

*Chaplains' Corps Chronicles*  
of the  
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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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**“That the Southern people literally were put to the torture is vaguely understood, but even historians have shrunk from the unhappy task of showing us the torture chambers.” Claude G. Bowers**

## The Sesquicentennial of Reconstruction

1865 - 1876

**“Reconstruction was ... an artificial fog, behind which the ‘master minds’ staged a revolution that changed America from a democracy to a plutocracy of ever-growing magnitude.” Rep. B. Carroll Reece (R-TN) 1960**

### Quote from a Confederate Chaplain

**“It gives me great pleasure to inform you and the friends of our regiment ... that the Lord continues to pour out His Spirit upon us. During the three months and a half of our camping here, about twenty-five of our officers and men have professed Christ.... A great deal of zeal and love for Christ are exhibited by both old and young professors.... We don’t cease to remember our Churches in our prayers. Do they remember us?”**

**Chaplain William E. Wiatt**

**26<sup>th</sup> Virginia Regiment**



### Editorial

Fellow Compatriots in the Chaplains’ Corps and Friends of the Cause:

I send greetings to each of you with an interest in the things of God and His work in Southern History. Please consider my following editorial:

**Forgiveness Adulterated  
or  
The South as Tiger Meat**

By H. Rondel Rumburg

There is still afoot, roaming about the South, the Northern tiger with an insatiable appetite for destroying accuracy in history and correcting so-called Southern wrongs by demeaning and taunting the people with an unbiblical view of sin and forgiveness. There is an overbearing attempt to cower Southern Christian men into thinking they need to

feel a special guilt and seek forgiveness at the Northern altars. We have been tiger meat too long.

Forgiveness is a glorious truth when understood in the Biblical context and experienced by grace. However, it may be a very divisive thing when its truth is perverted. We live in a time when Biblical ignorance has reached epidemic proportions. Anything anyone wants to say is truth passes as acceptable. “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Prov. 14:12; 16:25).

Forgiveness is not to be equated with an apology. Many Christians and criminals think apologizing is seeking forgiveness. How many political figures have been caught in crimes and after being found out they make a public apology. Why? Not because they are sorrowing over their sin and truly repenting, but because they got caught and think this is their way out. The public apology is the ploy to get by with their sin. Actually, as the term is used today, “apologizing” has little meaning because it is corrupt society’s unsatisfactory substitute for “forgiveness,” and it is a totally unscriptural concept.

Forgiveness is consistently conditioned upon repentance. Southern theologian John L. Dagg noted, “The blessing of forgiveness is bestowed on all who truly repent of their sins.... All forgiveness is bestowed through Jesus Christ.” *Forgiveness* means to cancel, remit or pardon as in the sense of cancelling or forgiving a debt; and that on the basis of another being able to pay it and willingly paying it. Paul used the word in Ephesians 4:32—“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.” If we are to understand what forgiveness is we must know what is meant by God’s forgiveness? When God forgives He declares one forgiven—“Know the LORD: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jer. 31:34). Hear the Lord—“I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins” (Isa. 43:25). Considering what the Bible says in these verses about sin not being remembered, someone might ask, “If God is all knowing (and He is) if He remembers our sins—then how can He be said to forget our sins?” “Forgetting” is not the same as “not remembering.” In reality God is all-knowing and thus does not forget, but He can choose to “not remember.” Forgetting is passive and is something that finite human beings do. “Not remembering” is active and is God’s promise to not remember our sins which are against Him on the basis of Christ’s redemption. Thus the future is free from any rehearsals of that which was forgiven. The sins under the blood of Christ are not brought up against the forgiven any more.

If someone asks you for forgiveness does that mean that one wants forgiveness or is it a ploy? For many it is a meaningless overture to regain control. An example: after the war against the South the Northern Presbyterian Church made proposals to bring the Southern Presbyterian Church back into their fold. At the 1870 General Assembly of the Southern Church, men were made to think they were bound to forgive the Northern

Church that had abused the South for political reasons.<sup>§</sup> The situation was portrayed by Dr. E. M. Green, "We had had no dealings with our Northern brethren, and they had just made the discovery that they loved us. They had been abusing us like pick-pockets, but the reunited Old and New School Church wanted to complete their glory by taking us in, and we heard to our dismay that Van Dyke, Backus and Dodge were on their way with the olive branch."<sup>\*</sup>

Many of the speeches compromised the issues and showed leniency. "The adroit Yankees seemed (Dr. J. J. Bullock says) to have cowed all our men by the insinuated threat that if they did not come in smoothly the whole Christian world would say it was because we were in the sulks at being whipped in a secular war, which would leave our church more clearly on a political basis than we charged theirs with being."

Some of the leading Southern men had been waiting to hear from Dr. R. L. Dabney. Dabney began, "Mr. Chairman, I feel as if I were talking to people across a river a mile wide. If you are pleased with such speeches as you have been listening to, it is useless for me to express my thoughts. I do not profess to be as good as some people; I hear brethren saying *it is time to forgive*. Mr. Chairman, *I do not forgive. I do not try to forgive*. What! forgive these people, who have invaded our country, burned our cities, destroyed our homes, slain our young men, and spread desolation and ruin over our land! *No, I do not forgive them*. But you say, 'They have changed their feelings towards us, are kind.' And why should they not be kind? Have we ever done anything to make them feel unkind to us? Have we ever harmed or wronged them? They are amiable and peaceful, are they? And is not the gorged tiger amiable and peaceful? When he has filled himself with the calf he has devoured, he lies down in a kind, good humor; but wait till he has digested his meal, and will he not be fierce again? Will he not be a tiger again? They have gorged themselves with everything they could take from us. They have gained everything they tried to get, they have conquered us, they have destroyed us. Why should they not be amiable and kind? Do you believe the same old tiger nature is not in them? Just wrest from them anything they have taken from us, and see." Dabney thus continued for an hour. Dabney was not unforgiving but there was no real repentance for the evils done to the South.

Dabney later said this was a fight for life or death and this was certainly true for the Old School Presbyterians of the South. He realized that some would consider him less than forgiving. He declared, "I would not surrender this right if I could. I then argued that the deep, instinctive recoil of the best and holiest in our communion from the embrace of the misguided men, who had murdered our sons and our country, was not unreasonable, not unchristian revenge, not malice, but a lawful and necessary moral sentiment.... The moment the Northern Assembly claimed the right to impose

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<sup>§</sup> An example was the treatment of Rev. McPheeeters in John S. Grasty's *Memoir of Rev. Samuel B. McPheeeters*.

<sup>\*</sup> Much of this is taken from Chapter 15 of Thomas Cary Johnson's *The Life and Letters of Robert Lewis Dabney*. The best biography of Dabney.

Lincolnism on our consciences by their spiritual authority; they made Lincolnism a constituent part of their ecclesial system.... The abolition majority took the freest scope to assert and argue that State secession was the sin of rebellion, thus making it a constituent part of their ecclesiastical and spiritual system.... And a holy mob of Abolitionists would have dragged them right out of the church, and, for the greater glory of God, murdered their '*dear Southern brethren*' in the streets."

Dr. Van Dyke, one the northern representatives said, "They have stripped every leaf from the olive branch, and made a rod of it to beat us with." Dr. B. M. Palmer warned, "[Y]ou men who have sacrificed principle will not walk the quarter deck. You have sacrificed true principles, and without those, your moral power and influence are gone." Much later when the Southern Church, which knew not Dabney as well as her other faithful men, willingly chose to be tiger meat and was eventually devoured by Northern liberalism.

Genuine forgiveness and real repentance go hand in glove. Will you be tiger meat or will you stand true to Christ and His Word?

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Please consider [ConfederateChaplain.com](http://ConfederateChaplain.com) & [Chaplain-in-Chief.com](http://Chaplain-in-Chief.com)



This issue contains our Chaplain-in-Chief's editorial on the Chaplains Conference in Harrisonburg, VA. You will also find our Chaplain-in-Chief's article titled, *A Defense of Southern Heritage, Part II*. Your editor has provided Part I of a biographical sketch of *Chaplain – Captain Edward J. Willis*, which deals with his life prior to the war and his ministry afterward. Assistant editor, Mark Evans, has written an article entitled *Tyranny Defeated*. This issue, as usual, includes *A Confederate Sermon* submitted by Kenneth Studdard of Rev. B. M. Palmer which is titled *God's Providence Towards the Bible*. Our *Book Review* is by your editor on *The Life and Letters of Robert Lewis Dabney*, by Thomas Cary Johnson.

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:

In just a few days the SCV National Reunion will commence in Memphis, Tennessee (July 20-22). If you need to register please see this link: [www.scvmemphis2017.org](http://www.scvmemphis2017.org). I hope to see you there. Two important items in regard to the Memphis Reunion:

- 1) The Chaplains' Prayer Breakfast will be Thursday morning at 7 AM in Ballroom A. This is an excellent way to begin the Reunion.
- 2) The Memorial Service will be on Friday afternoon at 4 PM in the Scottish Rite Auditorium and Forrest Park.

The Reunion is always a good time of fellowship and encouragement. It is good to be with others who appreciate Southern heritage.

***The dates for the 2018 National SCV Chaplains' Conference are May 17 and 18. I hope you will keep those days "clear" and plan to attend. Please share any ideas or suggestions that you feel could make the Conference even better. Just forward to my email at drparker@mdivs.edu***

The National Confederate Museum at Elm Springs will feature a section highlighting the service of Confederate chaplains and the great revival that spread through the Southern armies during the War. Several past Chaplain Corps' leaders are working with the Chaplain-in-Chief and Executive Director Colonel Mike Landree in designing this section. If you have items that would be appropriate for this section (Bibles used by Confederate chaplains, hand written sermons by Confederate chaplains, etc.), please let me know so we can explore that possibility.

I also hope that you will spend quality time at the Chaplain-in-Chief's Web Page each month. You will find a monthly article, prayers for use in the monthly camp meeting, a monthly sermon, and a "Happening Now" page to keep you up to date with news from across the Confederation. You may reach the web site at this link: <http://chaplain-in-chief.com/>

Deo Vindice!

Ray L. Parker  
Chaplain-in-Chief

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## Chaplain-in-Chief's Article

# The Defense of Southern Heritage: Part 2

(A Must Read)

Ray L. Parker

### The Southern Struggle

The Southern States are being "invaded" by Northern sympathizers who have no understanding of, appreciation for, or commitment to historically accurate Southern history. Many of the current conflicts over monuments, flags, cemeteries, battlefields, street and school names, etc. are led by those who have no historic or cultural "roots" in the community. They "moved in" and implanted themselves into the political process. Now they scheme ways to apply "politically correct" decisions on the community without regard or care for the historical legacy of the region. Their goal is to make all things Southern invisible.

There are other detractors who are Southern by birth but have been educated in classrooms where there is a presentation of skewed history. These skewed facts wedded to political ambition produce cultural monsters committed to their own agenda with no allegiance to the land of their birth. They take advantage of any heritage conflict to pose as the hero of equality and justice and demand that "those degrading Southern monuments" be removed. Their goal, again, is to make all things Southern invisible.

In addition, another group of detractors has emerged. These detractors seemed to be controlled by anger and bitterness. Their voices are loud and their rhetoric is violent. They "take to the streets" in harsh defiance and demand that Southern heritage be removed. Some in this group have defaced monuments, removed flags, and desecrated graves. They cheer and laugh as honorable Southern men and women of history are disgraced. Their goal is to make all things Southern invisible.

Perhaps one of the greatest struggles in this cultural conflict are those who just "walk on by" and refuse to recognize what is happening and thus do not get involved. Some say, "The War was so long ago. There are so many other things of importance that demand our attention. It is time for us to just 'lay those days aside' and move on." They are willing to allow the courage of their ancestors to "dim with the passing of time." They will lay the torch of truth down because they feel there are so many other things of significance that touch their lives. They fail to realize that Confederate history is only the beginning. These "history changers" will embrace other things as well. For example, there are now some colleges and universities that no longer display the flag of the

United States. They say, "It offends some." This process will not stop unless those who respect truth and honesty begin to push back. Remember, they want to make all things Southern disappear.

Perhaps to illustrate this point -- a few days ago my wife and I spent a couple of days in Savannah, Georgia -- a beautiful, historic Southern city. In two days of sightseeing in that wonderful city, we saw one Confederate flag. This was the first national flying over Fort Jackson at the entrance to Savannah Harbor. We saw British flags, US flags, company flags, state flags -- but only one Confederate flag flying over the fort. Our detractors have but one goal: to make all things Southern disappear.

These determined efforts are not going to cease. The march against the South is persistent, unwavering, and relentless. If at first they do not succeed, they will try and try again. To face this foe will take dedication, fortitude, and consistency. Our goal has to be visibility. We refuse to go away. We refuse to lower the flag. We refuse to be silent. As the Apostle Paul wrote so many years ago, "speak the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15).

## **The Southern Response**

I think Paul's words provide an action plan for Southerners. We will "speak the truth." The truth must be sounded loudly and clearly. We will not retreat from truth. We will not apologize for truth. We will not "water down" the truth. Truth is truth and cannot be changed. If it is changed, it is no longer truth.

The truth of the cause of the War Against Southern Independence is found in one word -- invasion. Federal forces marched South and practiced total war against the Southern population. Cities were burned, crops were destroyed, homes were ransacked, ladies were raped. Southern people were treated with the greatest of disrespect.

Our recent trip to Savannah illustrates the contempt Federal forces displayed against Southerners. As we passed a large cemetery, our tour guide pointed out the number of above ground mausoleum type burial sites that were there. He stated that when (*war criminal*) Union General Sherman and his forces occupied the city, Federal troops would open the mausoleums, remove the bodies, and use the tomb for shelter. They had no respect even for the Southern dead.

Southern states responded to the practice of Federal total war. Southern men rallied to their State's defense. The South waged a defensive war, not an aggressive war. If Federal forces had not marched South, there would have been no war -- 620,000 young Americans would not have died. It is a total perversion of history to say that the battles in the War Between the States were fought by the South to preserve the institution of slavery. The War was fought because the South was under attack -- no more, no less. If there had been no attack, there would have been no war. This is the truth of history.

Our challenge is to make this truth known. In every venue possible, we must sound this truth. As Paul admonished, "We must speak the truth!"

Paul's second admonition gives us the method of our speaking. We are to "speak the truth in love." We will not follow the example of our detractors. They expose anger, bitterness, vile language, and hatred of the deepest kind. Our speech will be in calmness and peace. We will not be violent, but we must be visible -- we must be seen.

Let every Southern home fly the Confederate flag. Let every Southern patriot be active in the political process. Let us attend the city council meetings. Let us be knowledgeable of the political agenda being set. Let us speak out. Let us write letters to our governmental leaders. Let us express the truth in "Letters to the Editor" (and other public forums). Let us support our leaders in the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Many Southern patriots should run for office and be elected. We must be (without exception) politically active. We cannot be silent. We must be visible. Our detractors must see us and be convinced that we are not going away.

In our last article we encouraged you to write the governors of all Confederate States. I hope you have done that. If not, why not put that letter in the mail today. Once again allow me to share the letter I forwarded to Southern governors. Feel free to use these ideas as you craft your letters. Southern governors should receive literally hundreds of letters in the next few days. Let's fill their mail boxes. We must make ourselves visible.

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(Sample Letter to the Governor of Virginia -- change the details as you write the other Governors)

*Thousands of young Virginians gave their lives in defense of their State in the War Against Southern Independence. These young men answered Virginia's call in a time of armed invasion and defended her borders, cities, and citizens. They endured the horrors of the conflict because they loved their State and families. They sought not honor or geographical expansion, only peaceful self-determination in a time of cultural upheaval. The hoped for peace was broken by invading armies.*

*It is only right and proper that each Southern State remember with dignity, honor, and propriety these young champions. They gave their highest sacrifice for the State they loved. No honorable State would ignore, belittle, or politicize the depth of their devotion.*

*The Flag under which they served their State should be publicly evident. Their battlefields should be preserved and their graves and monuments maintained. In the history of our country, these are the only ones to die in defense of the State of their birth and in which they lived. How inappropriate it would be for the State they loved so dearly to convolute the bold sacrifice they made.*

*Virginia will want to honor her soldiers in the most public venues possible – the best of their generation. These young men died in the War Between the States for their beloved State. They gave the full measure of devotion for Virginia.*

*Respectfully,*

## **Southern Supplication**

All of these efforts must be baptized in prayer. Prayer allows us to unleash the power of God into our lives, for prayer is not what we can do but rather what God can do. R. A. Torrey wrote: "Prayer is the key that unlocks all the storehouse of God's infinite grace and power. All that God is and all that God has is at the disposal of prayer."

In prayer we rush into the very throne room of God to spend time with Him. As one person stated, "Prayer is not so much a time to express an opinion as it is a time to feel a presence." There, in the presence of God, we can begin to enjoy His promises.

Scripture, of course, is filled with the promises of God. Promises that we can tap into through the process of prayer. The promises of God touch every phase of our life. We are to pray about food, clothing, shelter, work, friends, loved ones, heritage defense -- yes, everything that concerns our lives. As someone once said, "Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance, it is laying hold of God's willingness."

Hundreds of books have been written on prayer. Thousands of sermons have been preached on prayer. Perhaps the simplest definition of prayer is, "Prayer is the soul on its knees." No matter what position the body may be in, in prayer the soul bows before God. Here we have an attitude of heart that humbles itself before the living God and says, "I need Thee!"

As we do the good work of proclaiming truth, we need the Lord. In prayer we are depending on His ability, not ours. We ask him to give us strength, discernment, love, and perseverance.

Let us individually spend time in prayer. And would it not be appropriate in every SCV Camp Meeting for the Chaplain to lead in a prayer regarding heritage defense. These are uncertain times. We face a dedicated enemy. We need the direction and protection of God as we make ourselves visible.



**Chaplain / Captain Edward Jefferson Willis**

(1820-1891)  
The Man of Two Swords  
15<sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry  
Part I

What is meant by “The man of two swords?” He was a man who wielded the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God and he also carried the sword of earthly war.

***The Beginning of Life, Physically and Spiritually***

In the providence of God Edward Jefferson Willis was born to Captain Larkin Willis and Sarah Emily Fry Willis on December 19, 1820 at Indiantown in Orange County, Virginia. His father, Larkin Willis (Feb. 26, 1800-Feb. 21, 1856), was of Orange County and a prosperous farmer, who was the son of Captain Isaac Willis and Ann Garnett Willis. His mother, Sarah Emily Fry Willis (1800?-1821), was called “Susan,” and she was of Madison County. Edward’s mother lived less than a year after his birth.

His father was remarried on July 15, 1823, to Mary Gordon (March 4, 1807-November 2, 1881). Mary was the daughter of Rev. John Churchill Gordon and Lucy Garnett Herndon Gordon. Edward was the only child of his mother but he was to have no shortage of playmates for he had twenty half siblings.\* Of this twenty, born over a thirty year span, there were twelve sons of whom ten were in the Confederate Army. Ten plus Edward made eleven from this home who were in Confederate service. Of these one was shot on the battlefield, and one died in a Federal prison. When the youngest child was married, fifteen of the siblings were present.

Edward made a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as also did his half-brother, John Churchill Willis, about the same time. They were baptized at the same service into the fellowship of the Flat Run Baptist Church which at that time was under the care of the founding church, Zoar Baptist Church. Zoar at the time had co-pastors:

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\* The following were Edward’s half siblings:

2. John Churchill Willis, born 21 May 1824; died 2 Aug 1894;
3. James Addison Willis, born 16 Sept 1825; died 5 May 1900;
4. Mary Elizabeth Willis, born 18 March 1827; died 16 Sept 1886;
5. Lucy Herndon Willis, born 2 Sept 1828; died 20 Nov 1875;
6. Anna E. Willis, born 2 Oct 1829; died 2 Nov 1847;
7. Absolam Graves Willis, born 9 Nov 1831; died 22 Aug 1903;
8. William Willis, born 23 April 1833; died 8 Oct 1910;
9. Larkin Willis, born 24 Feb 1835; died 19 May 1927;
10. Isaac Willis, born 20 June 1836; died March 1910;
11. Joseph Gordon Willis, born 27 Dec 1837; died 1864;
12. Reuben Garnett Willis, born 16 July 1839; died 8 March 1900;
13. Isabella Herndon Willis, born 15 Oct 1840;
14. Ella Jane Willis, born 25 July 1842; died 15 March 1911;
15. Charles Augustine Willis, born 20 Feb 1844; died 3 Oct 1879;
16. Eugene Harrison Willis, born 16 April 1845; died 25 Dec 1916;
17. Benjamin Willis, born 19 Feb 1847; died 6 Oct 1864;
18. Walter Lewis Willis, born 30 April 1848; died 29 Nov 1848;
19. Unnamed Infant Willis, born ca 1850; died ca 1850;
20. Unnamed Infant Willis, born ca 1851; died ca 1851; and
21. Nora Fry Willis, born 29 Nov 1852; died 14 June 1878.

John C. Gordon and Charles A. Lewis. These men were involved in the ordinance of baptism. Elder John Churchill Gordon was the step-grandfather of Edward and grandfather of John C. Willis, his namesake. Both elders were men of godly reputation. Elder John Churchill Willis wrote of Elder Charles A. Lewis:

Election, predestination, effectual calling, and the final perseverance of the saints, were themes upon which he delighted to dwell, while he taught experimentally that the love of Christ alone could constrain the believer practically to surrender all to Christ. He held up the terrors of the law as warning to the impenitent, but the mercies of God through Christ as motives of obedience. At times, when the scenes of Calvary were vividly impressed upon his mind, there was a peculiarly persuasive eloquence in his manner and style.

The Flat Run Baptist Church was organized in 1848.

### ***Education***

It appears that the Willis children began their education in the local field schools. Shortly after the baptismal service there came into the Willis home a teacher for the younger children. This was Miss Mary Catesby Woodford from Kentucky, a granddaughter of General William Woodford of the First War for American Independence. This was the family that had given its name to Woodford County, Kentucky. Mary was a young lady of rarest beauty, observable gentleness and superior education. Edward's brother John Churchill Willis was smitten by Miss Mary and when he reached his majority married the lady on June 26, 1845. John and Mary passed away within a day of each other and were buried in one grave.

Edward J. Willis attended Williams College in Massachusetts for a year. He returned to Charlottesville, Virginia in pursuit of education. He commenced the study of law, and graduated from the University of Virginia Law School in 1842.

### ***Marriage and Early Profession***

After graduation he practiced law in Charlottesville where he met and married Virginia Ann Sneed. The Lord blessed this union with three sons born in succession and then six daughters in a row.

As a barrister, Edward Willis moved and began to practice law in Barboursville, Virginia. However, law practice paled into insignificance at the glowing reports of enormous amounts of gold being discovered on the west coast. He was bitten by the gold-bug and became a "Forty-niner" seeking gold. He parted from his family to seek his fortune in California. One account said, "He apparently walked the 2200 miles from the jumping-off point at Independence, Missouri, to Sacramento, which he reached early in 1850. This was no small feat, and suggests an inner toughness and great willpower which would serve him well in later years." The pick and shovel became his instruments

of choice as he sought to strike gold. There was little or no success and soon the gold fever lifted. As a result, he soon realized he needed to go back to his profession.

Sacramento was considered little more than a place with a lumber producing mill. With the gold strike it mushroomed to a population of around nine thousand by 1850. Sacramento County was officially established in February 1850. Edward J. Willis realized that he could not provide for his family prospecting gold and hung his shingle out to do legal work. Then in April of 1850 he was elected as a circuit judge for the county and he held this position a number of years. Therefore, he established a home there and brought his family out to California.

This was pioneering. Sacramento was not a very settled town with the influx of people seeking to get rich quick. There was a lingering wildness to the place and most likely this was a cause of concern for Judge Willis as a concerned husband and father. The situation was described the following way: "Sacramento was still a wild place. On several occasions local vigilante groups enforced the law as they saw fit - by hangings - without the sanction of Judge Willis' court, and the California Militia declared martial law at least once in 1850 to quell rioting caused by 'squatters' and 'claim jumpers.'" Wife Virginia must have wondered at times what her husband had gotten them into, but she seemed to be of similar stock with her husband.

Seeking a place to worship the triune God of the Bible, the Willis family became a part of the Sacramento Baptist Church which was established in 1850 with sixteen members in their home as a result of pioneer Baptist preacher Osgood C. Wheeler's planting effort. Dr. Osgood C. Wheeler had become a missionary for the American Baptist Home Mission Society to California. Wheeler's first labor was in organizing a church with six members in San Francisco on February 28, 1849. There he led in the building of "the first Protestant church edifice in California that year." Wheeler moved to Sacramento in January of 1852 as pastor of the Baptist church he had helped found. There, Edward J. Willis and family came under his ministry. Pastor Wheeler was compelled in 1855 to stop preaching because of a throat disease, but upon making a partial recovery, he resumed preaching. He edited and published the first Baptist paper on the Pacific coast, which was called the *Pacific Banner*.

Edward J. Willis was licensed to preach in 1854 when he took a commission from the Baptist Home Mission Board to start a church in Oakland, California. He resigned his judgeship and relocated to Oakland across the bay from San Francisco to the east. His ordination to the gospel ministry occurred in October of 1854 as he became pastor of the church that was organized with six members in his parlor. Also in the year 1854 Oakland was incorporated as a city. This church flourished under his ministry and built a nice meeting place. Pastor Willis also became an editor for the *Pacific Banner*.

Pastor Willis made a trip East in June of 1856 with the purpose of raising money for missions in California. Due to an illness in his family, they pressed him to remain in Virginia. Larkin Willis, Edward's father, died February 21, 1856. Retrieving his family from California in 1857 to return to Virginia, they came by way of Central America. At

Aspinwall they sought to take the train to cross the Isthmus of Panama which was the way of transferring passengers from the Pacific seaports to the Atlantic seaports. At Aspinwall, Pastor Willis and his family were thrown into prison. It took the intervention of the United States Government to have them released.

Pastor Edward J. Willis became pastor of the Leigh Street Baptist Church in Richmond. This was the fourth Baptist church founded in the city. He likely had some kind of itinerate ministry in Virginia for a while before becoming pastor at Leigh Street around 1860. During this pastorate he, according to J. Wm. Jones, “was building up a new interest at ‘Clay Street Chapel.’”



The appliquéd friendship album quilt was made by the women of the Leigh Street Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia, for their pastor, the Reverend Edward Jefferson Willis (1820-1892).

There was an ominous threat to the freedom of the Southern people from the abolitionists, transcendentalists and other heretical groups in the North. An invasion was on the way and those in Virginia did not want the state to be occupied by federal forces as had Maryland. Lincoln’s call for 75,000 soldiers from Virginia to fight her Southern neighbors was the last straw before secession.



## Tyranny Defeated

Mark W. Evans  
Past Chaplain-in-Chief

After the war, General Robert E. Lee became President of Washington College in Lexington, Virginia. For the five remaining years of his life, he dedicated himself to

educating Southern youth. Modern educators would gasp at his goal: "I shall be disappointed, sir; I shall fail in the leading object that brought me here, unless these young men all become consistent Christians" [J. W. Jones, *Life and Letters of Robert Edward Lee*, p. 419]. Equally shocking or possibly unintelligible would be his disciplinary standard: "We have no printed rules. We have but one rule here and it is that every student must be a gentleman" [Curt Steger, *Character and Faith of Robert E. Lee*, p. 36]. Imagine contemporary college and university professors digesting Lee's maxim: "Obedience to lawful authority is the foundation to manly character" [Steger, p. 43]. Many of today's views and practices flow from a deeply flawed educational system that has evolved into a propaganda machine for the state, led by godless, intellectual elites. General Lee's practices and methods flowed from vibrant Christianity that brought valor to many Confederate soldiers and sustained the Southland through the Reconstruction. They also worked well in the training of Southern youth, enabling them to live for God's glory. Today, these principles and truths are generally abused and in their void have come a deluge of error and misery in state, church and home.

The Holy Bible pierced the hearts of the men in gray, putting iron in their souls to fight for their families and the God-given right to self-government. Many of them understood the fundamental issues threatening the fabric of society. C. Gregg Singer, in his book, *A Theological Interpretation of American History*, quoted James Henley Thornwell's statement in 1850: "The parties in this conflict are not merely abolitionists and slave-holders -- they are atheists, socialists, communists, red republicans, Jacobins on the one side and the friends of order and regulated freedom on the other. In one word, the world is the battleground -- Christianity and atheism the combatants, and the progress of humanity is at stake" [p. 85]. Singer also quoted from Benjamin Morgan Palmer's sermon, preached in 1860: "The abolitionist spirit is undeniably atheistic. The demon spirit which erected its throne upon the guillotine in the days of Robespierre and Marat, which abolished the Sabbath and worshipped reason in the person of an harlot, yet survives to work other horrors of which those of the French Revolution are but a type. Among a people so generally religious as the Americans a disguise must be worn, but it is the same old threadbare disguise of the advocacy of human rights. From a thousand Jacobin clubs here, and in France, the decree has gone forth which strikes at God by striking at all subordination and law...." [p. 85]. Palmer concluded: "To the South is assigned the high position of defending before all nations the cause of all religion and of all truth. In this trust we are resisting the power which wars against constitutions and laws and compacts, against sabbaths and sanctuaries, against the family the state, and the church which blasphemously invades the prerogatives of God and rebukes the Most High for the errors of His administration" [Ibid., p. 86].

Our present liberal preachers and politicians have thrust ungodly philosophies upon the American people, infecting churches, schools, universities, seminaries, and homes. They have created social chaos replete with civil and religious upheaval. Surely, it is

time to open our Bibles, read its sacred pages, receive its eternal truths, and go to the Throne of Grace to "find mercy, and grace to help in time of need."

Following the war, wounded Dixie weathered the storm of Reconstruction, much to the dismay of her adversaries. Missionaries of ungodly philosophies could not prevail against the souls of Southern Christians. After one hundred fifty years, it appears that Northern propaganda and anti-God philosophies have prevailed in church, state, and home. Yet, the same Biblical truths that enabled our relatives to resist the horrors and bloodshed of the North's invasion are still able to defeat our present plague of tyranny. Jesus Christ said, "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32). The sixteenth century Reformer, Martin Luther, penned a hymn that captured the spirit of freedom that defeated tyranny in many nations, including our own:

*Did we in our own strength confide, Our striving would be losing,  
Were not the right Man on our side, The Man of God's own choosing.  
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He; Lord Sabaoth His name,  
From age to age the same, And He must win the battle.*



## A CONFEDERATE SERMON

**Submitted by Chaplain Kenneth Studdard**

**Benjamin Morgan Palmer** (1818-1902) served as pastor of First Presbyterian Church of New Orleans for 46 years. He was a strong influence in the Presbyterian church as well as in the communities he served. After New Orleans fell to the Federals in 1862, Palmer spent the remainder of the War preaching to Confederate soldiers. Palmer was a powerful orator and preacher.

### God's Providence Towards the Bible

Delivered by B. M. Palmer, D. D., at the celebration of the Thirty-first Anniversary of the Southwestern Bible Society, New Orleans, Jan. 16, 1881.

We are assembled Christian friends, by invitation extended from the various pulpits throughout the city this morning, to commemorate the Thirty-first Anniversary of the Southwestern Bible Society — a local organization with a restricted territory, over which it undertakes to circulate the sacred Scriptures. It is, however, only one of the many co-ordinate associations scattered throughout Christendom engaged in the same benevolent enterprise; and they are all of them more or less closely connected with the American Bible Society in this country, and with the British and Foreign Bible Society in England; whose object is to print the sacred Scriptures in all the languages and dialects of the earth, and to scatter these "leaves of the tree of life which are for the healing of the nations" wherever sin has extended its ravages.

We are confronted then just here with a momentous fact, the import of which it may be well for us to consider. Why is it that this one book, lying by itself on that desk, commands such universal homage? What is it that justifies the pre-eminent title in which it claims to be the Book? The world is full of books, and the shelves in our public and private libraries groan beneath their weight. The eye swims, and the mind staggers, in simply contemplating the ponderous tomes which are gathered in these repositories of learning. Yet this one book claims supremacy over them all; as though no other could fall into the same denomination with itself and be called a book, when it is near. Again, with our hand upon the several treatises of which it is composed, we speak of The Scriptures." Why, the pen is in every man's hand — we all write, and the world is full of writings, but these are The Writings, sitting in judgment upon all other writings, and claiming a royal jurisdiction wherever books and writings are found upon earth.

How shall this proud supremacy of the Bible be vindicated? The answer is at hand; it has but one author, and that author is God. He, who built the Universe and created all things that exist, has revealed His perfections and his will in the pages of this book. The book is therefore one, and stands alone in the same awful supremacy with Him who is its author. It is true that human agency was employed, through a period of fifteen hundred years, in composing the separate portions of the collective volume. Divine truth was cast in the mould of human thought, and was transmitted through the forms of human speech. So distinct indeed are the characteristics of each individual penman, and so marked is the impress of each particular epoch, that a just historic criticism is furnished with the evidence upon which to establish the authenticity and genuineness of every part of the sacred canon. But in all these contributions, made piece by piece through the lapse of centuries, there is a unity of thought and design which marks the presidency of a single mind throughout. That mind was the mind of God — embodying His truth under human conceptions which shall rightly embrace it, and under modes of utterance which shall as safely express it. Holy men of God spake— here is the human element in the Scriptures; but they "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and there is the Divine element which gives the Divine authorship of the entire record.

May I venture to spread before you a wonderful parallelism which occurs to me at this moment? "There is one God, and there is none other but He," "infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth" — and these attributes of necessity exclude the possibility of any other to whom they can be ascribed. There can be but one Infinite and Supreme; and the moment we grant these perfections to Him, every competitor or rival is shut out from our thought. Again, as there is one God, so there is one law — a law consisting not of arbitrary enactments, but springing from the nature of Him whose character and perfections it accurately transcribes. It is the universal law of the one Supreme Jehovah, spreading its authority over all orders of created intelligence in all worlds, only modified in its details to suit the varying conditions in which these are found in heaven, earth or hell. Again, as there is one God and one law, so there is but one Mediator who undertakes to solve the mighty problem of sin — one Sacrifice, by which to make atonement for transgression — one Priest, to offer that sacrifice upon the altar — and one Advocate, to plead in the chancery of heaven the high argument of His own sufferings and death. A single link is needed to complete the chain; one God, one Law, one Redeemer, one sacrifice and one Book, in which to make the stupendous revelation of it all to us. There it lies before us, the Book of books; springing immediately from the mind of God, revealing to us the thoughts of God, unfolding to us the plans of God, making known to us the purpose of God in the

creation of the universe, and disclosing to us the grand secrets of the eternal world. It deserves the applause of royalty with which it is crowned, invested with the supremacy which is the prerogative of its Divine author. In view of all this there arises a question which I propose for solution. If the Bible be the Book of God, claiming jurisdiction over all other writings, is it not to be expected that God's providence shall be conspicuously concerned about its history? I desire, tonight, to point out some of the forms in which this providential intervention and care may be distinctly traced.

1. First then, I direct attention to some facts connected with the two languages in which the Old and the New Testaments were originally written. It is obvious that, in a Revelation which is intended to unfold a plan of salvation to guilty men, terms must be employed which shall denote general conceptions, such as those of holiness, sin, redemption, repentance, forgiveness, regeneration and the like. But these purely abstract terms are devoid of significance, until a meaning is put into them by taking up the language of sense — perception and glorifying it with a spiritual import. As ideas are originated in the mind through impressions made upon the senses, the whole terminology of Grace must be created by the transfiguration of images which are drawn from the outward world. Hence the symbolical character of Divine Revelation in the Old Testament. The doctrine of atonement was taught by the institution of animal sacrifice, at the very beginning and instantly upon the first transgression; and this germinal symbol expands afterwards into the whole complex ritual of the ancient Hebrews. Conviction of sin and the consequent obligation to punishment, were deepened in the mind by innumerable ceremonial restrictions; which were constantly violated in the intercourse of life, and which required a constant purgation of the transgressor. The expiation of sin demanded by infinite and inflexible justice, was adumbrated in the various sacrifices offered upon the Jewish altar; and reconciliation and communion with the Most High were illustrated in the sacrificial feasts, which formed so important a feature in Hebrew worship. The holiness of God and the corresponding purity of the worshiper were represented under the ablutions and purifications, which transfigured the idea of physical into that of moral cleanliness, and laid the foundation of the whole doctrine of sanctification. It is needless to adduce further illustrations of the pictorial and typical character of that ancient economy — one of its important ends being the creation of a language, through which the Holy Ghost shall reveal to us the mysteries of God's mercy and grace. Those who desire to pursue this line of thought, will do well to consult a popular work in which it is elaborated with admirable skill. (Walker's *Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation*)

Now the Hebrew tongue is peculiarly fitted for this symbolical presentation of Divine truth. As one at least of the primitive languages, every word in it embodies a material image and offers a picture to the eye. The scholar is delighted to find in its vocabulary what appears to him a splendid gallery of art, upon whose walls are hung the most beautiful paintings the eye ever rested upon. Into the tapestry of the language are woven forms of exquisite grace, as well as landscapes of surpassing loveliness. Perhaps it is true of every language in its primordial construction, that every word shall be thus pictorial; but in the development which culture always ensures, this emblematic character is gradually lost; as words pass from their primary use into a secondary and tropical signification. What is gained in the accession of general and abstract terms necessary to philosophic precision, is lost in poetic beauty and force. But the Hebrew language was employed as the vehicle of Divine Revelation, whilst it was in its forming stage, and the painting of the material image was hardly as yet dry upon the surface of each word. It was in itself a collection of symbols, exactly suited to the symbolic

revelation of which it was made the medium of transmission. It was equally adapted to those grand visions afforded to the ancient Prophets, through whose inspired enigmas the shadows of events yet to come were cast upon the wall. Nor was it less fitted to be the language of devotion and of praise, in those tender lyrics set to the harp of David; and which will be set to the harp of every saint in every age, until they swell into the grand chorus of angels and the redeemed around the throne of God and the Lamb in Heaven.

I turn now from the Hebrew of the Old Testament to the Greek of the New. When "the fulness of time was come," and the Great Prophet appeared upon earth of whom Moses was the type, another language was required for the larger Revelation to be made — a language more developed than the Hebrew, more comprehensive and flexible, and more subtle in expressing the nicest shades of thought, So God, in His providence, far back in the centuries, was training the Greeks to frame a language for the New Testament, as before the Hebrews had prepared a dialect for the Old. They were a people remarkable for subtlety of intellect, carrying the culture of art and the study of philosophy to such a pitch as to win for their country the proud distinction of being "the school-mistress of the world." But the grandest monument of their genius is the language which they forged in those high speculations of philosophy which yet rule so largely the empire of modern thought. In the construction of this language they have rendered their largest service to mankind; for into it God has poured all the treasures of that truth in which the symbols of the Old Economy were lost, as the shadow is swallowed up in the substance. It was exactly the language in which to embalm the materials of a scientific theology. In the fulness of its vocabulary, in the variety of its connective particles, in the richness of its grammatical forms, and above all in its power of combining words as thought wrestles in its agony to find emphasis of expression, truth is stated with such nicety of discrimination and with such delicacy of shade as to signalize the Greek for the conveyance of Christian dogma. The Biblical student, after worrying through elaborate commentaries, often recurs to the original text, surprised to find in itself the best exposition of its own meaning. And who does not know that, in the great controversies through which the creed of the Church was articulately framed in the early centuries, it was the precision of the Greek tongue which enabled the Christian Fathers to detect error, sometimes impaling it upon the shaft of a single letter in a single word.

But if the Divine care is disclosed in thus preparing the languages for the reception of His truth, there is deeper significance in the fact that both were broken from the chain of living tongues as soon as they had fulfilled this purpose. Both the Hebrew and the Greek, after gathering into them the Divine testimonies, were sealed up as the urns in which those treasures should be preserved from change through all time. The Hebrew was arrested in its growth, so that it never passed through the stages of development necessary to bring it to perfection. I shall never forget the impression of this incompleteness made upon me when I first entered upon the study of that venerable tongue — nor my wonder that our educators had not embraced it in the curriculum by which our youth are trained, as illustrating how languages are formed and grow in exact accordance with all the laws of thought. This arrest was made under a series of providential dispensations carefully interpreted to us by the prophet standing always close to the historian, and which are so wonderful in character that they are read by us with tingling ears after the lapse of more than twenty centuries. Certain it is, that upon the completion of the Old Testament Canon, the Hebrew passed into a sacred dialect, no longer used in ordinary intercourse, free from the fluctuations to which every living

tongue is exposed, and consecrated to the one high purpose of preserving in its ark the solemn symbols of a prophetic and typical economy.

The same great change passed upon the Greek tongue, though less abruptly than upon the more ancient Hebrew. But when it had fulfilled its mission, first in receiving into its verbal forms the mighty mysteries of redeeming Grace, and then in defining amidst fierce controversies the creed of the church, it too became a fixed, hard crystal, protecting from abrasion the precious treasure of Divine Revelation which it enshrined.

The insignificance of this fact needs but a word of comment. All living languages are in a perpetual flux. Words lose their original meaning, becoming often ambiguous, sometimes obsolete, and in a few instances expressing the exact opposite of its first import. Why, at the end of three centuries we are unable to read Chaucer and Spencer without the aid of a glossary. The modern reader is perplexed in deciphering the early versions of Wycliffe and Tyndale. Since the period of the Reformation different versions of the English Bible have been made; and the scholarship of the English speaking world is at this moment engaged in another and more careful revision, with a view to the expurgation of archaisms and conforming our existing version more nearly to the present state of the English language. Let us suppose then that the Hebrew tongue had been subjected to this law of change through a stretch of twenty-three hundred years since the days of Malachi — and the Greek, through nearly eighteen hundred years since the days of John — where would be the standard text to which we could recur to ascertain the Revelation which God had given to man?

There is another aspect of this same matter. We have reached the period in the history of the church when her great duty is to unfetter these Divine Oracles. In this Missionary age, when the church has harnessed herself to the imperial task of subjugating the world to Christ, these Scriptures must be translated into all the tongues and dialects of tongues which are spoken over the globe. In China and Japan, in Egypt and India, all over the steppes of Asia and through the jungles of Africa, men must read "in their own tongue wherein they were born" the wonderful works of God. But what shall be the standard by which all these versions shall be verified, and what the text from which they shall severally be drawn?

Obviously there can be no final and uniform arbiter, except in a Revelation which has been locked up in a language itself congealed into a fixed form and put forever beyond the reach of change. How marvelous the working of that Providence, by which the unchangeable God has stamped the likeness of His own unchangeableness upon the Record of His own purposes and thoughts! Men may deny or refuse, or misconstrue His testimony; but they cannot add to it, nor take from it. God has locked up the Record in the archives of His own providing, and has taken the key into His own possession.

2. I call attention next to the providential multiplication and preservation of ancient manuscripts, by which we are able today to establish the verity of the Sacred Text. The topic is large, and can only be handled here under its most general aspect. Of course the question presents itself upon taking up a copy of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, have we here the very words which the Holy Ghost inspired Prophets and Apostles to write? It so happens that early copies of the Sacred Record were made with evident care, and were collected at important ecclesiastical centers — such as Alexandria in Egypt, Constantinople and Rome in Europe, in Babylonia and Syria in Asia. With untiring industry these have been collated by the ripest scholars of every age, and through this comparison and combination of testimony the verity of the original text can be satisfactorily ascertained. It will serve to illustrate this point to refer to a single fact. When Kennicott and DeRossi first announced their detection of many thousand various

readings in the manuscripts they had compared, the Christian world rose in alarm against critical labors which threatened to unsettle the authority of God's word. But when these variations came to be sifted, they were found almost uniformly of the most unimportant character — such, for example, as whether we should spell the word honour in English with or without the letter u. With the exception of only one or two single passages, the genuineness of the received text was unchallenged; and not a single doctrine or fact was displaced, or even weakened, by this imposing array of seeming contradictions. The integrity of the Sacred Text was thus unchangeably established; and these manuscripts remain and will be kept with holy vigilance, as permanent vouchers of the integrity of the Scriptures in our hands today. How marvelous is that Providence which caused so many copies of the Divine word to be taken at so many points, and at a period when fraud and interpolation, or simple errors of transcription, would certainly be detected! And how remarkable, that so many of these witnessing manuscripts should have escaped the ravages of time and the changes to which all things mortal are exposed! How wonderful that historic criticism finds the evidence for establishing the genuineness of the Scriptures increasing with every new discovery! All this becomes the more impressive by the contrast between the Sacred Books, and those of secular literature which have come down to us from ancient days. No such cumulative testimony can be drawn from concurrent documents to establish the genuineness of any profane history; showing that God, having given the Revelation of His will, has also taken care that it should be preserved and verified to all the generations that shall live to the judgment day.

3. I pass to another striking verification of the Divine Record, which has come to light in recent times; the antiquarian researches into the remains of ancient profane history contemporaneous with the events recorded in the Bible. You need not be told that the dogmatic authority of the Scriptures is now assailed with greater persistency and boldness than in any former age. The old line of assault through alleged discrepancies found in the historic statements of the Bible has been abandoned; as minute investigation has, one by one, cleared these up and shown them to exist in appearance only, but not in fact. And the blatant lecturer, who in this country is now employed in giving a rehash of the blasphemies of Paine and the puerilities of the elder Tindal, may be safely ignored as being himself simply an anachronism. But the modern school of criticism has undertaken the more audacious task of unsettling the authorship of the more ancient portions of the Sacred Record and the dates of their composition, inducing a general skepticism as to the historical verity of the entire book.

Well then, side by side with this school of destructive criticism and yet wholly independent of it, a spirit of antiquarian research has been awakened; which undertakes a thorough exploration of those ancient Biblical lands, to see what knowledge can be gleaned from the historic monuments lying buried under the ruins of those ancient cities which were once the seat of empire. Archaeological societies have been organized in America and in Europe, raising large sums of money to be employed in this exhumation of ancient and forgotten history. The best scholars of the world have been sent forth under their auspices, equipped with all the appliances necessary to this work of excavation. It would be an old story to many in this audience to tell how they have invaded the tombs of Egypt, scanned the walls of her temples, and deciphered the hieroglyphics of her obelisks — how they have scoured the plains of Moab and gathered the legend upon her wonderful stone — how they have dug beneath the site of ancient Troy, to find the relics of Homeric story — how they have turned up to the light of the sun the old foundations of Nineveh, Persepolis and Babylon, tussling with the cuneiform

inscriptions of the burnt bricks disinterred from the debris of those hoary centers of a past civilization. But the result of all this subterranean exploration, as published under the sanction of those learned, archaeologists, is what particularly interests us tonight. These inscriptions are found to be monumental testimonies of the prowess of ancient warriors and kings. They tell of such and such a campaign, in a given year, conducted by such and such a monarch — of the invasion and subjugation of this and that foreign territory — of the siege and sack of cities whose names are particularly recited — of conquered kings led in chains as tributary vassals behind triumphal chariots — and all this accompanied with magniloquent praises of the might and glory of the conqueror. But all these proud narrations are found to fall into the Bible record as in a natural socket. The story is simply supplementary of what was long ago written upon the sacred page. The hiatus designedly left open here and there by the inspired historian, who was writing only the facts which related to God's dealings with His chosen people, is more or less perfectly filled with these scraps of profane history gathered from these monumental stones and bricks. So far as they have been yet deciphered, not a solitary contradiction has emerged to what is written as history in the Bible. On the contrary, the correspondence is so exact between the two independent records, the later facts so interlacing with the earlier, that we have that precise verification of Biblical history which springs from the undesigned coincidence of minute particulars. This complimentary character of the monumental history confirms the testimony of the written word beyond the chance of further impeachment.

It should be stated in this connection that these researches have made no substantive addition to the sum of our knowledge of the past. They have in some degree rounded out the knowledge we had before, by filling up the gaps which existed in the previous record; but they have added no chapters to history which are positively fresh and new. Intrinsically valuable as they enlarging and confirming what was already known, so far as I am aware, the sum total of history remains without increase of bulk. This leaves us to infer not only that we have in the inspired volume the key to all past history, but that God has treasured in His book the cream of all the facts which were worth preserving and transmitting. And it is well suited to provoke admiration, that the disclosure of all this confirmatory testimony should be reserved to the period when it was most wanted to meet the most formidable assault ever made upon the historical verity of the sacred Scriptures.

4. I beg leave to submit to your consideration another Providential movement in favor of the Bible, which strikes me as not a little remarkable. I refer to the concerted effort which is now being made to convert the Sabbath School into a regular Biblical Institute. The Scriptures are exposed in our day to every kind of assault, and not the least formidable is that which comes from a certain school of science. Believing that no contradiction can exist between what God teaches in nature and what He teaches through a special Revelation, I restrict the censure to a particular class; and would think it equally rash and unjust to impute to science, which can teach only truth, theories which simply lead us back to the antiquated and abandoned errors of the past. There are those however, by no means deficient in genius, influence or zeal who upon the ground of science openly impugn the authority of the Bible. They allege that an honest rendering of the sacred text yields an account of the derivation and government of the world which is contrary to fact. In the place of an intelligent Creator whose efficient will brings into being a well ordered Universe, they postulate a primordial vapor — whether itself original or derived, will depend upon the thinker's tendency to Atheism on the one hand, or to Pantheism on the other. In the womb of this first matter lay hidden the

germs of all forms that exist, organic or inorganic — and by necessity of logic all the potencies of life, of thought and of volition. Through almost interminable ages, and under the operation of necessary mechanical laws, the whole cosmos was self-produced, and is held in the iron embrace of a rigid physical fatalism. The huge machinery grinds on under the inflexible laws through which it was first established. All freedom and responsibility are destroyed. Man thinks and feels, and chooses and acts, under the same physical necessity through which the plant grows. As God is excluded from the arrangement and order of the Universe, so is He excluded from its management and control. The wheels and pistons of the monster machine move under the law of its own mechanism, and there is no supreme intelligence to open and to shut the valves. An indwelling mechanical force drives its ponderous wheels upon the iron track; until by some explosive catastrophe the whole becomes a stupendous wreck, and all returns to chaos again to await a new mechanical evolution. In such a scheme there is no room for either Providence or Prayer. Nature runs in a fixed groove; and man with all his wants and woes finds himself "without God and without hope in the world."

It is not incumbent upon me to test here the validity of any of these speculations; which, though they are advanced only by the extreme wing of skeptical scientists, are conclusions from which they do not shrink in their most pronounced form. The object is simply to state the issue which, in the name of what is called science, is joined with the inspired Book of God, and beneath which its dogmatic authority is thought by many to be steadily crumbling. Let the issue then be accepted by us precisely at the point it is made, and in these terms — a Divine testimony rightly interpreted, as against all the assumptions of science and all the speculations of Philosophy. But now let us see one of the ways in which God is leading us up to this issue. It occurred not long since to the mind of an earnest Christian layman, to employ the Sabbath school as the instrument of lifting up the Bible as a great classic to be systematically studied in all its parts and connections. The suggestion, like an electric spark, flashed at once along the wires of sympathy throughout the Christian world. Almost before it was matured in the mind of its author, it was wrought into a practical and comprehensive scheme. A select committee of representatives from all the Evangelical churches marks out a curriculum of study to be completed in seven years, in which the Sabbath scholar is carried consecutively through all portions of the Book. Now the lesson is in the Old Testament, and now it is in the New — now it is in the lives of the Patriarchs, and now it is in the Gospel life of our Lord — now it is in the history of the Hebrew kings, and now it is in the Apostolic Acts — now it is in the grand utterances of the ancient Prophets, and now it is in the close reasoning of the doctrinal Epistles. Almost without hesitation the system has been adopted by all branches of the Christian church; and today the ripest scholarship is employed in pouring the accumulated stores of Biblical learning into the lap of the Sabbath school, which had before been treasured in Theological seminaries as a species of esoteric and professional lore. The generations of the future will thus be trained in the knowledge of the Bible as, in itself, a complete Organon; a book of history with its testimonial facts — a book of principles with their tremendous moral sweep — a book to enlighten the reason, and to direct the conscience, and to sanctify the affections — a book, the test of character and the guide of conduct — a book, the final arbiter of all disputes, and the key to open the door of everlasting blessedness and glory. If, too, the time shall come, which I am hopeful enough to predict is not far distant, when the Sabbath school shall enlarge its circle to embrace the parents as well as the children, we shall have the entire church in training as systematic students of the Bible. There will then be no such thing as graduating from the Sabbath school, for the child of seven years

will find at his side the grand parent of seventy years — all gazing intently upon the glass of the written word, until these lower forms of knowledge are superseded by the grander revelations which shall burst directly from the face of the Throne.

What then is the conclusion into which we drift from, this antithesis between infidel propagandism on the one hand, and this Bible education on the other? Why only that the controversies of the age are narrowing down to the issue between a Divine testimony and all human speculations. It is true now as of old, that the battle is not ours but God's; and he says to us as He did to Ahab, "because the Syrians have said the Lord is God of the hills, but He is not God of the valleys, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into their hand — and ye shall know that I am the Lord." It is fit that the Supreme Book, which gives the mind of the Supreme Jehovah, should have power behind it to enforce its testimonies upon the consciences and hearts of men. It is "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Therefore it is the church has planted herself upon the Divine word; and therefore it is we are educating our children to stand squarely upon its authority. When Infidelity and skepticism marshal their forces, we are content to let the Bible speak with its own voice. The glory of victory shall belong only to Him by whom it is achieved. Let the great battle then with Gog and Magog be fought upon these holy plains, and the host of Israel exclaim the sword of the Lord and of Gideon!

5. I will fatigue your patience with only one illustration further of my general theme. It is found in the division of the church into different branches, or as it is sometime invidiously termed, into different sects. This divergence has been thrown as a reproach into the face of our Protestant Christianity, nor will I undertake to deny that it furnishes proof of human infirmity. Perhaps it is a fault that we cannot see eye to eye upon all the details of the Christian scheme. But when the vast comprehension of the system is considered, as well as the depths of mystery in which its fundamental truths are sunk — and when further we take into account the natural tendency of the human mind to divergence in the field of speculation — there is at least a diminution of the reproach. Yet if it be an evil, it has unquestionably been allowed in the Providence of God; and it may of that class which Divine wisdom sees fit to subordinate to a superior good. It cannot be denied that all bodies of Christians which stand upon the authority and teachings of the Bible, agree entirely upon all the ground facts which that book reveals, however they may diverge in their articulate expositions and deductions. Upon such fundamental truths as the unity of God, and the adorable mystery of a tri-personal distinction in that unity — upon the reality of the Incarnation, involving the two natures in the person of Jesus Christ — upon the fact of redemption accomplished through His death upon the Cross — upon the doctrine of justification before God through His perfect righteousness alone — upon the office of faith in appropriating this righteousness and making it our own — upon the truth that salvation is grounded purely in Divine Grace, independent of human merit — upon the fact of the sinner's entire estrangement from God, and his just condemnation under a perfect and holy law — upon the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Ghost, who quickens us from spiritual death into spiritual life — upon personal holiness as the necessary voucher of a regenerate state — upon the offices of the Holy Spirit in renewing, enlightening, comforting, sanctifying and glorifying the believer — upon the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment — upon the eternal blessedness of the redeemed in Heaven, and the everlasting punishment of the wicked in Hell — upon each and upon all these supreme truths which are the ribs of the Christian system, there is not the breadth of a hair which divides the Evangelical churches of this country or of England. Why, in this

rapid enumeration I have run up a magnificent creed which none upon this platform tonight would hesitate to subscribe; and yet I have stated only in part the doctrinal consensus of the catholic church of God upon earth. It is true; it would not be difficult to draw up a formidable list of topics upon which we would honestly divide. Yet this would happen only when we come to specification of the minor details of the system, or to questions of external order which do not touch the vitals of Christianity at all. Upon the system itself as it stands before us in its essential facts, we agree as with the heart and the voice of one man.

There arises then from this diversity in unity a capital advantage, that these different branches of the church become concurrent witnesses for the truth which they hold in common. There is no compulsory uniformity in their testimony. There is no collusion between the witnesses, patching up a system to be imposed upon the credulity of men. But in the free exercise of private judgment, each has bent over the sacred volume to find out its meaning for himself. That the investigation has been independent and free, is proved by their obstinate difference in given particulars; and their unanimity in affirming the truths which lie at the heart of the system, is a light shining upon the Bible such as could only be produced by the convergence of separate rays to a common focus.

Why is it that the life of our Lord is written by the four Evangelists? Could not one historian have given the substantive facts, without the apparent repetition of them by the other three? Why should Matthew, with his eye fixed upon the Jewish people, cast his narrative into a form which accumulates the testimonies to the Messiahship of Jesus? Why should Luke, with his eye fixed upon the Gentile nations, bring out in minute and expressive features the true human nature of Christ —putting him thus in sympathetic relations to the human race and tinging his Gospel with such a Pauline color of thought? And why should John, the holy mystic of the Apostolic College, go back of all this into the preexistence of Christ who in the beginning was the word that was with God, and was God — reciting those wonderful discourses which breathe the music of infinite love from the bosom of the Father? Why this four-sided history of the Redeemer on earth? I do not pretend to give an exhaustive answer to these questions, touching the manifold uses of just such a history as this. But undeniably there is an advantage to us in being able to go around that blessed life upon all the sides of the square, as light and shade fall upon it from north, south, east and west. May it not be in analogy with all this, that the church of God has been allowed to front all the points of the compass in the variations which have been indicated; in order that the solid temple of truth within may be recognized as one and alone by the very number of faces it is able to present

I am warned by the clock that I must close. Christian friends, I suppose you have felt, in those tender moments which sometimes come to us in the closet, an envy of those who enjoyed the privilege of looking upon the face of our Lord on earth. You feel that if He would but reveal Himself to your sight, and if you could but once clasp his human form in your embrace, you would be able to say with Simeon in the temple "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." And it is perhaps with a sigh breaking into a sob that you bow under Paul's solemn prohibition, "yet now henceforth know we Him no more after the flesh." Yet here is the secondary incarnation of our blessed Lord in this Book. Here are the tones of His voice; here are the words of His love; here are the tears upon His cheek for human suffering and sin. It is not to us the hard letter of a hard record, but it is a living Christ walking up and down with us in a garden of delights; a personal friend, the pulse of

whose warm love we feel against our beating heart, and into whose confiding ear we can pour every pain and every prayer. What a compensation have we in place of our absent Lord! As for myself, I am content not to look upon the face of my Master upon earth. This joy, I humbly hope, is reserved for me hereafter: it is enough now if I can meet Him in His word, and feel His strength and pity in the hours of weakness and sorrow, of temptation and of sin.

But duty is coordinate with privilege. An obligation rests upon those to whom the oracles of God are committed. Have we the right to monopolize the precious gift? It is God's Book and God's salvation given to the world. Would you raise partition walls quite up to the body of the sun, that his blessed beams should slant only upon your dwelling? Would you fence off the expansive air, that it should fill only your lungs and not those of your neighbor? God's love is like the sunlight which bathes the earth with its glory. His grace free as the air which breathes over grass and flower, over land and sea, in the great round globe. You are asked tonight to aid in circulating these Scriptures through the section of the land in which we live, through the vast outlying territory that is beyond, throughout the earth, that all nations may be able to see "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." I am ashamed to make any appeal in behalf of what is so supreme as the Bible. One thing is certain, nothing of privilege or duty is higher than this to which you are summoned tonight. Next to the joy arising from our personal interest in Christ, is the joy of uniting with Him who is the Word in spreading God's thought throughout the world.



## Book Review

### *The Life and Letters of Robert Lewis Dabney*

by Thomas Cary Johnson

First published in 1903 and republished in 1977, 585 pages, hardback

#### Review by H. Rondel Rumburg

What a grand thing it is to read a biography that is not conflicted by the fear of being politically correct. This book was written BPC (before political correctness). Men like Dabney have been dishonestly dealt with in modern times. Some think they may discredit him by disparaging him. Men of conviction have few admirers in a world filled with compromise. You will understand when I say, "Dabney was a man's kind of man." Thomas Cary Johnson's biography is a truly great biography of a great man of God who was unwilling to compromise eternal truth and its application to all of life. Johnson was a personal friend of Dabney as well as his successor at Union Seminary in Richmond.

Johnson carries us through the life of Dabney from its beginning to his blindness in old age and then his entrance into eternity. It was said that he hands us a biography "warts and all." Two readings of this grand volume causes this reviewer to say that herein is the true Dabney in the greatness of his insights, the magnitude of his knowledge, the accuracy of his theology, the kindness of a son for his mother, the love of

family, the conservancy of truth, the care of his students, the labor of his hands, the power of his pen, the penetration of his preaching, the adoration of his worship of the triune God, the preciseness of his exegesis, the chaplain to Confederate soldiers, the chief of staff to General Thomas Jonathan “Stonewall” Jackson, the architect of church buildings, the success as a planter, the kissing of the hand that took his children from his life, the fierce defense of the truth, the uncompromising nature of his beliefs, the combatant against ecclesiastical demagoguery, etc.

Dabney’s life was properly preserved by Johnson’s skilled treatment. What the author does is give us an honest account of an eminent preacher of reformed theology. Dabney accepted the Bible as the absolute Word of God, as inspired, not only in matter, but in form. He was a man with sanctified common sense. He was a skilful maker of furniture to be used with purpose. He was a book binder, a skilled mapmaker and a stone mason. He was a theologian beyond Charles Hodge. Robert Lewis Dabney was an enemy of evil and error.

What greater compliment could I give the author than to say, “Johnson lets Dabney be Dabney.” He does not try to suffocate Dabney by strangling him by trying to put him in a particular mold. His pen releases Dabney before your eyes and turns him loose to live a great life of service to the sovereign God of the universe. Often Johnson lets Dabney speak for himself through his letters. One would wonder if there is anyone in this modern time without the disease of “psychography” who could do an adequate job on such a man. D. S. Freeman noted, “Of all the frauds that ever have been perpetrated on our generation, this ‘psychography’ is, in my opinion, the worst. How dare a man say what another man is thinking when he may not know what he himself is thinking! That is the fate of a good many of us.”

Do you want to know R. L. Dabney? Johnson’s biography can help you! This is a great biographer and biography.



**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](http://biblicalandsouthernstudies.com) for a copy.