deut. 31:6; Josh. 1:9; Isa. 41:10; Eph. 4:16). Some Christians, yielding to despair, are beaten before they commence to do battle against the foe. Discouragement is one of the most powerful of the weapons of Satan (1 Kings 19:1-4).

Then, too, the battle is the Lord's when the cause is just (1 Sam. 17:47; 18:17). His glory is at stake, and His is the responsibility to vindicate His Holy Name. But the people must make a stand (Exod. 14:15; Eph. 6:13, 14); the men of Judah were commanded to go against their enemies (Judg. 5:23; Psa. 78:9). In the battle against sin and Satan, we are to act as though all depended upon our own efforts, but pray, since all depends upon God. "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon" was the battle-cry of the Israelites (Judg. 7:20, 21). It is only as we resist Satan that he will flee from us (Jas. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:9). The people were commanded to stand still, quietly, patiently, expectantly, but yet they were to stand (Exod. 14:13, 14), and the Lord would be with them (2 Chron. 13:12; 15:2; 32:7, 8).

Jehoshaphat and his people went forth in the spirit of worship, acknowledging the sovereign power of the Lord (2 Chron. 29:29, 30). They went also in the spirit of praise and thanksgiving, chanting the Psalm of victory (1 Chron. 16:34, 41; Psa. 106:1; 107:1; 118:1-4; 136). The singers on this occasion were as important as the soldiers, and the army

marched forward as though they were already celebrating the return march of triumph (1 John 5:14).

The Lord Himself routed the enemy. He controlled the sinful passions of the enemy tribes so that the wrath of the men should praise Him (Psa. 76:10). The rival peoples could not and would not unite, and in utter confusion they began to destroy one another (verses 22-24). Thus in sovereign power and grace will the Lord give victory to those who obey and trust Him (Rom. 8:37).

Three results followed the deliverance; riches (verses 25), rejoicing (verses 27, 28), and rest (verses 29, 30).

#### Daily Bible Readings

Feb. 14—Israel's Victory ..... Exod. 15-1-13

Feb. 15—Joshua's Victory ..... Josh. 6:1-20  
 Feb. 16—Gideon's Victory ..... Judg. 7:19-23  
 Feb. 17—Abijah's Victory ..... 2 Chron. 13:4-12  
 Feb. 18—Hezekiah's Victory ..... 2 Chron. 32:1-21  
 Feb. 19—The Psalm of Victory ..... Psa. 124  
 Feb. 20—The Psalm of Deliverance ..... Psa. 126

#### Suggested Hymns

To God be the glory.  
 Forward be our watchword.  
 Christian, dost thou see them?  
 There's a royal banner.  
 True-hearted, whole-hearted.  
 Begone, unbelief!

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