

Chapter XXV

A. D. 1860 - 1862

Influence of the War Upon the Church

State of the church at the beginning of the war; opinions of the pastor on political subject; sentiments of the church regarding Southern rights; sermon of the pastor on Fast Day; his sermon on The Duty of Christians with regard to Peace; patriotism of the young men of the church; review of the year.

The First Baptist Church in Nashville never was in a condition more prosperous than at the beginning of the present war. It had safely passed the rocks and shoals, that had so lately imperilled its voyage; Its harmony was unbroken; all its enterprises were flourishing; its finances were ample, and arranged with promptness, and skill; its congregations were full, and its brotherlove was cordial and universal. The blessing (pastor. (Political doctrines of the) of God was rich upon it in all respects. But the sullen storm cloud of war hung threateningly in its horizon. Hopes had been entertained that it would pass away. These hopes were nearly extinguished. In that direction all eyes were now anxiously turned.

The pastor, although leading politicians, on all sides of nearly every national controversy, had always been members of his church, both here and in Virginia, had never at any period of his life mingled in political contests. Sensational sermons on any subject, he never preached. He never attended political meetings of any kind; he seldom voted at elections; and he rarely

ever expressed his views on such subjects, even in private conversation. He nevertheless had his opinions regarding them. These opinions were the results of much reading and investigation; were very decided; and held by him with the firmest tenacity. In their leading features his political doctrines were those of "The States' Rights School." He believed that in these doctrines only, practically developed in the government of our country, the union of the states, and the liberties of the people, were safe. Of the correctness of these conclusions, the Civil War now so furiously progressing, in its inception, cause, and in the meaning in which it is waged, and objects, has served but the more thoroughly to convince him. If as was declared by our fathers and conceded by all "Free" Government necessarily rests upon the consent of the governed," it must follow that "coercion" in whatever form, will necessarily end in the destruction of freedom.

It has been said by those who professed to know personally the facts in the case, that Jefferson derived his ideas of the Confederation of the American States, from the form of Baptist Church Government which he saw prevailing around him in Virginia. Whether this be true or not, there is unquestionably a great similarity between the principles which characterize the Union of the States in the Federal Government, as understood by States' Rights were, and those of the Union of the Churches in a Baptist Association. The statement of a few points of resemblance will make this fact apparent to the most ordinary mind.

1. Each church is originally a separate and independent body, over which no earthly power outside of itself, has any right of control whatever. Precisely such is each state. And in this character were the states recognized by England, when they acknowledged their independence.

2. The churches unite voluntarily with an association for their mutual advantage, that they may work together the more effectually, for the advancement of the great cause entrusted to their care by our Lord Jesus Christ. The states unite together voluntarily, in a Confederacy, for their mutual advantage, and the more effectually to maintain their liberty, happiness, and prosperity.

3. In the compact of Union, the churches grant to the association specified rights only; and all rights not expressly granted, are retained within the churches. This is also true of the states with regard to the General Government. They retain within themselves all the right not expressly granted.

4. The bond of union in the association, is the confidence and love of the churches towards each other and toward the association. When these are destroyed no matter by what means, the union is destroyed, and to compel them still to remain together is in every sense a calamity. The bond of union in the Federal Government, is the confidence, and love of the States towards each other, and towards the Federal Government. When these are destroyed the union is destroyed, and if afterwards it is compelled, it is a calamity and not a blessing.

5. The association is clothed with no coercion powers to compel a continuance of the churches with it, without their consent. The exercise of any such powers is beyond the circle of its rights. The Federal Government occupies this relation precisely towards the states. Compulsory laws, and coercive acts towards states to bind them together by force, when the spirit of union and of fellowship exists no more, are beyond the legitimate authority of the Federal Government.

6. When any church becomes satisfied that the objects for which it united with the association have failed, or that union with that body is production of injury, it has an undoubted right to withdraw from that body, and resume its original separate and independent position. A state in like manner, when convinced that the benefits sought by union with the Confederation are not attained, or that injury rather than advantage arises from the relations, has a clear right to withdraw from that Confederation, and take its original separate and independent position. And since, as has been said, "all just government is derived from the consent of the governed," it has a right peaceably to withdraw. A union forced and perpetuated by power is slavery, not freedom.

7. Should a church wish to withdraw from an association it does so exercising an admitted right; and should a state withdraw from the Federal Union it does so exercising also an admitted right; soon perhaps, both the one and the other, will become satisfied and return to the Union; but

whether they do or not, while these principles are practically maintained, civil war never can take place; and the rights and liberties of all parties necessarily remain inviolate. If however, compulsory measures are adopted to enforce a repudiated union, either in the Association or in the Federal Government, or agitations, collisions, and hostile conflict are inevitable.

These principles have been admitted and acted upon, in the United States, from the beginning and up to the present time have produced no discord. This fact is fully sustained by references to the history of our country. In his Message to Congress of the 12th of January 1863, the President of the Confederate States speaks as follows:

"Four of the states now members of the Confederacy, were recognized by name, as Independent Sovereignties, in a treaty of peace, concluded in the year 1783, with one of the two great maritime Powers of Western Europe and had been prior to that period, allies in war with the other. In the year 1778, they formed a Union with nine other states, under Articles of Confederation. Dissatisfied with that Union three of them, to - Virginia, Carolina, and Georgia, together with eight of the states, now members of the United States, seceded from it in 1789, and these eleven seceding states formed a second Union, although by the terms of the Articles of Confederation express provisions was made that the first Union should be perpetuated. Their right to secede, notwithstanding this provision, was never contested by the States from which they separated, nor made

the subject of discussion by any third power. When at a later period North Carolina acceded to that second Union and when still later the other seven states, now members of this Confederacy, became also members of the same Union, it was upon the recognized footing of equal and independent Sovereignties; nor had it then entered into the minds of men that Sovereign States could be compelled by force to remain members of a Confederation into which they had entered of their own free will, if at a subsequent period, the defence of this safety and honor should in their judgment justify a withdrawal. The experience of the past had evinced the futility of any renunciation of such inherent rights, and accordingly the provision for perpetuity contained in The Articles of Confederation of 1778, were omitted in the Constitution of 1789. When, therefore, in 1861, eleven of the States again thought proper, for reasons satisfactory to themselves, to secede from the second Union, and to form a third one, under an amended constitution, they exercised a right which being inherent, required no justification to foreign nations, and which International Law did not permit them to question."

In our Associations in this quarter, these sacred principles were three or four years ago, flagrantly infringed. Tumult, collision, and the sundering of all Union, instantly resulted. The association was destroyed, and the churches returned to their original separate independence. By the Federal Government, all these principles, within the last three years, have also been deliberately and persistently violated and the consequencys

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are the bloody civil war which is now desolating our whole land.

Guided by these facts and principles, the pastor of the church, considered his political allegiance due first to his own state, and afterwards to the General Government with which his state was connected, Federal or Confederate, and if it was connected with neither, then he regarded himself as owing allegiance to no General Government whatever. He was therefore, a secessionist from principle, maintaining the right of the states who thought proper to do so, peaceably and at will, to secede from the United States Government and from a General Government of their own. His feelings ~~were~~ in unison with his sentiments. A native of the South, having always lived and labored in the South, it was natural that he should sympathize with the South most fully. When by a sovereign act of the people at the ballot box the State of Tennessee seceded from the government of the United States on the 8th day of June 1861, though he took no part in the proceeding, he warmly approved the measure and went with his state, heartily into the Confederate Government. So unanimous was his church at the time, that it was not known to him that a single member seriously dissented from his views and feelings on the subject. Almost all its young men entered enthusiastically the Confederate Army. The church and congregation together supplies more than a hundred soldiers. It was at once deprived, however, of speaking of the bone and sinews of its strength. Old men, women and youths alone remained at home. The active laborers in the church, the Sunday school, and the

various departments of Christian benevolence were hurried to the camps and into the field of combat, then to battle for our rights. The Southern Baptist Convention, of which he was a member and one of the Vice Presidents held its biennial meeting, in May of 1861, in the city of Savannah, Georgia, and unanimously adopted a report and resolutions on "The State of the Country." Among the resolutions were the following:

1. Resolved, That impartial history cannot charge upon the South the dissolution of the Union. She was foremost in advocating and cementing the Union. To that Union she clung through long years of calumny, injury and insult. She never ceased to raise her warning appeals against the fanaticism which has obstinately and incessantly warred against the Union.

2. Resolved, That we most cordially approve of the formation of the Government of the Confederate States of America, and admire and applaud the noble course of that government up to this present time.

3. Resolved, That we will assiduously invoke the divine direction and favor in behalf of those who rule among us; that they may still exercise the same wise, prompt, elevated statesmanship which has hitherto characterized their measures; that their enterprise may be attended with success; and that they may attain a great reward, not only in seeing these Confederate States prosper under their administration, but in contributing to the progress of the transcendent kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. Resolved, That we cordially tender to the President of the Confederate States, to his Cabinet, and the members of Congress

now convened at Montgomery, the assurances of our sympathy and entire confidence. With them are our hearts and our hearty cooperation.

5. Resolved, That the lawless reign of terror at the North, the violence committed on unoffending citizens; above all, the threats to wage upon the South, a warfare of savage barbarity to devastate our homes and hearths, with hosts of ruffians and felons burning with lust and rapine, ought to excite the honor of all civilized people. God forbid that we should so far forget the spirit of Jesus as to suffer malice and vindictiveness to insinuate themselves into our hearts; but every principle of humanity, of patriotism, and of religion, calls upon us to pledge our fortunes and our lives in the good work of repelling an invasion designed to destroy whatever is dear in our heroic traditions; whatever is sweet in our domestic hopes, and enjoyments; whatever is essential to our institutions and our very manhood; whatever is worth living, or dying for.

6. Resolved, That we will now engage in prayer (and that we will pray daily) for our friends, brothers, fathers, sons, and citizen soldiers who have left their homes to go forth for the defence of their families and friends and all that is dearest to the human heart; and we commend to the churches represented in this body, that they constantly invoke a holy and merciful God to cover their heads in the day of battle and to give victory to their arms.

7. Resolved, That we recommend to the churches of the Baptist denomination in the Southern States to observe the first and

second days of June as days of humiliation, fasting and prayers to Almighty God, that he will avert any calamities due to our sins as a people, and may look with mercy and favor upon us."

Of the committee that reported these and the other resolutions, Dr. Howell was a prominent and active member. The days recommended as days of fasting, humiliation and prayer, were observed by the church and congregation, with unusual unanimity and devotion. If the sermon preached by the pastor on that occasion and which was reported for the daily papers of the city, we present the following extracts:

"God is the supreme rule of the universe. Omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent; he governs with absolute sway, all the events of time. The arch angel that wheels his flight in heaven, attracts his attention no more than does the insect that flutters in the morning sunbeam. His care is given equally to the solitary wanderer, poor, forsaken, and miserable, and to the march of armies, the fury of the battle, and the revolutions of empires. He feeds the young ravens when they cry. He clothes the lily in its beauty. He marks the sparrow upon the housetop. This is the being who affectionately says to you: "In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy steps." This is the purpose especially of our meeting today, the day designated and recommended by our brethren of the Southern Baptist Convention recently assembled in the city of Savannah, in the State of Georgia, to be observed as a day of humiliation,
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fasting and prayer. Never is human strength ~~so~~ weak as when it

(Fast day
(sermon of
(the pastor.

ceases to lean upon God; and human weakness guided and directed by Him, is clothed at once with resistless power. Truly indeed, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

In the present crisis of our national affairs, we have infinite reasons to approach God with humiliation, fasting, and prayer; the form and spirit in which such services are to be conducted are abundantly set forth in the divine word; and promises, numerous and rich encourage the assurance that coming before Him with sincere and contrite hearts, God for Christ's sake will look with favor and mercy upon us, will hear our prayers, pardon our sins and avert any calamities due to us as a people. We have therefore sanctified (set apart) this fast; we have called this solemn assembly; we have gathered the elders and the inhabitants of the land into the House of the Lord your God, and humbly, penitently, submissively we cry unto the Lord your God. Alas, for the day! A day of fearfulness and wrath, a day of anxiety and alarm; a day surcharged with the destinies of men and of nations.

1. In the present crisis of our national affairs, we have infinite reasons to approach our God with humiliation, fasting, and prayer.

These reasons are sufficiently set forth in the Report on the State of our Country, adopted unanimously by the Convention on the 13th of last month, and published in most of our newspapers. To the statements thus made, I shall on this part of

the subject, mainly confine myself. That Convention embraces fifteen states, all but three of which, Missouri, Delaware, and Arkansas had delegates present, and numbers a constituency of six or eight hundred thousand communicants.

The preamble to the report in question affirms as follows:

"Governments are established for the security, propriety and happiness of the people. When therefore any government is perverted from its proper design, becomes oppressive, and abuses its power, the people have a right to change it. As to the states once combined upon this Continent, it is now manifest that they can no longer live together as one Confederacy.

The Union constituted by our forefathers was one of ~~united~~ ^{co-equal} States. The fanatical spirit of the North has long been seeking to deprive us of rights and franchises guaranteed by the Constitution and after years of persistent aggression, they have at last accomplished their purpose.

In vindication of their sacred right and honor, in self defence, and for the protection of all which is dear to man, the Southern States have practically asserted the right of seceding from a Union so degenerated from that established by the Constitution and they have formed for themselves a government based upon the principles of the original contract, adopting a charter which secures to each State its sovereign rights and privileges.

This new government is thus dissolving former political connections, seeks to cultivate relations of amity and good will, with its late confederates, and with all the world; and they

have thrice sent commissioners to Washington with overtures for peace, and for a fair amicable adjustment of all difficulties. The government at Washington has insultingly repelled these reasonable proposals and now insists upon devastating our land with fire and sword; upon letting loose herdes of armed soldiers to pillage and desolate the entire South; for the purpose of forcing the seceded States back into unnatural union; or, of subjugating them and holding them as conquered provinces.

While the two sections of the land are thus arrayed against each other, it might naturally have been hoped that at least the churches of the North would interpose and protest against this appeal to the sword; this invoking of civil war, this delfratricidal ~~fratricide~~ ^{fratricidal} ~~blood~~ ^{blood}. But, with astonishment and grief we find churches and pastors of the North, breathing out slaughter and clamoring for sanguinary hostilities, with furiousness we would have supposed impossible among the disciples of the Prince of Peace.

In view of such premises, this Convention cannot keep silence. Recognizing the necessity that the whole moral influence of the people, in whatever capacity or organization, should be enlisted in aid of the rulers, who by their suffrages, have been called to defend the endangered interests of person, and property, of honor, and liberty, it is bound to utter its own voice distinctly, decidedly and emphatically."

This is the language of the preamble and show the relation position of the two sections of the former United States. In its first resolution the Convention affirm "Impartial history

cannot charge upon the South the dissolution of the Union." That "the South was foremost in advocating and cementing that Union;" that "to that Union the South clung through long years of calumny, injury, and insult;" that "she never ceased to raise her warning appeals against the fanaticism which has obstinately and incessantly moved against that Union;" and that "now that Union is severed forever."

Through these and similar means, despite all our efforts to avoid it, we find ourselves today in the midst of a most unnatural and revolting war. Not on our part a war of aggression, but strictly a war of self-defence. We have asked nothing, we have sought nothing, but the preservation of our honor, and our rights. These we can never abandon. These we must defend. The North against which we are called to contend leaves us no alternative. It forces us either to submit unconditionally to its will and pleasure, or to oppose force to force. We have chosen the latter in preference to the former. And what seems to be the character thus far of the conflicts? They are waging against us a warfare ~~and~~ not marked by the civilization of our age, but of savage barbarity. They threaten our homes, our wives and children, all that we hold dear upon the earth with dishonor, desolation, and destruction, and to this end they are throwing their soldiers among us, in ~~our~~ border states, with the declaration that they mean to overawe and destroy our whole land! God forbid, deeply as our honor is excited by these manifestations that

we should so far forget the spirit of Jesus as to suffer malice and vindictiveness to insinuate themselves into our hearts. But every principle of religion, of patriotism, of humanity, calls upon us to pledge our lives and our fortunes to the good work of repelling an invasion designed to destroy whatever is dear in our basic traditions; whatever is essential to our institutions and our very manhood." For this purpose, and to this end, our fathers, and husbands, and brothers, and sons have taken the field. Of these the seats heretofore of more than sixty are vacant. They are prepared to peril their lives and all they possess for your safety. Nor in these respects is this church and congregation singular. Others throughout the whole South have manifested a like dear ones patriotism. These ~~desires~~ so precious to us all, we have commended, and daily commend to the holy keeping of our God. But we feel, and the Southern Baptist Convention felt, that this is not enough. The eighth resolution of their report, proposes as follows:

"We do recommend to the churches of the Baptist denomination in the Southern States to observe the first and second days of June as days of humiliation, fasting, and prayer to the Almighty God, that he may avert any calamities due to our sins as a people, and may look with favor and mercy upon us.

As one of the multitude of Baptist churches in the Southern States and identified from its origin with this Convention, we are today in the House of the Lord, and with the elders and inhabitants of the land, gathered in this solemn assembly, we

lift up our voice unto the Lord our God, and cry - Alas
for the day! Alas, for the day!

These are some of our reasons for the peculiar ser-
vices in which we are now engaged.

1. The form and spirit in which these services are to be conducted, are abundantly set forth in the word of God. We afflict our bodies by fasting, and our souls by humiliation and we call upon God in prayer to protect us from injuries and to bestow upon us his blessings. The appointment for this purpose of public service in the House of God to be observed on specified days is scriptural; it is of im-memorable usage; and as it seems to me, is peculiarly ap-propriate in the midst of calamities like those which are now upon us. Indeed, such solemn devotion so obviously is it dictated by nature itself, and all the principles of human reason, has been common to almost all ages and nations. Everywhere in ancient times, it was constantly associated with all sacrificial offerings to God. This as to the ancient Phoenicians, Assyrians, and Babylonians and other nations, is well known to all who read history. It is affirmed that im-mediately preceding their states sacrifices the Egyptians fasted several days. The Greeks who as you are aware derived their origin and their institutions from Egypt, observed the same solemnity in a similar manner. At Rome it was observed by emperors, kings, and people with great ~~peculiar~~ particularity. Numa Pomplilius, Julius Ceaser, Augsts, and many others had their regular periods for this service and never intermitted it on any account. Of Julian especially it is said that he was more

exact in his facts than the most ascetic of his priests. The scrupulous attention given by modern pagans to services of this character cannot have escaped your observation.

Sacrifices, I may remark were instituted by God himself immediately after the fall of our first parents. They were appointed in connection with the promise of a Deliverer from sin, who should save his people by suffering. The design was to manifest the character and work and perpetuate the promise of Messiah. These sacrifices therefore having been enjoined upon the head of our race and constantly offered by him, passed into all nations and are still found still prevailing wherever the gospel announcing that Christ has long since come has not been preached. Humiliation, fasting, and prayer have ever accompanied them. Therefore, like sacrifices we may safely conclude that this is a primitive institution of God.

But humiliation, fasting and prayer was a service especially enjoined upon Israel in the law of Moses. It occurred as a regular observance, but once in a year, and embraced the great days of Expiation. It was conducted by the High Priest with great solemnity. On that day the whole people publicly, bowed before God, confessed the sins of the nations and earnestly sought His forgiveness and blessing. Besides this however similar services were held incidentally on a more limited scale, whenever the providences of God seemed to indicate them as proper and desirable. Those to which the Jews were called in our text, were of this latter character. Such were the laws and usages of the Mosaic Ritual.

Under the gospel no specific period for this peculiar service has been instituted. We are all familiar with the doctrine of certain churches in regard to the period known as Lent. For that observance however, there is in the New Testament, no authority whatever. Humiliation, fasting, and prayer, as a solemn observance, is, nevertheless, approved, and inculcated by our Lord Jesus Christ, and his apostles. When the Pharisees censured our Savior for his disregard of these public facts, which custom had established among the Jews, he answered; "Can ye make the children of the bride chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? But (referring to his own ascension, he adds) the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and then shall they fast in those days." And, instructing his disciples on this subject, he said in his sermon on the Mount; "when ye fast (not meaning any specific time for it) be not as the hypocrites are, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast; verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash the face, that thou appear not unto men to fast, but to thy father who is in secret, and thy father who seest in secret will reward thee openly." With these instructions agreed perfectly, and in all respects, the personal habits of our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and the personal habits and instructions of apostolic and primitive Christians and churches. They were accustomed on suitable occasions publicly as well as privately to observe these

solemnities. From these inspired authorities and apostolic and primitive examples we ascertain definitely that while all outward show, for mere effect is odious in the sight of God, yet when chastened by his providences, when evils are apprehended, when dangers threaten, and when pressed as we are now by perplexity and distress, it is in accordance with the divine will that we seek our God by humiliation, fasting, and prayer.

3. Promises, numerous and rich, encourage the assurance that thus seeking him, with sincere and contrite hearts, God, for Christ's sake, will look with favor and mercy upon us, will hear our prayers, will pardon our sins, and will avert any calamities due to us as a people.

That these promises may be fulfilled to us, it is evident that in hearts, as well as in form, our humiliation, fasting and prayer, must be characterized by the spirit of true religion.

In them God must be distinctly and intelligently recognized, as presiding with absolute sovereignty over both the evil we deprecate and the good we implore.

The hearts of all men are in his hands, and "He turns them as rivers of water are turned." Where he would scourge the guilty, he permits the passions of men to arise and rage as devouring flames. War, civil and national, consumes, desolates, and destroys, and famine and pestilence complete the honors of the scene. When he would bless the penitent and sincere, he infuses into the hearts of the people, love, friendship, forbearance, kindness, and peace, and he gives fruitful seasons and joyous health. As God will these are distributed among men, and He

will be sought to avert the one and bestow the other. So much at least is asserted in the Divine Word. "In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and he poureth out of the same." This doctrine is so obviously true, that it was recognized even by heathens themselves. However for example in the last Iliad (I quote the version of Pepe) represent Achilles as addressing Priam thus:

"Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood;
The source of evil one, and one of good;
From thence the cup of mortal man he fills
Blessings to those, to those distributes ills.
To most he mingleth both; the wretch ~~discreed~~
To taste the bad unmixed is cursed indeed."

If the service of this house shall be approved, and blessed of God, it is evident that the cause, the promotion of which we seek, must be just and righteous.

A holy God, can never be the supporter of iniquity and ~~never~~ injustice. Sin and oppression ~~can~~ can permanently prosper. Dare we, dare any one thus solemnly approach him, and ask his blessing upon an iniquitous cause? Surely not, Whither our cause be just and righteous is a question we have already considered in presenting the reasons for the observance of this solemnity. It need not now be discussed further. I will only add that to my mind, nothing can be more dear, than the right of a people to establish new governments, as often as the constitutional forms of the old one designed for the preservation of their liberties are in their opinion turned into in-

struments of oppression; and it is equally plain that in the exercise of this right they may defend themselves against every injury sought to be inflicted upon them. Without this, the self-government of which we boast, is a mere figment of the inauguration. And such is our cause.

"It hath this extent; no more."

It must be just; it must be righteous, and if so, it is approved of God. To claim however the fulfilment of the divine promise, it is further requisite that these services be characterized on our part, by a contrite spirit, and a hearty recognition, confession, and forsaking of all our evils.

As individuals, as a people; as a nation how multidinous, how criminal are our transgressions! What woe in the catalogue of human suffering might not he justly visited upon us! If from the treasury of his wrath, God should send upon us in addition to war, now commenced, famines and pestilences, and worst of all subjugation to our enemies, we could not impeach his righteous decision. But if we repent of our sins and forsake them, God is merciful, and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us then, today in the name and strength of our great High Priest, who has passed into the heavens, "come boldly to the throne of grace in time of need." In penitent humiliation, fasting and prayer is not only a contradiction in itself, it is more, it is a horrible mockery. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God." Let your secret heart correspond in all respects with the external forms of this day, and God's blessing

will be rich upon us all. It is proper to state further, that to be effective, these services must on the one hand be characterized by faith in the promises of divine mercy, and on the other by a spirit of submission to the appointment of God.

Do you believe the promises of God? Are you prepared cheerfully to acquiesce in the result to which his providence may bring you? He is full of compassion towards nations as well as individuals. Upon the repentance of one as well as the other, he will pardon and bless. He himself has said: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation, against whom, I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent me of the evil I thought to do unto them. "And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent me of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them." We may surely commit the destiny of our nation into the hands of God, and confide to his wisdom and mercy, the time, the manner, and the measure of our deliverance from impending evil. We may say in the language of ^{Job} ~~Job~~ to the armies of Israel: Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God; and the Lord do that which seemeth him good.

Thus humbling ourselves before God with fasting and prayer, every consideration encourages the assurance that for Christ's

sake, he will accept our persons and services, will forgive our sins, avert from us apprehended calamities and look upon us with favor and mercy. This is indeed the time of all his most gracious promises: "Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you." "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts ye double minded. Be afflicted and weep. Let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will lift you up; "casting all your care upon him for ~~careth~~ for you." "Trust undoubtingly in God," and he shall fulfil the desires of your heart."

We have now seen that in the present crisis of our national affairs, we have infinite reasons for humiliation, fasting and prayer; that the form and spirit in which these services are to be conducted are abundantly set forth in the word of God; and that promises, numerous and rich, encourage the assurance that thus seeking him with sincere, contrite and believing hearts, God, for Christ's sake will look with favor and mercy upon us, will answer our prayer, forgive us our sins, and avert from us any calamities due to us as a people.

1. This whole subject teaches us that as individuals, as a people, and as a nation, our sure and only hope is in the blessing of Almighty God. "I returned," says the wisest of men, "and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, "Jehovah presides over the conflict, and turns the victory according to his pleasure. And shall we be stranger to him? Shall we have no access to

him, no intercourse with a Being upon whom we are so utterly dependent? Today, if never before, let us humbly, penitently, bow at his feet, acknowledge our sins, and give ourselves to him, body and soul and spirit in a new and everlasting covenant.

2. This whole subject teaches us that God will defend, succor, and save those that humbly trust in Him.

Of the day of battle, David said: "Some trust in horses, and some in chariots, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God;" and in another place; "Through thee, O God, will we tread down our enemies. I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me; but thou has saves us from our enemies, and put them to shame that hated us." "Therefore, they that trust in the Lord ahsl1 never be confounded, world without end." "Ask," said the Redeemer, "what ye will in my name and it shall be done for you." In accordance with these declarations Daniel humbled himself and fasted and prayed, and God happily fulfilled his desires. The inhabitants of Ninevah humbled themselves, fasted and prayed, and God spared their city, which had been devoted to destruction. The divine record abounds with examples like these. Under similar circumstances, God will deliver, save and bless you.

3. This whole subject teaches us that if the divine blessing be continued, the spirit of these services must ~~xx~~ not pass away with the hour, but must be perpetuated in our hearts.

O let us continue to live and trust our Lord Jesus Christ, for ourselves and for our country. Our prayers that ascend

daily are mingled with the prayers of hundreds of thousands of our brethren. They go up from our churches, from our firesides, and from our armies; as a cloud of incense before the throne of God. They cannot but move the hand that moves the world! God will hear us; God will answer us; and ere long we may sing as did Miriam with her maidens of Israel, when delivered from the hands of their oppressors:

"Sound the loud timbrels o'er Egypt's dark sea

Jehovah has triumphed - His people are free."

The sermon and the autumn passed away, and the winter was upon us. Nothing of special consequence occurred in the church. The members who remained at home, anxious in large numbers for full instruction on the whole subject, solicited the pastor to preach a sermon on "The duty of Christians with regard to Peace." He did so in December and on account of the imponderance of the subject, and the effect it produced, the whole discourse is here introduced, as it was reported for the Nashville Union and American, and published in that paper. It was as follows:

"Seek peace and pursue it." Psalm 34:14.

Peace is quietude. An individual, a community, a church, a nation, enjoying tranquility, is in a state of peace. Peace is the opposite of conflict, agitation, war. God himself pronounced this admonition. Its observance is obligatory upon men of all classes, and in all the relations, and pursuits of life. To employ every honorable and appropriate means to secure

and perpetuate peace, is your duty as Christians, as citizens, and as men, peace with God; peace with your own consciences; peace in the community in which you live; peace in the churches of Christ; peace in your own country; and peace among the nations of the world. It is required that you shall seek peace earnestly; that you shall pursue it assiduously; that you shall make its attainment a special object; and that you shall ^{have} this grand purpose in view, always, and under all circumstances.

How little has this solemn and important duty been regarded by men! The history of the world from the beginning, details little else than battles, bloodshed, and devastation. Emperors, kings, princes, the rulers of the people have delighted in war. Thence mainly they have derived their honor, their power, and their wealth. They have therefore been madly ambitious to "Whelm nations in blood, and wrap cities in fire."

(Sermon of
the pastor
on peace.)

Consequently graves, and tears, and sorrows, and miseries have been ceaseless. Are these honors to continue forever? Is man always to be the enemy of man? Are murder and destruction to mark his footsteps perpetually? No, my brethren, no. Thanks be to God, his holy word teaches us to look forward to a period when they shall all cease, "Christ shall," Some day, "judge among the nations." When that blessed time shall come - would to God it were already come - then shall they, "Beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall no more lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more." Peace shall pour her rich treasures upon our

world. In reference to our own country at least, and especially in regard to civil strife, fondly had we hoped that this halcyon day had already dawned upon us. A dissolution of our great national Union, at some period, not very distant, we had thought probable, but not a furious conflict of arms between the parties. We believe that the true spirit of religion prevailed throughout all our land, to great an extent, to permit a catastrophe so melancholy. Unhappily we were mistaken. We had judged too favorably of our the spirit of the nation. From ~~num~~ dreams of peace, and security, we have been suddenly awakened to find ourselves in the very midst of the horrors of war; of a civil war, proverbially of all wars the most relentless and bloody. We have within a few months, seen civilization, to say nothing of religion, go back on the dial plate of Time a thousand years! In the circumstances which now surround us, what shall we do? This question is pressed upon us as Christians, as patriots, and as men. Does the word of God afford us in this exigency adequate instructions? If so what are those instructions? These are practical questions, which demand an immediate solution, since we are called upon to act without delay, and are compelled to take some position on the subject. To aid you in this investigation and decision is the whole design of the present discourse. Our text, brief as it is, covers the whole ground: "Seek peace and pursue it." But how? In what manner? By what means? I beg permission to answer in detail.

1. Seek peace and pursue it by sedulously avoiding all just cases of war.

It is not enough that you do nothing yourselves, as individuals, or as a people and that you join with others in an act violate of the law, or calculated to endanger the peace of your country. This is merely negative. You are bound to do all that you can, consistently with honor, truth, and the common welfare to promote and perpetuate peace. It has been the fortune of the Hebrews, God's peculiar people, to live during a large portion of their existence, dispersed among the various nations of the earth. Instructing them as to their duty in these circumstances he said: "Seek the peace of the city, whither I send you, and pray to the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace." If this was the duty of the wandering Hebrews toward the lands of strangers, in which they temporarily resided, how much more is it our duty to our own native land which contains our cherished and beloved home which is the home of our ancestors, and to which we look as the home of our posterity? To seek the peace of our country, and to pray for it, is the least that is demanded of us, since it may be said with increased emphasis, that in its peace shall we enjoy the blessings of peace. We owe this as a duty to God, we owe it to the safety of our households; we owe it to the wealth and happiness of the whole people, we owe it to the cause and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the earth. Next to the religion of Christ, peace is the greatest of all our blessings. War is this world's direst curse.

The duty enjoined in our text, admits of the neutrality of no man. Our country may justly say as did our Lord Jesus Christ on

a certain occasion: "He that is not with me is against me." When her tranquility is menaced you dare not stand aloof and satisfy yourself with the plea that you do her no harm. It is not enough that you refrain from conspiracies and injurious conduct. This much may be done as a measure of prudence, by the _____?

You owe to your country, nor merely a cold passive obedience, you owe it positive love and good will, you owe a prompt and cheerful obedience to its just and constitutional laws; a ready and efficient cooperation in whatever is necessary to its safety, prosperity, and happiness. The government when it departs from its just and lawful functions, may be and ought to be, in so far as it does so, firmly, and perseveringly resisted. While however it maintains the great end for which it was instituted, it must be able to rely upon the cordial support of its Christian citizens. Such support must be given at whatever sacrifice of private interest, of individual ease, or of pecuniary wealth. We receive the protection and support of the government. In return the government must receive our protection and support.

2. Seek peace and pursue it by positively refusing to countenance, or to give aid to any war not sanctioned by the word of God.

This is our example in which duty requires that we shall a determined resistance to the decisions of the government under which we live. But what is the character of those wars which are not sanctions by the word of God? They are of three

classes and include most of those which have been waged among men. To each of them consecutively suffer me briefly to refer.

The first class embraces all those waged for the propagation of religion.

These are all utterly condemned and denounced by the word of God because apart from the miseries they inflict, they are worse than useless for the accomplishment of the object proposed. Religion has to do with the soul. It dwells in the affections of the mind. These never can be changed by any physical force. They are free. You may bind the body, you may destroy it, but the soul is unbound and deathless. An armed coercion may make hypocrites, but Christians never. The weapons of our warfare, are not carnal," they are infinitely better; they are spiritual and therefore "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds."

The second class of unlawful wars are those waged by Christians to defend themselves against religious persecutions of their own governments.

For your religion so far as it interferes with none of the rights of your fellow citizens, you are responsible to no earthly ruler, but to God only; and God himself in his own time and in his own way will either remove your from the evil or give you the necessary protection. This he has always done and with vastly less of suffering and loss of life, than are incurred in war. If princes and rulers interfere with the duty to

God of their people, they may petition; they may remonstrate; they may flee; but they may not fight. Oppressed and persecuted bodies of men have in various instances taken the sword, and they have invariably experienced the truth of that saying of Jesus; "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword." The Waldenses, the Anabaptists, the Albigenses, the Bohemians, the Hugenots, and others in Europe, thus resisted, and they perished miserably. But when "not loving their life unto death," the only refuge of the pursued flock of Christ, has been God alone, the result has been far otherwise. They have always triumphed. The more they have been affiliated, the more they have multiplied. "The blood of the martyrs, is the seed of the church."

The third class of unlawful wars, are all those waged to gratify ambition, envy, avarice, pride, the lust of conquest and dominion.

No war of this character can properly receive Christian countenance or aid. In a government, every man however feeble is entitled to his rights, and if that government be just he will receive them. Among the nations the same equitable principle ought to prevail. The weak and the defenceless are as fully entitled to hold all that belong to them as are the mightiest empires. Neither a man, nor a government is to be despoiled of rights, or of property, because it can be done with impunity. With considerate men their very helplessness, is their strongest claim to protection. A war of aggression for such purposes is wholesale robbery and murder. It is a melancholy commentary on the depravity of man to know that such has been the motives and purposes of nearly all the hostile conflicts in every age and nation, among the Assyrians, the Greeks,

the Romans, the French, the Germans, the Spanish, the English, and other nations. They are unjust; they are inhuman; they are abhorred of God.

Such in general terms are the several classes of wars upon which every Christian man must look with the deepest aversion. In reference to them all the doctrine of the Quakers is strictly scriptural. Indeed this amiable body of men err mainly in that they give to their principles on the subject of war, a universal, and not a practical application.

3. Seek peace and pursue it in the last resort, by actual war.

The intercourse of nations, like that of individuals, must be conducted upon the principles of justice, truth, and honor. If at any time these principles are infringed the offending nation ought to be ready, and, if equitable will be ready to make all proper amends. If its counsels are influenced by the spirit of Christ, it cannot be otherwise. This however is seldom the case. And if war is made upon a nation with a view to its conquest; if every measure consistent with honor and justice has been adopted to averted hostilities; and pursue peace upon equitable terms; and, if after all that nation is invaded by armies; then are its people bound to meet the foe in arms, and arraying force, against force, to decide the contest in battle. No Christian citizen, dare shrink from the strife. To maintain in such a case our country's cause we must ever be ready, as were our fathers, under such circumstances, to "Pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

You know very well, my brethren, how earnestly I have ever

deprecated and do now deprecate, war, of whatever character, as one of the most dreadful of all earthly calamities.

It is the government of vengeance in which God arrays himself, when he comes forth to ~~furnish~~ ^{punish} the guilty inhabitants of our earth. It overwhelms and destroys the property, prosperity, and advancement of the people. It inflicts in its camps, its hospitals, its prisons, and its marches, unspeakable privations and sufferings. It destroys the lives directly and indirectly, irrespective of battles, of hundred of thousands. On the battlefield, there, what honors cluster! Those who ~~perish~~ instantly are far more fortunate than the mangled and the maimed. These while the strife rages around them, lie helpless amidst the changing squadrons, the trampling of horses, and beneath the rushing wheels of ponderous artillery; and when it has passed away, they are left alone, without assistance and without pity; there they remain in solitude and with wounds exposed to suffer and to die! Nor are there few who thus suffer. The victims of war are multitudinous, everyone of whom "was a sham of the same nature with ourselves, was warmed with the same hopes, and as fondly attached to life as are any of you in this assembly. The death of each one of them has pierced the hearts of brothers, sisters, parents, perhaps a loving wife and affectionate children. But in the contemplation of this aspect of the subject, honors multiply, and come up before us from every quarter. We turn away from a scene in which death reigns and triumphs, and sports, without control, in blood, and carnage, and destruction. Still it is

true that there are circumstances in which war becomes a necessity as a choice of evils, and in which some of the best and most devoted servants of God, have been, and will hereafter be engaged.

"Abraham was the friend of God," and an eminent example of fidelity in every duty. After his removal to Canaan several petty armies, commanded by kings, ~~on~~ a marauding expedition, in his neighborhood, surprised his kinsman Lot, and captured him, and his whole family. Taking possession of all his immense property, they set out with spoils and captives on a hasty retreat to their own land. The fearful intelligence soon reached Abraham. Instantly ~~waking~~ arming his trained slaves, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, "he pursued the robbers. He soon overtook them; attacked them vigorously; conquered and slew most of them; and recovered and restored all that had been lost of both persons and property. It was as he was returning from this expedition that he was met by "Melchisedeck, king of Salem, and priest of the Most High God," by whom he was addressed thus: "Blessed be Abraham of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth, and blessed be the Most High God who hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand." And this benediction was pronounced upon Abraham while his garments were yet reeking with the blood of the slain. With similar examples the Old Testament everywhere abounds.

Am I told that all this occurred before the gospel period; that Christianity is a reign of peace; and that under its auspices you are forbidden to resist evil? I admit it all, but

venture to inquire in what sense it is to be understood.

Christianity is indeed a religion of peace; but it is also a religion of honor, truth, and justice. All these must go together, or all will be lost together. If arbitrary power attempts to inflict upon us injustice, injury, or oppression, and no recourse is left us but forcible resistance what shall we do?

Shall we guilty submit, or shall we, if necessary, forcibly resist? On this whole subject the teachings of the gospel are plain to all who choose to study and understand them. Let us for a few moments have these instructions.

1. When the Savior instructing us in regard to relative duties said: "I say unto you that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," he did not mean to enforce a precept of literal and universal obligation. If so Paul did wrong in resisting his prosecutors at Phillipi; Jesus himself would not have violated his own command by reproving the man who smote him at the judgment seat, and he would not on another occasion have said: "If the good man of the house had known at what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not have suffered his house to be broken up." In all these cases the resistance in some sense of evil, is clearly involved, and approved. The sense of his instructions need not be mistaken in their application to individuals or to nations.

The instructions of Jesus apply to us as individuals.

They demand that we avoid all hatred, retaliation and revenge; that merely to gratify pride, avarice, or ambition, we attack no one; injure no one; oppress no one; and they with equal certainty authorize us when assailed in any form to defend as best we may ourselves, our families, our property, our interests of every character. The burglar, the assassin, the plunderer, we may if necessary to our safety, justly slay. The interpretation of the whole subject is, briefly, that it is better in ordinary cases if a man smite you on one cheek that you turn to him the other also, than that you should take the law into your own hands, and attempt to avenge personally the wrongs you have received.

His instructions apply to nations as follows:

They require each nation to govern itself by the same general principles that apply to persons. If therefore national assassins, burglars, and plunderers assail you, self preservation and defence justify you in meeting them in force, and as in the other case, if necessary to the result, in destroying their life.

2. The doctrine now submitted was still more clearly taught by the Savior when before the bar of Pilate.

In answer to a haunting question of the governor, Jesus said; "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were then of this world, ~~then~~ would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." We have before seen that his kingdom, which is spiritual, and worldly, is not to be propagated nor defended by the sword. It was on this account,

that when in Gethsemane, Peter drew his sword (for it seems that his disciples like other men of those times, carried deadly weapons about their persons) and severely wounded a servant of the High Priest, that Jesus said unto him: "Put up again thy sword;" "for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." This was an attempt to defend Christ's kingdom, with carnal weapons which we have seen is unlawful. But had his kingdom been of this world, then would his servants have fought for it? He himself expressly declares that they would. Every other kingdom but his is of this world. It is therefore according to the Saviour's reasoning that for its defense and preservation its citizens should fight.

3. The duty of maintaining the safety and securing the peace of our country by war, when they are not otherwise attainable, is apparent from our relations to the government as its citizens.

Government is an institution of God. I refer not to the form of government, but to government itself. A monarchy; an Aristocracy; a Republic; a Democracy as far as the gospel is concerned is alike legitimate. All are equally recognized and to each as a government. God has expressly ~~delegated~~ delegated the use of the sword. Paul declares it is the duty of all Christians to "obey magistrates;" and in another place he says: "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers," for there is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God." "Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil." The magistrate, or ruler, "is the minister of God

an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

Thus is it seen that the gospel plainly invests the magistrate with the sword and requires him to use it for the punishment of evil doers. With these premises before us the argument cannot be mistaken. If the magistrate is required to use the sword, for the punishment of evil doers within the government, then certainly he is required to use it to repel invaders from without. The magistrate must therefore fight. But if he alone cannot gain the object proposed, then every good citizen is obliged to help him. Every good citizen in such circumstances must therefore fight. If not then the power of the magistrate would be merely nominal, and government would be at an end. He would surely "bear the sword in vain."

Am I told this will do well enough for men of the world but not for Christians? I am sure the gospel makes no such ~~distinctions~~ distinctions between citizens. What is demanded of one is demanded of all. It is true that men in every government for purposes of government, occupy different positions as to authority, and rights, but these distinctions are far the harmony of the whole, and all are, in their plans, alike amenable to the laws. Does the gospel intimate that a government may be so organized as that one class of laws may be binding upon the religious part of the nation, and another upon the irreligious part? Whatever in his sphere is the patriotic duty of one citizen, is the patriotic duty of all citizens. If it is the duty of the irreligious man to fight, it is equally the duty of the religious man to fight. The safety and peace of the nation demand it. If not then the

If not then the Christians are not bound to sustain the civil government at all, and the nation may be left, unless defended by a few wicked and ungodly men, a prey to any ambitious and unscrupulous power that may choose to overthrow and destroy it. The gospel requires every Christian to be a good loyal citizen; to bear his part in all that concerns the welfare and defence of his country; therefore when it is invaded by enemies the gospel requires every Christian man to fight for his country.

4. Were it sinful for a Christian to fight, it would be wrong for him to be a soldier.

That it is wrong to be a soldier the gospel nowhere intimates. From what is said on this subject, we are led to an opposite conclusion. Two believing Centurions are mentioned neither of whom was censured on account of his profession of arms. Nor were they required to relinquish that profession when they became Christians. Soldiers came to John asking what they must do. In his answer he warned them against the abuses of their calling, but the calling itself was tacitly admitted to be lawful. "Do violence," said the Baptist "to no man; neither accuse any wrongfully; and be content with your wages." Had the duties of a soldier been sinful, or inconsistent with the Christian profession, think you that John, rigid as he was as to every moral obligation, and bold as he was reproving even kings for ~~denounce~~, their sins would have hesitated to ~~condemn~~ the profession of a soldier? He would surely not so have instructed these soldiers as to have implied the lawfulness of their calling.

Instructed therefore by our Lord Jesus Christ, by Paul the apostle, and by John the Baptist, we are obliged to conclude that when invaded, Christian citizens, as well as all others are under the most sacred obligations to arm, and to fight in defence of their country.

5. Your duty to your families proceeds upon the same principles. The gospel requires you to protect and defend your wives and children, and household against all enemies, from every quarter, and in the most effectual manner possible. Not to do so at whatever hazard would prove that we are utterly unworthy of families, a home, and a country. An invading army - mark if you please its footsteps of blood and carnage. Its progress is desolation. Here you look upon "rich harvests and the reward of patient industry, consumed in an hour, or trampled under foot and destroyed, while famine and pestilence stalk through the land." There you see the duellings of the people given to the flames; mothers expiring through fear; not for themselves, but for their helpless children that cling to them for protection; the inhabitants flying before the murderous rifle for shelter, they know not whither; cities, the streets of which are filled with slaughter, flowing with blood, and resounding with the cries of the pursuers and the pursued; the mansions of its citizens pillaged and burning, and every age, rank and sex mingled in promiscuous massacre and death! And are they your harvests that are destroyed? Are these your dwellings that are in flames? Are these your wives and daughters, and mothers and sisters and babes, that are shrieking and flying for their lives?

And are you not driven to madness? Are you to sit still, and not resist? Are you forbidden to fight? Great God! Does religion bind your hands? Not resist? Not fight! My brethren, does the gospel teach you any such inhuman - any such pusillanimous doctrine as this? No, my brethren; no, no. It teaches you boldly to meet the foe; to beard him on your border; to keep his profane footsteps from your soil; to strike to his heart; to continue to

"Strike! Till the last armed foe expires;

Strike! for your altars and your fires;

Strike! for the green graves of your lives,

God, and your native land."

Thus, and thus only, can peace in such cases be recovered and perpetuated. An assailed people must "Conquer peace! It is purchased I grant at an immense price. It costs the hearts blood of many a loved one dearer to us than life itself. But this is inevitable. No alternative is left us. We must pay the price. In this direction when it becomes necessary do we as fully, and as certainly as in any other "seek peace, and pursue it."

We have now considered attentively, the duty of Christians with regard to peace, and have seen that nations should conduct themselves as to avoid all just causes of war; that Christians should positively refuse to countenance, or aid, any war not authorized by the word of God; and that in some cases it becomes a religious duty to seek peace by a resort to actual war. If I have succeeded in impressing your minds with the principles which I conceive to be true, on this subject, it remains only

that it be suitably applied for the government of our nations and conduct in the painful circumstances by which we find ourselves surrounded.

1. Have we, the people of the Confederate States, done all that religion, honor, truth, and patriotism demanded to avert the melancholy and bloody war that is now upon us, and to preserve the national peace?

If we have then clearly/justice and right are on our side, and God is with us. To my mind it is certain, that Tennessee, and all the other ~~Confederate~~ States, according to the terms of their compact with the United States, and their own organic laws were fully authorized to take the position they have assumed, and to maintain that position without molestation from the Federal government, or from any other power whatever.

The ground upon which I rest this opinion is set forth in the Report on the State of the Country adopted in May last by the Southern Baptist Convention, in Savannah, Georgia, is familiar to you all, and need not now be further considered. This being true we have violated no obligation; we have withheld no just claim; we have done no act to provoke the war in which we are now involved. We have also done all that could honorably be done to avert it, and to preserve peace with our late national associates. Just and generous terms of compromise were long and preservingly urged by us, in the Federal councils, and rejected. A Peace Congress was assembled at Washington from most of the States. Its deliberations were anxious and protracted. They were disregarded. No terms of continued union was offered to the fifteen Southern States, where rights

were placed in universal jeopardy, but unconditional submission. Commissioners were sent to the Federal government to adjust equitable terms of separation. They were not even recognized. Other like essays were made. They met with no success. We could not even be heard. It remained for us only that we should stand upon our rights and take the consequences. We did so. We could do no less. We have therefore done all that religion, honor, truth, patriotism, demanded to avert this war, and preserve the national peace. Our cause is just. We must maintain it. God is with us. He will defend the right.

3. In this war purely of a defensive character, such as religion demands that we shall prosecute at all hazards, and to the last extremity?

To me it clearly so appears. The Confederate Government has, up to this time inaugurated no aggressive measures. So far as I know it has contemplated none. In the official language of the President himself; "We have asked only to be let alone." We have begged for peace unheard. War, relentless, cruel, unfeeling, has been waged against us. Our claims to national character, just rights, and honesty of purpose are not admitted. We are pronounced rebels, robbers, outlaws, and as such having no rights, civil, political, or pecuniary. Our fraternal enemies have declared their purpose to subdue all these States, to hold them as conquered provinces and to use the property of our citizens to pay the expenses of our overthrow and destruction. To carry into effect this bloody purpose, they have as they report, and which is doubtless true, six hundred

thousand soldiers now in the field. Our coast is invested from Delaware to the Rio Grande; our interior border swarms with men in arms from Harper's Ferry to New Mexico, the Potomac, the Ohio, the Mississippi are bristling with bayonets for more than a thousand miles, and raids are made upon as at every assailable point and every convenient opportunity; our distinguished friends, male and female, whenever they can be captured, are immured in dungeons, and our privateers when taken, are held and treated as pirates... Is it not therefore as to us, firmly and wholly a defensive war? What can we do but meet the foe in arms, and repel his advances? Religion, patriotism, humanity, honor, every attribute of manhood call upon us for prompt, firm, decided vigorous action. Dare we abandon to such a foe, our wives, our children and our property? In whose mind can such a thought be harbored? On such terms as these ~~no~~ Christian man would save his life. Swayed as by one impulse, our fathers and brothers, our sons and husbands have gone, and are going to the field; they have placed themselves as a living wall between you and your heartless enemies, not until they all sleep in bloody graves, and life is no longer worth preserving, will the foe be formidab*le* as he is, reach your homes and firesides, and even should such an unlooked for event occur, I cannot but hope that even you would meet him at your threshold, and that he will be expelled by the ordinarily feeble hands of age, infancy, and womanhood. Our offenders are impelled no less by their religion than by their patriotism. Can they fail: I do not believe it. It is, I know, possible, but not at all probable. Fail! No; never. Our armies conquered!

Our country subjugated! Our land overrun and desolate!
You have determined not to survive such a dishonor. You are
prepared to punish as did the people of Carthage, when the
power of Rome was upon them; as did Moscow, when beleagured
by the conquering armies of the great Bonaparte. Then indeed
would every man, woman, and child in the whole South adopt
and act upon the high sentiment of the old Roman, whose song
will never be forgotten:

"Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori."

Our land and sunny land may fall, at last, permanently, into
their hands, but it will be without an inhabitant worthy of the
name of man or woman.

3. In view of all these exigencies what are our most im-
perative Christian duties. Evidently, besides those already
indicated, determined endurance, daily prayer; habitual prepa-
ration for death; and an unwavering reliance upon God for guidance
and success. Patiently we must all endure the afflictions, losses,
privations, and other suffering incident to our present cir-
cumstances, and which will most surely come continually upon
us. To such endurance you have been wholly unaccustomed im-
patience is already manifested when it is intimated that this
war may not soon close; you are unwilling to think that you may
be reduced to poverty, or even of the long exposure of dear ones
in the field. Every feeling of this kind must be repelled. We
must save our country. Those dearest to us will do so by ~~fighting~~
~~giving~~ fighting. Our part of the work, no less arduous than
theirs, will be calm endurance, patient suffering, unwavering

firmness, until God, in his providence, shall crown our land with an honorable peace, and open to us again the channels of prosperity and plenty. One more weapon of resistless power you can all wield. It is prayer; earnest importunate, persevering prayer. We need its support in our own souls; it is needful for our brothers in arms; it will lead us to victory, and endue us with humility in our triumphs. God will hear us; God will answer us, and bless us. "God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble." Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar, and be troubled; ~~though~~ the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." "They that trust in the Lord shall never be confounded, world without end." Amen.

This chapter will be appropriately closed by some extracts from the annual discourse of the pastor, preached at the end of the year. In that sermon he said:

"In the battle of life we need a power adequate to sustain us in every exigency; a power to go before us; and prepare our way; to be with us in every time of need, a power which will never to our last moment, fail us, nor forsake us. We need all this because of our ignorance, our slothfulness and our feebleness. More than this we cannot ask, since it is sufficient to secure our full triumph. Is there such a power? May we avail ourselves of it? I answer, "The Lord, he it is that goeth before thee; he will be with thee; he will not fail thee nor forsake thee; fear not neither be

dismayed." This was the divine message to Joshua, and his armies, when about to take the field agains their enemies. Paul applies it to the Christians of his day. To us at the present time, it is plainly equally as applicable as it was to the disciples in apostolic times. God has gone before us; he has been with us; he has not failed us nor forsaken us during the year which has now closed. Such a year we have never as a people before known. What is in store for us in the future God only knows. Events of late have rapidly developed themselves. Twelve states, and several territories, have united in a Southern Confederacy, and a government has been formed and perfected in all its departments, military and civil. War has been inaugurated by the United States, against these Confederate States, and battle after battle has been fought, fierce, furious, and bloody. Our late associates of the Northern States have declared their unalterable purpose to subdue and hold us in subjugation, as conquered provinces. They possess immense resources of men, of money and munitions. We are few in numbers and by sea especially are defenseless. We have an army, but comparatively no navy. We have only "God and the right." We cannot be conquered. We may be crushed by the weight of our assailants, destroyed, annihilated, but conquered never. Our position is a fearful one.

This fact need not be concealed. It is as well known as to me. In any event much suffering, privation, and distress are inevitable. Our Heavenly Father sees however, that all this is necessary. Nothing less could cure us of our follies, and

bring us to his footstool. Already the effect upon religion has been startling.

In all its enterprises especially, and in its advancement generally this church has been greatly weakened, as its statistics will show, although its progress has not been wholly arrested. Taking together the whole church - white and colored - we have during the year baptized 16, received by letter 12, and 5 have been restored to fellowship, making an aggregate addition of 33; and 11 have been dismissed by letter, 6 have been expelled, and 14 have died, making an aggregate loss of 31, and leaving a net gain of two members. Our whole number today is 527, of whom 282 are whites, 105 males, and 177 females. The Sunday Schools of the church have been seriously diminished. Most of the male teachers and very large numbers of the adult male pupils, in all about fifty, have gone into the Confederate army, where they will remain during the war. The average attendance in the white school has been 142, and in the colored school about 125, making an annual average attendance in both schools of 267. Your deacons have conducted the pecuniary affairs of the church during the year, with their accustomed energy, and success. For strictly church purposes they have paid \$3,116.49. To the Board and for collections, you have paid \$200.00, and you have contributed something to sustain Domestic and Foreign missions, the exact amount of which I have not been able to ascertain, not more however than \$300.00. For the various purposes of the Sunday school you have paid, say \$100.00. These several sums make

\$600.00, which added to the sum paid for church expenses, make \$3,176.49, and one half of what you have in years past been accustomed to contribute to the cause of Christ. The pressure of the war, has in various ways, required you to pay large sums of money, not less, if we take the church and congregation together, than fifty thousand dollars. You really therefore, in direct pecuniary payments, although not for benevolent purposes, have contributed, nearly five times as much as during any previous year of your existence as a church.

Of the state of religion, so far as our churches are concerned in the country, nothing can be said of favorable character. Desolation had swept over them nearly all, before the war commenced. Their condition now is "Confusion worse confounded." In this church it is hoped the light of true religion still shines. I have watched over you with sleepless vigilance. I feared the result of the storm which has been beating upon you. I have as you know been absent from my pulpit but one single Sabbath during the year. On that day I was in attendance as your representative in Savannah, at the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. "You know after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations which befell me, and how I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying to all repentance towards God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."