

# The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No. 74

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## Editorial

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Warm Greetings in Jesus Name.

Our thanks to all who have communicated with us during the past month, the Apostle tells us that with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Looking back over the past year it has been one featuring many calamities of one kind or another, we have listed most of them appearing in the news media. Bangladesh; Severe tidal waves and floods early in the year. U.S.A. Slight Earthquake tremors and the Typhoon Gloria on the east coast. Canada; Earth tremors, Mexico; Major Earthquake and tremors. Colombo; Volcanic eruption, resulting in floods and mud covering a number of days thousands perish. "Latin America; Wars and Skirmishes, uprising against governments. Pacific Ocean Countries-and Islands race troubles and risings of governments. England and Ireland; Industrial troubles and Riots in Handsworth and Tottenham. African Countries; Extensive drought and famine in many of the smaller countries we hear little about apart from Sudan and Ethiopia etc, South Africa; Race troubles and Tribal troubles with the Zulu's. Middle East; P.L.O. activity and their extreme party. The Cyprus murders, Air Hi-Jackings and Cruise Ship Hi-Jack. Disasters from man's inventions: Major Air, Road, Rail and Sea disasters as Oil tankers sinking with the resultant oil slicks, also at Petro-Chemical plants etc.

Indeed the world is witnessing some of the troubles forecast for the last days of Gentile times, we pray for the "New Day" to dawn when peace and order will be brought out of the chaos which now exists.

In the early fifties Bro. Brady published a booklet called "Too true to be new" which it is thought would be worth repeating in serial form through the Circular Letter, the first instalment being in this issue, in addition there are two exhortations, one by Bro. Albert Woodhouse entitled "Our conception of the Kingdom of God" and by Sis. Lily White entitled "And God Said"

We of the Nazarene Fellowship wish all our readers many temporal and Spiritual blessings for the coming year.

With Sincere Love in the Master's service. Harvey and Evelyn Linggood.

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## Too True To Be New.

An appeal to Scripture, history and reason, to correct a far-reaching error in Christadelphian doctrine and to make good the deficiencies in an address by L.C.Jennings at the Mutual Improvement Societies Conference, Midland Institute, Birmingham, on "Our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the Sheep," on June 2nd. 1952.

Some years ago, as a member of the M.I.S. and a former President of the Union, the writer was invited by a Yorkshire Society to speak at their Interim Conference. The then President, A.E.Owler, vetoed their invitation and said Ernest Brady must not be allowed to be heard, having expressed doubt of the correctness of some aspects of Christadelphian teaching. Any mutual member will appreciate that such action is absolutely contrary to the rules and spirit of the Society, but I mention it not from any feeling of resentment but simply as a background to what follows.

It is, perhaps naturally, the policy of most leaders to prevent their followers hearing anyone or anything which might disturb the peace, but it has not usually been in the real interest of any form of knowledge or progress for discussion and criticism to be stifled. As it was evident to me that many of the friends I met at this meeting had no conception of the deep and abiding issues which had, to our sorrow, broken a long and loving association, I determined on writing this explanation. I had been led to my conclusions as a result of feeling that something must be seriously wrong with a community which was split into so many different and antagonistic divisions as Christadelphians. If they all had the truth, I asked myself, and if the true spirit of Christ animated any or all of them, how was it possible for there to be in the same town two or three, as in Birmingham, as many as five different groups, each debarring members of the others from fellowship? It could be, of course, that the matters upon which they were divided were unimportant and that all were right on fundamentals. On the other hand, if all were right on matters of basic truth, why was not the love and tolerance which should characterise true Christians not equal to the task of agreeing on matters of secondary importance? During a period of several years I had thought over these matters, visiting other meetings, talking with other brethren and reading widely anything which seemed to have a bearing on them. I made one important discovery; there was one fundamental question on which all were most certainly not agreed, and it was in regard to the nature of man and the sacrifice of Christ. Not only were there different and conflicting views between different fellowships, but also inside separate groups the most contradictory views were to be found. Furthermore there was what seemed like a conspiracy of silence in many quarters. For example, the Editor of the Fraternal Visitor said the subject had caused so much strife that he would have nothing more to do with it. Yet undoubtedly, it is the crux of the Gospel and in apostolic times it formed the chief topic in Christian preaching. It was while my mind was in a state of indecision that I happened to be speaking at Derby and spending the day with the late J.T.Roberts. During the afternoon I was browsing through his bookcase and came across two volumes of a periodical called "The Lamp," produced by Edward Turney of Nottingham in 1878-1880. From these, which Bro. Roberts subsequently gave me, I learned the true facts of the controversy of 1873 concerning the nature of Christ, and I realised how a zealous but misguided and autocratic man, the late Robert Roberts, had driven out of the community a noble character, with a few thoughtful and intelligent followers like the elder William Ellis, and had riveted on to Christadelphianism for all time the abominable doctrines of sinful flesh and a condemned Christ. A number of small groups and ecclesias upheld the truth, the majority being re-baptised on realising that, as Christadelphians, their understanding on vital matters had been deficient, and remnants of these have existed ever since, though gradually diminishing in the way it seems minority groups of true believers always tend to. One of the last, known as the Crabtree Road ecclesia, was amalgamated to the Suffolk Street fellowship early this century. Such is the way in which, by age, infirmity and death, the brightness of truth is dimmed, those who follow allow the sharp edges to become blurred and finally the lights are smothered. Nevertheless, throughout the history of "The Truth" there has constantly appeared here and there what is called "The Clean Flesh Heresy," either the result of reading what others have written or from personal study of the Bible leading to a rejection of the false teaching in the Statement of Faith, so that the in Temperance Hall Section the process of withdrawal has become almost a matter of routine. Pamphlets on the subject have been widely circulated by F.J.Pearce of Newbridge and the Nazarene Fellowship and although some of these are unskilfully written and crudely printed the reasoning is sound

and scriptural and the confusion and contradictions which they reveal in the works of the Dr., R.R., C.C.W., J.J.H. and other prominent Christadelphians is scarcely credible. My former brothers and sisters have good reason to know how R. Roberts misused his power, for not many years later, by a similar act of dictatorship, he again split the Community on the question of Inspiration, and battered upon the Suffolk Street section the false accusation of believing in a partially, inspired Bible. The fact that nearly 70 years afterwards this lying charge is still levelled by malicious members of the Temperance Hall and Berean sections should make them hesitate to accept upon hearsay the equally false charges made against Edward Turney by Robert Roberts in e.g. "The Slain Lamb" and other similar literature. The year 1873 was a turning point for Christadelphians. If brotherly love and the scriptural principle of reasoning together had prevailed, the community might have gone on unto perfection and become a true and united Church. Instead, a fallible and irascible man was allowed to assert his will and entangle his followers in some of the same gross errors and misapplications of Scripture which disgrace most of the sects of Christendom, namely, original sin and defiled nature.

Many Christadelphians feel bitterly insulted to be charged with sharing the apostate doctrines of Roman Catholics, but the facts are undeniable. We willingly admit that longstanding tradition, supported by a superficial reading of a few passages of Scripture and encouraged by too great readiness to blame their faults and failures upon our inherited nature, leads some people to conclude that human nature is full of inherent evil. But true believers are expected to exercise a God-given reason and discrimination, and not to read superficially or be led astray by tradition, while the very fact that it was a Pope, seeking excuse for his own evil courses, who first introduced into Christianity the theory that Adam's sin is supposed to have defiled his nature and become transmitted to all his descendants, should make us examine it carefully. It is quite illogical to conclude that because wickedness appears to be universal therefore there must be some kind of evil principle or bias towards sin inherent in man, and there are two simple arguments to the contrary, either of which is alone sufficient to prove it false. The first is, that if we have such a bias, then God who created us or caused us to inherit a nature with that disability would be really responsible for all the sin in the world. The second is, that Jesus, with exactly the same nature and tendencies as ourselves, was without sin. It is no answer to the first to say that Adam sinned and we merely inherit in our flesh the effects of his sin; there is no escape from the conclusion that if we are born into the world with some evil principle or bias in our nature which causes us to sin, or makes it inevitable that we do sin, then it would be impossible for God in justice either to hold us guilty or still less to punish us. While a Creator who in such circumstances says to us "Be ye therefore perfect as I am perfect," would be a very monster of deceit and injustice; if as Christadelphians assert, sin runs in the blood one could as fairly blame a child born blind for not being able to see as expect one with sin in his blood to be good.

Such, in the Christadelphian view, is the virulence of the evil in man, that it can only be overcome by Divine Grace entering and displacing or restraining the native evil tendency. If such were the case, then one would expect that outside of the true believers, whoever they may be, there would be neither goodness nor morality of any kind. Yet one must admit that there are and possibly always have been, people who do good rather than evil from choice; who, without any religious motive whatever take pleasure in being charitable and kind; indeed the apostle tells us so (Rom. 2:14); there have even been those who have loved their fellow men better than their own lives. We need not fear to acknowledge the fact because we are told that we are all under sin and in bondage; rather we should ask ourselves if we have properly understood what such statements imply. They in fact relate to a federal constitution whereby, for the purpose of salvation and the deliverance of a vast multitude of people from their personal sins, the one first sin is regarded as hanging over all men and the legal situation resulting from its commission, involving all enlightened believers. I shall produce the evidence on this point in due course. Regarding the second point one would think it scarcely necessary to enlarge, were it not evident that there are people who can "blind themselves to the most hopeless contradictions in order to avoid facing a disquieting fact. If it is true, and we know it is so, (i) that Jesus was the same human flesh and "blood as we are, and (ii) that He was capable of experiencing the same temptations as we do, and (iii) that He did indeed suffer such temptations and overcame them all, then it follows that His life, His experience and His example prove beyond question that there is no evil or bias toward evil in human nature which it is impossible for any other man to overcome. When this reasoning is put before a Christadelphian, as it has been "ad nauseum", he generally explains that we are overlooking the fact that

Jesus was the Son of God, and that on this account He was specially strengthened to enable Him to do what no other man could. We were confidently informed by a young brother last summer that Jesus was a mixture of human flesh and Divine Spirit and therefore although He had the human weaknesses of other men yet He had the divine strength necessary to resist them! If such was truly the case, then Jesus was not really like us; He might have looked like a man but He could not be truly a member of our race, the Son of Man. While if it is said that He was the same as we are but was in some way specially helped or strengthened, then it is not true to say He was tempted in all points as we are. A person may choose to believe that our Saviour was a hybrid mixture of human and divine, or that He was endowed by His Father with a power to resist temptation which no ordinary man can call upon, or He may believe that He was an ordinary man actuated and supported by Divine Power as a puppet is by strings, but if so He should honestly admit that he believes in a Christ unknown to the very fundamentals of truth laid down in the Scriptures which record Jesus' life and experience. Those who are interested to plumb the depths to which Christadelphian exposition on these points can descend might do worse than read "Redemption in Christ" by W.F.Barling; which the present writer and F.J.Pearce have dealt with in "My Life for the Sheep."

To be continued next month.

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## **Our Conception Of The Kingdom Of God.**

What is our conception of the Kingdom of God? But as it is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." I Corinthians 2:9.

God's word leaves us in no doubt as to what the future kingdom will be like. First, it is to be a place of beauty such as man has never known. Wars will certainly be a thing of the past. The days of the crooked and stupid politicians in which greed and vanity are the motivating factors, will certainly become things of the past, when the King of kings will rule the world in righteousness. It will not be a case of might over right: it will be the reverse: it will be right over might.

It should be very evident to any reasonably intelligent person who reads the foregoing quotation that the present order of things has come to an end: when Jesus Christ, The Son of God, intervenes in the affairs of wicked men and women, whose god is money. God, through His Son Jesus, who, as we are told in the scriptures, is to be king over the whole of this planet, will transform this world into a place of unspeakable beauty on which, eventually, will reside, only those people who will treasure and use this wonderful creation of God, as it was intended to be used. For the glory of the Lord as we are told in Numbers. 14:21. Men who now destroy the earth will themselves be destroyed. Rev. 11:18.

What are the politicians: financiers; scientists: and the like people doing to this world now? For greed and power they are surely destroying the planet. They have polluted the air; they have polluted the rivers; they have polluted the land and now they are polluting the seas. We are told by those who make fortunes out of their activities it is all in the cause of progress, despite the moral and physical pollution brought about despite many side effects. But we wonder is it progress? Surely a more apt word would be regression. For in no way does it help to bring about the conditions which allows a man to live under his own vine and fig tree. Micah 4:4. Those of us who are lovingly looking for Jesus' return can rejoice with confidence because we are told in the scriptures of a new and wonderful order of things which will be introduced; when all that now offends will be destroyed.

Let us look at the beginning of this new era which is to be brought about by the return of our absent Lord and Master; Jesus. When Jesus returns, we know that the dead in Christ are raised incorruptible: and those of us who are alive will be changed in the twinkling of an eye as we are told in I Corinthians 15:51-55. "Behold I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall

“be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality”.

Nothing can be put plainer than this, and it is from this point of time when Jesus sets his feet on this earth, that the way of life which has been thrust on man will be radically changed.

“Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” II Peter 5:15.

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.” Revelation 21:1.

“And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me. Write; for these words are true and faithful.” Rev. 21:5.

“But every man in his order: Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christs at his coming.” I Corinthians 15:25.

We also read in John 5:2, “but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; we shall see him as he is.”

“And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.” II Thessalonians 1:7.

Reading the above quotations, one is able to build up a picture from these words. It is very evident from the foregoing that, at Jesus’ return, there will be a very powerful and invincible army created, headed by a leader, whose wisdom and understanding will be far in excess of man’s thinking. In addition, this leader (Jesus Christ) will have at His command, the power of literally moving mountains. If one reads Exodus chapter 14, one is shown the wonderful power of God which He uses to defend His people, Israel. It might be stressed here, that the incident recorded in Exodus 14; although an impossibility with man; is only a very small example of God’s power. This power will most certainly be vested in Jesus, The Son of God. Just think of it, Jesus, could destroy a mighty army with just one look. It has already been noted that Jesus will be accompanied by His mighty angels. In addition to the combination of these two invincible powers, will be added the power of the immortalized saints. Visualise this combination of beings, headed by Jesus Christ; it certainly adds up to a very formidable army. Those poor fools who make war with the Lamb, will most certainly be in for a great and unexpected shock. These people who make war with the Lamb will obviously be wealthy people, who will send armies to try and overcome this man, Jesus, who will be a threat to their wealth and power.

“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful”. Revelation 17:14.

Gone will be the days when those military men go strutting around in their fine uniforms with rows of worthless medals: these people are part of a system which sends and brings about death: at the same time, making sure that their own skins are not at risk. They try to glorify death.

There is nothing glorious about death. Life is a precious gift from God. No one has the right to put other people’s lives at risk. All this will “be ended when the law goes forth from Zion.

“And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth from Zion, ‘and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” Micah 4:2.

“And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off, and they shall beat their swords into plough shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and

under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.” Micah 4:3 and 4.

Those vain people who strut around in uniforms, and their greedy masters, who make vast gains from mass death, will most certainly, be ruthlessly dealt with and destroyed. In this year 1985, the way of life has become so complicated, that one sometimes wonders how could civilisation, as we know it, carry on, if it were suddenly deprived of the many things we rely on. For instance electrical power. Civilisation depends on it, completely, because, it is a form of energy which supplies light: transport: use: in the homes: road transport depends on it; yet, at one time, not many years back in the history of man; man got on very well without the man controlled use of electricity. “Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” Daniel 12:4.

We take modern transport. The car: The heavy lorries: Air travel: What are the advantages of these modern forms of transport? Man can get from A to B in a very short time, as can his freight also. Yet a little over 100 years ago man managed very well without these modern forms of transport.

Let us compare the above with the disadvantages. First, the above way of life has speeded up life to such an extent that the leisurely way of life has gone completely. Tranquillity is a thing of the past, and as for time for meditation upon the Word of God it gets less because of the speed of everyday living, we have reached the stage when man has to keep up with the machine and not as it should be: the machine keeping up with man. In addition to the foregoing, the internal combustion engine; is the major means of supplying power to transport of all the inventions of man it is the greatest polluter in our time, on a terrifying scale in the atmosphere. The fair country side being torn up to make room for those horrific and ugly motor-ways.

Can any of us who are looking forward to the Kingdom of God possibly visualize a perpetuation of these modern inventions into the Kingdom of God? In this day and age, vast sums of money are spent on man’s efforts to combat diseases, with all of his modern “Know how;” with all the modern hospitals; man is still scratching the surface in his fight against disease. When Jesus was on this earth he brought about very remarkable cures. He brought the dead to life. Some of the cures He brought about would, in this day and age, be classed as incurable. The apostles were able to restore life and bring about cures. The prophets of old were able to do likewise. It will be noted that these wonderful people did not have to go to a place of learning to be able to bring about these wonderful cures, and to bring the dead back to life. When Jesus returns to this earth, the need for the medical profession will be a thing of the past. There will be no need for hospitals, no need for dangerous operations, which are at the best, “touch and go”, because Jesus and His immortalised saints will be the healers in those days. At a touch, they will be able to bring about cures. Not only will Jesus and the immortalised be a safe-guard against diseases, but they will be a safeguard against all forms of man-made ugliness and filth, when, as the scriptures say through the prophet Isaiah in his 35th. Chapter: -

“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.”

Bro. A. Woodhouse.

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## And God Said

And God Said “Let there be light” and there was light.  
And God Said “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters and let it divide the waters from the waters”.  
And God Said “Let the waters be gathered together unto one place and let the dry land appear”.

And God Said “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed  
and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth”.

And God Said “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide  
the day from the night”,

And God Said “Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature  
that hath life, and fowl that they may fly above the earth in the open firmament of the  
heaven”.

And God blessed them saying:-  
“Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters of the seas, and let fowl multiply upon the  
earth”.

And God Said “Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his  
kind; cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth after his kind; and God saw that it  
was good

And God Said “Let us make man in our image after our likeness: and let them have dominion  
over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air and over the cattle and over all the  
earth and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”

And God Said “Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed which is  
upon the face of all the earth and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding  
seed, to you it shall be for meat”.

And God Saw everything that He had made and behold it was very good. I remember as a child singing the words of a hymn: “Flowers in the garden, Violets in the wood giving out their perfume, God is ever good,” “See the morning sunbeam, peeping thro’ the wood silently proclaiming God is ever good.”

The summer meadows filled with wild flowers, the singing of the birds in the trees, the scent and sound and movement of it all filled me with a sense of magic and wonder; and the need to thank somebody, somewhere, for all of this. That sense of wonder has never left me. It seems to me, that it is the first ingredient of faith, a sort of humility which recognises a greater power than we can understand. Something we are drawn to. What makes the scent of a rose or the taste of a peach? There is an inbuilt magic in every living thing that grows. Even a blade of grass has its pattern, its colour and its usefulness. The poet Blake wrote some very beautiful words, “Little lamb, who made thee? dost thou know who made thee?” and “Tiger, tiger, burning bright in the forest of the night. What immortal hand or eye could frame thy fearful symmetry?” And God gave to man this great heritage for his use and his delight. To replenish and subdue; to have dominion over all the earth, the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air and over everything that moveth upon the earth,

In Psalm 55 vs. 6-9 David wrote:-

“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth up the waters of the sea together as an heap. He layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him - for He spake and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast”.

Of all the great personalities of the Old Testament King David of Israel, showed his love and praise of God in more beautiful poetry than has ever been written in all the history of men.

Further in Psalm 104 David wrote: - “O Lord my God, thou art very great: thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Thou coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain... who maketh the clouds his chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind.” And in Psalm 8 “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained. What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”

David was well aware that God was mindful of man and had visited him in a very special way with words of instruction and commandment. No other living creature can read and understand the word of God given to man thro’ Moses and the prophets. Only mankind made in the image of God can do this.

“My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb Deut. 52:2. “Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard and live.” Deut. 4:55. “Is not my word like a fire? saith the Lord; and like hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces.” Jeremiah 25:29.

And from the sweet Psalmist of Israel, “The Rock of Israel spake to me he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God, and he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth -- even a morning without clouds as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain. In Psalm 119 v. 150 we read, “The entrance of thy word giveth light”. Tending his sheep by night the boy David would grow up watching many dawns of light over the dark fields; and would see the tender grass springing up, clear and shining after rain, As an Israelite, he would grow up under the influence of God’s word Thro’ Moses, and perceived that there was a parallel between the natural and spiritual world. Just as God had said ‘Let there be light and there was light, so the entrance of His word to mankind gave light to their understanding. A man could become a light in the world. The word of God was a rain upon a thirsty land, giving life and strength and clear shining. Thus the power through His Word was given to David and to all mankind who sought Him. The word of God is the seed which brings life and light and immortality.

David never saw Jesus or heard him speak: Never read the enlightening words of John in chapter 1. “In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God”. “And the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we “beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth.” Nevertheless he was able to write in vision of a king who would reign in righteousness. “Give the king thy judgements oh God and Thy righteousness unto the kings son. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth. “In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth”. Psalm 72 “Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, Who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen.”

Sis. L. White.

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## “Hold Fast”

“Hold fast.” On your courage and discipline much depends. You are asked to show unparalleled fortitude in face of this great menace. If you hold on, obeying the instructions you are given, then liberty will one day be yours again. But if you give way.

It is unusual to begin an exhortation with a quotation from the daily press, but the application of this particular extract must be apparent to us all. It is evident that the world is conscious of some things of which we, above all people, ought to be aware.

How vital a part to play in war is the ability to “hold fast.” How inevitable is the tendency of all human beings to yield, or to “crack” under pressure or strain! It is easier to let go than to hold on, to give up than to keep on. We tend to despair rather than to persist, and there is constant need for encouragement. A few years ago this country was urged in no uncertain terms to ‘go to it’, sometime afterwards, the country, having gone to it, was urged to ‘keep at it.’ Between these two expressions there is an important distinction. An eager and enthusiastic response to a challenge will cause men and women to leap to a task, but the quality of character which causes men and women to begin is not the same as that which enables them to finish. Enthusiasm may start us off, determination will keep us going. There is room for both enthusiasm and determination, but it is with the latter that we are more concerned at the moment. If nothing more is remembered of these few words than this, they will not have been in vain; having begun, it is imperative that we finish. The disciple of Christ must keep on, always, incessantly,

persistently. We must stay the entire course, there must be no dropping out by the way. You may feel at times weary, tired and dispirited, as we all do, but we must “press on.” He whom we love and serve, and for love of whom we speak at the moment, stands watching and He cheers us on. Our pace may vary, there may be times when we seem to make no progress at all, we may falter and even fall. But as long as we rise again, and press on, there is hope. These are His words of cheer; “He that endureth to the end, shall be saved,” “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” Note the phrases “to the end,” “unto death.” The nation at war is urged to hold on until victory. The Christian cannot attain unto victory until his course is run, until life is ended or Christ is back again. It may be the will of God that the end shall come violently, or maybe peacefully, through persecution, or through pain. However it may come the fact remains, the disciple is expected to be steadfast and immovable, to hold on until it does come.

J.B. From an old Circular Letter.

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