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I BELONG BY: C. D. COLE

NOTE: This message was written right after World War II: it is pertinent to Christians today, just as it was then.

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in

rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof," Romans 13.

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven," Colossians 3:12-4:1.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen," Ephesians 3:20-21.

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's," I Corinthians 6:19-20.

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Luke 6:46.

INTRODUCTION: *"Be there a man with soul so dead, who never to himself hath said, This is my own, my native land?"*

There can be no argument, the fact is too obvious to need argument, that the form of government given to this country in the providence of God is the best ever to be enjoyed by any people. If this were not true there would not have been such an influx of people from all parts of the world, people who come here to seek peace and plenty under the protection of our flag.

Under our form of government there has grown up what is called the capitalistic system. Under this system thrift and hard work have been rewarded so that the poorest boy may and has reached the top in business and politics. Under this system the miner has saved his meager earnings to become an operator and owner of one or more mines.

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And he challenged the world to find the name of one Christian martyr who did not believe in election. Others have challenged the world to find a single Higher critic, or a single Spiritualist, or a single evolutionist, or a single Russellite, or a single Christian Scientist, who believes in the absolute sovereignty of God and doctrine of election. Without an exception these awful heretics are Armenians to a man. This is a significant fact.

5. It is unreasonable. This is not denied, but gladly admitted. This attests it as a Divine truth. Any religion that is according to human reason is not a saving religion.

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Many of our big industrialists have come up by hard work and thrift to the very pinnacle of industrial power and prestige. Under this system the bank teller becomes the bank president. Under this system the store clerk becomes the store manager. Under this system the section hand becomes the railroad's president. Under our system the basic law is the constitution, perhaps the greatest man made piece of work ever produced. Humanly speaking the constitution is the rock of our republic. All subsequent legislation must square with the constitution. But the constitution can and may be smashed. It can be torn to shreds by the majority of our people or by minority groups under wrong leadership. I am no prophet and make no predictions. I am satisfied to live under the constitution and give honor and respect to the stars and stripes.

We have come upon an hour that none of us thought we would live to see. Our very constitution is staggering under heavy blows. We are threatened with famine in the land of plenty. Freedom is gasping for breath in the vaunted land of the free and home of the brave. Millions of men are idle in the face of the demand for production. Transportation is at a virtual standstill in a land where transportation lines crisscross the country like a wire fence. We have just concluded a war to give freedom to people of other lands, and now face slavery at home. We are still shooting German and Japan war criminals for inhuman atrocities against our soldiers and see worse atrocities at home. For industrial reconversion we are having industrial paralysis. For social good will we are having hatred and strife. For religion we

are having paganism. America has forgotten God's word and forsaken His day. We have reached new lows in every realm. The escalator of progress has gone into reverse. Something has dimmed the stars in our sky and has drowned out the voice of the angels.

We need a revival of rescue. We need a mass movement for righteousness. We need to rescue our constitution from the red hands of anarchists. We need to crusade for law and order. We need to rescue men from fear in their pursuit of peace and happiness.

I am tremendously interested in the present welfare of our country. I have emotions in this present crisis that cry for utterance. I want to be a good citizen of my country. "Be there a man with soul so dead, etc."

But I have a greater interest than these present things. I have an interest in things eternal. I tremble at the threat to human peace and happiness and freedom, but I shudder at the danger men are in before God. I hate to see human wrath poured out but I dread the very thought of divine wrath in the day of judgment. I hate to see women and children suffer for lack of bread, but it is a worse sight to see men and women writhe in the regions of the damned. I hate to see men strike out against government but it is worse to see men and women strike out against God. I hate to see men defy the powers that be, but it is worse to see men and women defy the laws of God.

The condition of this country reminds me of the man who had two wives, one of them young, the other an old woman. One pulled out all his gray hairs, the other pulled out all the black ones, until the poor fellow was bald.

"I belong to the church," is the profession of many. But the conduct of many believes their profession "I belong," carries with it certain implications. If I belong to the church then the church has certain claims upon me and if I ignore those claims I repudiate my profession. In other words, I am a hypocrite. You belong to your wife. She has claims upon you that no other woman has, and she can enforce those claims. You belong to your country and your country has claims upon you that no other country has. Your country can take you from your home and business and make you hazard your life; even forfeit it, for its defense.

We have marital infidelity because men do not belong to their wives and vice

versa. We have anarchy because men do not belong to their country. We have children turning the black hairs of their parents into gray because they do not belong to the parents. We have feeble churches because men and women who are its members do not belong to it. It has been claimed that the biggest lie ever told was told by men and women who said, "We belong to the church." You may have a thousand names on the church roll and have only a handful who belong. I sometimes wonder if we really have anybody who belongs to our church.

If we belong to the church we will gladly make our contribution to its material and spiritual welfare. If we belong to the church it will have our money, our time and our talents. If we belong to the church we will attend its meetings, we will love its members and its Lord.

There is no institution in the world slighted and neglected and opposed as is the church. Men will slight prayer meetings for pleasure; they will slight preaching services for fleshly lusts; they will neglect the word for the world. Some will work everywhere but in the church.

The church is the only permanent institution. One of these days all these things men love so much and give their time to, will fold up, but the church will remain and be caught up. The only lasting relationship is with our brethren and sisters in Christ. No capital and labor groups in heaven, no brotherhood for promotion of selfish interests.

Sin is selfishness gone to seed. To be selfish is to put self first, self before God and men. It is to be led by our desires. *"Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."*

Sin is folly. Every sin is a mistake. Every sin is committed for personal profit, but no sin profits. Eve thought she was acting for her personal good when she took the forbidden fruit but she soon discovered her mistake. The murderer seeks the profit of a satisfied feeling when he kills his fellowman, but he soon discovers he did not get the profit he expected.

The church member makes a mistake when he makes himself believe he cannot afford to support the church with his time and money. Saints are those who have had the back of selfishness broken. But many of them live on with broken backs; in reality not one of the ever die to selfishness--there is room for improvement.

SOME MISREPRESENTATION OF OUR VIEWS DENIED

BY: C.D. COLE

It seems impossible for the opposers of election, like the opposers of the security of the saints, to properly represent our views. Some honestly misrepresent them, while others do so wilfully and maliciously.

1. That those who preach election, preach that men were saved before the foundation of the world.

2. That God makes some to damn them. God makes men neither to damn them nor to save them, but for His own glory. *"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created,"* Revelation 4:11. *"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen,"* Romans 11:36. *"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him,"* Colossians 1:16.

3. That it is a new doctrine among missionary Baptists. The ignorance betrayed in this statement is pitiable. To cite several: London Confession (1689); Philadelphia (1742); New Hampshire; Waldensian (1120); Anabaptists (Reformation period); Bunyan, Andrew Fuller, Boyce, Broadus, Carroll, Graves, Jarrell, etc., all the Baptist Theologies: Boyce, Strong, Mullens, Conner.

4. That it prevents the salvation of people who want to be saved. According to this misrepresentation, God has spread the gospel feast, and a man comes to the table hungering for the bread of life, but God says, "No, this is not for you; you are not one of my elect." This is a false representation of God's truth. Now then, here is the truth: God has spread the feast but the fact is nobody is hungry, and nobody wants to come to the feast. They all with one consent began to make excuse. God knew just how fallen human nature would act, and He took no chances for His table being empty. So, He tells His servant to go out and compel them to come in. Were it not for the death of Christ, there would be no gospel feast; were it not for the Holy Spirit there would be no guests at the table. A mere invitation brings nobody to the table.

FOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

1. What is election? It is the choice of persons to salvation. *"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,"* II Thessalonians 2:13.

2. Who does the electing? *"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you,"* John 15:16; II Thessalonians 2:13; *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love,"* Ephesians 1:4.

3. When was the choosing done? Ephesians 1:4; II Thessalonians 2:13; *"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,"* II Timothy 1:9.

4. Why was the choice made? Was it on the ground of something good in the sinner? Then nobody would be elected for there is none good, no not one. Was it on the ground of something bad in the sinner? Then all would be saved and there would be no choice at all. The ground of election was the pleasure of God. *"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,"* Ephesians 1:5.

SOME OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED AND ANSWERED

1. It makes God unjust. Surely, this objection is made without thinking. Salvation is not a matter of justice but of mercy. It was not justice in God that caused Him to provide salvation, but mercy. Justice is simply each man getting what he deserves. *"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"* Romans 9:20,21.

2. It destroys the doctrine of "Whosoever will." Not so. It explains and supports the "Whosoever will" doctrine.

Without election there would be no "Whosoever wills;" everybody would be "Whosoever Wants." The human will is free, but its freedom is within the limits of fallen human nature. It is free like water. Water is free to run down hill. It is free like the vulture. The vulture is free to eat carrion, but it would starve to death in a wheat field. It is not its nature to eat clean food. Here is a physical corpse. Is it free to get up and walk around? In one sense, yes. It is not bound by fetters. There is no external restraint. But in another sense, that corpse is not free. It is not the nature of death to stir about. Here is a spiritual corpse. Is it free to repent and believe and do good works? Yes, in one sense. There are no external restraints. God does not prevent, but offers inducements. But the corpse is hindered by its own nature.

Council of Trent (1563): "If anyone shall affirm that since the fall of Adam, man's free will is lost, let him be accursed." But, alas, in this day, such a spirit is not confined to Roman Catholics.

3. It is incompatible with a missionary spirit. It produces "hardshells." This word "hardshell" is a word to be conjured with. It is employed for prejudice. Those who are practical antimissionaries employ it to the injury of men who are missionaries. Facts that cannot be controverted stubbornly deny the charge that election and predestination antagonize the missionary program of Christ. Those who hold these doctrines have been and are now the greatest missionaries: Andrew Fuller, Spurgeon, Boyce Taylor, etc.

4. It is conducive to loose living. And again the facts proclaim in thunderous tones, "Not so." Some of the godliest men who have ever lived were believers in election and predestination. John Gill, one of the greatest brains Baptists have ever had, was noted for his godly character. The Puritan age of Christianity is known as the purest age of the church since apostolic times. And every one of the Puritans, with scarcely an exception, were believers in election. Nearly 200 years ago, Toplady issued this twofold challenge which was never accepted in his day nor since. He challenged the whole Christian world to find one person who ever really held the sovereignty of God, who had gone over to Roman Catholicism.