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A Personal Word

With this issue of The Southern Presbyterian Journal we will complete our work as Editor. In May of 1942 we were asked by Dr. L. Nelson Bell and others associated with him in this new venture, to become Business Manager and Editor. Feeling that we were very poorly qualified we agreed to take over the responsibility until a suitable Editor could be secured. The "temporary position" stretched out to over seventeen years. We praise God for His great blessings upon the Journal's ministry and for the many friends who have helped at all times and in so many ways. We will continue to serve as Managing Editor and Business Manager and will help with this work in every possible way.

We pray for God's rich blessings upon Dr. G. Aiken Taylor as he now takes over.

H.B.D.

EDITORIAL

Whose Peace?

"For when they shall say, Peace and safety: then sudden destruction cometh upon them." I Thes. 5:3

During recent days we have had in our midst a man who has interminably used the word, "peace". The tragedy is that many well meaning people will be confused by the use of this word, and, desiring peace as we all do, will be willing to join in a movement, the aim of which is "world peace".

The "peace" about which Mr. Khrushchev is talking is the peace of the cat which has just swallowed the canary. It is a "peace" on Russia's terms. It is a "peace" where the free nations of the world would suddenly find themselves engulfed in a slavery worse than death itself.

The first step to the "peace" about which Mr. Khrushchev is talking is "total disarmament". How appealing! How wonderful to be relieved of a forty billion dollar per year burden for armaments! How wonderful to envision a world order without arms or armies!

How can Christians think of rejecting this offer of total disarmament and world peace? Because the source of true peace is not to be found in an agreement with men and nations who know neither truth nor honor.

We are in deadly danger — that danger in which a bird fascinated by a snake finds itself — for we are fascinated by an extremely intelligent (and ignorant) man who cannot even grasp the meaning of the way of life which goes with Christian freedom.

In our thinking of peace we need to realize that man cannot will to have it. Peace is a state of being conferred by God and possible only on His terms. For man to think that he can will to have peace, without reference to the Laws of God, is more than a delusion — it is folly.

There can be no real peace without conformity to the Holy Will of God. True, armed strife may be averted for the time being; but true Christianity may involve turmoil — the turmoil which comes when righteousness confronts evil.

The way to true peace is a narrow one. It involves first of all surrender to God and His Christ. It means accepting the death and resurrection of our Lord with all therein implied. And when this is done, peace with God is the glorious result. No longer are we enemies and aliens. We become members of the household of faith, children of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

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The immediate corollary of peace with God through the redemption of the Cross, is the peace of God which fills the heart of the believer. Through faith in the finished work of the Redeemer we know there is no condemnation confronting us. We know that now nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ. We are assured that God is for us and we care not what man may do to us. This peace is independent of and in no way related to the circumstances by which we may be surrounded. In the midst of danger, sorrow, trouble, uncertainty we have the peace of God in our hearts because we have already made peace with Him.

Our Lord left us this legacy: *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* (John 14:27)

In the minds of some, peace means primarily quiet so that they may enjoy the delights of this world and serve the Devil in comfort and ease.

James makes this clear when he says: *"Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."* (James 4:3,4)

It is debatable whether the unregenerate world can ever know peace. The activities of consecrated peace makers have their effect, but *"There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked"*, and the world deserves no peace except as the Prince of Peace shall Himself bring peace.

Of immediate concern is that we as a nation shall not be drawn into a scheme for world "peace" which can be nothing more than a clever trap, in the toils of which all freedom is destroyed.

—L. N. B.

Good Witnesses to Jesus Christ

The other day Dr. James O. Reavis of Nashville, Tenn. passed from the Church Militant to the Triumphant. As he did, all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side. Dr. "JO" Reavis was the last of that group of fine servants of God who made up the Faculty of Columbia Theological Seminary in the period I was privileged to be a student, 1917-1920. He was a great soul, a missionary statesman, an effective teacher. Associated with him were President Thornton Whaling and Professors W. M. McPheeters, R. C. Reed, H. A. White, and E. D. Kerr. In looking over an old sermon preached before the Faculty and Student Body in that period I find these reflections

upon the instruction given by these mentors in that old school of the prophets:

The architectonic principle of the studies at Columbia Theological Seminary seems to be that "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines from the face of Jesus Christ." And the distinctive Christian attitude is . . . that of "looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith". In our hearts, We can apply the sign of the Cross by looking backward to the historic Saviour, by looking upward to the interceding Christ on the right hand of power, by looking forward in hope to the coming King when He has put all things under Himself. At the beginning of the school year, Dr. Reed gave us this healthy admonition, "if you can't be both a good preacher and a good man of prayer, be the latter, you will accomplish more." President Whaling's final message to our Class was this: "For we preach not ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves your servants for Christ's sake."

Our Faculty of 1917-20 knew the patience of the saints who kept the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, Rev. 14:12; 12:17. As one of their inadequate successors, I invite the prayers of God's people that we may have grace to walk in their ways and keep the testimony of Jesus which they so well handed on to us.

For all Thy saints, who from their labors rest,

Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,

Thy Name, O Jesus, be forever blest.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

—W. C. R.

Chains

What are some of the chains that hang heavily on Christians, that bind us and handicap us in our desire to break free and be true and active servants of Jesus Christ?

1. *Convention*—The conventions of life are mostly man-made and not God-made. And man-made things are generally devil-used.

2. *Habit*—We little realize to what extent our lives are controlled by habit, and the habitual actions of the old man are not easily discarded for the precepts of the new man which we become after conversion.

3. *The Desire for Peace*—We just naturally dread to start a row, but yet we are told to "contend" for the faith and if our brother errs it is our plain duty to tell him about it, even at the risk of his friendship.

4. *The Fear of Ridicule*—Christ was ridiculed many times, but we have an instinctive revulsion against making a statement or taking a position which may bring ridicule upon us.

5. *Spiritual Laziness*—Many of us accept salvation, which is a free gift, but do not strive for sanctification, since this costs us work and effort. Yet our Lord told us, "I am the vine and ye are the branches", and we know that the work of the vine must be done by and through the branches.

These shackles and many others of this life are not struck from us when we are saved, and we can never break them with our own strength, but they may be weakened and finally overcome through continual prayer, work and study of God's Word, and in these efforts we have a powerful assistant — the Holy Spirit.

The Christian who breaks his chains will attain the victorious life.

—R. LeC.

Teaching the Bible

By L. Nelson Bell

To many laymen there is given the responsibility and privilege of teaching the Bible, usually within the curriculum of the **church school**.

The responsibility involves the importance of such a task, the fact of men's need for deeper understanding of God's Word, and the nature of the Book itself.

The privilege consists in the marvel of this volume of "God-breathed literature" which is living and relevant to our times — a divinely given revelation of great truths to be found nowhere else and without which man gropes in darkness.

In a day when so much emphasis has been given to methods, those who teach the Bible should explore not only teaching techniques but the philosophy of teaching upon which methods are built.

There are those who strongly support the discussion method. This has been considered, while the lecture method has been relegated to the era of the one room school house.

Anyone acquainted with the philosophy of progressive education promulgated by John Dewey, along with his emphasis on individual "adjustment" and "methods" of teaching, knows the havoc these ideas have played with American education. The seed was not recognized until its evil had already begun to ripen. A generation trained under this "progressive" method turned out to be uneducated and undisciplined in those things that education should produce.

Has the philosophy which so nearly wrecked American education filtered into the realm of the Church and become adopted by some of those responsible for Christian education?

One can only wonder why the replacement of emphasis on *teaching* the Bible with *discussing* it has been thought an improvement.

What lies back of the change from responsible Bible teachers to "moderators" whose chief qualification is not so much a knowledge of the Bible as an ability to keep discussion going? I believe we should