

Panoplied, Prayerful, Watchful.

BY REV. F. C. WRIGHT.

Ephesians 6: 13 18.

"Wherefore, O Christian soldier, take up the whole panoply of God," exclaims the Apostle—Behold, then, the Christian soldier:

1. Panoplied.—An indispensable part then of our equipment for warfare is the armor. Touching the items referred to by the Apostle notice (a) The girdle. "Having the loins girt about with truth," says the Apostle. This girdle was no soft, elegant, silken sword-sash, such as an officer in modern armies folds around himself. It was made of the toughest leather, armed with iron and buckled about the soldier's waist with the carelest security. It was that upon which all the rest of the armor hung. Without his girdle the ancient warrior was limp and useless. And the girdle for the Christian warrior is the truth, the Apostle says. He calls upon the Christian to have definite and distinct convictions of truth. In the stress and strain of conflict, you will need the support and strength of definite conviction, something worth living for and if need be dying for too. See to it, dear friend, that your loins are girt about with truth. Further notice:

(b) The breastplate. "Having on the breastplate of righteousness" adds the writer—the name then for the breastplate is righteousness—What does that mean? Righteousness here means the coincidence of life and creed. "The tree is known by its fruit." Right root, right fruit. As if it asked, "do you believe the truth?" Then live in accordance with the truth and so defend yourself, as the breastplate did the ancient warrior. There is no such defense for a man as the truth accepted and lived out in righteousness. Jesus said that He was the truth. Next comes:

(c) The sandals. "Having the feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace." Preparation here means readiness. Then a readiness to tell the glad tidings of peace. Dear reader, have you got it? Do you know about it? Have you experienced it? Go, tell it, then! There are no such protecting sandals for the feet of the Christian warrior as an obedient and alert readiness. The next item is:

(d) The shield. It is called the shield of faith. "Taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one." Shield, from *dura* a door, a shield like a door. It covered pretty nearly the entire person. Take this, says the author, that ye may be able to quench all the fiery darts, darts wrapped with lighted and flaming tow—such darts the evil one flings at us.

Here's a hint of the propagating power of temptation. "One sin draws another in its track; the flame of the fire-tipped dart spread; temptation acts on susceptible material; self-confidence is combustible; faith, in doing away with dependence on self; takes away the fuel for the dart; it creates sensitiveness to holy influences, by which the power of temptation is neutralized; it enlists the direct aid of God." Next notice:

(e) The helmet. It is designated the helmet of salvation. The Apostle, in his epistle to the Thessalonians, explains the figure, as the helmet of the hope of salvation. That sounds good! Ah, what protection here! Hope! Expecting to conquer instead of being conquered. Why not, then, go into the conflict with high heart?

The last item in the panoply of the Christian soldier is:

(f) The sword. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit which is the word of God. It is then the sword of the spirit and this sword is God's word. The sword is a part of the armor. It is the weapon of offense and defense. Grasp it, then, and hold it. It is sharper than any two-edged sword of Roman soldier. Be sure you have it my brother, sister, as it is indispensable in the great conflict. You cannot get along without it and do not try. Know it well and this can be achieved by using it much.

(2) Prayerful.—Not only do we need to be well armed but we must be prayerful also: The struggle is not simply with human but with super-human foes. "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." Consequently we need super-aid. How can such help be obtained? The answer is by or through prayer. Not only are we enjoined to pray but to pray always, that is in prosperity and adversity, in joy and sorrow, etc. We are to pray with all prayers and especially pray in the spirit. What a world of meaning there is in that expression "praying in the spirit." The Christian warrior, in addition to this harnessing in armor, this being prayerful, must be:

(3) Watchful.—Notice, here, that we must maintain a persevering and intent watchfulness. That word watchful means without sleep and perseverance means strong and strong, as the bow ready for service, toward such watchfulness. We must watch as well as pray. "Watching there unto" says the Apostle. A closing word about being watchful is: (1) As toward prayer itself. Remember that we are to pray in the spirit. Watch toward growing conventional and mechanical in our prayers. (2) As toward the armor, that no portion of it is left off. This, too, is very important. (3) As toward our antagonists, they are many and wily also. "The virgins slumbered and slept." (4) Lastly as toward obedient service. Not a drone, nor a mere onlooker but a worker. Go watching, praying, panoplied we shall conquer. If this must be the method of the Christian life, what must be said of the life of the un-Christians, unarmed, unprayerful, unwatchful! Into what sore defeat it must surely pass.

West Rutland, Vt.

The Baptists of Yarmouth, N. S.

REV. J. H. SAUNDERS.

No. II.

In ability to give proper expressions of emotions and character we are far in advance of our fathers. In our knowledge of religious principles—in the order and decency of religious worship—in the perfection of our church organization we have advanced. By the records of the century we have reaped a large gain. In all that is vital to church life we are quite the equal of any body of Christians. But with all this it is possible for Baptist churches to suffer the dearth and death of religious formalists—to have a name, to live and be dead. We have some indications of this lapsing to the spiritual lifelessness of past times. Many whose names are on our church rolls are living far from virtuous lives,—many more it may be whose deportment is more correct know but little, if anything, of the experiences of the new life, which is by faith in Jesus Christ; nor of the self-denial and benevolence inherent in the regenerate life. Nor do they profess ever to have known this. Nor was this experience demanded of them at the threshold of church life. How shall our churches be saved from backsliding is the question which now demands an answer. Let the history of our churches for the last century aid us. "Whereunto we have already attained, by that same rule let us walk."

The Baptists of Yarmouth made remarkable progress in the last century. We have distanced our fellow-Christians. Our statistical status is about 17 churches, 3,000 members, 25 church homes—places of worship—seating 7,000, 12 parsonages; value of church property, \$105,000; 11 pastors.

It is well for us to know how all this increase and prosperity have been attained. As we have seen, at the beginning of the last century a few, poor uninfused converts of Father Harding were here under his pastoral care, really without a name or church home, surrounded by the most bitter opposition. The influence of church and state was united against them. Against them, too, were the passions and vices of an ignorant, unregenerate age, in full play. All this force of evil was met and more than matched by the simple preaching of the gospel—the good news of salvation for lost sinners by faith in Jesus Christ. Aside from this commission Mr. Harding and his people were neither endowed nor endorsed.

In the course of a few years this feeble band of Christians was the most influential body of Christians in the township of Yarmouth. Your attention has been called to the doctrines preached and the peculiar experiences of these converts. In this gospel, and this new life of these New-Lights, is found in germ and crude form the spiritual power to which our churches are indebted for their present existence. But for our undervaluing these primaries of our faith the lack of spiritual life in our churches we now deplore would be unknown to us. Living principles demand opportunities for growth. It is the glory of the gospel that out of crude clay it makes vessels of value and honor—out of rough, debauched humanity saints of angelic purity. By refining the individual citizens it lifts to a higher plane of civilization the commonwealth. See how this gospel has magnified itself in the history of Yarmouth.

In 1806 the first general reformation of Mr. Harding's congregations began in a small meeting held in a school house in Hebron. Soon this work of the Holy Spirit spread throughout the township. Many were converted and baptized. What of church organization there was at this date was of the New-Light order, of which no records were kept. The Baptists of Nova Scotia had formed an Association in 1800, which quite systematically guided the churches of this body in their work. But Mr. Harding and his people were not with them. The more loose views of Mr. Alline prevailed in Yarmouth.

Following the revival of 1806 great difficulties came upon Mr. Harding and his people. The gospel net had gathered of every kind. There was no standard of selection. The emotional was the ruling factor now, and factions was the result. Feelings were accepted as the voice of the Holy Ghost. Much that was sensual and devilish took on religious garb. This, under a sort of congregational control, with an ignorance of, and a smothered contempt for gospel order in the church, wrought widespread discord and confusion. What was known as the New Dispensation was now ushered in—visions, dreams, emotions of joy or sorrow for all sorts of things sinful or saintly were in control. This was a time of bitter experience for Mr. Harding and the more intelligent of his flock. The reins slipped out of the pastor's hands. Many of his people became a law unto themselves. Other denominations put in an appearance and divided the flock. In the meantime the Associated Baptists had taken more close and Scriptural order, were laying foundations in truth, firm and intelligent, for denominational unity and prosperous church life. God had like blessings in store for Baptists of Yarmouth.

In 1807 Zachariah Chipman, a young man from Annapolis, settled in this county as a tanner and shoemaker. He was a brother of Elder Thomas Handly Chipman, one of the leaders of the rising Baptist cause

in Nova Scotia. Mr. Chipman affiliated with Mr. Harding's people. As God sent Father Harding to Yarmouth so he surely sent Bro. Chipman. He was just the man for the occasion. All was in confusion in the church. Everything was flying at loose ends, as a wreck in the storm. There was no official control—no records. Mr. Chipman was a devoted Christian—he was judicious—orderly to an excessive degree, with a large share of executive ability and wisdom. His ideals of the church of Christ were Scriptural. He had aspirations for the dignity of office, and a conscientious purpose to humbly serve the Lord and His cause. In him what was lacking in Mr. Harding was largely furnished. Already there was gathered sufficient material for a forceful, spiritual church, but it lay about in unsightly form. The hand of a workman was needed to rear a house for God.

Not until the 30th of August 1814 was there a regular church record kept. At this date Mr. Chipman was appointed church clerk. The following resolutions were passed:

First. That the former Articles of Faith and Practice, Order and Discipline of Christ's visible Kingdom do express our belief.

Second. That no believers are considered members of this church, who are not baptized by immersion. But such believers as the church have a fellowship for, who walk circumspectly may be admitted by the voice of the church to occasional communion.

Third. That the Lord's supper be administered the 1st Sabbath of every month.

Fourth. That it is the duty of church members to attend church meetings regularly, etc.

Fifth. That such believers as have been regular members of the church heretofore, do manifest to the church an unshaken gospel belief of the plan, order and discipline of this church, that we may be perfectly joined together in one judgment in the Lord's Body, as members of Christ's visible Kingdom.

This was really a re-organization of the body. Here the New-Light church was made to approach a regular Baptist church.

Only a part of the people subscribed to this platform. There was a division, but the people knew how they stood in church relation.

Subsequent records show that for years after this former members were coming into this new order of things.

In June 1823 an attempt was made to unite with the associated Baptists, but membership was denied them on account of the occasional communion clause in their church articles. This was somewhat disappointing. This church was hardly strait enough for the regular Baptists of N. S. Some stirring discussions followed. But as additional peace and prosperity had come to this church, since more orderly service had been established, and the associated Baptists were a prosperous people; and moreover as the people of Yarmouth were coming to a better knowledge of the Scriptures these discussions but drew them closer to their brethren of the association.

To complete this work Thos. Ainsley, one of the strong men of the Baptist faith visited Yarmouth in autumn of 1827. A marvelous outpouring of the Holy Spirit was the result. In 18 months hundreds were converted. The church was enlarged by some 200 baptisms. Mr. Ainsley remained with Mr. Harding in this work for 5 or 6 months. He introduced the covenant and articles of the Baptist body. He constantly at all the conference meetings held in the several districts of the county read these articles and explained their scriptural import. He preached with clearness and power the doctrines of grace, and the special privileges of obedience to Christ's command. The people came together as they had never before in church life.

On July 6, 1828, nearly 200 sat at the communion. The foundation for the Baptist cause in Yarmouth was now quite solidly laid. Regular order was taken and in 1828 the Yarmouth church was received to full membership in the association.

Among the influential men of the county who identified themselves with the Baptists we find the name of Jas. B. Moody, M. P. P. He died Oct. 30, 1828.

This was the way the Lord led the Baptists of Yarmouth out of the chaos of New-Lightism and the muddle of sentimentalism as to church ordinances.

Three distinct lines of action were now entered upon by the church, and quite persistently followed.

First.—Church discipline was arranged for. Orderly walk and fellowship were required of all the members. Offenders were labored with until they were either restored to fellowship or excluded.

The records show that in the second quarter of the century more were censured and excluded from the church for disorderly walk than were removed by death. Large numbers of these returned to the church, confessing their faults, and were lovingly restored.

Then there was an effort made to establish regular and suitable financial support of the church. This was a most difficult work. The pastor was not very heartily in sympathy with the movement. The people were not educated along this line. Their pocket-books had not been baptized. The leaders of the church were not always wise in the application of gospel principles. In spite of their best efforts they were often confronted with deficits and discouraged. This was a large factor in the records of the church for 50 years. We are not entirely above this difficulty now.

Following this the missionary spirit put in an appearance, demanding recognition and support. This movement met an allied host in all but battle array against it.

The members of the church were not rich in this world's possessions, as a class. Only by strict economy and persevering industry were they arising from the poverty of earlier days. Then the traditions of New Lightism, with the logic of their history were hanging to their skirts. They did not recognize the principles by

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