

# LIGHT

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## FAITH, FREEDOM AND LOVE

Dr. J. B. Weatherspoon, for many years a member of the Social Service Commission and for the past six years its chairman, has here presented a pointed and significant message for Southern Baptists in this hour.

*"Ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Jesus Christ . . . Ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another" (Galatians 3:26; 5:13).*

These verses from Galatians contain three words which we Baptists ought to cherish with an ever fresh and fervent devotion: faith, freedom and love. They were spoken by Paul in a situation not altogether dissimilar from our own. In the Galatian churches and in others, strong and dangerous tensions were drawn. Matters on which they differed had become bones of contention. Some of them were very serious, striking at the very root of the gospel. Emotions were being whipped up, attitudes were crystallizing that threatened to destroy fellowship and bring confusion into the Christian testimony.

This, Paul saw. What should he do? Keep out of it and consent to letting circumcision and eating meat become the criteria of salvation and Christian fellowship? Should he join one group and denounce all who practiced circumcision and observed laws of clean-unclean as participating in a discredited religious tradition? Or, should he join another group and declare those practices to be tests of fellowship? He did none of these things. He simply called upon the Galatians to look squarely at their Christian experience and to bring into the present situation what they found there. He spoke to them about faith and freedom and fraternal love.

These words I bring for our fresh consideration as Baptists today. They are our words. They run through every progressive chapter of our history. They have been a three-ply cord not easily broken, binding us together as one people and girding us with power in our world task. Only when we have let one or another of them slip have our ranks been broken and our strength

dissipated. This is the testimony of our experience here in our own land. We have increased from a small band of rather despised believers to a host counted in millions. And we have done it because along our rugged road, not completely and not without controversy but, prevaillingly, we have held on to our faith and our freedom in a spirit of fraternal love.

We have held on to faith. We have been a company of believers. Our faith has been in Jesus Christ as our one Lord and only Saviour. Not in sacraments, or ordinances or orders; not in creeds, or courts, or codes; not in churches or rituals, but in Jesus Christ is our salvation, and that by personal faith. For the materials and forms of faith we have held by the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, resorting to divine revelation and not to speculative human philosophy, to facts revealed in history and not to logical inferences, to find the truth of God and his ways among men. We have faced forward with Christ in our hearts, the hope of salvation, and God's book in our hands, the light for our way.

We have held on to freedom, the freedom of the individual to hold, to exercise and to formulate his faith freely. When the Roman Catholic hierarchy imposed an authoritative interpretation of the Scriptures, our forefathers chose to be numbered among the heretics, as also when the church was substituted for the unmediated saviorhood of Christ and the sacraments for fellowship through personal faith. For the principle of freedom of faith and expression we have in all our history been willing to suffer. Neither church nor state must interfere with that, for to surrender our freedom or to deny freedom to another is to sell our birthright, to forsake our God-given inheritance.

In this claim of freedom two things have happened. (1) We have found ourselves in agreement upon a central core of basic beliefs which identify us as Baptists and draw us together in voluntary association in the churches—those great doctrines of grace which Baptist confessions of faith express in common. 2) At the same time our

freedom has resulted in a broad area of differences in interpretation of the Scriptures and history. It is well known among us that Baptists have never had a creed adhered to by all. Any group of Baptists has been free to make a creed of its own, but none has succeeded, and only rarely tried, to impose its entire statement upon others. The only ecclesiastical authority we have among us is the local church, and every local church has equal freedom. For this reason, there is no authoritative Baptist creed, and cannot be. General confessions of faith and confessions of local churches differ from one another. These differences have appeared in matters of theological interpretation, ecclesiastical practice and eschatological hope. It was this characteristic of Baptists that Dr. C. S. Gardner had in mind when, in reply to a student's question, "What is a Baptist?" he said, "It depends on where one lives." We have never had complete uniformity and have always vigorously opposed Acts of Uniformity from without or within.

So we Baptists have lived together and grown. Without uniformity of organization, without theological ecclesiastical law we have in all our history displayed a cohesiveness and cooperative strength that have amazed others. Faith and freedom have worked together in a marvelous history. What has made it possible?

Here our third word comes in. In fraternal love we have the answer. At any time faith operating alone might have become so absolute in form, so dogmatic in certainty as to demand conformity and uniformity within strictly defined limitations. At any time freedom operating alone might have become so powerful a centrifugal force as to make cooperation impossible. We might in a spirit of independence have remained scattered, isolated local churches, shorn of the power that has made our faith heard as an emancipated gospel around the world. But, thanks be unto God, there has been a third thing: brotherly love, a sense of belonging together in faith and a faith and freedom, a spirit which has magnified our basic agree-

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### MASS MURDER

Killing one man is murder, killing a million is not, but now GENOCIDE is on the way out, thanks to the United Nations . . . if you do your part.

For two thousand years the decent people of the world have been looking for a law to ban that foulest of all crimes—the butchery of entire groups of human beings, for no other reason than race, nationality or religious beliefs. It is a tragic paradox that, although the murder of an individual is forbidden in even the most primitive societies, there has never been a law against the extermination of a whole population.

When the ancient Roman conquerors wiped the civilization of Carthage from the face of the earth, there was need for such a law.

When Nero sent thousands of early Christians to the lions and the stake, there was no law under which the victims could claim protection—no authority to deter the tyrant from indulgence in sadistic pastime.

Throughout the centuries civilization has been degraded by repeated outbursts of bestiality. The pages of history are stained with the slaughter of tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions . . .

And there was never a law to restrain unbridled tyranny . . .

When the Teutonic knights exterminated entire Slavic communities—**THERE WAS NO LAW AGAINST IT.**

When the Ottoman Empire massacred one million, two hundred thousand Armenians during the first World War—**THERE WAS NO LAW AGAINST IT.**

When the Nazis destroyed six million Jews and two and a half million Poles—**THERE WAS NO LAW AGAINST IT.**

When, in 1947, over a million Moslems and Hindus were slaughtered in a mutual attempt at extermination—**THERE WAS NO LAW AGAINST IT.**

But today—thanks to the United Nations—a law is being forged to prevent such deeds of horror for all time to come.

### What the UN Has Done

A Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was unanimously passed by the General Assembly on December 9, 1948, largely due to the vigorous support given the measure by the United States. It not only pronounces genocide a crime under international law which every nation must prevent, but it also specifies that the perpetrators of mass murder, whether public or private individuals, or the heads of state, must be brought to justice and punished for their misdeeds.

### What the United States Must Do

But, in order to be binding, the Convention, which is a multi-lateral treaty, must be ratified by at least twenty countries. It would have been most

fitting if the United States, as the foremost advocate of international law and order, had been the first country to ratify. Unfortunately that opportunity was lost. Australia, Norway, Ethiopia, Panama, Guatemala and Iceland have already pledged themselves to outlaw genocide; others are on the way. If the United States was not among the first, certainly she should not be among the last.

President Truman has submitted the Convention to the Senate, with a message urging ratification. Public sentiment throughout the nation is overwhelmingly in favor. We must not now delay in insuring that the greatest crime of all—genocide—is banished forever from the face of the earth.

### What YOU Can Do

Write to your Senators and to the Hon. Brien McMahon, chairman of the Genocide Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, D. C., TODAY. Insist that the Senate ratify the convention against genocide at once!

### TIME IS RUNNING OUT

### RACE PREJUDICE—ITS NATURE AND CURE

R. B. Eleaser

The word "prejudice," as we all know, is a legal term meaning "prejudgment," or premature judgment. It is as if a jury should render a verdict before it has heard the evidence. In common use it means an attitude or opinion based on insufficient evidence, incomplete knowledge, incorrect information, false reasoning, fallacious assumptions, outworn tradition, rumor, suspicion, groundless fear. To understand and deal with it effectively we need to take account of three fundamental facts about its nature and cure:

The first of these is the fact that race prejudice is not inherent; we are not born with it. We acquire it—we "catch it" as it were—from the conditions into which we are born and the people who surround us.

This fact is distinctly encouraging, for it is reasonable to believe that acquired attitudes can be more easily controlled or shaken off than those that are born in us, as part of our very nature. Since we get them by a process of education, consciously or otherwise, so by similar means they can be corrected or eradicated.

A second fact of great importance is this: Race prejudice is not an air plant, growing out of nothing. It is always rooted in something believed to be real. Its roots are unsound, to be sure; that is what makes it prejudice; nevertheless they are always there.

This again suggests that education is

the only effective means of dealing with race prejudice. There is no use in trying to beat it down with abuse or back it to pieces with sharp words. That treatment only tends to drive it in the deeper. Instead its rotten roots must be skillfully dug out and replaced by solid facts out of which sound opinion may grow. And that is in every sense an educational process, requiring understanding, sympathy and tact.

Finally, we need to remember that prejudice is much more a misfortune than it is a vice. For the most part people are prejudiced not because they are mean, but because they are misled. Thus a highly prejudiced person may be at the same time perfectly honest and well-meaning. The trouble is that his mind has been clouded and his attitude warped by misconceptions and fallacies.

Often this process begins in early infancy, when the child unconsciously absorbs the opinions and attitudes into which he is born. This is certainly not his fault, but his misfortune. As he grows older he is likely to continue the victim of environment, finding his early attitudes confirmed by the misconceptions, fallacies, fears and practices amid which he lives.

That being so, he needs to be shown, not abused, just as a sick man needs to be treated scientifically, not knocked on the head. Only if somehow he can be led to examine his attitudes calmly in the light of the facts is there hope of his release. And that again is a matter of education, not one of argument and controversy. How much wasted heat might be saved if we could only remember that fact in all our discussions!

### DRINKING AND DRIVING

The National Safety Council says "A quantity of alcohol contained in an ounce of whiskey or a bottle of beer is sufficient to lower the ability of the driver or the pedestrian to use the street safely."

The United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company of Buffalo, N. Y., goes even further. It says, "The drinking driver causes more accidents than the drunken driver. It has been established that within forty minutes after imbibing three highballs, the efficiency of four vital driving factors is reduced in the following percentages: (1) concentration, 35.3 per cent; (2) coordination, 59 per cent; (3) muscular reactions, 17 per cent; selective reaction, 9.7 per cent."

It is not the drunken driver but the drinking driver with one drink in him that creates most of the highway problems.

**FAITH, FREEDOM AND LOVE**

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ments and tolerated our differences, that has agreed to disagree without making our differences a test of fellowship. By the strength of this threefold cord we have become a mighty host for a time like this, a mere significant fact than we may realize.

Two examples of what I am saying came to mind. The first is a personal experience. In the summer of 1913, I went from my pastorate in North Carolina to Fort Worth, Texas, for an interview with Dr. B. H. Carroll concerning an invitation which had been extended to me to become a member of the faculty of the Southwestern Seminary, of which he was the founder and president. Dr. Carroll was a man of strong convictions, a conservative thinker, strict in his views and ready to defend them, ready also to pass judgment upon contrary views. I expected, naturally, to have some questions asked about my views. In his library as we talked he turned to a shelf of books and said "These are my books on Inspiration," and taking down a volume by Wm. Sanday he asked, "Have you read this book?" When I answered that I had he said, "I do not agree with all that Sanday says but he certainly can write." Without further discussion he turned to another shelf, saying, "These are my books on the millenium. I don't know what you believe on that subject. I am myself a very strong post-millennialist but we Baptists agree to disagree on that subject." And such was the spirit of the entire conversation. What was the great Baptist saying to the young man? It was this: Convinced that you are a Baptist, I trust you as an honest mind and an earnest student of the Bible. Come, study and teach, and don't worry too much about conforming to my personal views about this and that.

That was thirty-seven years ago. The same spirit appears much earlier in other great men of our denomination. Nearly a hundred years ago, meeting to prepare for the establishment of what is now the Southern Baptist Seminary a group of Baptist leaders were considering the need for articles of faith to guide and safeguard the teachings in the new seminary. Immediately they faced the facts of agreement and differences among Baptists. Should they write a statement representing the faith of that educational convention or that committee? Or, should they write a statement that would contain those things in which there was general agreement among Baptists, and omit matters on which there was known disagreement. Their answer was these rules which they adopted: "The abstract of principles must be: 1. A complete exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of

grace, so that in no essential particular should they speak dubiously; 2. They should speak out clearly and distinctly as to the practices universally prevalent among us; 3. Upon no point, upon which the denomination is divided, should the (Educational) Convention, and through it, the Seminary, take any position." So the seminary was established to serve all Baptists, expressing in principle and practice the faith, the freedom and the fellowship of fraternal love that have been our common bond.

It is for the cherishing of that spirit, that sense of kinship in faith and freedom, that we need to set ourselves in this critical hour of the world's life. The trend of the time is strongly in another direction, discounting individualism, freedom and voluntarism. Many forces would move us toward centralized controls and regimented uniformity. In such a day when political democracies, like our own, feel compelled for security's sake to abandon democratic faith and democratic processes we must cling with intense conviction to the principles of personal responsibility, personal freedom, and fraternal love. We shall be tempted to abandon them. We shall be tempted to build close-drawn fences about our freedom, to condense our Bible into authoritative creeds, to convert our conventions from cooperative associations into ecclesiastical bodies with authority to force uniformity upon the churches. To yield to that temptation would be to yield to the spirit of the age, and forget our history and the genius of our fellowship. Surely that cannot be our choice. We must adhere to the essential nature and genius of the faith of Jesus Christ and of the gospel we have in him. We must listen to Paul's admonition. We must remember our history. We must invoke the basic spirit of our fellowship. We shall save our name and preserve our greatness only as we adhere to the things that have made us great, and keep them strong in this critical hour for a world so sorely stricken and confused.

#### ATTENTION UNITED STATES BREWER'S FOUNDATION

Here is one picture that your artists overlooked in their depiction of "home life in America" where, as you claim, "beer belongs."

In Hyattsville, Maryland, the parents of four children were charged with delinquency in failing to provide food for their children. The police found conditions in the home like a "pigsty." The kitchen sink contained beer cans. The children were suffering from hunger. There was no food or heat. Two boys, 7 and 9 were sleeping in soiled clothing on a mattress on the floor, and a 3 year old girl and 16 months old boy, in soiled clothing, on a bed in the same room.

**NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE**

**Massachusetts:** Fight is underway to repeal state law allowing use of public funds for the transportation for public and parochial schools. Spurred by League Opposed to Sectarian Appropriation, 20,000 persons signed petitions to place repealer on next election ballot.

**Illinois:** Faced with loss of \$677,989 in state aid, East St. Louis Board of Education has ended 85-year-old policy of segregating races in public schools. New ruling forbids allotment of state money to school districts practicing racial discrimination.

**Mississippi:** Jones County Circuit Court dismissed case against Davis Knight convicted of alleged miscegenation despite "overwhelming weight of the evidence" to the contrary. State Supreme Court so stated in reversing verdict on grounds attorney general failed to prove Knight had at least one-eighth Negro blood.

**Pennsylvania:** Stirred by public criticism, Lafayette College trustees have turned down a \$140,000 bequest that could have provided scholarships if money were not used for Jewish or Catholic students. College had first intended to place money in general endowment fund, where discriminatory ban would not have been in effect, but later rejected entire bequest, left by late diplomat, Frederick F. T. Dumont.

**New York:** Through pressure of 1948 state Education Practices Act, program to end discrimination in admissions to colleges and universities has succeeded, says Dr. William J. Wallin, chancellor of Board of Regents. Nearly every non-denominational institution of higher learning has dropped from student application blanks questions dealing with race, color or religion. . . . New York City police were instructed in new manual to show no favoritism in dealing with racial or religious problems.

**Alabama:** The city of Birmingham, Alabama, recently passed an ordinance which makes it a misdemeanor for Negroes or whites "to move into, for the purpose of establishing a permanent residence, or, having moved into, to continue to reside in an area in the City of Birmingham generally and historically recognized at the time as an area for occupancy by members" of the other race.

City Attorney J. H. Willis warned the city that if a colored person filed a suit in the U. S. District Court opposing the ordinance the ordinance would be declared unconstitutional.

That there may be anticipated an early challenge of the Birmingham ordinance is suggested by the fact that while Negroes comprise 43% of the city's population, the zoning ordinance only allots to them 16% of the city's 52 square mile living space.

## DEAR SENATOR . . .

Here is the sort of letter that "packs a punch" calculated to make any man in public office sit up and take notice. It was written in response to the suggestion from the office of this Commission that people write their Senators in Washington urging support of the Langer Bill (S 1847).

"Dear Sir:

Excuse this paper. I borrowed it from one of my eight children. Yes, seven are in school. I send them as regularly as possible, sometimes doing the family wash on Saturday so I don't need to keep any of them home to help during the week.

"I'm right proud of those youngsters growing tall and straight, sparkling eyes and zest for all the things before them in life.

"I'm careful about cooking the best foods for them, watching vitamins and seeing that they get plenty of milk. I've tried to impress on their little minds to take proper care of their bodies so that they will have health to enable them to perform whatever task God would have for them when they grow up.

"Yes, I am a Christian and I know above all that God really helps those who help themselves. He is my strength and in His name I am writing you about the Langer Bill (S 1847). If passed, it would take all those enticing ads out of the magazines my youngsters read. They are distasteful to me also. They try to tear down what I have tried to build up in my children's characters. According to those ads you just don't live unless you drink. How wrong they are.

"Please let me know how you stand on this bill and how you will vote on it in its present form.

"Thank you and I pray God may guide you in all these matters,

Mrs. R. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Have you written your Senator about this bill?

## HER NAME IS MARY

Katherine Parker Freeman

1933

Her name is Mary. I don't remember her last name. It doesn't make any difference, she is just our servant. She is a young woman—married, I guess, because she has some children. She seems to be rather intelligent, and is clean and mannerly. Really we are rather lucky to have her because I can trust her and she knows how to work and knows her place and is always respectful. Lucky, too, to get her for \$5.00 a week, with servants so scarce and so high.

1943

We have decided to call the Negro women who come to our interracial meetings by the same title we do the white women; that is, Mrs. Jones and Miss Smith. And, well—Mary is one of our group! But now I will have to call her Mrs. Jones. You see I have learned her last name. And since I don't meet her as a servant, but as a fellow Christian, I am beginning to see that she is a fine individual, with the same impulses and joys and sorrows and needs and hopes I have. Her children are in college too, doing well. She is as poised and thoughtful as any of the white women. I am beginning more and more to forget the color distinctions in that group. With our eyes closed in prayer we don't know whether the face of the one praying is black or white, unless we recognize the voice. And how at home they seem praying! They really talk to God. I am glad to be able to stop calling her Mary, and call her Mrs. Jones, as befits her dignity and womanliness.

1946

How I have changed. First she was Mary, called that to indicate that she was my subordinate, and inferior, my servant to do my bidding. It kept her "in her place." I have found since, that she didn't belong in the servant

## SURVEY SHOWS SERIOUS SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS, SCHOOL BUILDINGS

There is a serious shortage of both teachers and buildings in public school systems throughout the country, a survey just completed by Natl. Education Association shows.

Four major findings of the report are:

1. About 90,000 teachers, or one in 10, hold emergency or temporary certificates.
2. In 45 of the 48 states there is a "considerable" or "very large" shortage of rural elementary teachers. Thirty-seven states have similar shortages in the cities.
3. In more than half the states there is a "very large" shortage for city elementary schools. There is a similar shortage for rural schools in one-fourth of the states.
4. Average teacher's salary this year is \$2,985, which has a pre-war purchasing power of \$1,780.

Things are a little better than last year, though, because of "strenuous efforts by state legislatures, local school boards, organized teachers, and the public" the survey reveals. It concludes that "much remains to be done."

—CIO News

class, but under financial stress was big enough to be willing to be a servant. Then I grew to see that she was worthy of the dignified simple title. And so she became Mrs. Jones.

But since we have been in committee meetings and in group meetings these last three years, we have become friends. We write to each other when separated. She is Mary again. But what a difference in the content of the name. Now, it is the first name because of understanding friendship.

Once again her name is Mary.

—By permission

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