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"That in all things Christ might have the preeminence."

"I think it worth a lifetime of hardship to prepare, under God, one of our dear defenders thus to die." *Chaplain J. Wm. Jones*

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Quote from a Confederate Chaplain

"Soldier ... there is no class of men for whom I feel a deeper solicitude, than the noble defenders of our rights, civil, political and religious. You have bared your bosoms to the cannon's mouth; and your lives may be said to be in jeopardy every hour. I would to God that you were all prepared for living, and for dying, that you might live eternally with Christ in the upper mansions."

Chaplain Andrew Broadus

J. B. Gordon's Georgia Brigade

Editorial

Fellow Compatriots in the Chaplains' Corps and Friends:

As we enter the month of November please consider with me the truth that contentment is the disposition of thanksgiving. We are to "be thankful."

Thanks-giving may be expressed in prayer and praise. It is that part of divine worship in which we acknowledge the benefits and blessings of the Lord. However, thanksgiving may have its greatest expression in thanks-living.

Paul told Timothy that "godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6). "Godliness" or devotion to God with a satisfaction of mind is very profitable. A person could truly say that one who is truly thankful is content or one who is content is thankful. "Contentment arises not from a man's outward condition, but from his inward disposition, and is the genuine offspring of humility, attended with a fixed habitual sense of God's particular providence, the recollection of past mercies and a just estimate of the true nature of all earthly things" [*Buck's Theological Dictionary*, 115]. What is contentment from the perspective of the New Testament word? The word means self-sufficing, having within one what produces contentment and so contentment is not to be impacted with external things. Thus one who is content is independent of his circumstances. The child of God carries this secret of happiness that rests in the sufficiency of his God. Contentment is not a stoical indifference to or contempt of material needs. The Christian can be self-sufficient because his sufficiency is rooted and grounded in God's all-sufficiency and rests with assurance upon God's providential care. Thus a state of contentment makes one independent of outward circumstances, satisfied with one's inner resources, enabling one to maintain a spiritual equilibrium in the midst of favorable as well as unfavorable circumstances.

When a very painful event occurred in the life of Andrew Murray he wrote the following words as an admonition to himself:

First, God brought me here; it is by His will I am in this strait place: in that fact I will rest.

Next, He will keep me here in His love and give me grace to behave as His child. Then, He will make the trial a blessing, teaching me the lessons He intends me to learn and working in me the grace He means to bestow.

Last, in His good time God will bring me out again—how and when, He knows.

Let me say I am here by God's appointment, in His keeping, under His training, for His time.

Here is a demonstration of contentment.

"Godliness with contentment," Patrick Fairbairn noted, "that is, godliness cultivated for its own sake, not as a stepping-stone to wealth or worldly consideration, and so bringing its own dowry of good along with it, making the soul 'satisfied from itself.'"

On Sunday morning, May 3rd, 1863, at first light, Chaplain Beverly Tucker Lacy reached the field hospital near Wilderness Tavern. He found that General "Stonewall" Jackson's arm had already been removed, and by then he had recovered from the effects of the chloroform. Lacy spoke to Jackson in the field hospital. He inquired after his general and Christian friend, expressing his deepest regret. Jackson contentedly thanked him with his usual politeness and then said:

> **You find me severely wounded, but not unhappy or depressed. I believe that it has been done according to the will of God; and I acquiesce entirely in his holy will. It may appear strange, but you never saw me more perfectly contented than I am today for I am sure that my heavenly father designs this affliction for my good. I am perfectly satisfied that, either in this life, or the life which is to come, I shall discover that what is now regarded as a calamity is a blessing. And if it is regarded as a great calamity (for surely I shall feel it to be a great inconvenience to be deprived of my arm) it will result in a great blessing. I can wait until God in his own time shall make known to me the object he has in thus afflicting me. But why should not I rather rejoice in it as blessing, and not look upon it as a calamity at all? If it were in my power to replace my arm, and to restore myself to perfect health, I would not dare to do it, unless I have reason to believe it was the will of God [*Lacy Narrative*].**

Here is contentment with a voice of thanksgiving. At another time that same day, he said:

I thought, after I fell from the litter, that I would die upon the field; and I gave myself up into the hands of my heavenly father without a fear. I was in the possession of perfect peace. It has been a valuable and precious experience to me, that I was brought face to face with death, and found all was well. In that experience, I learned an important lesson, that one who had been the subject of converting grace, and was the child of God, could, in the midst of the severest sufferings fix the thoughts upon God and heavenly things, and derive great comfort and peace. But that one who had never made his peace with God, would be unable to control his mind, under such suffering and in such circumstances, so as to understand properly the way of Salvation and repent and believe on Christ. I felt that if I had neglected the salvation of my soul before, it would have been too late [*Lacy Narrative*].

Chaplain Tucker Lacy recorded for posterity these words of General Jackson and many biographers have repeated them. Jackson clearly through thanks-living showed that "godliness with contentment is great gain."

Paul expressed himself—"But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Phil. 4:10-11). He learned "in whatsoever state or in the condition in which I am." Paul bowed to the will of God in every condition in which he was placed.

We are not sufficient of ourselves but our sufficiency is of Christ. Do we bow in contentment resting in Christ alone? Are we thankful always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:20)?

Please find in this issue our Chaplain-in-Chief's message to the reader. Then our Chaplain-in-Chief gives us a very excellent article entitled *Thanksgiving and Adversity*. Your editor has provided a biographical sketch of *Chaplain J. J. D. Renfroe,* Part II. This issue as usual includes A Confederate Sermon, submitted by Chaplain Kenneth Studdard. This sermon is by Rev. John Lafayette Girardeau. This is the second of a series of five on Prayer; this one is on *The Spirit of Prayer.* Our Book Review is on the *Webster's Dictionary in Reprint of First Edition.*

Soli Deo Gloria,

Editor H. Rondel Rumburg

[*Compatriots, if you know of any members of the Chaplains' Corps or others who would like to receive this e-journal, please let us have their names and e-mail addresses.* ***Also, feel free to send copies of this***

journal to anyone you think would like to receive it. If you want to "unsubscribe" please e-mail the editor or assistant editor. Confederately, HRR]

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THE CHAPLAIN-IN-CHIEF'S MESSAGE

Dear fellow Chaplains and Friends of the Corps:

This time of thanksgiving gives us an opportunity to ponder the abundant blessings poured out upon us. As chaplains in the Sons of Confederate Veterans, we have many reasons to be thankful. The greatest blessing any of us can have is salvation in Jesus Christ. If we have that eternal blessing, we have everything. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things" (Romans 8:32)?

We are blessed to have a glorious heritage of valiant defenders of the Southland. Our relative's courage, character, perseverance and Christian virtues set a high standard. As SCV chaplains, we also have the example of faithful men of God who were used by the Lord to bring a glorious revival to the Southern armies. They labored zealously for the advancing of the cause of Jesus Christ. Dr. Rosser of Ewell's Division gave a description of the kind of chaplain needed in the Confederate armies:

> *We want our best men here – men of courage, faith, experience – holy men – hard working men – sympathizing men – self-denying men – men baptized afresh every day by the Holy Ghost for the work. No place here for slow men, mere reasoners and expositors, however learned or eloquent; war has no time to wait for such men – the soldier has no time to wait for such men – he may die tomorrow.* [The Great Revival in the Southern Armies, 333].

May the Lord give the SCV an abundance of such chaplains. I trust that you will have a wonderful Thanksgiving, rejoicing in God's mercies. Let's remember to

pray for one another, for our compatriots, and for the spiritual prospering of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Deo Vindice!

Mark W. Evans
Chaplain-in-Chief

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Chaplain-in-Chief's Article

Thanksgiving and Adversity

Mark W. Evans

Giving thanks in the time of peace and joy is easy, but having a thankful heart when all seems to be against us is extremely difficult. We find examples in God's Word that give us hope. Job, who lost his children and possessions, said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:22). David faced enemies from within and without, but said in Psalm 34:1, "I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth." Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, said in the midst of one of the darkest books of the Bible, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning, great is Thy faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22, 23). Habakkuk the prophet said, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet, I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Habakkuk 3:18, 19). When Paul and Silas were scourged by the Roman whip, put into stocks, and left in a dark prison, they "prayed, and sang praises unto God" (Acts 16:25). Paul instructed the Thessalonian believers, "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (I Thessalonians, 5:18). The Lord Jesus Christ, before going to the cross, comforted His disciples with these words, "And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" (John 16:22). Every true believer in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, from the weakest to the strongest, has many reasons to rejoice and thank God.

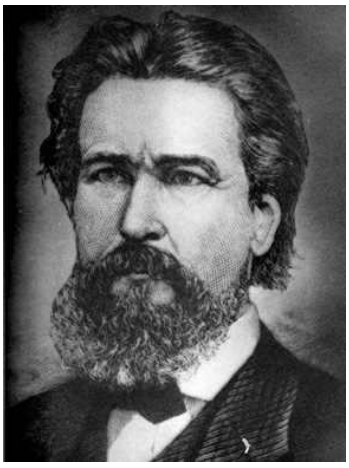
Our Confederate ancestors were deluged with miserable circumstances, yet, we read of their thanksgiving. In July, 1863, Rev. E. H. Myers, of the *Southern Christian Advocate,* said:

Our temporal condition looks none the brightest. God is trying us in a fiery furnace of war; and for the present, the battle seems to go against us. The high hopes for our country and of a speedy peace, which we entertained a few weeks since, have been in a measure disappointed, and we may be doomed to yet greater disappointment. But there is a refuge for the soul in every storm. God's peace and love, the joys and hopes of salvation, the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Holy Ghost, are not subject to human circumstances; and they may be ours amid every variety of calamity. But these are the fruits of the cultivation of personal religion; and, independent of every other consideration, the uncertainty of all other sources of comfort alone should be an inducement to us to betake ourselves to the refuge, to watch closely, pray much, believe with all our heart, and to cleave the closer to God, the louder the storm swells, and the more furiously the billows dash upon the wreck of earthly hopes. He who in the dark hour feels that he grows in grace and maintains soul-communion with God, stands upon a rock. He shall never be moved [Christ in the Camp, 607].

As the War for Southern Independence progressed and the superior numbers, weapons, and supplies of the enemy destroyed the prime of Dixie's noble warriors, God sent a revival to all the armies of the South. Chaplain A. D. McCoy, 58th Alabama, after detailing personal testimonies of soldiers repenting and believing in Jesus Christ, wrote: "Thus the work of God is going on amid the cannon's roar, the fatiguing monotony of the trenches, and the heroic movements of the picket line. Religion is infusing a spirit of fortitude, endurance, and determination, into the hearts of the soldiers that no hardship, no suffering, can undermine or break down" [*Christ in the Camp*, 559].

As the war moved towards a close, the Yankee hordes advanced upon private citizens, robbing, abusing, and destroying their property. Churches and public buildings were burned. Chaplain Bennett said, "The incidents of General Sherman's march were often painful to the last degree. From multitudes of people the last morsel of bread was taken, and in some instances delicate women were pushed to the verge of starvation" [*The Great Revival*, 408]. Yet, the spirit of the men in gray could not be broken. After the war, they returned, many with war injuries, to rebuild their devastated land. Chaplain Bennett asked the question, "[W]ere the fruits of the army revivals enduring?" He answered, "To this question thousands can this day, more than twelve years after the banners of the South were furled, give an emphatic affirmative response. In all the churches of the South there are earnest, devout and active Christians, who date their spiritual birth from some revival in Virginia, in the West, or in the far South" [*The Great Revival*, 427].

Some one hundred fifty years later, we are still reaping the harvest sown during the War for Southern Independence. Our relatives persevered through war, poverty, enemies of our way of life, and rebels against God. They fought for Constitutional liberty, State's Rights, and freedom from an oppressive central government. In the midst of the battle, another great cause emerged – the greatest cause of all – the salvation of sinners from the guilt and bondage of sin through faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ. With thankful hearts, we may trace the merciful hand of God preserving a testimony to this hour, even in the face of fierce enemies. The victory is certain. "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations" (Psalm 100:4, 5).



Chaplain J. J. D. Renfroe

(1830-1888)

10th Alabama Infantry Regiment

By Dr. H. Rondel Rumburg

Part II

Entering the Chaplains Corps

War is terrible and destructive, therefore it must not be entered into lightly. Only "just war" is acceptable to Christian people. What is "just war?" Biblically, it is the same as self defense. The South desired to be left to its own governance in accord with the original Constitution. This is why the Confederate States of

America Constitution was almost a replica of the Constitution of the Founding Fathers, many of whom were Southern men.

Renfroe preached a sermon in the Army of Northern Virginia called "God hath a Controversy with the Nations," and his text was Jeremiah 25:31, dealing with God's declaration of war against earthly nations. Herein he warned that Southern people "have forgotten our obligations to the God of our mercies." Waldrep, in the *Alabama Review*, pointed out the position that Chaplain Renfroe took:

> A theological Calvinist, Renfroe believed that nothing happened outside of God's will; thus the war had to be understood in cosmic dimensions, as an aspect of God's providential rule in the affairs of men. His explanation began with Adam's disobedience in the garden of Eden and the subsequent transmission of Adam's fallen nature to his posterity. "Here," he asserted, "is the cause of the controversy, of all our woe. Man is a sinner against God.... The effusions of blood that have flowed on the battlefield of every nation in all ages," he told his audiences, "have resulted from the sinful nature of our race."

In the eyes of Renfroe, since no nation is without sin, no nation is without war. War thus is a result ultimately of someone's disobedience to God.

This biographical sketch began with the death of J. J. D. Renfroe's brother, Baptist minister Nathaniel Renfroe, who had joined the 5th Alabama Infantry and served as a lieutenant. Personal correspondence and the deep love he had for his brother was a force in propelling him into the chaplaincy. Renfroe had at first opposed the military chaplaincy as being unconstitutional due to his interpretation of the issue of the separation of church and state, but the death of his brother caused a reconsideration of that position—"It is perhaps no credit to me that I accepted a chaplaincy prejudiced against the system" [*South Western Baptist*, September 10, 1863; Dwain B. Waldrep, *Alabama Review*, July 1999]. After Nathaniel's death he would throw himself into the gap and seek to bring Christ to the Confederate soldiers. There are a series of sermons Renfroe preached in the Army of Northern Virginia that are preserved in his own hand.

Riley noted:

> Pastors in Alabama were promptly enlisted in the work of taking the gospel to the soldiers, not in a merely perfunctory way, but with the vim and spirit of the country protracted meetings at home. Renfroe, Bailey, Hawthorne, Chambliss, DeVotie, Bell, and many others suspended the work of their pastorates, and went to the front [152].

It has been said that Renfroe was the best known of the Alabama chaplains. Before he became a chaplain, he was an agent for the Colportage Society spreading the Word of the Lord through literature. A. E. Dickinson wrote, "Rev. J. J. D. Renfroe … made known the fact that he had arrived at the conclusion that it was his duty to give himself to the army, his churches were very unwilling to give him up." Then he gave the following account:

> At one church, after several had spoken against his leaving, three of the sisters remarked, that while they valued as highly as any Brother Renfroe's services, they could cheerfully give him up to labor in the army, for they had sons there for whose conversion they felt very deeply. Each of these three sisters has received a great blessing. The sons of two of them have professed conversion, and the son of the third has been restored to the fellowship of God's people, from whom he had wandered [J. William Jones, *Christ in the Camp*, 328-329].

His chaplaincy began in the winter of 1863. The subsequent account was written in January of 1867:

> The Tenth Alabama was the regiment of which I was chaplain. The brigade was composed of the Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh and Fourteenth Alabama Regiments. I reckon this brigade comprised as noble a body of men as ever served in any army. I reached my post of duty while the army was in winter-quarters at Fredericksburg, in the early part of the year 1863…. Very little preaching had been done in the brigade up to that time…. The first Sabbath after I got there I preached twice, and from that time until I left them, I had a large attendance upon worship, and as good order in my congregations as I ever had at home [Jones, 510].

During the Gettysburg campaign he preached thirteen sermons, but most of them to other brigades. "I preached several sermons in line of battle," he confided. He preached at times when shot and shell were flying overhead and had men wounded while he was preaching [Jones, 511]. Chaplain Renfroe said that he saw few signs of revival up to Gettysburg. When they fell back to Orange Court House after Gettysburg, they built arbors and began to preach the gospel. The chaplains in the brigade through the faithful preaching of the gospel began to see the Lord's blessings in conversions. Chaplain Renfroe described the wind of revival that began to blow:

> God greatly blessed our efforts. I have stood at that place (his preaching place in the 10th Alabama) at night and on Sabbaths and preached, as it seemed to me, to a solid acre of men. I think I have seen as many as five or six hundred men, in one way or another, manifest at one time a desire to be prayed for. I have never seen such a time before or since. There were as many evidences of genuine penitence as I ever noticed at home—yes, more. Almost every day there would be a dozen conversions, and there were in the six weeks in the brigade, not less than five hundred who professed conversion…. A most interesting feature was the large number who would retire after the evening 'roll-call' in groups, to pray. Walk out from camp at that hour in any direction and you would find them, two, three, half-dozen and a dozen, in a place, all bowed in the dark, earnestly praying for themselves and the conversion of their comrades; they nearly always took some unconverted one with them [Jones, 510-511].

Chaplain Renfroe wrote a letter from the Army of Northern Virginia to a member of his pastorate in Talladega, Alabama:

> Were it not for separation from my dear family, I never was so happily situated in my life. I would rather be in the army than anywhere else. O, it is transporting to see the earnestness with which men enter upon the cause of religion, and the primitive familiarity and simplicity with which they approach each other and the preachers on the subject. And then there is scarcely an hour, but some poor inquiring soul comes to my tent to get instruction. I never saw the like of it before [Jones, 346-347].

What a change took place in Renfroe who was so reluctant to join the Chaplains Corps at first, only to be overwhelmed by the blessings of God upon his work as a chaplain. He was seeing hundreds of men come to Christ, and he administered baptism to many of these.

Chaplain Renfroe was greatly used of the Lord. Chaplain J. William Jones said that on September 6th, 1863, he was engaged to preach for Brother J. J. D. Renfroe in the great revival in Wilcox's Brigade near the Rapidan River, not far from Orange Court House. On the afternoon of that day, Chaplain Jones witnessed what he described as "a most interesting baptismal scene in a creek near the railroad … where Dr. Andrew Broaddus, of Caroline county … and Chaplain Renfroe baptized eighty two soldiers…" [Jones, 246]. Then that same day as dusk came, Jones went with Chaplain Renfroe to his place of worship. Those who attended were not just from the 10th Alabama, but men came from every direction until at least 5,000 men had assembled. Chaplain Jones preached and around two hundred professed Christ [246].

Chaplain Renfroe pushed himself in the work to the point of nearly breaking down physically. The toll of intercession and preaching numerous times a day for three weeks was now about to be collected. A visiting chaplain said that he had witnessed those under Renfroe's ministry, and he had never seen men so eager to hear and profit from the preached word of God. Many professed faith in Christ and were baptized.

Chaplain Renfroe's preaching was very noteworthy. His sermons have been described as "well constructed and powerful in their rhetorical effect" [Waldrep]. Jerry M. Windsor, in an article called "Preaching Up a Storm from 1839 to 1889," described our chaplain's preaching as "earnest, direct, aggressive." Windsor noted that Renfroe "preached a sermon to General Forney's brigade of Robert E. Lee's army, entitled 'The Sin of Stealing.' Renfroe had been made aware of comrades' stealing from one another in the front lines of battle, and he attacked the problem directly and forcefully" [*The Alabama Baptist Historian*, Vol. 29, January 1993, No. 1, 15]. Chaplain Renfroe went to the heart of the matter in his ministry and the Lord greatly blessed his honesty and truthfulness as he held up "thus saith the Lord."

A very similar approach was seen when Chaplain Renfroe preached the sermon entitled "Jeering the Bald Head." This sermon had been prepared and preached

because a number of enlisted men were mocking and deriding their officers. The chaplain thought this was disrespectful and unscriptural, so he went into detail describing incidents which he had seen and heard where men spoke disrespectfully or sarcastically to officers. In this message he reminded the men of Elisha's words in 2nd Kings 2:23-24 and how he had called down a curse upon the children for mocking him. He described how two she-bears came out of the forest to eat forty-two children who were thus guilty. Chaplain Renfroe in this message declared, "You are soldiers in the hands of superiors who can invoke the aid of the she-bear" [Windsor, 16]. This message no doubt got the attention of the culprits. Thus his sermons aimed at the soul and mind and decorum of the men bolstering the cause in a way most would have overlooked.

Renfroe was requested to have a fast day sermon put in print. This sermon he had preached on August 21st, 1863, and in his prefacing remarks he said he had to "snatch fragments of time from the pressing duties of an extensive and glorious revival of religion." There was great revival under his chaplaincy as the Lord was pleased to send the Holy Spirit to anoint and apply the sermons which he preached to the hearts of hundreds of men, many of whom were to face eternity in hours or days.

The years of Renfroe's chaplaincy was spent in Virginia with the 10th Alabama. He was true to the end in providing the ministry of the gospel. The year 1865 was declared by Renfroe to be a year of "woe and lamentation."

Conflict of Arms Ended

When his work as a chaplain was wrapped up, Pastor Renfroe returned to the congregation in Talladega. There he readjusted himself to civilian life, and the pastoral scene must have seemed very tame to one who had spent years in the field. Literal bullets were no longer flying, but conflict was far from over.

The conflict of arms ended but the conflict in many other ways was about to be revved up by a hate-mongering elite bent on destroying Southern faith and culture. Pastor Renfroe confided to his congregation at the Talladega Baptist Church that there were many things that he wished to say to them, but they had to be repressed. Why? There was a sea of brass buttons on blue uniforms sitting before him. Lest there be reprisals against his flock, he practiced restraint. However, to make his point, Renfroe told a story of an old rebel prisoner being informed by his guards that he could not speak his mind. Finally, one of the guards asked what he was thinking, and the prisoner replied, "Damn the Yankees." Renfroe's point, "Now, I have not yet come to that in my thoughts, but I have come so near it several times that my conscience is repeatedly operating on the subject every day" [Sermon, "Redeeming the Time"].

In the added preamble of his sermon, "The Resurrection of the Confederate Soldier," Renfroe related an incident between himself and Gen. Christler (General Morgan Henry Chrysler) after the war at Talladega. Chrysler was military governor of the District of Northern Alabama at the time and attended Renfroe's ministry:

> (I)n the summer of 1865 when the war was over, there was a great revival in my church at Talladega, when the Hon. J. L. M. Curry, now minister to the Spanish Court at Madrid, was a minister of my church and did most of the preaching; and the aforesaid General. Christler (Chrysler) and many of his garrison were regular attendants on the services, and three of his men united with my church. I baptized them in Talladega Creek—a large stream near at hand; it was a pleasant scene to see the whole city on the banks of the creek witnessing the baptism of men of the conquering army and of the conquered, going into the water together…. My Union disciples reported to me however, that they were kicked and cuffed about a good deal in camp on the strength of their "rebel salvation"—not by their officers, but by their comrades of the line [6-7, 9].

Renfroe said of the gloriousness of the final resurrection is that they will be brought "up together."

When Renfroe preached the funerals for Confederate veterans, he honored them as much as he did those he buried during the war. Of the men who survived the war whose funerals he conducted many were men whom he ministered to as their chaplain in the 10th Alabama. These funerals were in a sense a vindication of their fight for freedom. His sermon, "The Resurrection of the Confederate Soldier," began, "The Christian thinks of his Saviour when told that 'without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.'" And he immediately said:

> The patriot thinks of his fallen comrades and of the soldiers of former ages, when told that 'blood is the price of liberty.' As we stand at the open graves of these our officers and comrades, we feel that we are paying a great price for the boon for which they died….
>
> There is not and never will be dishonor attached to their graves. Following our convictions of an honest patriotism they have laid down their lives for the vindication of these convictions. Let it not be said that it has been a mere sectionalism and not patriotism which has inspired those brave men…. They have died in an effort to prevent the fetters of political slavery which is attempted by an old and scheming sectional enemy. If their survivors should fail, then the effort will be made to hand them down to posterity as traitors, but even in this case the slanderous effort would prove a failure…. (T)hey can no more be disgraced than England can disgrace the graves of the soldiers of Cromwell. The death of every one of them imposes on us the additional responsibility of guarding their honor [10-13].

This was a powerful sermon in which he reminded his hearers:

> We fought on the same principles which actuated the forefathers of American liberty…. We fought to maintain the institutions and the liberty which were secured to us in the Constitution of the Country; and we laid down our lives in resistance to a sectional party

> which had conspired to overthrow the fundamental compact on which the original Government was based [14].

Some have tried to turn Dr. Renfroe into a New South man, but the previous quote looks Old South to this writer! There are those who call him a "Lost Cause apologist," but where will anyone ever find that concept in Renfroe? Modern writers often seem to fear the "thought police" or politically correct Gestapo, so they impose false interpretations to one who bows to God's providence and recognizes reality. What is the result of such misconceptions? They turn great men into hypocrites. Renfroe always sought to vindicate truth Biblically, in spiritual things, or Constitutionally, in civil things. *The Baptist Encyclopedia* astutely noted:

> Dr. Renfroe is a man of strong convictions, with courage to follow wherever they lead without hesitation and without wavering. An humble man of God, who has spent his life and sacrificed himself in the service of his Master [970].

Interestingly, when Renfroe was working with the Alabama Baptist State Convention in 1868 and 1869, his mission reports took the form of "biblically based sermons." "In the 1868 domestic missions report, Renfroe used Acts 1:8 to remind all present that missions were to start at 'Jerusalem—beginning at home.'" Then when he gave his foreign mission report he "used Isaiah 42:6 to show that the Christian Church must be a light to the Gentiles" [Windsor, 17]. Renfroe's life was based on the Word of God and so was his view of doing the work of the Lord.

He also returned to the labors of his denomination with its needs and work. His pen was quickly put to use in contributing articles to various Baptist periodicals. As corresponding editor of the *South Western Baptist* and *Christian Index* he sought to be a source of encouragement to God's people. This was true when he was associate editor and then editor of the *Alabama Baptist*. The Southern people and former Confederate soldiers found a friend as he defended their values, beliefs and customs. He was ever ready to defend the faith once delivered to the saints. There was also the need for rescuing or rebuilding the institutions damaged by the invasion and preoccupation with defense. Pastor Renfroe set to doing what he could, which was a great deal. There were many boards that he was requested to serve on during this process.

Many of the sermons of Pastor Renfroe made reference to the Southern cause and those who fought it. "It was J. J. D. Renfroe who constantly used his war experience to begin, end, and illustrate sermons" [Windsor, 19]. This is certainly evident when one reads those sermons.

When General R. E. Lee passed away on October 22nd, 1870, Pastor Renfroe remembered the esteemed Virginian and Southern Christian gentleman in a sermon. The title of this message he preached to the congregation he pastored was

"A Star of the First Magnitude of General Robert E. Lee." His text was—"For one star differeth from another star in glory" (1 Cor. 15:41). He told the congregation:

> And now, in harmony with the spirit of the text … we propose to bring forward the name, virtues, and character of General Lee, and if the world were assembled here we would modestly and yet boldly challenge the chronicles of the past and the living present, "match him if you can!" We will not claim that he never had an equal, but that we have known nothing of his superior…. And while one planet in the moral and intellectual heavens differs from another in glory, we assume that our retired and fallen hero is a star of the first magnitude—standing among human luminaries as a "burning and a shining light."

In this message Renfroe dealt with Lee's noble attributes and character [6-7]. In this message is an encouraging word regarding Lee and those who respected him. He pointed out that the glory of such men as Cromwell, Wellington, Havelock, Washington, etc. was "the glory of success; that of Lee shines out luminously in the hour of defeat in the dark days of subjugation" [14-15]. A bit later he stated, "It seems to your speaker that Gen. Lee … will stand the test for greatness whether tried by the hard rule of success or the harder rule of failure" [15]. Of course Pastor Renfroe used the message to encourage the sheep in the local fold. This encouragement was evident in such declarations as, "A dark cloud drew itself between him and the object of his cherished hopes, but so brilliant was this bright star, that its rays burst through that cloud and throws a flood of light on the dreary pathway of the disappointed and defeated" [15]. He held Lee up to youth as a role model. Renfroe indicated that it did not matter when the stars from the South ascended; they "are our stars still…. Hard by the glories of Lee stands his illustrious Lieutenant General Jackson—the inspiration of the Southern armies and the consternation of the invading forces" [19].

Howard College (now Samford University) conferred a Doctor of Divinity degree on him in 1875. He diligently sought to raise funds for this institution which was almost put out of existence during the war. He was one of the instruments in its relocation to Birmingham.

There was the frustration and consternation with the results of the war and the conflicts that took another form. Pastor Renfroe never believed the South was wrong in defending herself against a hostile invasion. The outcome of the war was according to God's providence and thus he accepted it. Theologically he understood but he found it challenging to submit to Yankee masters policing the South and interfering in about every aspect of life after the war during occupation.

Pastor Renfroe preached a sermon to his congregation that he had preached during the war. The title of the sermon was "Bitter Waters Made Sweet." This was a very practical sermon to men who had seen so much carnage and death, but it was equally practical to a congregation suffering under want, occupation and military coercion.

There were in his life many difficulties from beginning to end but Renfroe trusted the one who saved him by grace and kept him unto glory. His life was one of facing the difficulties head on. *The Baptist Encyclopedia* recognized these issues:

> The latter years of his life have been made bitter by severe bereavements and affliction. Amid repeated sore troubles and hard trials, rapidly recurring, he has made it manifest that he is a trusting child of God, a good servant of Christ, who can endure hardness as a good soldier of the Cross [970].

During his involvement in supporting Howard College he met others at Birmingham's First Baptist Church where he became ill. He was taken to his brother-in-law's home in Woodlawn for care, but the time of his summons had come. Thus on June 2nd, 1888, he closed his eyes to earthly things. Elsie, his wife, had passed from this earthly scene just nine months previously. J. J. D. Renfroe was interred beside his wife at Oak Hill Cemetery in Talladega, Alabama, where he had spent so many years ministering to the Lord's people. "So shall he ever be with the Lord."

B. F. Riley gives what could be called Renfroe's Eulogy:

> Dr. J. J. D. Renfroe had died at Woodlawn—a leader whose death occasioned universal sorrow. No one had exceeded Dr. Renfroe in the esteem, honor, and love of the Baptist people of Alabama. Chivalric in disposition, the soul of honor, a great preacher and leader, he was preeminent in the esteem of the people to whom he was, in turn, devoted [253].

A CONFEDERATE SERMON

Submitted by Chaplain Kenneth Studdard

John Lafayette Girardeau (1825-98) was a Presbyterian pastor and theologian of great ability. His life was devoted to the preaching of the gospel. His heart was deeply moved to work among the slaves of his native South Carolina. Prior to the outbreak of the War Between the States, he served as pastor of a predominantly black church.

Girardeau was once called the "Spurgeon of America," and many were moved by his powerful Christ-centered preaching. In *Preachers with Power*, Douglas Kelly describes Girardeau as one who "had a profound grasp of the reformed faith and was skilled in preaching it with unusual power, clarity and unction to the men and women of his own culture…not a few observers expressed surprise at the theological nature of his preaching to the black slaves."

Girardeau served the Confederate Army as a chaplain of the Twenty-third Regiment of the South Carolina Volunteers. Following the war Girardeau continued in the pastorate until he was called to the chair of Didactic and Polemic Theology of Columbia Theological Seminary. He would continue in that position until retiring due to poor health.

The following sermon on prayer was the **second in a series of five sermons** delivered late in 1865, in Zion Presbyterian Church, Glebe Street, Charleston. A note by Dr. Girardeau says: "Daily prayer was offered by crowds of worshippers for the success of the Confederate struggle. In consequence of its disastrous result, many of God's people were, by Satanic influence, tempted to slack their confidence in prayer. These sermons were an humble attempt to help them under this trial." We will publish all five sermons in this series in the CCC over the next five months.

THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER: OR THE MANNER IN WHICH IT OUGHT TO BE PERFORMED

Hebrews, x: 22. *"Let us draw near with a true hearty in full assurance of faith having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."*

In the words immediately preceding the text the apostle, as I endeavored to show in the last discourse, indicates the grounds of acceptable prayer. They are, first, the atoning death of the great Mediator, forcibly expressed by the words, "'the blood of Jesus"; and, secondly, the presidency of Christ as a great High Priest over the house of God in all that pertains to the offering of worship. And the warrant which we have to approach God in reliance upon these grounds is derived from His own invitations, commands, and promises. Your attention is now asked to a consideration of the question, What is the spirit of true and acceptable prayer? How should we pray? In what manner should we attempt to discharge this all-important duty? In answering these questions I shall follow the order of statement observed in the text.

I. In the first place, in conformity to the exhortation of the inspired apostle, we should earnestly endeavor, in all our prayers, to "draw near" unto God. This evidently implies that we should avail ourselves of that perfect liberty of access to God which is granted to us under the present dispensation in consequence of the completed mediatorial work of Christ, and His prevalent advocacy of our cause in the heavenly Holy of Holies. In the whole of this suggestive passage a contrast is drawn between the restricted worship

of the old economy and the untrammelled freedom of our approach to God under the provisions of the new. Not that it is by any means implied that the way to God through prayer was unknown to the saints of the former dispensation, or that there were not conspicuous examples of the performance of this duty before the advent and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Daniel and a host of others, were remarkable exemplars of the fervor and the efficacy of prayer. Every believer during the past dispensations of the Gospel enjoyed access to a prayer-hearing God. We do not differ from them in the fact that we can come to God in supplication while they could not; but our state is discriminated from theirs by the consideration that as a result of the accomplished sacrifice of Christ we have greater liberty, a bolder confidence in drawing near to God. We are not now admitted into the holiest of all only after the lapse of protracted intervals, and upon the occasion of solemn and national lustrations. We are not deterred from drawing nigh the blood-besprinkled mercy seat by a veil which dripped with blood and a glory which forbade the approach of the ordinary worshipper. We come not as the Israelite did, even when represented by the august High Priest, only to the symbols of the divine presence. Nor are we obliged to conform, as a prerequisite to acceptable petition, to the requirements of a cumbersome and painful ritual, to present daily the blood of animal sacrifices and to furnish the numberless offerings exacted upon pain of death by the rigid statutes of the Mosaic institute. On the contrary, we are privileged to come unto God, to approach into the holiest of all every day and every moment. No interposed veil stands between the worshipper and the innermost sanctuary. The flesh of Jesus has been rent and the veil exists no more, or exists only as an open door through which our High Priest passed into the heavens and through which all His people are invited to enter with Him — a privilege now enjoyed by faith, and actually possessed at the personal passage of believers at death into the heavenly sanctuary. We come not now, as of old, into contact with the symbols of the divine presence, but into the very presence of a gracious and reconciled God. No blood of daily sacrifices is required at our hands, nor need the smoke of the morning and the evening oblation ascend to God; we come through the sacrifice of Jesus which was offered once for all, and the infinite merit of which opens the way for the advance of every true believer, and the submission of every true petition. What an extraordinary privilege, my brethren, do we thus possess! A privilege denied, in its full extent, to the saintly patriarchs, prophets, and

servants of God in time past, but now freely granted to the humblest believer in the atoning Lamb. How great will be our guilt and folly if we neglect to avail ourselves of this liberty of worship and fail to draw near unto God!

It is also implied, in drawing near to God, that we endeavor to attain to nothing short of an intimate personal communion with the Father of our spirits. We have seen that the guilt of the believer is fully expiated by the blood of Jesus, and the pardon of the believer is actually secured for him by the priestly intercessions of his great High Priest. God is, therefore, no longer an unpropitiated judge. He is a reconciled God and tender and pitiful father. It has been said that the style by which the Old Testament saints addressed the Deity was — the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, but that that employed by believers in the New Dispensation is — the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Go to my brethren," said Jesus to Mary at the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection, "'go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God." "Blessed," says the Apostle Peter, "be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Our sins estranged us from Him and drove us into exile from His paternal presence and from the tokens of His fatherly love. In Christ He is reconciled to us and admits us to His gracious presence. Our communion with Him is not only restored, but enhanced and enlarged. "Truly," exclaims the Apostle John, in appreciation of this illustrious privilege, "our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." The great God now regards us as children adopted in His Son and beloved for His sake. As children, therefore, are entitled to enter into their father's presence, to invade, so to speak, his very privacy, and to come before him with filial confidence at all times with their petitions, so are we, my brethren, authorized to approach our heavenly Father, to hold personal communion with Him, and freely and fully to present our prayers and make known our wants. Nor should we ever be satisfied unless in our worship we have sensibly attained to this sacred yet intimate fellowship with our God, have been enabled to talk to Him as children to a parent, and have thus consciously realized the fact that we have drawn near unto Him.

In connection with this point, it may be remarked, that drawing near to God supposes not a perfunctory performance of prayer, dictated by the demands of custom or a cold and formal sense of obligation, but a kindling of

the emotions which naturally spring from near and holy intercourse with Him. In coming near to Him in personal communion we are attracted by His infinite glory, beauty and loveliness, are powerfully drawn to Him by sentiments of gratitude and love, and secure that moved and elevated state of the affections which renders prayer an actual joy and best prepares us for the duties, the conflicts and the trials of life. Without some such experience as this, though the fundamental elements of prayer may not be entirely absent, we fail to discharge the duty in such a manner as to entitle it to be described as a drawing near of the soul unto God.

II. The second element in the spirit of true prayer, which is mentioned by the apostle, is that we should come to God "with true hearts." There are two things which are suggested by these words: in the first place, that in prayer, our hearts should be true to God; and in the second place, that we should be true to ourselves. That our worship should be acceptable it is necessary that it should be that of the heart. It is the language of the heart which God expects, and no other language, whether it be that of outward services or of words, is ever acceptable to Him except as the medium of His own appointment through which the heart utters itself to Him. Nor is it only the worship of the heart which He demands. The heart itself must be characterized by truth. That our hearts should be true to God, it is essential that they should, in the prayers they urge, be conformed to the nature and perfections of God, to the relations which we sustain to Him, to the requirements of His word, and to the really existing condition of our own souls in His sight.

It deserves to be considered, then, that our hearts are true to God in prayer when they recognize Him in His spirituality and render to Him a spiritual worship which corresponds with His nature. "The hour cometh," says our Savior, "and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." It is not so much required of us that we worship in this or that place, in Jerusalem or Samaria; nor that we employ this or that external mode of addressing God; what He does expect of us as absolutely indispensable to any worship at all, is that as He is a pure and intelligent Spirit, our spirits should hold true and genuine communion with Him.

It ought also to be noticed that the spirituality of the divine nature makes it requisite that our hearts, if they would be true to God, should divest

themselves of those vain and unscriptural imaginations and conceptions by which material properties are attached to Him. I am not unaware, as our Savior possesses a human nature, and that nature is represented as being in a certain locality designated as heaven, and as being the medium through which the divine glory is manifested to the celestial worshippers, that it would be unscriptural and extravagant to say that such conceptions, so far as they apply to this mode of Christ's existence, are illegitimate. The truth is, that the facts of the case and our own mental natures necessitate them. We cannot think of Christ without associating with Him corporeal qualities. But what I would urge is this, that worship rendered to God as God must recognize His spirituality, and that we ought to labor to free ourselves from those imagings of His essential nature which degrade or limit it by the ascription to it of material qualities. When we are privileged to draw most near to God we feel that in Him we live and move and have our being, and that He is restricted to no place and no material forms in the manifestation of His presence and the exhibition of His glory. Of course, this view of the spirituality of the divine nature and the spiritual worship which truth requires will exclude all impious attempts, on any pretence whatsoever, to frame some material image of God by the efforts of human art through which we may conceive ourselves better able to approach Him or to attain the sense of nearness to Him. Now, as of old, the command of God is thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image: thou shalt not bow down thyself to it or serve it. Whatever may be pleaded for these painted or sculptured representations of an immaterial Being, their tendency necessarily is to the destruction of spiritual worship; and the blinded, fascinated and imbruted faculties lose at last all capacity for true and heartfelt worship. These words may not be gratuitous. Prophecy informs us that the time is coming — and there are not a few who think it not far distant, — when these old and settled principles of Protestants will be brought to a crucial test. To worship the image of Antichrist will then be to live, to refuse it homage will be to die. Happy he who will consent to die that he may forever live!

It merits our consideration, too, that in order that our hearts should be true to God in prayer, they should recognize His greatness, majesty, holiness and glory, and worship Him "with reverence and godly fear." Liberty of access to Him by no means implies that we are warranted in approaching Him with thoughtlessness and rashness. We are never to forget the great and terrible name of the Lord our God. He is in heaven, and we upon earth; He

the infinite God filling immensity with His presence, and we insignificant worms of the dust, debased by sin even unto hell, and dignified and ennobled only by the gracious notice which He is pleased to take of us. His glory fills the heavens and the most exalted principalities of that celestial state approach Him with reverence and awe, and bending in the light of His majesty, cry, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. It becomes us, truth requires it of us, to come unto God with profoundest humility, and to pay our homage to Him with reverent and prostrate adoration.

I remark, further, that in order that our hearts may be true to God in prayer, it is necessary that they should be characterized by sincerity, and be free from hypocrisy, double-dealing and formality. This involves the necessity of being ever deeply convinced that our secret motives, intents and thoughts are open to the scrutiny of the all-seeing eye. "Thou God seest me." "O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and my uprising; Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine hand upon me. Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee." Were we always properly impressed by the truth conveyed in these striking words of the Psalmist, we should less seldom vitiate our prayers and vacate them of efficacy by the insincerity and hypocrisy which may be mingled with them. It is frequently the case that while we pray to be delivered from sin, our hearts secretly cling to it and are reluctant to give it up; so that we should be disappointed by receiving the answer which we seek with our lips. And not only is this the case in specific cases, but a secret regard for sin operates to the destruction of all truthfulness of heart in prayer, and closes the ear of God against our petitions. "If," says David, "I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." This is a species of insincerity which consists in pretending to desire what we do not, and it is as abhorrent as it is patent to Him who desireth truth in the inward parts. On the other hand, we may be equally

guilty of insincerity by seeking from motives which God cannot approve the things which we really desire. This sort of insincerity is designated by the Apostle James when he assigns a reason why some of our prayers fail of receiving an answer, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." It would be interesting to inquire what motives come under this class, what prayers are thus invalidated, but the scope of this discourse precludes the discussion. Suffice it to say that any state of the soul which consists with a love of sin, with an indisposition to submit to the divine will, and with a refusal to seek the divine glory as our great and ultimate end, is characterized by an untruthfulness to God which hinders the success of our prayers. We are not true to God in our prayers, if we love sin instead of hating it, if we seek the gratification of our own wills rather than the accomplishment of God's will, and if we desire our own reputation and advancement rather than the glory of God's great name.

The exhortation of the apostle, it may be observed in the next place, supposes that in our prayers we should be true to ourselves, both in regard to our own personal necessities and the needs of those who are related to us. This implies such a knowledge of our own state, such a conviction of our own wants, as will lead to fervent earnestness and importunate ceaselessness in pressing our petitions. It is evident that in order to pray as we should, we ought, in some degree, to understand our necessities, and to feel them. It becomes us, therefore, to examine into the condition of our souls, that we may be prepared to plead with God. And then when apprized of our wants, we should not be satisfied with merely mentioning them at the throne of grace, or coldly asking their supply; we should urge our suits with fervent earnestness. We have eminent examples of this manner of presenting prayer in the saints mentioned in Scripture. The most illustrious case is that of the Lord Jesus Himself, who is represented as having spent much of His time in wrestling with God, prays with strong cryings and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death. We are commanded to ask that we may receive, to seek that we may find, to knock that it may be opened to us. Truthfulness to our own wants requires that we should be instant, that is, urgent in prayer, that like Jacob we should wrestle with God, and like Jesus pour out our supplications with strong cryings and tears.

To be true to our own necessities, furthermore, we must continue importunately and unremittingly to pray. Our needs are always pressing and demand unceasing prayer. And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that

men ought always to pray and not to faint. Like the poor widow in this parable, we should, in spite of discouragements and delays, of baffled expectations and disappointed hopes, continue to plead our cause until the answer is in some form received. Perhaps there is no one duty which is more frequently inculcated in the Scriptures than that of importunate and incessant prayer. "Praying always," says Paul, "with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance." "Evening and morning and at noon," says David, "will I pray and cry aloud." Daniel kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks. "Continue in prayer and watch in the same." "The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer."

III. In the third place, we are exhorted, in the text, to draw near to God in prayer "in full assurance of faith." The apostle does not here, as I conceive, allude to what is ordinarily understood as assurance, that is, the certain persuasion of our being the children of God, though a feature of Christian experience clearly enounced in other passages of Scripture as one which we should labor diligently to attain. His meaning in this place, I take it, is that in approaching God in prayer, we should repose undoubting reliance upon the death and intercessions of the Lord Jesus as sufficient grounds for our petitions, a childlike and unquestioning confidence in the willingness of our great High Priest to present and of our Heavenly Father to accept our prayers, and a firm belief in the promises of God to answer us favorably so far as may be for His glory and our highest good. Doubt upon these points is a hindrance to the proper performance of this great duty. The limitations which God may see fit to impose upon the fulfillment of His promises have already, in a previous discourse, been fully suggested. He best knows what is consistent with His glory and the welfare of His people, and He reserves to Himself the sovereign prerogative to answer prayer in accordance with His righteous will. But even in view of these limitations — in full recognition of the divine sovereignty, and in profound submission to the divine will, it is alike our duty and our privilege, in all cases in which we are convinced that we offer petitions which are not inconsistent with the revealed will of God, to pray in full assurance of faith. This duty is frequently inculcated by the Savior. "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." The Apostle James, in directing us to pray for wisdom, bids us ask in faith, nothing wavering; and declares that doubt is

fatal to success. "For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." It is obvious that a general rule is here delivered which, although applied by the apostle to a special case, is capable of universal application. My brethren, we are conscious of infinite guiltiness, infinite shortcomings, and infinite worthlessness. Satan infuses doubts into our minds and our own hearts tempt us to skepticism. Let us believe. In the blood of Jesus and the intercession of Jesus we have sufficient grounds for approaching God. Let us rely upon them. Our great High Priest and righteous advocate is willing to receive our prayers and present them before the throne. Let us trust Him. Our reconciled God and Father in Christ Jesus is ready to accept our petitions. Let us confide in Him. To doubt is to do injustice to a Savior's work and the dispositions of a Father's heart. Come, let us draw near to God in full assurance of faith.

IV. In the fourth and last place, the apostle encourages us to come to God in prayer, "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

There are two cases in which the heart is so influenced by an evil conscience as to be hindered in endeavoring to offer acceptable prayer. The first is that in which the conscience convicts us of guilt, accuses us of it, and reflecting the sentence of the broken law, condemns us for its existence. This necessarily produces a timid and slavish condition of the soul, which is utterly inconsistent with the enjoyment of that filial confidence without which it is impossible to draw near to God with liberty and boldness. The blood of Jesus sprinkled, through faith, upon the conscience, satisfies its demands, silences its accusations, and annuls its condemning sentence. We are, in consequence, no longer ashamed or afraid to come unto God. The blood of Jesus, as the apostle says in another passage, purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. The soul is no longer slain under the curse of a violated and unsatisfied law. The blood of atonement applied by the grace of the Spirit has rendered it a living soul. Its works are consequently living works and suited to be presented to a living God. In coming to God by prayer, therefore, we should labor so to apprehend the atoning merits of Christ as to be delivered from an enslaving bondage to an accusing and condemning conscience.

The second case in which liberty in prayer is impeded by an evil conscience is that in which, through the special pleadings of a perverted

understanding and a corrupt heart, the conscience is deceived and induced to tolerate the soul in the secret indulgence of sin. So long as this condition lasts, no access to God in prayer can be enjoyed. The heart regards iniquity, and God will not, consequently, hear our prayers. The blood of Jesus sprinkling the conscience purges it of its blindness, clears up its perceptions of the real facts in the case and leads it to continue its rebukes of the sin until it is repented of and forsaken. The defiled condition of the heart is thus removed, and liberty in prayer is the result. We should draw near to God, therefore, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience by the blood of Jesus.

To this the apostle adds the necessity of having our bodies washed with pure water. Dr. Owen is of opinion that the allusion in these words is not to the purification which is symbolized by the washing of baptism. It may be that it is included in the idea presented by the apostle; but I am inclined to think that that was not its chief significance, and to agree with the great theologian just mentioned in supposing that Paul's meaning is that in coming to God in prayer, we should be cleansed, not only from the guilt of those secret sins by which the heart is defiled, but also from that of those more open and grosser sins which the body is instrumental in committing. The blood of Christ applied by the grace of the Holy Ghost washes us from the pollution communicated by these sins. And as it is necessary that in praying acceptably we should not secretly regard iniquity in our hearts, it is equally incumbent upon us, if we would pray aright, to resist the solicitations of those sins of the flesh from which we have been purified by the blood of Jesus and the washing of the Holy Ghost. It is plain that allowed indulgence in such sins bars the way of access to God. Let us, therefore, draw near to God, having our bodies washed with pure water.

Book Review

Noah Webster's First Edition of An American Dictionary of the English Language

by Noah Webster

Foundation for American Christian Education

The first edition to own is published by the Foundation for American Christian Education and has a prefacing article by Rosalie J. Slater. Slater noted, "Today when the biblical basis of education is under systematic attack we need to capitalize upon the availability of our first American dictionary – the only dictionary in the world to *"draw water out of the wells of salvation"* – to utilize God's written word as a key to the meaning of words. Historically, it documents the degree to which the Bible was America's basic text book in all fields."

There is an excellent chapter added to this edition titled, *Noah Webster: Founding Father of American Scholarship and Education.*

Why review a reprint of the first edition? This is the unadulterated version. Words matter! Have you ever heard, "Those are fighting words?" Words may be used to falsely incriminate, to pardon, to assassinate a person's good name and character. Southerners of all people should be aware of the misuse and abuse of words. Richard M. Weaver reminds us in *Ideas Have Consequences*: "Words because of their common currency acquire significance greater than can be imparted to them by a single user and greater than can be applied to a single situation." A good dictionary is essential in learning. One who reads books prior to the twentieth century needs such a dictionary in order to understand those authors in context.

Consider the destructive forces that are mutilating our language and thus distorting understanding. Consider for example the definition of the *family*. Webster in his 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language* defined "family" as "1. ...a household, including parents, children and servants.... 2. Those who descend from one common progenitor (forefather).... Thus, Israelites were a branch of the family of Abraham." The drift in definition of the "family" has plunged into the abyss. *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* defined "family" as "...a group of individuals living under one roof and usually under one head (household).... 5. The basic unit of society having as its nucleus two or more adults living together and cooperating in the case and rearing of their own or adopted children." Where are we headed? Yes, we have reached the abyss. Have you heard of the Charles Manson family? Yes, this group was described as a family. The word "family" has become identified with every form of behavior that is an abomination to God, such as: homosexual marriages, unwed partners, group relations and mate swapping to name some.

Webster considered education to be "useless without the Bible." He stated: "In my view, the Christian religion is the *most important and one of the first things* in which *all* children, under a free government, ought to be instructed…. No truth is more evident to my mind than that the Christian religion must be the basis of any government intended to secure the rights and privileges of a free people." The Webster's 1828 Dictionary is a unique and essential tool for educating Christians. It has the greatest number of Biblical definitions of any reference. The roots of words are traced in many languages. There are examples of proper use from classical literature and the Bible. This dictionary becomes not only a tool for defining words Biblically, it becomes a way of thinking that forms a worldview. It will equip you for Christian leadership, strengthen your vocabulary, give you an edge in communicating your view and become your foundation for thinking and reasoning Biblically. This tool can be the turning point for you to be more effective in communicating Christian principles used in government, economics, and marketing or for your child to clearly understand how the Bible has influenced every area of life.

We must remember who we are and what we must be about:

The SCV Challenge by Lt. Gen. S. D. Lee

To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we will commit the vindication of the cause for which we fought. To your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles which he loved and which you love also, and those ideals which made him glorious and which you also cherish. Remember, it is your duty to see that the true history of the South is presented to future generations.

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Chaplain's Handbook

Sesquicentennial Edition

Sons of Confederate Veterans

This is an enlarged Sesquicentennial Edition of the *Chaplain's Handbook*. It is enlarged from 131 pages to 165 pages. A chapter has been added on the topic, *SCV Chaplains Should be Gentlemen;* there has also been added a third burial service, *The Order for the Burial of the Dead of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Confederate States of America;* a chapter on *Praying in Public* has been added; and a chapter on *Prayer Suggestions for Public Use.* All the other chapters remain the same.

Hopefully, those using the handbook will find it even more useful than before. There is the same cloth cover, acid free paper for longevity, sewn signatures, etc.

The retail price is being kept to a minimum of $12, which is very low for a hardback quality publication. Contact SCV headquarters or biblicalandsouthernstudies.com for a copy.