

SCRIPTURAL SECURITY

(Continued)

An urgent need for careful consideration of the subject with which we are concerned in these messages, arises out of a conviction that the scriptures already cited, and those associated with them, have been strained out of all proportion and are being used in support of a doctrine that they neither teach nor imply.

A true interpretation of the "security" texts of the Bible will inspire confidence, trust, and assurance; a false interpretation may lead to carelessness, backsliding and sin.

In our approach to this study it may be helpful to suggest a few necessary precautions:

(1) **Let us seek to be sincere and unprejudiced.**

A closed mind, an "I know before we begin" attitude, will inevitably hinder the entrance of the light of knowledge. The "veil of prejudice" will ever obscure the truth. An attendant of one of John Fletcher's meetings, who disturbed others who were in the service and interrupted Fletcher while he preached, was asked why he acted thus, and he replied: "I do not like your doctrine. You are a free-willer." "If I have spoken evil," said Fletcher, "bear witness of the evil." The man paused, and then charged the preacher with "praying before the sermon as if all might be saved." "That is false doctrine," he said, "and if Christ Himself came down from heaven to preach it, I would not believe Him." Here is an example of the deadly influence of prejudice.

intolerance.

(2) **Let us carefully avoid the spirit of intolerance.**

The saintly Fletcher, staunch defender of the Armenian and Wesleyan interpretation of the subject under discussion, and author of the classic "Checks to Antinomianism," advocated by precept and example the spirit of tolerance and love in the discussion of doctrinal subjects on which we find ourselves at variance with others. Said he: "If in doing the good offices of the church, we find ourselves obliged to bear a little hard upon the peculiar sentiments of our opposite friends, let us do it in such a manner as not to break the bonds of peace and brotherly kindness."

Rev. Thomas Reader, an ardent Calvinist, was so angered after reading one of Fletcher's books on holiness, that he made a long journey to Madeley, where Fletcher lived, to protest the author's radical views. Fletcher greeted his visitor at the door with these words: "Come in, come in, thou blessed of the Lord. Am I so honoured as to receive a visit from so esteemed a servant of my Master? Let us have a little prayer while refreshments are getting ready."

Mr. Reader was so nonplussed at such a reception during his three-day stay at the vicarage, that his indignation vanished to the point where he did not even broach his criticism, and returned home saying that he "never before enjoyed three days of such spiritual and profitable intercourse in all his life."

When we allow ourselves to become intolerant or abusive of those of opposite view, we not only defeat our purpose of seeking to convince them of the truth of what we say, but we sow seeds of discord and division among those who profess to be of like precious faith, much to the grief of our Lord

and equally much to the glee of Satan. If we cannot discuss a subject in the spirit of love and understanding, better that we leave it alone. And so, in our investigation of a doctrine that has ever been very controversial, let us seek to maintain a kindly, Christlike spirit toward all who differ with us. May we have discussion without argument; candour without abuse; decision without estrangement.

(3) Above all, **let us seek the mind and guidance of the Spirit.** We cannot accept a line of teaching merely because some or many others embrace it, nor reject a truth because it is rejected by others. We must "compare spiritual things with spiritual," and, taking the teachings of good, sincere men, prove them by the Scriptures, discarding that which does not agree thereto, and holding fast "that which is good." **Let the Word be the final authority.**

LET US RETURN

J. F. Knapp

It is commonly said and generally believed among evangelical people of all denominations that the GREATEST NEED of the present hour is a sweeping revival—such a revival as will uncover sin whether in high or low places, arouse up sleeping Christians and dead professors, obliterate for the time being denominational and sectional prejudices and unite the cry of God's children for the salvation of souls and the soon-coming of Jesus.

The thing that seems to be disregarded is that such a revival is not to be thought of unless there is first a turning around from the present trends which have penetrated and to a large degree overwhelmed even many of the Holiness people. A visit to the average minister's home today will reveal far more marks of worldliness than of piety. There may be a few Scriptural mottoes on the wall and perhaps a picture or two suggestive of spiritual things. But how about the book case and particularly the center table and magazine rack? How about the programs that are permitted to come in over the radio? For the first time in history the spirit of worldliness can vocally penetrate the sanctity of a Christian home unless rigidly shut out by a determined conviction. Sex stories appear in the popular magazines of the day that would not have been permitted to enter a self-respecting church member's home a few years ago. Just in the last few years a deadly menace has been creeping its slimy way into the home in the shape of juvenile comics that might have come from the presses of hell so far as their unspeakable contents is concerned. The Chicago Daily News recently called it "The Ten Million Dollar Swindle." The daily newspapers with their emphasis on crime and their worldly advice as well as fiction features appeal to every member of the household, young and old, and unless kept in their proper place will take up so much time that little is left for prayer, the study of the Word and the reading of spiritual papers and books. It is true a little religion is sandwiched in between the various radio programs; but suppose that, to get God's Revivalist, one had to look over several pages of silly comics and theatrical and sports editions, how many would subscribe for this or any other religious paper?

LET US RETURN to a sense of balance and perspective in our daily living. Instead of leaving the radio on blaring away as do so many, hour after hour, let us very defin-

itely choose and set down those programs that are spiritual and educational and rather smash it to pieces than permit it to bring into our homes the current worldliness, sex-madness and advertisements of liquor, night-clubs and general ungodliness that characterizes the usual daily grind that comes in through the box on the table or the cabinet in the parlor.

LET US RETURN to the definite idea that parents are responsible for the doing and even the thoughts to a large degree of their children. Communism and other ungodly social ideas have found the readiest hearing among the immature and the youthful of the land. Growing up among us are a generation who know not God and whose only ruler is their own carnal and wayward desires. For this generation the careless, irreligious and utterly selfish parents are directly responsible. The worst heresy ever palmed off on the parents of our day was the idea that children are capable of developing themselves and that it is an infringement on their personality for what is true and right. One chaplain recently writes, "We receive the men the way they are sent to us, and only five per cent of my men are aware of what religion is."

LET US RETURN to the family altar. It is true that large numbers of families are being broken up by war service of various kinds and that no man knows where this will end. But even if a son has been taken for the army or a daughter gone out into other service, let the remaining members of the family night and morning cast over these dear ones the protection and encouragement of their prayers, and let the letters to our soldiers indicate not only the encouragement that we feel but the solemn sense of our obligation to God and to our country, that through our prayers they may be led and protected. REMEMBER PEARL HARBOR but remember it in prayer for loved ones and a nation that must return to the God of our fathers or go down in moral defeat even though its arms might be triumphant.

LET US RETURN to a holy Sabbath. True Christians have always curtailed all buying and selling on the Lord's Day. But into large numbers of homes, where the heads know better, the Sunday paper, the Sunday news broadcast and the Sunday milk man are now regular comers. Besides, there are frequent Sunday trips for mere recreation. This makes our children feel that, even though we talk about keeping the Sabbath, we do not really mean it. It will take courage and determination but LET US RETURN to a Christian observance of the Lord's Day.

LET US RETURN to regularity in our personal Bible reading and prayer and our attendance upon the public means of grace. Let nothing but absolute physical helplessness interfere. Better to lose a few dollars than to imperil our souls. Better to be twenty-four hours behind the news than behind in our appointments with Almighty God.

LET US RETURN, for thus we meet the divine law so often repeated in the Scriptures, as in the prophecy of Jeremiah (chap. 15) "If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile . . . I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible."—Selected.