

A Battle of Love

by Joseph Parker

The Church should rule by love, not compulsion, and seek to captivate people's hearts with Jesus' example.

Scripture: John 6:15, 2 Corinthians 5:14, 2 Corinthians 9:7, 1 Peter 5:2

Topics: "Church Leadership", "Christian Love"

Description

Joseph Parker emphasizes the importance of the Church ruling by love, following the example of Jesus who did not seek to rule by force. He highlights the need for the Church to be an attraction in itself, not resorting to compulsion or punishment to enforce attendance or biblical learning. Parker stresses that everything done in the Church should be out of a willing mind and motivated by the love of Christ, rather than by force or obligation.

Transcript

"When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone" (John 6:15).

The Church should be like the Master: it should not rule by force. I would never compel even a child to go to church; much less would I attempt to compel anyone who was momentarily in my power. I would not bribe a man to go to church--certainly I would in no way inflict upon him loss or humiliation for not going. I would try to make the church itself the attraction. No child should be punished for not learning its Bible. Punish a child if you please for not learning the spelling-book or the geography, but do not associate penal suffering with biblical learning.

The Church should be like the Master: it should seek to rule by love. Not one penny would I take from any man by the law to support any form of religion, either my own or yours. Whatever is done must be done of a willing mind, and everything that is given must have this written upon it--"The love of Christ constraineth us." And in proportion as Jesus Christ will not force you, ought you to love him. If it were a contest of force, then you might rejoice in the apparent victory which you win for a moment; but when he says to you, "It is not a contest of hand against hand or sword against sword, but of your obstinacy against my love;" when he says, "I could by mere omnipotence crush you between my fingers, but that would only be a triumph of physical power. No; I will teach you, preach to you, love you, die for you, show you my hands and my feet," the very stripping of himself of his physical almightiness should constitute his supreme power as One who wants to captivate your love, and sit down on the throne of your confidence forever.

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