

THIS SERMON IS A REGULAR WEEKLY FEATURE

PEOPLE'S PULPIT...



Sermon by CHARLES T. RUSSELL, Pastor Brooklyn Tabernacle.

Choose Ye This Day Between Truth and Error.

"Choose You This Day Whom Ye Will Serve... If Jehovah Be God, Serve Him" (Joshua xxv, 15).

Washington, D. C., March 13.—Pastor Russell of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, preached here twice today to splendid audiences. One of his discourses was entitled, "The Overthrow of Satan's Empire." We report the other one from the text above quoted. Pastor Russell said:—

As Christians in the light of this wonderful Twentieth Century we stand at the parting of the ways and must decide for right or for wrong, for truth or for falsehood, in respect to our religious convictions. Without questioning the sincerity of our forefathers, we all object to their theology. It is in vain that ministers and Bible class teachers longer deny the facts of the case. Nor will intelligent and honest people agree that it is right that through their creeds they should profess one thing, and in their lives and general conversation they should ignore or absolutely deny the teachings of those creeds. Yet this is the position of practically all the thinking people of Christendom. Their consciences will not stand for this much longer. If they refrain from telling the truth and taking their stand for it, they will not only bear their consciences (1 Timothy iv, 2) and correspondingly separate themselves from God's favor, but additionally their course will sooner or later bring upon them the disapproval and contempt of all honest people. For although the masses are not yet aroused on the subject, they are rapidly getting awake.

Do you wish me to illustrate what I mean? Do you wish me to show in what respect all denominations are ashamed of their creeds and anxious to hide the fact that they ever professed them or were anxious to give them some new interpretation more consistent with the broader thought and more generous sentiment common to civilized man in this Twentieth Century? I will do it.

Our Methodist friends are ashamed of that feature of their creed which declares that the Almighty is now doing everything that Divine Wisdom and Power can accomplish on behalf of our poor race to bring all to a full knowledge of Christ and to opportunity of faith and obedience. They realize that there is a weakness in this argument. And when they protest that God must work through means, and hence that the responsibility lies at the door of Christian believers to carry the Gospel to the heathen, they realize that this is an illogical argument too. For why should our Great Creator send to eternal torment millions of his creatures, because of an insufficiency of zeal on the part of some of their more enlightened fellow-creatures? Acknowledging the inconsistency of such a theory our good Methodist brethren tell us that they hope that God has some other way of saving the ignorant of heathen lands and, perhaps, of civilized lands.

We appreciate the loving heart which prompts this answer and we agree that it is true—that God has another way for these. But when we attempt to point out what that other way is, some of these dear friends inquire, Is it Methodism? Did John Wesley preach it? Our answer is, No, Brother Wesley did not preach it and did not know of it. Not because it is new, but because it is so very old and was lost sight of during the "dark ages" for fifteen centuries before Brother Wesley was born. He was feeling after it, yearning for it, hungering and thirsting for it, but the "due time" for it to be made known to God's people had not yet come in Brother Wesley's day. He preached the eternal torture of all mankind, except the sanctified believers in Jesus the Savior. But in his preaching of the love of God he was used of the Almighty to wondrously prepare the hearts of Christendom for the broader message of the Bible now due to be seen and understood. Wesley's Gospel of the love of God has mellowed the heart of Christendom, which once was frigid under the cold teachings of Foreordination, Predestination, etc., of the Westminster Confession of Faith—once the basis of nearly all Protestant Communions.

If we and our Methodist brethren could maintain the same degree of spiritual warmth that Wesley and his forefathers enjoyed we might do without further instruction. But we cannot do this! None can stand still; Christians today are losing their holiness, their sanctification—their zeal for God is giving place to zeal for a sect.

The light of the Millennium morning which for a century has been gradually breaking upon the world, stimulating thought in every direction, makes it necessary for our Methodist brethren, as well as for us all, to awaken to the wonderful privileges of our day for Bible study; to ascertain the real teachings of God's Word, which in the dark past we all seemingly misunderstood and misrepresented. Already the most intelligent one-fourth of Methodism not only rejects Brother Wesley's theory, but also, repudiates the Bible also! It accepts instead of Salvation that most dangerous form of infidelity known as Higher Criticism and that most un-Scriptural propo-

tion of human Evolution, which denies the fall of our race and makes void Christ's redemptive work and the glorious result thereof—human restitution (Acts iii, 19-23).

Bury the Dead Past. God forbid that we should bury any of the doctrines of Christ and his twelve apostles! On the contrary let us strive to resurrect these from the rubbish of human traditions which eighteen centuries have piled upon them. Let us instead bury our man-made creeds, of which we are all ashamed. Our Presbyterian friends some years ago set a noble example to all Christendom in the burial of their Confession of Faith and their substitution instead of a much simpler and much more rational statement.

But, No, I must correct myself here. This is what they should have done but did not do. Instead of burying the old creed, not only from sight, but also from odor, they have merely covered the corpse which is admitted to be dead and placed the briefer and better Confession atop the winding-sheet. They assuredly declare that it is not a substitute but merely a representative statement. Hence every time we read the re-statement, we must hold our noses to avoid contamination from the odors of the carcass beneath. Not all must do this, for, as the Apostle suggests, All have not their senses exercised to discern. But all intelligent Presbyterians are being rapidly driven not only away from Calvinism, but, alas, away from the Bible also, because of their erroneous supposition that the teaching of Calvin and the teachings of the Bible are one and the same.

These bright minds are not merely lost to the Christian forces. They become active agents in the promulgation of anti-Biblical teachings. They are engaged in pulling down the Bible and substituting for its teachings Darwin's Evolution theory. These sincere men are to be found in the faculties of all of the Colleges, in the highest pulpits throughout the land and in the most prominent positions in business and social life. Their loss of faith in the Bible has not made them murderers or thieves. Their noble inheritance from the past preserves to them an uprightness of character which the loss of a fear of hell-torment has not undermined. While they are no longer Christians from the Bible standpoint—no longer believers in Jesus as a Redeemer—they are still believers in Jesus as a great Teacher and a noble Leader of men. They fail to discern the fact that if he posed as the Son of God and the Redeemer of men, and was not such, instead of being a noble example, his life and teachings were most stupendous frauds and deceptions.

Baptists and Disciples Awakening. When we say that this awakening is also reaching our Baptist and our Disciple brethren, let it not be understood to mean that all of these have been asleep until now. Perhaps it would have been better for them if some who have gotten awake during the past thirty years had slumbered longer. Those long awake have principally gone off into Darwinism and Higher Criticism. Baptist and Disciple schools and Colleges and Theological Seminaries, like those of other denominations, are manned with the brightest minds of the denominations, and all with one accord teaching Higher Criticism, infidelity and Darwinian Evolution. With one accord all are engaged in overthrowing the Christian Faith of the rising generation. They are doing this intelligently, wisely, cunningly, but not with evil motive. Having gotten awake to the inconsistencies of their creeds these scholarly men, concluding that the creeds truthfully represented the Bible, abandoned faith in the Scriptures to the same degree that they have abandoned faith in the creeds which their intellects have repudiated. Now they are seeking to gradually help Christian people of all denominations to what they consider the higher plane of Truth. What they have—almost anything in fact—is better than the "creeds" they have repudiated. They are working hard and succeeding well in introducing their faith-destroying theory into the minds of the rising generation through the school books. From these they not only have eliminated everything sympathetic with Bible faith, but in the stead have introduced the subversive doctrine of Evolution.

As for the rank and file of Baptists and Disciples, probably three-fourths of them still hold vaguely and indefinitely to the Bible and their Confessions of Faith though both of these denominations in their innocency of mind think that they have no creeds—that they take the Bible only. As these dear friends awaken to the inconsistencies of their Confession and teachings they are in great danger of following their leaders into a repudiation of everything pertaining to the past—into Higher Criticism—infidelity and Darwinism.

"Choose You This Day Whom Ye Will Serve." Joshua's words to the Israelites, after they had come into Canaan, consti-

tute our text. Joshua perceived that the Israelites were in a trying position and that it was their duty to decide promptly and thoroughly which course they would take. So we may see today that Christians of all denominations are in a trying position and that a prompt decision to stand by God and the Bible is the necessary thing for those who would be delivered from the darkness of the past and avoid falling into the Adversary's great deception of the present—into which their leaders are guiding them. Unless they need speedily, the blind leading the blind will fall into the ditch of Darwinism and the mire of Higher Criticism. There are not many ways to escape this threatening calamity. There is only one way—the Bible way. Many Baptist and Disciple ministers are becoming awake to the inconsistencies of their positions and drifting without foreknowledge of where their course will end. For instance, I have before me the words of the Rev. Dr. Mac Don aid of my own city, Brooklyn, on February 27th. This gentleman speaks of the Baptist Confession of Faith as "these swaddling clothes of an ancient dogmatism." And respecting the Baptist doctrine which recognizes only immersed persons as members of the Church of Christ and heirs of salvation, he says, "Henceforth it can be regarded to be as dead as the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and as worthless as a buried corpse." The gentleman rejoiced that recently a Baptist minister had been ordained to the Sixth Avenue Baptist Church of Brooklyn who affirmed in advance that he would invite all to communion and Church membership who loved the Lord Jesus. He urged that "associate members" should be received into Baptist communions "without imposing baptism upon them."

This courageous brother fails to see wherein the course he advocates is illogical. What he needs to see is the real teaching of the Bible on the subject of Baptism—that it is baptism into Christ's death, and thus into the Church of Christ—not the Baptist Church, nor any other human organization, but the Church of God—"The Church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven." That roll contains the names of all the saintly, faithful, consecrated believers in the Redeemer—of all denominations and outside of all denominations.

"Sanctify Them Through Thy Truth."

It is not sufficient that we get rid of the errors and superstitions of the past. We must supplant those with the Truth, that "We may be able to withstand in this evil day" (Ephesians vi, 12). It alone will constitute the armor of God. Christian people love much precious Truth, but hold it so illogical and confused a matter, that it fails to give them the needed strength. God permitted us to come to this very hour and has permitted the present tests for the purpose of developing the characters of the "Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile," and for the purpose of gathering out from them all the tares, all the chaff and all not at heart copies of his dear Son. Let me now briefly summarize the errors of our creeds and briefly indicate the Bible remedy.

None of our Creeds were too strict in defining the saintliness of the Church class, invited to become the Bride of Christ and his Joint-heirs in his Kingdom. On the contrary, in many respects they were too loose—they were not nearly up to the standard of the Master's word, "If any man will be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me." "Strait is the gate and narrow the way which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it" (Matthew vii, 14). Jesus taught that his followers must drink of his cup of suffering and be baptized into his death—and not merely into water. Our too-loose standards have admitted to membership in all denominations millions who are far below the Master's standards.

Our error and deception was the supposition that all who are not saintly all who would not become the Bride of Christ, all who are not baptized into his death, all who do not drink of his cup of ignominy will be eternally tortured. This great mistake common to all Protestants (and in the much modified form of Purgatory shared also by Catholics) must be displaced by the Bible teaching that as soon as the elect Church shall be completed and glorified the antitypical Year of Jubilee will begin; that then for the thousand years of the reign of Christ and the Church as the spiritual seed of Abraham, the non-elect, of all the families of the earth will be blessed by the elect (Galatians iii, 16, 29; Acts iii, 19-23). Let us, dear brethren, choose this day to stand by the Word of God to reject all human traditions contrary to it and to hold fast the things that are true, just, loving, good.

If occasionally a thoughtless friend asks, Why do you believe in a Millennium? answer that it is one of the oldest doctrines of Christendom and above all, the Bible doctrine. Answer that he who does not believe in the Millennium and the resurrection of the dead is one of the "unbelievers" of the world of mankind—"All that are in their graves" must account for the dead in some other way—must claim that they have been experiencing pain or pleasure for thousands of years, or must claim that they are extinct as the brute beast and will have no resurrection or must believe in universal salvation regardless of a knowledge of Christ or obedience to him. On next Lord's Day, we will discuss the Millennium and show its absolute necessity, not only from a Bible standpoint but also from a scientific standpoint. "Choose ye this day"—to stand for the Bible and reason and to oppose the Creeds of the dark ages and their unreason!

IS MARRIED; DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT

St. Louis Man Says That When He Took Wife No. 2 He Didn't Know What Was Happening.

ST. LOUIS, Mo., March 19.—Psychologists are much interested in the case of Charles R. Drummond, a member of a wealthy St. Louis family, who asserted under oath that he had no remembrance of his second marriage recently.

Drummond testified in court here yesterday that his "sub-conscious self" was in control and that his real self was unaware of his facts when he married Miss Charlotte J. Bent, a minister's daughter, on January 25. At that time he had been

divorced from his first wife just four weeks. Drummond's peculiar case was brought out in court yesterday when he was testifying against his first wife, whom he accused of contempt of court in refusing to permit him to visit their three children.

Death of E. C. Dahl.

E. C. Dahl, aged 34 years, died at the residence of Aaron Wyland in North Medford, Saturday, of dropsy. Young Dahl came here several months ago for the benefit of his health, but he came too late.

His remains will be sent to St. Aples, Minn., for interment, under instructions from his brother, John C. Dahl, of that place.

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