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A CONSERVATIVE INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

By Rev. Samuel A. Cartledge, Ph.D.

THE FEDERAL COUNCIL

Foe Of Capitalism

By Rev. Robert L. Vining

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SOUND IN THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

By Rev. John R. Richardson, D.D.

THE JOY OF THE LORD

By Rev. Wm. C. Robinson, D.D.

WOMAN'S PAGE

Edited By Mrs. R. T. Faucette

EXPERIENCES IN EVANGELISM

By Rev. C. T. Caldwell, D.D.

MONTREAT CONFERENCE OF MEN FOR MISSIONS MOVEMENT

By Dr. J. P. McCallie

RELIGIOUS NEWS OF THE CAMPS

By Rev. Dan. T. Caldwell, D.D., Director.

THE CHURCH AND DOGMATISM

By Rev. A. R. McQueen, D.D.

THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN

By Rev. William Megginson

NEW DIRECTOR OF SUNDAY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

By Edward D. Grant

church, attending this institution, came back home denying the resurrection of Christ.

It is very important that the Christian Church should be awakened to the fact that spiritual perverts are just as dangerous as moral perverts. Both exert an influence that is poisonous and deadly. A few years ago in one of our churches there was an assistant Scout Master that had to be dismissed because he was a moral pervert. To have allowed this young man to influence boys in an immoral way would have been reprehensible, but we are just as guilty if we permit spiritual perverts to influence our young people in robbing them of their faith. The time has come when we are forced to realize that those who tamper with the divine truths of Scripture are guilty of

high crime.

Again, I want to emphasize that the Christian faith and the Christian life must go together. As one continental scholar has put it, "People want the apples without apple trees. Anyone who wants the Christian way of life must want the Christian faith; for the Christian way of life has never been anything else but the fruit of faith." It is because of this fact that St. Paul wrote Titus to reprove those sharply who were not thinking and living straight that they might be sound in the faith. Only those who are sound in their thinking and living can adorn the Gospel of God, our Saviour. "Consistency, thou art a jewel!"

*Alexandria, La.

The Joy Of The Lord

By Rev. Wm. C. Robinson, D.D.*

Neh. 8:10. "The joy of the Lord is in your strength."

When the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt the people gathered to worship the LORD, and the Levites expounded to them the law of God. As the Word of the LORD lay bare their sin they began to mourn and weep under the just judgment of God. But Nehemiah and Ezra stopped them, saying, "The Day is holy unto the LORD your God; weep not, neither mourn, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." The Word of God ever judges us, but blessed be the LORD our God, His Word of judgment is at the same time His Word of grace. He wounds, but He also heals. He convicts of sin, but He graciously pardons through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

The Bible is a book of life, presenting people in every conceivable difficulty, suffering, sin, disappointment, need—but through it all and over it all is the sound of rejoicing. God brought forth His people with joy, His chosen with singing. David appointed singers to lift up their voices with joy and brought the Ark into Zion with such joy that his wife thought he danced too gaily. The people offered for the Temple with joy. Hezekiah's passover feast was celebrated with such great joy that Jerusalem had not seen the like since the days of Solomon. The foundations of the new Temple were laid with the shout of joy and the house of the LORD was dedicated with joy. When the walls of the city were dedicated God made His people to rejoice with such great joy that the joy of Jerusalem was heard afar off. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound, for the city of God is the joy of the whole earth.

"Saviour, if of Zion's city

I, thru' grace, a member am,

Let the world deride or pity,

I will glory in Thy Name.

Fading is the worldling's pleasure,

All his boasted pomp and show;

Solid joys and lasting treasure

None but Zion's children know."

The living God is the only source of true joy.

"In Thy Presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Those that walk in the light of Thy countenance know the joyful sound. As you gather in His solemn assembly, "The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing." Therefore, O God, send out Thy light and Thy truth and let them lead me to Thy Tabernacles, unto God my exceeding joy.

"Praise to God immortal praise,
For the love that crowns our days,
Bounteous source of ev'ry joy,
Let Thy praise our tongues employ."

I. The Joy of Our Lord's Ministry.

The joy of heaven was brought to earth when God became man for us men and for our salvation. Luke has caught the gladness of that hour in the fragrance of song with which He welcomes the Saviour. He ushers us as it were into a beautiful cathedral, on one side of which are the women, Elizabeth with her Benedicta, and Mary with the Magnificat; and on the other the men, Zacharius with the Benedictus, and Simeon with the Nunc Dimittis, while above is the angel chorus singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will to men." When Mary comes to visit Elizabeth John leaps for joy, while Mary's spirit rejoices in God her Saviour. The angel brings the shepherds good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. When the Wise Men saw the star they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. When all men began to come to Jesus John's joy was made full. The friend of the bridegroom rejoiced greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.

The Father gave not the Spirit by measure to the Son, and one of the primary gifts of the Spirit is joy. When Jesus admonishes the disciples to rejoice because he goeth to the Father for the Father is even greater, He is tacitly saying that up to that time He has been their joy. Our Lord began his miracles by making wine that there might be more joy at the wedding feast. When he healed the woman whom Satan had bound eighteen years, the ruler of the synagogue became indignant, but the multitude rejoiced for the glorious

things that were done by him. When the seventy returned from their mission of preaching, teaching and healing, they rejoiced that even the demons were subject unto them in Christ's Name. Jesus told them rather to rejoice that their names were written in heaven. In the midst of His own rejection by the critics of Galilee our Lord rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding and reveal them unto babes; yea, Father; for so it seemed well-pleasing in Thy sight."

When what was foreshadowed in the rejection in Galilee occurred in Jerusalem also Jesus gathered His disciples close about Him, and in the shadow of Gethsemane and Calvary He spoke unto them that His joy might be in them and that their joy might be full. Passing rapidly by the agonies of His own going He promised to see them again and cause their hearts to rejoice with a joy that none could take from them. From His emptied tomb the women departed quickly with fear and great joy to bring the disciples word. The Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that for the joy that was set before Him, Christ endured the Cross despising the shame. At Pentecost Peter sees Him seated at God's right hand made full of gladness with the Father's countenance. Even before the Resurrection Jesus lived in such communion with the Father, such delight in doing His will, that as He tasted death for every man, His spirit overflowed with a joy that was sufficient to make the joy of Disciples full. Now that He is enthroned in the joy of the Father's presence, surely earth hath no sorrow that can quench the joy He giveth.

"Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts!
Thou Fount of Life! Thou Light of men!
From the best bliss that earth imparts
We turn unfilled to Thee again."

II. The Joy of our Lord's Salvation.

The Psalmist continually speaks of rejoicing in Thy salvation, and out of the depths of sin David pleads, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me and restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation." There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth more than over the ninety and nine that need no repentance. There was much joy in Samaria when Philip proclaimed unto them the Christ. The same evangelist began at the fifty-third of Isaiah and preached unto the Ethiopian Eunuch that Jesus was the lamb led unto the slaughter, who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, and with whose stripes we are healed. The Ethiopian accepted the Gospel, confessed Christ, was baptized and went on his way rejoicing. Paul stopped the Philippian jailor from killing himself and told him, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." This man heard the Word of the Lord, believed in God, was baptized and rejoiced greatly with all his house. Friend, would you know the joy of salvation? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, receive His atonement, hide in the Rock of Ages that was cleft for thee, lay aside all confidence in yourself, entrust yourself to Him. Christian, would you taste again the joy of the Holy Ghost? They that go forth and weeping bearing precious seed, shall doubtless

come again with rejoicing bringing their sheaves with them. Be helpers of others' joy and they will be your crown of rejoicing in the day of Jesus Christ. In that day He shall come in glory, but now

"Jesus comes to hearts rejoicing,
Bringing news of sins forgiven;
Leading souls redeemed to heav'n;
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Now the gate of death is riven."

The joy of His salvation carries with it the assurance of the Father's love and wisdom and care in every circumstance of life. The Bible is not a book of airy castles in the nebulous blue, it is not a vain clutching after Platonic ideas, it is the story of the joy of God in the serious problems of real life. Over the heart burns, the sorrows and sufferings of life we see the Father's heart and know that His hand is upon us in chastening only to work out in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness. From the midst of physical sufferings the Apostle writes: "I am filled with comfort, I overflow with joy in all our affliction." James bids us count it all joy when we fall into manifold trials, knowing that the proving of our faith worketh patience. Peter calls us to rejoice greatly even in grief for these trials prove our faith. As gold is refined in a furnace so our faith, being more precious than gold, though it is proved by fire shall be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ, on whom believing we now rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Facing the reality of famine, the Old Testament prophet cried:

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom,
Neither shall the fruit be in the vines;
The labour of the olives shall fail,
And the fields shall yield no meat;
The flock shall be cut off from the fold,
And there shall be no herd in the stalls:
Yet will I rejoice in the LORD,
I will joy in the God of my salvation."

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh to the people of God in the morning.

"O Joy that seekest me thru' pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee!
I trace the rainbow thru' the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn' shall tearless be."

Yes, God's salvation has promises not only for this life, but also for that which is to come. As we look at the invisible things which God has for His children we find that our present afflictions work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Jesus tells us that when we are reproached for the sake of the Son of Man we are to rejoice and leap for joy, for great is our reward in heaven. We are not to think a fiery trial a strange thing, but as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings we are to rejoice, for at the revelation of His glory we shall rejoice with exceeding joy. We have a Saviour who died and rose again that He might be the Lord both of the dead and of

the living. He is the Lamb who shepherds the souls in the heavenly pastures, the Son who prepares for us the many mansions of the Father's house. Therefore to depart and be with Him is far better for the believing soul however hard it may be for those who remain. And in the final consummation we have the blessed hope of His appearing bringing with Him the tens of thousands of His saints, the New Jerusalem which occupies the City that has the glory of God for a light and the Lamb for a temple, new heavens in the new earth, where God dwells with His people, and wipes every tear from their eyes.

"Jerusalem the golden,
With milk and honey blest,
Beneath thy contemplation,
Sink heart and voice oppressed;
I know not, O I know not
What joys await us there,
What radiance of glory,
What bliss beyond compare."

III. Rejoice in the Lord!

One of the finest examples of rejoicing in the Lord is Paul's experiences with the Philippian Church. At Philippi he was arrested and scourged without a trial, his feet were thrust into stocks, he was hungry; but at midnight he and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God. Is it any wonder that God used his testimony to bring the joy of salvation to the jailor? Some years later Paul writes to this Church from the bonds of a Roman Prison a letter that is simply running over with joy. He always prays for these Philippian Christians with joy, he looks forward to seeing them that their rejoicing may be more abundant, he asks them to make his joy full by being of one accord, he rejoices greatly in their thought for him and repeatedly bids them rejoice in the Lord. With the Epistle to the Philippians we may place a number of other Christian writings that have come from prisons redolent with the joy of the Lord: Revelation, Pilgrim's Progress, Rutherford's letters. The Confessional Minister in a Concentration Camp has a joy to which the master of Berchtesgaden is a stranger. Our own Dr. J. V. N. Talmadge stayed behind to care for our foreign mission property in Korea and was incarcerated several months. On his return he told us that the joy of the Lord had been his strength through those trying days.

We are bidden by the Saviour to ask in His Name and we shall receive that our joy may be full. Through His great mission access to the Father has been opened. He is the way by whom we come to the Father. As we come by this new and living way the Father receives us, the joy of fellowship with God is ours.

"There is a place where Jesus sheds
The oil of gladness on our heads,
A place than all beside more sweet:
It is the blood-bought mercy-seat.

* * * *

O eyes that are weary and hearts that are sore
Look off unto Jesus, and sorrow no more;
The light of His countenance shineth so bright,
That here as in heaven, There need be no light."

Again our Lord says, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be made full." The Book of God is the book of joy. And the way to joy is the study of the Word. In this hour of the World's travail even the secular press is pointing to the Book that gives a light to every age. From the **Saturday Evening Post** we read:

"A fighting man speaks from the floor of a storm-tossed raft. 'Is there a Bible among us?' On a burning African desert a voice reads quietly, and a thousand heads bow reverently. . . . In the silence of night on a Kansas farm a mother finds solace in its thin, worn pages. . . . Quietly its words of comfort are spoken in solemn requiem as rough hands grown tender lower a hero's body overside."

In the search for peace through generations man has turned to the Bible. For the things men live by are found in this book that is the Word of God. In its pages men have found help for their deepest needs. Comfort for their shattered spirits. Light for their darkest hour. Always the Bible has inspired the noblest courage and the most sublime actions of man. Heroes have dedicated their lives to its principles. Martyrs have died with its words on their lips.

Now, an anguished world turns to this book that has molded the life of man. For its lessons of mercy, humanity, tolerance, charity. For a restoration of the spirit torn with grief. For return of the hope and faith grown weak under the whip of despotism. And here in its pages to seek the flame that lifts men's souls. The courage to face tomorrow. The faith, that in good time the sound of war will end and men shall live again in brotherhood and peace."

For the words of this Book are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye may have life through His Name. In the dim and distant centuries Abraham rejoiced to see His day, and He saw it and was glad. The faithful children of Abraham believed the promise that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed and this faith in the Christ to come was accepted for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised for our justification. In Jesus Christ there is a righteousness that can avail for the foulest sinner, a salvation for the most guilty. "Therefore, I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robes of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."

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