

Paul's Faithfulness in Reproving.

by Thomas Reade

Paul's faithfulness in reproof is a model for Christian leaders, demonstrating the importance of kindness, humility, and consistency in addressing the needs of the church.

Scripture: Romans 13:1, 1 Corinthians 4:14, Galatians 2:11, 1 Timothy 2:1, 1 Peter 2:13

Topics: "Church Discipline", "Civil Obedience"

Description

Thomas Reade preaches about Paul's faithfulness in reproof and his obedience to civil government. Paul was a faithful reproof, always ready to impart faithful admonition with wisdom, kindness, and humility. He demonstrated his faithfulness by reproof Peter publicly when he strayed from the truth of the Gospel. Paul's obedience to civil government was rooted in his understanding of God's authority and the importance of peace and order. He exhorted believers to submit to governing authorities, pray for leaders, and maintain unity and respect in society.

Transcript

PAUL'S FAITHFULNESS IN REPROVING.

HIS OBEDIENCE TO CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

Among the many duties which compass the walk of the believer, few are more difficult to perform, than that of Christian reproof. We might naturally expect, that the great Apostle would be faithful in the performance of this duty. And so he was. Under every circumstance, however difficult or delicate, arising either from opposition or affection, Paul was a Faithful Reprover. By the light of Truth, he could discern the least deviation from the path of rectitude; and guided by a spirit of love, he was ever ready to impart the faithful admonition.

Much wisdom, combined with kindness, is required in the reproof, and much humility, blended with thankfulness, in the reproof; for, "As an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reproof to an obedient ear." Those who reproof must guard against every feeling, yes, even appearance of superiority; lest, by exciting the pride of the reproof, the intended benefit should be lost.

Notwithstanding the delicacy of this Christian duty, faithfulness must guide its operation when the occasion requires its severe exercise. The tender-hearted Paul had to perform this painful task in several instances, which are recorded in the Acts of the Apostles and in his own Epistles.

When the Holy Spirit said, "separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them," these holy men were obedient to the heavenly mandate. Having performed the work assigned to them, they sailed to Antioch, from where they had been recommended to the grace of God, for the work which they fulfilled. And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. The relation of this missionary tour gladdened the assembled church, and called forth many thanksgivings unto God.

Paul and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord. "After some time Paul said to Barnabas, "Let's return to each city where we previously preached the word of the Lord, to see how the new believers are getting along." Barnabas agreed and wanted to take along John Mark. But Paul disagreed strongly, since John Mark had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not shared in their work. Their disagreement over this was so sharp that they separated. Barnabas took John Mark with him and sailed for Cyprus. Paul chose Silas, and the believers sent them off, entrusting them to the Lord's grace. So they traveled throughout Syria and Cilicia to strengthen the churches there."

The heavenly-minded Paul was well acquainted with his own heart, when he said to the people of Lyconia, "We also are men of like passions with you." Though we cannot expect perfection in this sinful world, where the holiest of men are compassed about with infirmities; yet we must bewail that warmth of temper, which occasioned such excellent men to separate from each other. How instructive is Scripture Biography- It not only develops the inward principles of the heart, but makes us also acquainted with the nature and effects of those actions, which these principles produce.

The Bible is a faithful record. There we see man in his real character, whether groaning under the slavery of Satan, or rejoicing as the servant of Jesus Christ. Truth requires no covering, and therefore seeks none. The faithfulness with which the lives of believers are recorded, forms no small evidence of the truth of Scripture, which rests its veracity, not on the excellence of man, but on the immutability of Jehovah. The failings of the saints are detailed with the same impartiality as their graces, no, are even more minutely described, with the evident intention of humbling our pride, and showing us that salvation is of grace and not of works. The sins of believers, be it ever remembered, cannot be charged upon that holy religion which condemns them; but, upon their own corrupt nature which produces them. Holiness is the peculiar characteristic of the Gospel, and proves it to be from God.

The sacred historian bears testimony to Barnabas, that he "was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit." He had willingly given up the world for the Gospel's sake; for, being the owner of land he sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the Apostles' feet. John Mark was his sister's son, for whom he felt, no doubt, much natural affection. He was a young disciple and not sufficiently strengthened in faith, to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; hence he shrunk from the trials which awaited the Apostle in every city; and being most probably overcome by fear, left him at Pamphylia and returned to Jerusalem.

Barnabas, in the Spirit of that charity which hopes all things, was desirous to try Mark on another journey, but Paul, who well knew the evil of faintheartedness in the work of the Gospel, and the absolute necessity for a man to be willing to run all risks, if ever he would do good as an ambassador of Jesus Christ, remonstrated with Barnabas upon the instability of John Mark's conduct, and the unsuitableness of taking him for a companion in labor, who previously had deserted them in the work. Hence arose the sharp contention which ended in their separation.

Though he would not desire to justify what is wrong, even in the holiest of men, yet, it is evident that nothing guided the Apostle, but that uprightness of principle and that devotedness of heart to Christ, which rendered him so abundantly useful to the souls of men. Painful as was the circumstance, it forms another development of Paul's character; while, through the over-ruling power of God, it was made conducive to a more enlarged diffusion of the Gospel of peace.

In his last Epistle to Timothy he leaves this satisfactory record- " Take Mark and bring him with you; for he is profitable to me for the ministry." Thus Mark proved himself to be a true believer, by his growth in grace, and his continuance in well-doing. How relevant is the admonition of the Apostle, to all who feel inclined to expose, rather than to correct, the failings of a Christian brother, "Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself." Thus beautifully were the graces of the Spirit blended in the character of this servant of the Redeemer. He drank into the Spirit of Christ, and trod in his steps. May we go and do likewise.

Another striking instance of his faithfulness in reproof, is related by himself to the Galatians, "But when Peter came to Antioch, I had to oppose him publicly, speaking strongly against what he was doing, for it was very wrong. When he first arrived, he ate with the Gentile Christians, who don't bother with circumcision. But afterward, when some Jewish friends of James came, Peter wouldn't eat with the Gentiles anymore because he was afraid of what these legalists would say. Then the other Jewish Christians followed Peter's hypocrisy, and even Barnabas was influenced to join them in their hypocrisy. When I saw that they were not following the truth of the Good News, I said to Peter in front of all the others, "Since you, a Jew by birth, have discarded the Jewish laws and are living like a Gentile, why are you trying to make these Gentiles obey the Jewish laws you abandoned?"

What could exceed the honesty of the reproof here exhibited to our view? Did the Apostle speak evil of Peter behind his back? No- he withstood him to the face. Did he shrink from a public, though painful, denunciation of Peter's conduct on this occasion? No- he rebuked him openly, before them all. Did his reverence for Peter's age and character, cause him to palliate or connive at what he conceived to be injurious to the cause of Truth? No- he boldly reproofed him, when he saw that he walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel.

This was faithfulness indeed; and no doubt Peter well knew how to value it, and to love his brother Apostle for it; for "the ear that hears the reproof of life, abides among the wise." Consistency of conduct is, at all times, most important, both in ministers and people. On this occasion, there was a lack of consistency in Peter's conduct, which Paul condemned. If he thought it right to eat with the Gentile converts, he ought not to have separated himself from them, when certain Jews came from James. By this act, he either tacitly acknowledged, that he had done wrong, or he was influenced by an undue fear of man.

But another and yet more pernicious effect resulted from this inconsistency of Peter. In this act, he contradicted the glorious design of the Gospel, which was to break down the middle wall of partition, and to unite both Jews and Gentiles in one body in Christ; for the kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Peter was the more inexcusable, as the vision with which he had been favored to prepare his mind to visit Cornelius, and the blessed fruits of that visit, must have removed his Jewish prejudices, and led him to see, that unto the Gentiles also, God would grant repentance unto life.

Paul therefore, perceiving the evil which would arise to the Gentile churches from this conduct of his beloved fellow-laborer, boldly maintained the liberty of the Gospel; which, while it freed the Jewish Christians from the ceremonials of the Law, brought the Gentile converts into all the privileges of the children of God. Hence, he gloried in this blessed truth, -"you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus- There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

In no stage of our Christian pilgrimage are we removed out of the reach of temptation, or from the hidden evils of our fallen nature. "By faith we stand." Nothing but Almighty Power can keep us from falling, and enable us, under all circumstances to walk uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel. How faithfully did the zealous Apostle also reprove the church of Galatia, on account of their being drawn away by Judaizing teachers, from the simplicity of the Gospel. "I marvel," said he, "that you are so soon removed from him who called you into the grace of Christ unto another Gospel, which is not really another; but there be some who trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ." And then, with apostolic authority, he declares- "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again; if any man preach another Gospel unto you, than that you have received, let him be accursed."

Errors in doctrine are seldom unattended by defects in practice. If we depart from the purity of the Truth, we shall suffer loss, both in holiness and comfort. This Paul knew, and deplored- "You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? Have you suffered so much for nothing--if it really was for nothing? But now that you know God--or rather are known by God--how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you."

Few things are more painful than that which is experienced by the minister of Christ, when he beholds his flock carried away by dangerous errors, and losing their affection for him, through the insinuations and flatteries of false teachers. No one, not so circumstanced, can fully enter into the heart-felt grief of such a pastor.

With great tenderness of spirit Paul then appeals to their former affection for him. "Surely you remember that I was sick when I first brought you the Good News of Christ. But even though my sickness was revolting to you, you did not reject me and turn me away. No, you took me in and cared for me as though I were an angel from God or even Christ Jesus himself. Where is that joyful spirit we felt together then? In those days, I know you would gladly have taken out your own eyes and given them to me if it had been possible. Have I now become your enemy because I am telling you the truth? Listen! I, Paul, tell you this: If you are counting on circumcision to make you right with God, then Christ cannot help you. You were getting along so well. Who has interfered with you to hold you back from following the truth? It certainly isn't God, for he is the one who called you to freedom. I only wish that those troublemakers who want to mutilate you by circumcision would mutilate themselves."

With such earnestness did their spiritual father long for their restoration, that he used the strongest metaphor to express his feelings, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you, and to change my voice, for I stand in doubt of you." Who can

question the sincerity of a heart which could make such affectionate appeals, and administer such faithful reproof. His parental heart was grieved that they should so soon forsake him, and listen to the voice of strangers, who sought to lead them away from the simplicity that is in Christ.

This part of the Apostle's history affords a useful lesson to faithful ministers- to watch over their flocks with jealous care, and not to withhold the wholesome reproof, though it may deeply wound; for "faithful are the wounds of a friend."

Of all the offices held by man, none is so important in its nature, and awful in his responsibilities, as that of the Christian Ministry, however much it may be despised by an ungodly world, or unhappily dishonored by the unseemly conduct of some who sustain it. Glorious indeed will be the reward of that man, who, in the spirit of Paul, takes upon himself the care of souls, and solemnly engages in the presence, and through the grace of Jesus, "to teach and to admonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family; to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for his children, who are in the midst of this evil world, that they may be saved through Christ forever." May all who enter into this sacred office, "never cease their labors, their care and diligence, until they have done all that lies in them, according to their bounden duty, to bring all such as are, or shall be committed to their charge, unto that agreement in the faith and knowledge of God, and to that ripeness and perfection of age in Christ, that there be no place left among us, either for error in religion, or for viciousness of life."

The will and ability to perform so great a work, is given of God alone; hence arises the need for earnest prayer, that the Holy Spirit may impart those gifts and graces which are peculiarly essential in an ambassador of Christ.

"Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul

Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,

Paul should himself direct me. I would trace

His master-strokes, and draw from his design.

I would express him simple, grave, sincere;

In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,

And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,

And natural in gesture; much impressed

Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,

And anxious mainly, that the flock he feeds

May feel it too; affectionate in look,

And tender in address, as well becomes

A messenger of grace to guilty men."

This bright example of a Gospel minister, the Apostle held forth to us in his own experience, spirit, and conduct. As his labors were incessant, so also were his solitudes for the welfare of the Church of God. In enumerating his trials, he mentions last, as if to mark its peculiar greatness, that which came upon him daily, "the care of all the churches."

We cannot forbear to mention another instance of his uncompromising firmness when ministerial reproof was needed. He deeply lamented the evils which disfigured the Corinthian Church, "Now, dear brothers and sisters, I appeal to you by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ to stop arguing among yourselves. Let there be real harmony so there won't be divisions in the church. I plead with you to be of one mind, united in thought and purpose. For some members of Chloe's household have told me about your arguments, dear friends. I had to feed you with milk and not with solid food, because you couldn't handle anything stronger. And you still aren't ready, for you are still controlled by your own sinful desires. You are jealous of one another and quarrel with each other. Doesn't that prove you are controlled by your own desires? You are acting like people who don't belong to the Lord. When one of you says, "I am a follower of Paul," and another says, "I prefer Apollos," aren't you acting like those who are not Christians? Who is Apollos, and who is Paul, that we should be the cause of such quarrels? Why, we're only servants. Through us God caused you to believe. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us. My job was to plant the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God, not we, who made it grow. The ones who do the planting or watering aren't important, but God is important because he is the one who makes the seed grow."

Discarding all idea of personal merit, the disinterested Apostle strikes at the root of popular applause and party spirit. By his deep insight into the human heart, he saw the source from where these evils spring—that love of change, that fondness for novelty, that captious spirit, that itching ear, that setting up of one minister above another which divided the Church, and engendered strifes and contentions among them. With unwearied solicitude he labored to counteract these growing evils, that all who professed and called themselves Christians, might be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life.

Paul was well aware that an enemy had done this. As the kingdom of Christ is extended by union, gentleness, and love, so Satan increases his dominion by discord, strife, and hatred. Knowing the depths of this arch-deceiver, and being jealous for the Truth, he forewarned the Corinthians against his delusions; "No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval." Is not this a word in season? Do not errors and divisions even now weaken the Christian Church, and tarnish her glory? Blessed is he that watches, and keeps his garments unspotted from sin.

With equal fidelity he apprized the Christians at Rome to beware of schismatics, who would endanger their peace and unity— "And now I make one more appeal, my dear brothers and sisters. Watch out for people who cause divisions and upset people's faith by teaching things that are contrary to what you have been taught. Stay away from them. Such people are not serving Christ our Lord; they are serving their own personal interests. By smooth talk and glowing words they deceive innocent people."

This unwearied laborer was the more anxious for their preservation from these evils, as they were in a prosperous spiritual condition— "But everyone knows that you are obedient to the Lord. This makes me very happy. I want you to see clearly what is right and to stay innocent of any wrong. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

These instances are sufficient to show, that Paul was a faithful reprove, that he feared not the face of man. While others were dissembling, or courting popular applause, he could say with honest Nehemiah, "Even their assistants took advantage of the people. But because of my fear of God, I did not act that way."

As a Christian, and a preacher of righteousness, the Apostle was obedient to the reigning government; and cheerfully submitted to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. His religion was the religion of peace and good order, not of strife and confusion. "Woe unto him that strives with his Maker. Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth." While the rebellious sinner exclaims; "Who is Lord over us?" -the humble Christian cultivates a spirit of reverential love.

In drawing a sketch of the Apostles conduct and preaching we must notice his important exhortations to the duty of Christian obedience to civil government. Having revealed to Titus, the glorious appearing of the Great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ, he subjoins- "You must teach these things and encourage your people to do them, correcting them when necessary. You have the authority to do this, so don't let anyone ignore you or disregard what you say. Remind your people to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good. They must not speak evil of anyone, and they must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone."

How beautifully does the Christian character shine forth in this admonition. Were all rulers and subjects brought under the holy influence of the Gospel, then truth and justice, brotherly kindness and charity, devotion and piety, concord and unity, with all other virtues, would so flourish among us, that they would form the stability of our times, and make the Church of Christ a praise in the earth.

As it is by the will of God that kings reign and princes decree justice, Paul gives this charge to Timothy exhort therefore that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men," -without any distinction of character; for foes as well as friends; for the turbulent as well as the peaceable; for distant nations as well as for our own land. To which he adds, and, "for kings and for all that are in authority;" giving this substantial reason for the performance of this duty- "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

While the governing power was Pagan and persecuting, he gave this admonition to the Christians at Rome, "Obey the government, for God is the one who put it there. All governments have been placed in power by God. So those who refuse to obey the laws of the land are refusing to obey God, and punishment will follow. For the authorities do not frighten people who are doing right, but they frighten those who do wrong. So do what they say, and you will get along well. The authorities are sent by God to help you. But if you are doing something wrong, of course you should be afraid, for you will be punished. The authorities are established by God for that very purpose, to punish those who do wrong. So you must obey the government for two reasons: to keep from being punished and to keep a clear conscience. Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid so they can keep on doing the work God intended them to do. Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and import duties, and give respect and honor to all to whom it is due."

With equal force he inculcates on the Corinthians the duty of contentment in the station in which God had placed them. This admonition is the more striking, as the word rendered servant, in our version, signifies a slave, "You should continue on as you were when God called you. Are you a slave? Don't let that worry

you--but if you get a chance to be free, take it. And remember, if you were a slave when the Lord called you, the Lord has now set you free from the awful power of sin. And if you were free when the Lord called you, you are now a slave of Christ. God purchased you at a high price. Don't be enslaved by the world. So, dear brothers and sisters, whatever situation you were in when you became a believer, stay there in your new relationship with God." What a disregard is here manifested to outward worldly distinctions, so opposite to the spirit which actuates professing Christians in general.

To Timothy he also writes, "Christians who are slaves should give their masters full respect so that the name of God and his teaching will not be shamed. If your master is a Christian, that is no excuse for being disrespectful. You should work all the harder because you are helping another believer by your efforts."

The Apostle considered it of such importance to the peace of society, and so accordant with the spirit of the Gospel, not to render its professors dissatisfied with their social stations, that he adds- "These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing. From such withdraw yourself." So advised Solomon, "my son fear the Lord and the king; and meddle not with those who are given to change."

Writing under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Peter strongly enforced the duty of subjection to the existing powers, on the Christians who were scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, "For the Lord's sake, accept all authority--the king as head of state, and the officials he has appointed. For the king has sent them to punish all who do wrong and to honor those who do right. It is God's will that your good lives should silence those who make foolish accusations against you. You are not slaves; you are free. But your freedom is not an excuse to do evil. You are free to live as God's slaves. Show respect for everyone. Love your Christian brothers and sisters. Fear God. Show respect for the king."

And then, in his second Epistle, he cautions believers against such as were presumptuous, self-willed, despising government, and not afraid to speak evil of dignities. "It is the corruption and misery of man's nature" as Leighton observes, "that he does not know, and can hardly be persuaded to learn, either how to command aright, or how to obey; and no doubt many of those that can see and blame the injustice of others in authority, would be more guilty that way themselves, if they had the same power. It is the pride and self-love of our nature that begets disobedience in inferiors; and violence and injustice in superiors, that depraved temper, that ties to every kind of government a propensity to a particular evil; that makes royalty easily degenerate into tyranny, and the government of nobles into faction, and popular government into confusion. As civil authority and subjection to it, is the institution of God; so the peaceable correspondence of those two, just government and due obedience, is the especial gift of God's own hand, and a prime blessing to states and kingdoms. And the troubling and interruption of their course is one of the highest public judgments, by which the Lord oftentimes punishes the other sins both of rulers and people. And whatever be the cause, and on which side soever be the justice of the cause, it cannot be looked upon but as a heavy plague and the fruit of many and great provocations, when kings and their people, that should be a mutual blessing and honor to each other, are turned into scourges one to another, or into a devouring fire, as it is in the parable of Judges 9:20- Fire going forth from Abimelech to devour the men of Shechem, and fire from Shechem to devour Abimelech."

May the God of Britain preserve our nation from so awful a catastrophe, by uniting the hearts of all, as the heart of one man, in holy obedience to himself, in loyal attachment to our king, and in brotherly love to one

another.

It may be asked; did not Paul violate his own precepts when he so awfully denounced the high-priest? If the circumstances of the case be considered, it will be found that he was not aware that Ananias, then sitting in judgment, was the legally appointed high-priest. Ananias was acting contrary to the law, in commanding the Apostle to be beaten before he was found guilty. Paul, who knew his hypocritical character, under the influence of a prophetic spirit, pronounced his doom, "God shall smite you, you whited wall."

On being informed that Ananias was the acting high-priest, the Apostle instantly declared his reverence for the office, saying, "I knew not, brethren, that he was the high-priest, for it is written; You shall not speak evil of the ruler of your people." Hence it is evident, that he would not thus have spoken, had he known that Ananias was at that time the officiating high-priest in Jerusalem.

The following historical fact will serve to elucidate the Apostle's conduct. Soon after the holding of the first council at Jerusalem, Ananias was deprived of the high-priest's office for certain acts of violence, and sent to Rome, where he was afterwards released, and returned to Jerusalem. Between the death of Jonathan, who succeeded him, and was murdered by Felix, and the high-priesthood of Ishmael, who was invested with that office by Agrippa, an interval elapsed in which this dignity was vacant. This was the precise time when Paul was apprehended; and the Sanhedrin, being destitute of a president, Ananias undertook to discharge that office. It is probable that Paul was ignorant of this circumstance. With respect to Paul's denunciation, God did smite Ananias in a remarkable manner; for about forty-five years after this, after his house had been reduced to ashes, in a tumult raised by his own son, he was besieged and taken in the royal palace; where, having attempted in vain to hide himself, he was dragged out and slain. "Verily, there is a reward for the righteous; verily he is a God that judges in the earth."

The genius of the Gospel is love and unity. These fruits of the Spirit were the subjects of our Lord's last discourses, and the matter of his intercessory prayer. In the first ages of Christianity, prayers and tears were the only arms of the Church, whereby they long defended it from ruin, and at last advanced it to the most glorious prosperity. The shadows of the night do not more naturally vanish at the rising of the sun, than the darkness of Pagan idolatry and superstition fled before the light of the Gospel. In those days of the Church's first love, no labor was deemed too great, no sacrifice too costly, to evangelize the world. Thousands gladly embraced the crown of martyrdom, rather than deny their precious Savior. Their constancy and patience extorted the admiration of their enemies; the joyfulness with which they sealed the Truth with their blood, won over many of their persecutors to the faith of Christ.

With such lively hopes did they descend into the tomb, that the day of their death was celebrated by their surviving brethren, as the birthday of their martyrdom; for so the primitive Christians used to call the day of their death; looking upon it as the true day of their birth, when they were delivered from this valley of tears—these regions of death, and born again unto the joys and felicities of an endless life. Happy would it be, were this primitive spirit universal. It is fervent prayer, faithful preaching, and the heavenly lives of Christians, that must, and will, through the blessing of God, evangelize both our country and the world.

May all who bear the name of Christ, bear also his holy image. As subjects of the Prince of Peace, let us study to promote the blessings of peace. While thus diffusing around us a spirit of Christian charity, we shall hasten on that blissful period, when the din of war shall be exchanged for the harmony of praise; when men shall love as brethren; and when Jesus shall reign in every heart— the UNIVERSAL KING.

"Jesus, immortal King, go on;
The glorious day will soon be won;
Your enemies prepare to flee,
And leave a conquered world to thee.
Gird on your sword victorious Chief,
The captive sinner's sole relief;
Cast the Usurper from his throne,
And make the universe your own.
Your footsteps, Lord, with joy we trace,
And mark the conquests of your grace;
Finish the work you have begun,
And let your will on earth be done.
Then shall contending nations rest,
For love shall reign in every breast;
Weapons designed for war shall cease,
Only then, be implements of peace."
Hark! how the hosts triumphant sing!
'The Lord omnipotent is King.'
Let all his saints rejoice at this,
The kingdoms of the world are his!
Hallelujah! Amen!"

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