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## Poetry.

### I Dare not Idle Stand.

I dare not idle stand,  
When upon every hand  
The whitening fields proclaim the harvest near;

A gleaner I would be,  
Gathering, dear Lord, for Thee,  
Lest I with empty hands at last appear.

I dare not idle stand,  
While on the shifting sand  
The ocean casts bright treasures at my feet;  
Beneath some shell's rough side  
The tinted pearl may hide,  
And I with precious gift my Lord may meet.

I dare not idle stand,  
While over all the land,  
Poor wandering souls need help like mine;  
Brighter than brightest gem  
In monarch's diadem,  
Each soul a star in Jesus' crown may shine.

I dare not idle stand,  
But at my Lord's command  
Labour for him throughout my life's short day;  
Evening will come at last,  
Day's labour all be passed,  
And rest eternal my brief toil repay.

## Religious.

### The Duty of Baptists to Teach their Distinctive Views.

THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY, AT THE ANNIVERSARY IN INDIANAPOLIS, MAY 19, 1881. BY JOHN A. BROADUS, PROFESSOR IN THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, LOUISVILLE, KY.

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.—MATT. XXVIII. 20.

The things he had commanded include the internal and the external elements of Christian piety. Of the latter, they include ethical instruction, and directions as to the conduct of Christian societies. These matters pertaining to the Christian societies are certainly not so important as the internal and spiritual elements of piety, or as ethical principles and precepts, but still they are important. The tendency of human nature is usually not to neglect religious externals, but to exaggerate or pervert them. The New Testament gives in a very simple pattern in these respects—simple organization, simple government, simple ceremonies. But men early began to magnify their importance, and to change their character and application.

### EARLY JUDAIZERS AND THEIR SUCCESSORS.

Did you ever consider what became of the Judaizers who gave Paul so much trouble? When we last observe them in the history, in connection with Paul's latest recorded visit to Jerusalem they are really beaten, but still numerous and active. When in the second century we again get a clear view of the early Christians, the Judaizers seemed reduced to a mere handful. But has the tendency really disappeared? Nay, it is beginning to strike through and through the Christianity of the day, and from that time on, a painfully large portion of Christendom has had only a Judaized Christianity. When men began to exaggerate the importance of externals, they would soon begin to change their character. Coming to believe that baptism brings regeneration and is indispensable to salvation, they would of course wish to baptize as early in life as possible, and to make baptism practicable for the sick and the dying. Beginning to fancy that the bread and wine really become the glorified body and blood of the ascended Saviour, they not unnaturally took to the withholding the cup from the laity, lest their awkward handling should spill some drops of the sacred fluid, which would have been profanation.

### THE BAPTISTS OPPOSED TO JUDAIZERS' INFLUENCES.

In opposition to all this, Baptists insist on holding to the primitive constitution, government, and ceremonies of

the Christian societies or churches—and this on the principle of recognizing no religious authority but the Scriptures themselves, and of strictly observing all that the Saviour has commanded. Now the Saviour says in our text that in connection with disciplining men to him, we must teach them to observe all things whatsoever he commanded. These commandments include the matters just mentioned, concerning which the people who allow themselves to be called Baptists differ widely from large portions of the Christian world, and are persuaded that their own views are more Scriptural, more in accordance with the Saviour's commands. They must therefore feel themselves required to teach these things as well as others. Hence, the text lays upon us the duty of which I have been requested to speak, *the duty of Baptists to teach their distinctive views.*

### DISTINCTIVE VIEWS OF BAPTIST CHURCHES.

It may be well to state briefly what I understand to be the leading distinctive views of the Baptist Churches. The fact that certain of these are more or less shared by others, will be remarked upon afterwards.

(1) We hold that the Bible alone is a religious authority; and in regard to Christian institutions the direct authority is of course the New Testament.

(2) We hold that a Christian Church ought to consist only of persons making a credible profession of conversion, of faith in Christ. These may include children, even comparatively young children, for God be thanked that these do often give credible evidence of faith in Christ. But in the very nature of the case they cannot include infants. The notion that infants may be church members because their parents are, seems to us utterly alien to the genius of Christianity, not only unsupported by the New Testament, but in conflict with its essential principles; and we are not surprised to observe that our Christian brethren among whom that theory obtains are unable to carry it out consistently—unable to decide in what sense the so-called "children of the church" are really members of the church, and subject to its discipline. The other notion that infants may be church members because so-called "sponsors" make professions and promises for them, seems to us a mere legal fiction, devised to give some basis for a practice which arose on quite other grounds. Maintaining that none should be received as church members unless they give credible evidence of conversion, we also hold in theory, though our practice often falls sadly short of the theory, that none should be retained in membership who do not lead a godly life, that if a man fails to show his faith by works, he should cease to make profession of faith. Some of our own people appear at times to forget that strict church discipline is a necessary part of the Baptist view as to church membership.

(3) We hold that the officers, government, and ceremonies of a Christian society or church ought to be such and such only as the New Testament directs. As to ceremonies, it enjoins the very minimum of ceremony, for there are but two and both are very simple, in nature and in meaning. We insist that baptism ought to be simply what Christ practised and commended. We care nothing for the mode of baptism, the manner of baptizing, if only there is a real baptism, according to the plain indications of Scripture. As to the significance of the ceremony, we understand it to involve three things. The element employed represents purification. The action performed represents burial and resurrection, picturing the burial and resurrection of Christ, and symbolizing the believer's death to sin through faith in Christ, and his resurrection to walk in newness of life. And performing the ceremony in the name of the Lord Jesus, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, makes it like an oath of allegiance, a vow of devotion to Jesus Christ, to the Triune God. The early Roman Christians had a good word for this idea, if

only the word could have remained unchanged in use. They called it a *sacramentum*, a military oath. As the Roman soldier in his oath bound himself to obey his General absolutely, so in baptism we solemnly vow devotion and obedience. But alas! the word *sacramentum*, like many another word in Christian history, has come to be employed in sense quite foreign to its original use. As to the second Christian ceremony, we hold that not only the bread, but the cup also, should be given; urging, as all Protestants do—and Baptists are Protestants in one sense, though in another sense distinct from Protestants—that our Lord commanded us to do both, and no one has a right to modify his commands. And as to the order of the two ceremonies, we believe the New Testament to indicate that the second should be observed only by those who have previously observed the first, and are walking orderly.

(4) We hold that these societies called churches were designed, as shown in the New Testament, to be independent. They have no right to control each other. Ample warrant there is for co-operation in benevolence, and for consultation as to questions of truth and duty, but without assuming to legislate or in any sense to rule one another. And they must be independent of the State in the sense of receiving from it pecuniary support.

We are glad that as to one or another of these distinctive views, some of our fellow Christians of other persuasions agree with us, more or less. We welcome all such concurrence, and it is not now necessary to inquire whether they hold those opinions with logical consistency.

I wish now, first to present reasons why Baptists ought to teach their distinctive views, and then to remark upon means and methods of performing this duty.

### I. REASONS WHY BAPTISTS OUGHT TO TEACH THEIR DISTINCTIVE VIEWS.

1. *It is a duty we owe to ourselves.* We must teach these views in order to be consistent in holding them. Because of these we stand apart from other Christians in separate organizations, from Christians whom we warmly love and delight to work with; we have no right thus to stand apart unless the matters of difference have real importance; and if they are really important, we certainly ought to teach them.

This teaching is the only way of correcting excesses among ourselves. Do some of our Baptist brethren seem to you ultra in their denominationalism, violent, bitter? And do you expect to correct such a tendency by going to the opposite extreme?

The only cure, my brethren, for denominational ultraism is a healthy denominationalism.

2. *To teach our distinctive views is a duty we owe to our fellow Christians.* Take the Roman Catholics. We are often told that we ought to push our denominational differences into the background, and stand shoulder to shoulder against Popery. Very well but all the time it seems to us that the best way to meet and withstand Romanism is to take Baptist ground; the great Protestant persuasions have added something in faith or government or ordinances, to the primitive simplicity. The Roman Catholics know this, and habitually taunt them with accepting changes which the church has made, while denying the church's authority; and sometimes tell them that the Baptists alone are consistent in opposing the church. We may say that there are but two sorts of Christianity, church Christianity and Bible Christianity. Our friends of other denominations often do us great injustice because they do not understand our tenets and judge us by their own. "As to 'restricted communion,' for example, Protestants usually hold the Calvinian view of the Lord's Supper, and so think that we are selfishly denying them a share in the spiritual blessing attached to its observance; while with our Zwinglian view we have no such

thought or feeling. These things certainly show it to be very desirable that we should bring our Christian brethren around us to know our distinctive opinions, in order that we may at least restrain them from wronging us through ignorance. Christian charity may thus be promoted by correcting ignorance. And besides we may hope that some at least will be led to investigate the matters about which we differ. Oh that our honored brethren would investigate! A highly-educated Episcopal lady, some years ago in one of our great cities, by a long and patient examination of her Bible, with no help but an Episcopal work in favour of Infant Baptism, at length reached the firm conviction that it is without warrant in the Scripture, and became a Baptist. She afterwards said; "I am satisfied that thousands would inevitably do likewise, if they would only examine."

It is not necessarily an arrogant and presumptuous thing in us if we strive to bring honored fellow Christians to views which we honestly believe to be more Scriptural and therefore more wholesome. Apollon was an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, and Aquila and Priscilla were lowly people, who doubtless admired him; yet they taught him the way of the Lord more perfectly, and no doubt greatly rejoiced that he was willing to learn. He who tries to win people from other denominations to his own distinctive views may be a sectarian bigot; but he may also be an humble and loving Christian.

3. *To teach our distinctive views is a duty we owe to the unbelieving world.* We want unbelievers to accept Christianity. And it seems to us they are more likely to accept it when presented in its primitive simplicity, as the Apostles themselves offered it to the men of their time. For meeting the assaults of infidels, we think our position is best. Those who insist that Christianity is unfriendly to scientific investigation almost always point to the Romanists; they could not with the least plausibility say this of Baptists. While thus free to search the Scriptures, Baptists are eminently conservative in their whole tone and spirit; and for a reason. Their recognition of the Scriptures alone as religious authority, and the stress they lay on exact conformity to the requirements of Scripture, fosters an instinctive feeling that they must stand or fall with the real truth and the real authority of the Bible. The union of freedom and conservatism is something most healthful and hopeful.

4. There is yet another reason—one full of solemn sweetness. *To teach our distinctive views is not only a duty to ourselves, to our fellow Christians, and to the unbelieving world, but it is a duty we owe to Christ, it is a matter of simple loyalty to him.* Under the most solemn circumstances he uttered the express injunction. He met the eleven disciples by appointment on a mountain in Galilee. Probably more than five hundred of whom Paul speaks, were present also. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and disciple all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The things of which we have been speaking are not, we freely grant the most important of religious truths and duties; but they are a part of the all things Jesus commanded; what shall hinder us, what could excuse us, from observing them ourselves, and teaching them to others? "And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Shall we neglect to teach as he required, and then claim the promise of his presence and help and blessing?

### II. MEANS AND METHODS OF PERFORMING THIS DUTY.

1. *One of the best means of teaching our distinctive views to others, is the thorough instruction of our own people.* Brethren of other persuasions need not be repelled or offended if they find us taking suitable occasion in pulpit dis-

courses to teach our young members, what Baptists believe, and why. If they perceive that we are not striking at them through our members, but in simplicity and sincerity are feeding our flock, they may even listen with interest. And then, if they choose to take these things to themselves, of their own accord and on their own responsibility, why, all the better of course. Sunday-schools, connected with Baptist churches, ought to use Baptist helps for the study of the lesson. If some undenominational publications are so valuable for teachers as to be desired also, they ought to be used only in addition to those that explain according to Baptist beliefs. We do not withhold instruction in our Lord's other teachings, till the pupil has become a believer, and why should we withhold it as to his commands regarding church-membership and ordinances?

These benefits ought to follow from thus teaching our youth. *First*, it will restrain them from hereafter going to other denominations through ignorance. *Secondly*, we may thus render them better Christians. I fully agree with an eminent Presbyterian minister who recently said, "We make people better Christians by making them better Presbyterians, better Methodists, Baptists, Episcopians." There are some very excellent people in our time who think it a merit to be entirely undenominational, and who proclaim that they "love one church as well as another." But where not deluded, such persons are few and quite exceptional: in general, the truest, most devoted and most useful Christians are strong in their denominational convictions and attachments. And *thirdly*, we thus prepare them to explain and advocate these views in conversation, which is often called for, and when properly managed may be very useful.

2. *If actions speak louder than words, we may practically teach our distinctive views by everything that builds up our churches in Christian character, and promotes their legitimate influence.* Baptists are in some respects placed at serious disadvantage in consequence of trying to do their duty. They have not restricted their ministry to men who had a certain fixed grade of education, but have encouraged all to preach who felt moved to do so, and whom the churches were willing to hear. In this way they have greatly helped to meet the vast demand in our country, and have gained a powerful hold upon the masses. Whatever elevates the educational condition of our denomination, or gives more of social influence, provided this be not gained by worldly conformity, will help in securing respect and attention for our distinctive tenets.

3. *If we wish to teach our distinctive views to others, it is necessary to understand those whom we propose to reach.* Baptists are not on the whole so ignorant of the denominational opinions of other Christians as they are of ours. I respectfully urge upon all ministers, and upon intelligent private members of both sexes, that they shall study, by reading and by personal inquiry, each of the leading principal bodies with which we have to do.

Such inquiries will help us in several ways. They may restrain the tendency to react from what we regard as the errors of Popery, and many Baptists with reference to prelatical or pastoral dominion, to clerical support, etc. We rejoice in that "Progress of Baptist Principles" among Pedobaptists which Curtis's book so well describes, and perhaps fail to inquire whether they be not a counter influence which deserves attention, and which may not be wholly beneficial. And then this study of other denominations will enable us better to adapt ourselves to those whom we would influence. When you address to Methodists an argument suited to High Churchmen, or *vice versa*, what in the world are you thinking about?

4. *We should study the wise treatment of controverted topics.* Upon this point, I venture to offer several practical suggestions, for what they are worth.