

Christ Jesus Lord of Nations.

BY THE REV. N. R. JOHNSTON.

The conflict between good and evil still goes on. In our own country, it is fierce. Shall the evils which abound and which threaten our destruction continue? We know that the right will finally prevail; but it does not become us as followers of Christ to rest at ease so long as the wrong is dominant or while evils abound.

The antidote to these abounding evils and to whatever tends to ruin us as a nation is to be found in two things:

1. The general prevalence of pure religion and of consequent pure Christian morals. To bring about this desirable end is, under God, the work of the Church of Christ.

2. The voluntary submission of the nation and government to Christ Jesus as Lord of Nations; or, voluntary obedience to King Jesus the Mediator.

Nothing is more important than that we put ourselves, whether as individuals or as a nation, in proper relation to God; and happy is that people whose God is the Lord. As relation is the basis of obligation, let us be quick to perceive and recognize our proper relations to God and be prompt in the joyful performance of the duties growing out of these relations, not forgetting that the goodness of God leads us to repentance.

Our first and fundamental proposition is this: Christ Jesus, the divine Mediator, is Lord of

nations—of all nations—and so of this nation. No truth is more clearly and generally taught in the Word of God. Here are specimens of its testimony, some propnetic, some mandatory and some inferential from titles belonging to our King. "For unto us, a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom to order it and to establish it with Justice from henceforth, even forever." "I will make him my Firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth." "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." "Ask of me and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession: Be wise, now therefore, O ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest he be angry." "Behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven. * * * And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." "All things are delivered unto me of my Father." "All authority is given unto me in heaven and on earth." "When he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." "All kings shall fall

down before him; all nations shall serve him." "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

Many titles are given to Him which prove Him to be Lord of nations. He is especially called "King of nations;" "Ruler over the nations;" "Prince of the kings of the earth;" "King of kings and Lord of lords." He is the Anti-type of King David, for it is said: "He that hath the key of David;" *i. e.*, as the key is the emblem of power, power such as David held belongs to Christ. And how glorious was the vision of John who heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying: Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

How glorious is the scepter of the enthroned Mediator! And, O! what will be the joy of the nations when all emperors and governors and presidents and kings shall cast their crowns at his feet and shall unite in one grand shout: "All hail the power of Jesus' name!" that name which is above every name. And let every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father. And shall not we who have so long been singing the prophetic song of praise,

"All heathen lands and kingly thrones
On earth thy glorious name shall fear,"
be the first to call upon Christian Rulers of our own land to

"Bring forth a royal diadem
And crown him Lord of all!"
But relation constitutes obligation; that is,

lawfully constituted relations involve those who sustain such relations to one another in certain obligations, or require of them certain corresponding duties. A child owes reverence and filial obedience to the parent—owes it because he is a child, or because God has placed the parent over him. The obligation grows out of the relation. The child cannot escape it. Husband and wife are intimately related to each other. The relation is a divinely appointed one. Out of this relation grow certain obligations and duties that can be performed by no others. The employee owes certain peculiar duties to his employer, and to no other, because he is an employee. In like manner, to a lawful civil ruler or rightfully constituted civil government every subject owes certain civil duties, and all because of the relation which exists between ruler and subject, or government and citizen. Now, since relation constitutes obligation, we have the command, "Kiss the Son," that is, let kings and all in authority—all civil governments whether monarchies or republics—acknowledge the authority of King Jesus and render to him all voluntary subjection and obedience. Jesus himself declares that "the Father judges no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." And this far-reaching truth is unmistakably declared by the great apostle in Phil. 2, 8-11: "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name that is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

Now let the following facts be noted: The people of the United States are a Christian

people. They have the Christian religion and the Bible and the Christian church and the gospel of Christ Jesus. All these are regarded and received as from God. And everywhere in the land Christian institutions prevail. Thus the nation is a Christian nation. Moreover, the great blessings which we as a people enjoy are all due to this religion enjoyed, and to the actual providential dominion of the Lord Jesus. Besides, the fact, so clearly taught, in the Bible, that Jesus Christ, by the appointment of the great God, the source of all authority and power, is the Ruler over the nations and Prince of the kings of the earth—this fact, I say, is well known by the masses of Christians and Bible readers; and, being known, "we the people" are under the highest obligations to acknowledge Jehovah Jesus as Lord of this nation—as the nation's Judge and Lawgiver and King—as supreme in authority over all Congresses and Legislatures; over all Presidents and Governors; and over all judges and courts; and supreme Lord of Hosts mightier than all armies and navies.

The sum: As God, the sovereign Ruler of the Universe, has appointed his Son, the divine Mediator, Lord of all, to the glory of God the Father, and has commanded all civil powers to kiss the Son, or to render him all obedience, therefore, all civil governments, and especially the United States, should hasten to put themselves in loyal relations to King Jesus and to "kiss the Son, lest he be angry and we perish from the way when his anger is kindled but a little."

If all this were done; if the claims of Prince Messiah were rightly acknowledged, then the character of the government, not its form, would be changed and the happiest results would follow; for "happy is the people whose God is the Lord."

1. The Constitution of the Federal Government and the Constitution of the several states

would be made to expressly acknowledge the supreme authority of God and of Christ as Lord of nations. The nation, by this constitutional change, would promise and covenant to render obedience to the Mediator. And this would be the nation's first and most fundamental act to make itself a kingdom of Christ. It would be the beginning of a most desirable and glorious consummation.

2. The sovereign people, by the Constitution and government, would recognize and declare Christianity the common law of the land and the only religion to be recognized and fostered; and consequently, the government would not violate faith if it would recognize the Christian church as entitled to its fostering care and protection. "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee (the church) shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted."

The government having thus in the Constitution recognized the divine authority and the claims of Christianity would consistently recognize also Christian institutions—moral and civil Christian institutions—as laws of the nation to be observed and fostered for the good of the people of the commonwealth. Such are the Christian Sabbath, one day in seven sacred to rest and worship—sacred by divine appointment, not by human enactment; Christian marriage, that is marriage to only one wife and when the relation is constituted according to the divine requirement; Christian divorce, that is, as Jesus teaches, for only one cause; and the Christian oath, an oath only for just or necessary reason and according to the divine form, *i. e.*, by the great name of the heart-searching God, and in the proper manner, *i. e.*, by the uplifted hand, not by the hand on the Bible or by kissing the book.

3. The next step in this progressive reformation would be the accepting and proclaiming of the Bible, the law of Christ, as the fundamental law of all governmental relations and

actions and its moral and civil code as the basis of all civil legislation. "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them." In the days of Jehoiada when the good people of Judah became tired of the corrupt administration and demanded a reformation, and when Jehoash, the young reformer, was brought out from his place of concealment to be inaugurated as king, Jehoiada, the officiating functionary, placed the crown upon the king's head and the testimony (the Bible that then was) in his hand, thereby saying to the young ruler: "Take this holy law of God as your rule of official action, believing that so long as you administer the government in accordance with its divine requirements you may hope to enjoy the favor of God and secure the nation's good."

The principle applicable now is plain. All civil governments and all officers should take the Bible as the higher law and as the rule of action. Indeed, this holy law is just as good a rule of action in the State as in the church or in personal relations. According to the whole moral law as summed up in the ten commandments, and the whole moral Mosaic penal code, would be the rule of action in Congress; in State Legislatures and in the courts of justice. Kidnapping or man-stealing, blasphemy, and adultery, as well as murder, would be punished by severe penalties. Not the ever-changing will of the people but the unchangeable law of the Most High would be of supreme authority. As this would be right, can we doubt that good would result?

4. It would secure the administration of a rightly constituted government by righteous legislators, judges and executors. It would make only righteous men—men of Christian morality—eligible to office. It would keep out of office all ungodly and wicked men. Aspirants for office, for power, for honor or for the spoils—unbelieving and immoral men, asking

the dear people to make them legislators, or congressmen, or judges, or governors, or presidents, would be left at home. The reform we seek would not tear out of the Bible the divine command: "Provide (choose) out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them (the people) to be rulers;" "Choose you wise men and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you;" or, that ever memorable testimony: "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God."

Except a godless constitution and an infidel government, what greater incubus or heavier curse can rest upon a nation than the curse of corrupt and immoral men in office in the various departments of government? "The wicked walk on every side when the vilest men are exalted." The antidote is in the reform we seek. As the constitution now is, the vilest men may be elected to office. A religious test is forbidden and no moral test is required. Slaveholders used to be presidents. So, if the people now see fit to elect adulterers, drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, profane and godless politicians, or even bulldog prize-fighters, the constitution now opens the door of office to them. But conform the human constitution to the divine and we would hope to see every department of State under the administration of good men, and then a reign of righteousness. Then over all our land would be "as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds."

5. It would help to infuse religion into the institutions of the State; and it would tend to prevent the entire secularization of the schools and of the State. Only by the reform we seek can we hedge up the way against the saloonists and liberalists whose publicly declared aim is to have all the churches taxed, to keep the Bible out of the school, to abolish all chaplaincies

and prayers in Congress and State Legislatures, in the National and State schools and in the army and in the navy, to abolish all State and National fasts and Thanksgivings; to abolish all judicial oaths, and to repeal all laws recognizing the Christian Sabbath, or Christianity, or any Christian institutions. Let the Federal Constitution remain as it is, without any recognition of the authority of God; or of Christ, or of his law or of Christianity, then every demand of the secularist and of the Liberal League may be given them at any time they may appeal to the courts; for the validity of all acts of legislation depends upon the Constitution. Granted the failure of our reform and the consequent success of secularism, or the entire divorce of religion from both school and State, then will come the triumph of the Liberal League—then a new Reign of Terror. Why are not the Christians of 1893 on the Lord's side now? O let them rally around the standard of Him upon whose shoulder is the government and who "hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords."

6. It would tend powerfully to the suppression of existing evil—of all abounding wickedness. Public idol worship, profanity, blasphemy, Sabbath desecration, disregard of parental and governmental authority, oppression of the poor and the millions once enslaved, shameful wrongs done to women, the licensed liquor traffic, intemperance, legalized prostitution, infamous divorce systems, polygamy, lottery, gambling, bloodshed, adultery—these and similar evils would be punished as the divine law requires; and one design of punishment is suppression. And let it be remembered that the accomplishment of this needed reform presupposes the constant and prayerful and believing use of all gospel instrumentalities and influences. "The law is good if a man uses it lawfully;" but law and gospel are

mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. Armed with both, the hosts of God's elect will soon become invincible.

But it must not be forgotten that before all these reforms can be effected and before righteous legislation be not liable to be only a "dead letter," the masses of the people must become thoroughly evangelized. Our nation—the government of the United States—will become a kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ only after the great truths of the gospel shall have so graciously moulded the people that with believing and loving hearts they will say: We will have no King but Jesus.

Let it not be supposed that we hold erratic theories or are teaching new doctrines. The duty of the people to conform their national constitutions and their laws to the higher laws of God has been held and taught by Christians and reformers in all ages. And we have shown that the Word of God is full of the sublime fact that the great Redeemer, the Head of the Church, is also Lord of nations. A half a century ago a vigorous writer speaking of the claims of the Mediator and his law, said: "This is a matter of far more importance than has been generally deemed; indeed it is scarcely ever taken into calculation in the forming of civil constitutions. To account for so strange forgetfulness of divine authority is much easier than to furnish a vindication of it. The encroachments made on the rights of civil society by arbitrary and self-constituted governments, has called the attention of patriotism almost entirely to one point; and that point is the security of popular rights. So far this is good; but there is something beyond this which has a higher claim upon society, and which it is unpardonable to overlook in a Constitution framed in accordance to the will of a nation. Such, however, has been the fact exemplified and in most of the struggles for liberty during the past. God has been forgot-

ten! and the civil and the political convulsions which at present heave the nations are decidedly marked by a studied disregard of the authority of Jehovah; and the onward movement of this almost universal excitement tends directly to infidelity and national atheism, and ultimately will end in anarchy or despotism.

"It is the duty not only of the Christian but of the patriot to endeavor to stem a torrent which, if not resisted, will sweep before it civil as well as religious liberty. For rotten despotisms and arbitrary power in which neither the will nor the interests of the people are consulted, I have no sympathy. Let them perish without a requiem to lull them into oblivion! But, in the wreck of brutal and tyrannic power, O let not the homage which is due to the Governor among the nations be forgotten nor his laws be trampled upon. High, high indeed rear the the temple of human rights; but thrust not from this temple the God of heaven. Let its foundations rest on the truth of his law, and let its presiding genius be moral and religious principle."

Civil government, like the Church of Christ, being an ordinance of God, it is manifest from what has been shown that the government of the United States as it is constituted, organized and administered, is un-Christian, and therefore anti-Christian. It is "a throne of iniquity which frames mischief (wickedness) by the law," and with which, as he himself declares, God cannot have fellowship. How can *we*? All Christians, especially those who see the iniquity of a Godless and Christless government, should dissent therefrom, as some of us, in the name of the enthroned Redeemer, are trying to do. Let all his followers do so—be peaceful and benevolent citizens, but remain out of the political organization until we can effect a change—until we can make it a Christian government and loyal to Christ. Meanwhile we can labor hard for the conversion of the people, of

the nation and government, and pray incessantly, "Thy kingdom come." We must be loyal to Christ at all hazards—must obey God rather than man. What is party compared to the kingdom of Christ? Amid obloquy and persecution the old Garrisonian Abolitionists, as well as the Covenanters, came out of government because it was slave holding; and now millions honor their name. Cannot we now come out of the same government yet in rebellion against the Lord and his Anointed? O Christian, have faith in God! To obey is better than sacrifice. Nothing is more sublime than obedience and endurance; and none are so worthy of loving imitation as Jesus who fell a martyr to the truth and the right.

COMMITTEE ON TESTIMONY BEARING

Oliver Wylie, Sec'y,
Wilkinsburg, Pa.

W. J. Coleman, Chm.,
84 Boyle St., Allegheny, Pa.
