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### The Successful Minister's Fixed Resolve.

BY REV. JNO. S. HARDAWAY.

Sermon preached at Mt. Zion Church at the ordination of Joseph Blacklock, June 4, 1893, and requested for publication in the RECORDER by Mt. Zion Church, Flat River Association.

Text—"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."—1 Cor. 2: 2.

It is always an occasion of surpassing interest when a church is gathered together formally to set apart a man to the work of the gospel-ministry. We can well imagine that not only the church on earth is intensely interested in it, but also the church triumphant in heaven. The soldier is girding on the sword, and putting on the armor for a life-long battle, as a captain of the Lord's hosts. The servant of the Lord is about to accept, and publicly acknowledge his acceptance of, the highest trust ever committed to human hands. The church in thus publicly setting him apart into this work expresses her confidence in the man's character and her sanction of his call. If the church cannot stamp her approval upon the man, upon his life, upon his qualifications for work, no attention should be paid to any clamour, however loud and urgent, for ordination. The work of the gospel ministry is the most exalted and important of all callings.

There be some in our day who would underestimate it, and who would claim that there are other callings of equal dignity;—but there is no work that can be placed on an equal footing with the preaching of the gospel of salvation. It will be proper, then, to enter upon the inquiry, How can success in the ministry be attained? This is a question of supreme importance to every man taking upon himself this work. A failure in other callings in life might be borne without any deep sense of mortification, but failure in the ministry is unpardonable; it is equivalent to saying that God made a mistake when he called the man to the work; that God had acted without judgment and knowledge.

To attain unto success in the ministry a man must go forth having his heart filled with an unshaken and unshakable resolve—namely this—a determination to know nothing among men "save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

My text is found in 1 Cor. 2: 2, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." My subject is, "The successful minister's fixed resolve."

He who would be really and truly successful in this work must determine "to know nothing among men, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." He will need to fix his face like a flint against some of the most subtle temptations, and against some of the most powerful adversaries that ever assailed a human soul. Let us consider

#### I. SOME OF THE MINISTER'S TEMPTATIONS.

By minister's temptations, I refer especially to those temptations that assault him in his ministry. There are many who conceive of ministers the false notion that they are not like other men the subjects of temptation. This is contradicted by the fact that Jesus was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." If he was tempted, we cannot hope to be free from temptation.

The minister is often sorely tempted. I now ask you to consider the temptations that come to him through his ministry.

(1). There will come, there does come, to the minister the temptation to preach philosophy. By philosophy, I mean the course of sciences taught in the schools. Science is the goddess of our day. She has many devotees, and as the science of our day is largely materialistic, the result is that there is much materialism mixed with the religious views of the day. In many points the sciences as taught clash with the teachings of God's word, and the full fledged scientist says, "So much the worse for the word of God." Now take a young preacher and run him through the mill of science, and he comes out with enough science in his head to make him a foe; then he sets himself to work to reconcile the science "falsely so-called" with the teachings of God's word. He can show anything he wishes to; for when he comes to God's word everything that clashes with science is figurative and allegorical, not at all real and liberal. This temptation comes to the minister because to preach the word of God just as it is to relegate himself to the background of foggyism. So he is tempted to be a preacher of philosophy. I am no foe to true science; it cannot by any means be hostile to God's word; I would not deny any plain fact of science; I am perfectly willing to admit that there is a great similarity in physical structure between "man that goeth upward and the beast that goeth downward;" I am perfectly willing to consent to any fact of science, but what I never will assent nor consent to is, the theories spun around these facts, when they give the lie to God's truth as plainly declared in the word. "I had rather be a dog and bay the moon" than to set myself to work to make God's inerrant truth truckle to the low-bred teachings of a man who taught man was just "a higher ape." Let the fools teach their folly, but preach thou the word of God.

(2). Another temptation to the minister is to air his merely human learning. Poor man! he thinks, "If I can only get the people to think that I am a great man, I will be able to influence them for good." Therefore he hurks great masses of human learning at the people. He expatiates over the wide and varied fields of history; he discusses questions of etymology and psychology; he walks about among the stars sounding all the depths of astronomy; at last he comes down to earth again, and a sigh of relief goes up from the people that his learned peregrination has ended. Poor sheep! they go home thinking that they have a great shepherd, but they would enjoy his preaching a little more if he would sometimes feed them. The great preachers of the world have been the simple, plain preachers.

Surgeon preached simple Bible truths; Moody does the same in a simple, earnest way; Martin Luther said that he preached so that "the women and the children could understand him;" and so ought every preacher of the word to endeavor to do. He, upon the preacher who would make the pulpit a place to air his dry bones of human learning in. We ought to learn that the thing for the preacher to do is to get out of sight as much as possible by riveting every eye upon Christ. As a taper would be forgotten in the blazing light of the sun, so ought we to disappear in the presence of our Lord. He is the best preacher who will make men see and feel the presence of the invisible Christ.

(3). Another temptation of the ministry is to seek to catch what is called the intellectual element. The preacher is a fisher of men, and his aim should be to catch all men, as far as possible. A ministry addressed especially to the intellectual class would have two serious defects. It would be one-sided and narrow—and it would fail even of its own purpose. It would miss all classes. Such a ministry would have its root in intellectual pride, and its result would be spiritual desolation both to the people and to the preacher. How many sermons have been saved, as one hath well said, at the expense of saving souls!

4. Another temptation to the minister is to tone down his preaching to suit the worldly. You will get at my meaning better by the relation of the following incident: In a city of America, a minister of the gospel not long since undertook to preach against the sins of society. A member of his church went to him and told him he had to quit preaching on that subject. Not long afterwards that man who was too good to hear about the sins of society, by his own iniquitous speculation in "bucket shops," broke four banks. I am afraid that many preachers are too tender and gingerly in handling sins and vices. They say little about these things, because they are afraid the people who commit these sins will become offended, and begin to war against them. This generation needs men like John the Baptist who will even stir up if need be the nest of vipers; or who will rebuke Herodias, the adulteress, at the expense of his own head. We do not want a toned down, thin, watery ministry of the word, but the unadulterated word of God preached without fear or favor.

(5). Another temptation to the minister is to dwell but little on those Scripture teachings which a carnal mind would object to. There is much of this feeling among us. If I am preaching to those who believe in falling from grace, I must be very careful not to bring out final perseverance too strongly; or if I am preaching among antinomian people, I must say but little about missions, and that must have an apology; or if I am preaching to Pedobaptists and come across a Scripture that teaches believer baptism, I must be careful, O so careful, not to wound their feelings by intimating what the word says on that point—and so on, and on, "ad nauseam."

He who has not felt, or cannot feel this temptation, is not "a man of like passions as we are." But see here! Isn't it a mark of a carnal mind to be unwilling to hear all that God has said? When a man preaches in God's name, ought he not to preach regardless of what men will think of or do with his preaching? Woe, woe, woe, to the trimmers of God's word!

Of course, all preaching should be in kindness, but surely it should be also in all faithfulness.

(6). Another temptation to the minister is to preach morality instead of Christ Jesus. It is so easy to denounce bad living; to heap anathemas upon drunkenness, licentiousness, profanity, dishonesty, lying, card playing and dancing. It is equally easy to make the mistake of supposing that we can destroy sin and purify evil, sin-loving hearts, by denouncing sin. We might as well go into a garden where weeds were rank and cry aloud, "O weeds, worthless and noxious, ye choke and root out vegetables that are of service. O garden, why bring forth these unprofitable weeds, when you might yield vegetables in plenty?" I say we might as well do this, and then hope that the garden will cease to produce weeds at our bidding as to hope to make men good by a mere denunciation of sin. The evil garden of the heart will still produce an evil crop, and no amount of denunciation of sin can prevent it.

You need to preach the gospel—the grace of God to men through Christ; and when they receive the grace of God, a pure gospel-morality will grow as an inevitable result. I know that the preacher must often treat moral questions. The gospel has an intimate connection with morality—but the preaching of morality apart from the gospel will either utterly fail of doing away with sin, or will produce a dead, formal pharisaism, which is even more hostile to the pure gospel than utter immorality. Preach Christ. Be a preacher of the grace of God, and of the power of that grace to cleanse the hearts and lives of men.

(7). Another temptation will be to run off on side issues. How many a preacher has ruined his influence by being switched off into politics by some question of the day. That minister makes a fatal blunder who supposes that anything can take the place of the gospel of Christ. There is no other panacea for the ills of mankind. O, I know that one hundred thousand drunkards are reported as going down into a drunkard's hell every year from the United States alone. Yes, I know that the nation's drink bill is said to be \$900,000,000; and that in consequence of this wastage thousands upon thousands of wives and children cry for bread;—but friend, the only barrier we can oppose to this raging flood of intemperance is the preaching of Jesus Christ. I believe that the preacher should place himself on the right side of the all the great issues of the day, when he becomes a reformer and ceases to be a preacher he has made an inexpressible mistake.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

As in the fable the wolf preached against sheepstealing, so very many hunt down those sins in others which they shelter in themselves.

### Christ in Metaphor—No. 3.

BY REV. HIGHT C. MOORE.

THE CAPTAIN.

"I have given him for a leader and commander to the people." Isa. 55: 4.  
"The captain of their salvation." Heb. 4: 10.

War, merciless in the destruction of men and means, is yet an inspiring theme. The fallen hero is always sent by admiring friends to the soldier's paradise. The survivor is never without hearers who list with bated breath as the butchery and bloodshed of battle are depicted. The best known pages of history are those reddened with the blood of millions. The tales of ancient courage and mediæval chivalry and modern fortitude, exhibited on a thousand ensanguined fields, are thrilling as tales of romance and stranger than fiction. The poet writes in star-dust the glories of embattled hosts. The orator is never more passionate and powerful than when he paints the deeds of heroes or discusses the prospects of war. In the whole range of human knowledge and experience, there are few themes that have so inspired universal attention and gleamed on history's page, or wrought in poet's brain, or flashed on orator's tongue.

A deeper interest than mortal combat is the great conflict between truth and error. The forces of right and wrong are ever arrayed in line of battle against each other. There is ceaseless antagonism between good and evil. In this war, arbitration is unknown; the two sides are as distinct as Italian noon day and Egyptian darkness. Reconciliation can never be effected. The most important interest are at stake. No one is exempt from service. There is no neutrality. "He that is not with me is against me."

The great leaders in this warfare are Satan and Immanuel, the prince of darkness and the prince of peace. Those who contend for truth look to Christ as "the captain of their salvation." Here, then, we have a beautiful and suggestive metaphor. The meek and lowly Jesus is presented as a dauntless warrior going forth conquering and to conquer. Brave-hearted and battle-scarred, he leads forth his army into battle. With an eye of vigilance, and a mind of wisdom, and an arm of power, and a heart of courage, he faces the foe and plants his glorious standard on every shore.

I. HIS ARMY.

1. They are volunteers. The captain forces no one into his service. Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." The occupant must open willingly, or Christ will never enter. He says "Follow me," but he drags no one at his chariot wheels. He says, "Take my yoke upon you," but no unwilling neck is compelled to bear it. He resorts to persuasion and not to sheer force. No conscripts are found in his lines. He wants and will have only volunteers to fight his battles and further his cause.

2. They are fearless. A brave army is the delight of a courageous captain, but cowardly soldiers disgrace the ranks and embolden the foe. In a world of countless dangers, Immanuel's army must have true fortitude or it is doomed to defeat. We are to face and overcome the fierce onslaughts and insidious wiles of the evil one. Courage is required. No concessions must be made. Ever onward we must press with brave hearts from battle to battle. And the Captain will reward this. Witness him with the brave Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, with Daniel in the den of lions, with Peter in prison, with Paul and Silas in the Philippian jail, and a hundred other instances where he has not forsaken his bold and struggling soldiers.

3. They are obedient. No one in the army is authorized to issue commands. These come direct from headquarters. It is the part of the captain to command; it is the duty of the army to obey. A united and obedient soldiery is sure to win. If they are told to scout the plains of Asia or penetrate the wilds of Africa, it is theirs to obey. If they are bidden to proclaim the words of life in heathen countries or assail the strongholds of irreligion in Christian lands, the divine orders must be carried out. From the equator to the poles the army must "fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

4. They are armed. The armor has no small part to play in the success of the army. Were this defective, military skill would avail but little. A handful of trained soldiers can cut an unarmed multitude to pieces. The Christian warrior is clad in the best of armor. Paul saw the need of this and he sounded along the lines for all the centuries, "Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

The pieces which are provided in the armor of God are enumerated. The girdle of truth is essential. It binds on the armor and imparts strength to the Christian veteran. The breastplate of righteousness covers the vitals and serves as a bulwark behind which the heart is sheltered from the missiles of the foe. On the march the soldier will encounter a rough and thorny way; he must have his "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." The shield of faith is indispensable. Without it we are at the mercy of the foe; with it, we "shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." The helmet of salvation secures the head and in the hour of apparent defeat blesses the Christian with hopeful assurance of final victory. The sword of the Spirit is

necessary in every conflict. The Captain, assailed in the wilderness by the prince of darkness, wielded this trusty sword and conquered his enemy. Its powerful thrusts are always effective in driving Satan from the field. Finally, prayer is mentioned. It inspires the warrior with courage. It nerves him for the battles of life. It "moves the arm that moves the world."

"Restraining prayer, we cease to fight; Prayer makes the Christian's armor bright; And Satan trembles when he sees, The weakest saint upon his knees."

4. They engage in fighting. Ofttimes it is on the defensive. The legions of darkness come up against the forces of truth in battle array. The archers darken the elements with their poisoned arrows. They charge with glittering spears. With satanic yell they rush up the ramparts of right, bent on the total destruction of Immanuel's army. But the sturdy heroes of truth defend themselves with valor. Clad in divine armor, they receive the foe. The grand old sword in a thousand faithful hands, with true aim and steady stroke, thin out the hostile ranks. Shield and helmet serve their purpose. Prayer and courage do their part. The baffled enemy retires, and victory on the defensive is won.

But we must assume the offensive in Christian warfare. The pieces of armor are confined to the front, and we must never retreat. The spirit of Christianity is aggressive. It is the nature of the water of life to run and not to stagnate. It is the purpose of the Captain to wrest the entire globe from the hands of Satan. The army of the living God is to go forth on one grand series of conquests. It is to scan every ocean and sea, invade every continent and island, and subjugate the world for Immanuel. It is to crush every legion of error, to demolish every fortress of wrong, to thwart every purpose of Satan. And the church militant, weak and exhausted on many hard-won fields, rejoices that victories here are only a faint prophecy of the glories of the church triumphant.

II. HIS FOE.

1. He is experienced. For six thousand years he has been troubling and tempting the race. He knows the customs and tastes of all nations. He is acquainted with all kinds of people. He has dealt with all temperaments and all natures. Princes and paupers have alike fallen into his clutches. His snares have caught the cultured and the illiterate. Age and youth, rich and poor, honored and disgraced, male and female, cannibal and Christian, people of all centuries and countries and conditions, are well known to him. His experience is as old as man and as wide as the world.

2. He is invisible. He is a spirit and it is often exceedingly difficult to detect his presence. Mediæval poisoners used to place poison in the flowers of the gardens so that as youth or maiden inhaled the fragrance of the flower, they would also inhale the fatal poison. Thus Satan appears as an angel of light, and millions writhe in his deadly coils. Too late they realize the monstrous deception.

3. He is artful. Strategy has been known to accomplish far more in military tactics than whole legions of trained fighting men. Satan is proficient in this art. We deal with a foe who is well posted in all kinds of trick and artifice. His plans and schemes have been in operation for centuries. He has refined his diabolical processes to the utmost degree. His artful snares and wily deceptions have wrought untold havoc.

4. He is deadly. He means no good to man. He goes up and down the world as a roaring lion "seeking whom he may devour." If the race is ever elevated, it is against his wishes. He fathers no good work and aids no beneficent enterprise. He glories in the path of ruin. Thither he would turn the teeming millions of earth. He delights to bring every noble name into disgrace. His shafts are directed against the physical and spiritual man. Dissatisfied with devastation here, he would drag the entire race into an awful realization of the bitter death that knows no end.

5. He is powerful. The fiends and fallen angels are his devoted adherents, ever ready to hear his commands and do his bidding. His resources are vast. His instruments of death are numerous. He leads man to commit spiritual suicide. Lustful desires, so hard to control and so awful in effect, do the sad work of destruction. Companions serve as a mighty engine of ruin. The sparkling glass, glittering gold, shining fame, and exquisite pleasure are used to carry out satanic schemes. How great are the earthly odds against us!

III. HIS LEADERSHIP.

1. It is wise. No army can hope for success with an insane man at the head. Loss of faith in the skill and wisdom of the general is the first step to certain ruin. Unwise leadership has resulted disastrously in the fearful loss of life and liberty. Wisdom in the leader is essential.

The forces of right here have all that can possibly be desired. Jesus Christ is the very embodiment of wisdom. With infinite knowledge he leads forth his army. He knows his soldiers, their character and condition, their perils and poverty, their trials and temptations, their sins and sorrows, their hardships and helplessness. He knows the strength of the enemy and is prepared to meet him. No trick of the wily serpent is hid from the penetrating vigilance of

[CONTINUED TO THE FOURTH PAGE.]