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"Preaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State"

WE SOUGHT HIM NOT AFTER THE DUE ORDER

I CHRONICLES 15:13

C. D. Cole

The scriptures we have before us contain principles of lasting importance, and lessons greatly needed to be learned and heeded today. And may we ponder them as in the presence of God, and in view of eternity. Christian activity is either to please God, or for the gratification of the flesh. All departures from the word of God begin in a desire to please self--myself or some other self, rather than God. Paul, in Colossians 2:23 talks about will-worship; that is, people exercising their own wills, doing what pleases them religiously, to the satisfying of the flesh. Yes, I mean to say that the flesh can find satisfaction in religious forms as well as in the coarser things of life. Feelingly and earnestly do I say it--will-worship is the curse of Christendom. It has led away from God, and therefore from happiness and power. Will-worship has led into the wilderness of confusion and strife and bickerings by rejecting or ignoring God's word as the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice. Will-worship has substituted human expedients for the

scriptures which are able to thoroughly furnish unto every good work. And, O how degenerate is our religion when it is made to serve the lusts of the flesh--to please self rather than God. All religious service is worse than wasted if God is not pleased. "Enthusiasm and earnestness should be entwined." Some of old have said, "The great point is love to Him and we must not be occupied with the letter of details lest we cramp love." But, my friends, this is an unscriptural distinction, for has not Christ said, "If ye love me keep my commandments." It is so important to keep to His plan in everything, and to have a simplicity that hears His word above all else.

The surface lesson of the passage before us is that a right thing may be done in a wrong way. I recount the two attempts of David to get the ark to Jerusalem, after he had become king of Israel. Some of you will recall that during the days of the judges, while Eli judged Israel, the Philistines were victorious over Israel and captured from them the ark of

the covenant. At the same time, Hophni and Phinehas, sons of Eli, were slain in battle. At the news of the capture of the ark, and not the death of his sons, Eli fell from his seat backwards and broke his neck. (I Samuel 4:18) About the same time, a child was born of the wife of Phinehas, and when the mother heard of the capture of the ark, she named the child "Ichabod," which means, the glory is departed from Israel. Now the ark proved to be a curse to the Philistines, and after moving it from one city to another with unfortunate results, they sent it back home on a new cart drawn by two cows. The ark first came to Bethshemesh, in the tribe of Judah, and then to Kirjathjearim. During all the years of the reign of Saul, the ark rested in the house of Abinidab, but after David became king, he sought to get the ark back to Jerusalem. In the thirteenth chapter of I Chronicles, we have the record of the fatal and unsuccessful attempt, and in the fifteenth chapter, we have the account of a second and successful effort.

Let us first notice some things in connection with this first attempt:

I. There was much unity. I Chronicles 13:4 says, "And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people." Much counsel was taken and many conferences held. And everybody was of the same opinion. And you know, we are told that in union, there is strength.

II. There was apparent success, and everything looked favorable to a glorious climax. But, suddenly we remember that they carried the ark on a new cart. But, the average church member would say, "Well, what is wrong with that? They are trying to get the ark to Jerusalem and surely everybody ought to help." Do we not hear it today till our hearts get sick, "Why, we are trying to get souls saved, and surely everybody, even the devil, ought to help." And so new words are coined to express and emphasize the importance of cooperation.

III. There was much enthusiasm. Verse eight of the same chapter says, "And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets." Surely such enthusiasm is of God and augurs well. Look how religious the people are. See the triumphant procession, look how smoothly the cart runs. Surely the ark will soon be in Jerusalem. What a gala day in Israel! What show would any man have had in making protest against what was being done? He would have been smothered with the cries of "fool" and "slacker." He would have been branded as an enemy of God and man.

Hooray! Hooray! the ark is on its way;
Come see the end of a perfect day!
"Onward Christian soldiers!
Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before.
Like a mighty army moves the church of God;
Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod;
We are not divided; all one body we."

What was the outcome of this first attempt? Read verses nine and ten. Did you say Uzzah was dead; the man who was driving the cart? You do not mean to tell me it was all a failure? You do not mean to tell me that such enthusiasm and unity went for naught? You do not mean to tell me that the old saying, "that in unity, there is strength" has proven untrue? Yes, my friends, the whole affair was a dismal failure, and the whole thing was a terrible sin before God. Verses 9-12 say, "And when they came unto the threshing-floor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God. And David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called Perez-uzza to this day. And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?" What was the trouble? Just one thing. They were disobeying God's word. They were not seeking him after the due order. They were doing the right thing in the wrong way—they were disobedient, and God showed His displeasure by striking Uzzah dead, and throwing the whole procession into a panic and confusion.

They had implicit instructions about how to move the ark, but they thought the way of the Philistines was better than God's way.

In Numbers 4, God's word was plain. The ark was to be carried on the shoulders of the Levites, and no eyes were to look upon it, and no hands were to touch it. And, if God dealt with His people today like he did in those days and in the days of the apostles, there would be lots of dead cart drivers. And, in many a church, there would be panic and confusion and fear, where there is now enthusiasm and unity coupled with a spirit of disobedience to His word. And let us not vainly imagine that because God does not show His displeasure immediately, that He will never show it.

Now that our message may be practical, and that we may get a word in due season, let us inquire as to whether we have any new carts among today. Let our hearts be exercised before the Lord as to whether we are trying to do the right thing in the wrong way. Let us bring the matter to our church doors. We shall not bring out on parade all the new carts in our possession, lest you might not get a good view of any one of them.

We will examine only one of them today. This cart is named B.Y.P.U. I speak lovingly, and not to offend. But, I must speak truthfully. I must warn of the danger of displeasing Him, with whom we have to do. It is a human substitute for the divine plan. You ask where is the divine plan. Here it is: Ephesians 4:7-14, "...For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son

of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: ..." The B.Y.P.U. is being run in violation of I Corinthians 14:34-38 and I Timothy 2:11-15. I Timothy says, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence..." I do not blame our young people. Little blame attaches to them as compared with the blame that would rest upon me if I did not warn, and point you to God's way. Our denominational leaders are to be blamed for their plot against God and His word by bringing in this new cart.

But, some say, has not the B.Y.P.U. done great things for God and His church? Has not women's ministry been a success? Have not multitudes been won to Christ through the public preaching of women? Has not God blessed these things you condemn? I answer with I Corinthians 4:5, "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."

When we adopt this principle of reasoning, we are on the edge of a precipice. Myriads today encourage a departure from God's word with such reasoning. It must be remembered that God does not manifest His displeasure publicly today against the departures from His word. But He will. Study Numbers 20.



DON'T BE DEPRESSED

1. The Christian has a Father in Heaven who loves him, cares for him and has blessed him with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Jn. 16:27; Lk. 12:22-28; Eph. 1:3).
2. He has a Great High Priest in heaven to sympathize with him, succour and support him and to conduct him into heavenly things (Heb. 2:17 18; 4:14-16; 8:1-6).
3. He has a Great and Good Shepherd to lead him and to feed him all the way home (Ps. 23; Heb. 13:20-21).
4. He has an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous, who pleads his cause and always prevails (1 Jn. 1:8-10; 2:1).
5. He has a Divine Counsellor to go to for advice at all times (Isa. 9:6; Micah 4:9).
6. He has an Abiding Comforter (the Holy Spirit) to guide him into all truth, to teach him all things and to talk of the things of Christ and show them unto him (Jn. 14:16-17; 16:13-14).
7. He has a Throne of Grace to go to where he can obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Heb. 4:16).
8. He has the Holy Scriptures to search and study, which testify of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow (1 Pet. 1:11).
9. Angels minister unto him, being an heir of salvation (Heb. 1:14).
10. He is an heir to an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven, and is kept by the power of God until he comes into possession (1 Pet. 1:3-5).
11. He has the interest of Christ to engage him until the return of his Lord (Eph. 6:18-19; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; 1 Tim. 2:1-6).
12. He has before him the bright and blessed hope of the Lord's appearing in glory when all His saints will appear with Him and be like Him and reign with Him for ever and ever (Titus 2:13-14).

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Abortion

The diary of an unborn child:

October 5—Today my life began. My parents do not know it yet. I am as small as a seed of an apple, but it is I already. And I am to be a girl. I shall have blond hair and azure eyes. Just about everything is settled through, even the fact that I shall love flowers.

October 19—Some say that I am not a real person yet, that only my mother exists. But I am a real person, just as a small crumb of wheat is yet truly bread. My Mother is, And I am.

October 23—My mouth is just beginning to open now. Just think, in a year or so I shall be laughing and later talking. I know that my first word shall be Mama.

October 25—My heart began to beat today all by itself. From now on it shall gently beat for the rest of my life without ever stopping to rest! And after many years it will fire. It will stop, and I shall die.

November 2—I am growing a bit every day. My arms and legs are beginning to take shape. But I have to wait a long time yet before those little legs will raise me to my mother's arms, before those little arms will be able to gather flowers and embrace my father.

November 12—Tiny fingers are beginning to form on my hands. Funny how small they are! I shall be able to stroke my mother's hair to my mouth and she will probably say, "Oh, no, no, dear . . ."

November 20—It wasn't until today that the doctor told Mom that I am living here under her heart. Oh, how happy she must be! Are you happy, Mom?

November 25—My Mom and Dad are probably thinking about a name for me. But they don't know that I am a girl. They are probably saying Andy. But I want to be called Cathy. I am getting so big already.

December 24 — I wonder if Mom hears the whispering of my heart. Some children come into the world a little sick. And the delicate hands of the doctor perform miracles to bring them to health. But my heart is strong and healthy. It beats so evenly—tup-tup-tup. You'll have a healthy little daughter, Mom!

December 28—Today my mother killed me.

(The above is an imaginary diary of a child in the mother's womb up until the day the mother murders it.)

