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Religious Liberty*

By W. A. Colcord

Principles Too Little Understood

ONE of the most dangerous evils threatening our times is the growing demand for religious legislation. This demand is being urged more and more, and in some instances governments are beginning to yield to it.

Many are led to believe that the remedy for the present widespread irreligion lies through human legislation. Few seem to realize that the use of force in religion is inconsistent with the gospel of Christ, and that in the end religious legislation means religious persecution.

There needs to be a better and more general understanding of the great principles underlying human rights and liberties. Principles which, if universally understood and adhered to, would insure peace on earth and good-will among men, ought not to be ignored nor forgotten.

The principles of liberty are living, ennobling principles. They are recognized or disregarded wherever people live and governments exist. The people of all nations either enjoy the blessings of freedom, or feel the oppressive hand of intolerance and persecution.

To keep these principles fresh in the minds of the people is the only sure way of securing the blessing accruing from them, and perpetuating these blessings to the race. It is because these principles are allowed to be forgotten, and false ideas to spring up and take their place, that they are disregarded. A field, in order to yield fruit, must be cultivated; only weeds, thistles, and thorns thrive without cultivation. It has not yet ceased to be true that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

Religious liberty is safe only while a knowledge of its principles is familiar to the people. It is to this fact that are due the laws of toleration and religious freedom in many of the modern governments of Europe, America, and elsewhere. Through the great struggles of the past for freedom, the people of these lands became familiar with the principles, and public sentiment demanded their recognition and expression in the laws of the land.

Religious Liberty Endangered

But the histories of these great struggles are but little read, and less studied and talked about, by the masses of today. Few possess or read the works which chronicle these great conflicts for civil and religious liberty. They are not in large demand at the present time. These moral battles, upon the result of which so much depended, and which bequeathed to succeeding generations liberty of conscience and freedom of thought and expression, are not being fought over in the minds of the people today. The great underlying principles which actuated them, and carried them through to a glorious and successful issue, have largely faded from the memory of the present generation; and again the cloud of religious oppression, ever ready to overshadow and sweep away the dearest rights of man, hangs with threatening aspect over the world. Again demands are being made in different lands for legislation in religious things. Organizations have been formed, and dangerous movements are on foot, calling for the enactment and enforcement of laws which will make religious observance compulsory, and failure to comply a crime punishable by the state.

We hear of such organizations as the National Reform Association, the Christian Elector's Association, the International Reform Bureau, the American Sabbath Union, the Lord's Day Alliance, and the Sunday Rest League, all church organizations, and all having one object, that of establishing and enforcing religion by law.

All these also are professedly Protestant organizations; but in this work which they are undertaking they are departing widely from the great Protestant principles of religious freedom and separation of church and state. In fact, to gain their object and secure the laws which they desire, they are linking hands with that power which through the Dark Ages, claimed the right, and still claims the right, to make use of the civil power for religious ends, and whose history is stained with the blood of many martyrs.

All Christian laws and usages, they hold, should be placed upon "an undeniable legal basis in the fundamental law of the land;" religion, they say, should form a part of the

state educational system; and the Sunday should be protected, and its observance enforced, by law.

Although there are many individuals who make no religious profession, all, it is said, should be required to conform to the prevailing religious customs of the land. Although aware that there is not perfect agreement concerning religious beliefs and practices even among those who profess religion, the majority, they say, should rule in religion,—rule, not by the power of argument and persuasion, but by the power of law and compulsion. The state, they hold, should "protect" religious institutions, particularly the Sunday sabbath, by requiring all to observe them. They desire that the state shall become the subservient instrument of the church, and do its bidding.

This, in brief, is their theory. Reformation by law is their policy. To this end

do not see that they are working upon wrong principles. Neither Christ nor his apostles ever once appealed to the state to enforce their teachings. When any religion becomes a religion of civil law, it ceases to be a religion of love. True religious reforms are accomplished, "not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts," Zech. 4: 6.

The church proclaims her lack of love and divine power whenever she seeks to carry on her work by coercion and the power of the state. While retaining the form of godliness, she denies the power thereof. 2 Tim. 3: 5. The early church derived her marvelous power, not from politics, but from Pentecost. She made her way in the world, and gained her greatest victories, in the face of opposition and adverse laws. But when she became united with the Roman Empire the empire fell, and the church lost her purity and power and became a bitter persecutor.

So the success of the present movement for religious legislation means the uniting of church and state, the subversion of civil

The true character of proposed measures for religious legislation may be carefully concealed, or be justified by arguments apparently sound and convincing; but if the evil principle is there, evil results must surely follow their enactment. Any teaching contrary to the religion or religious practices thus established would be considered "dangerous heresy," and "heretics" treated as in the past, when church and state were united, and ecclesiastical establishments had their way.

Already some organizations connected with this movement are employing paid spies, or detectives, to go about on Sunday to see who are not observing the day, and to act as witnesses in prosecuting such under existing Sunday laws. How long the rights and liberties of the people would be respected should such an element gain control of the civil power is not difficult to see.

One branch of this movement, the International Reform Bureau, of Washington, D. C., has gone so far as to have literature advocating more Sunday legislation published by the government of the United States as government documents, which it has been sending out under the government franking system, free of cost. To what length it would go if permitted may readily be conjectured.

The Basis of True Freedom

So long as there is no religious legislation, every individual is left free to worship, or not to worship, when, where, and as he chooses. But the moment law is applied, this freedom is gone. Some one's rights are invaded. And although all but one were favored by the law, and this one's rights were infringed, this would be an unanswerable argument against it. Christ was crucified on the pretext that it was better that "one man should die" than that the whole nation should perish. John 11: 47-50. Religious rights is not a question of numbers. The rights of the few are as sacred as those of the many.

It is hard for men to learn that the same rights which they claim for themselves they are in duty bound to extend to others, however widely they may differ from them. Men may be quick to recognize and claim their own rights, while they utterly ignore and trample upon the rights of others.

No man himself desires to be coerced by others as to what he shall believe and practice; and no one ought therefore to assume or claim the right to coerce another in this respect. The liberty which each desires for himself he should freely grant to others. For each to demand his own rights is not the basis of true liberty. Each must recognize and respect the equal rights of others, before freedom is insured. This is the golden rule of life: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." This is the true panacea for all bigotry, intolerance, and oppression.

The state exists to protect rights, not to invade them. The church is ordained of God to convert and save men, not to persecute, fine, and imprison them. The whole principle of religious persecution is contained in the plea that religious observances ought to be enforced by the civil power. God is never honored by disregarding God-given rights. No man, no body of men, has the right to dictate by law what the religious faith or practice of any other man or body of men shall be.

Important Questions

Shall the principles of religious freedom be kept alive, or shall we let them die? After reaching an age of light and liberty, shall we go back again to an epoch of darkness and oppression? Shall our children be taught the blessings and the value of the rights and liberties so long enjoyed, or shall they grow up in ignorance of them? Shall the rising generation hear first the clear, logical voice of freedom and truth, or the ingenious sophistries which justify intolerance and persecution? Shall religious bigotry be allowed to rear its hideous head again over the world, and there be no protest made, no note of warning given?

God made man to be free. From the beginning, the enemy of God and man has sought to make men the slaves of men. The carrying out of this policy, at the basis of which is selfishness, the root of all slavery and sin, has caused a large share of all the misery, woe, and wars of the world.

In every home, in every church in the land, the principles of religious liberty should be taught, together with the history of the great struggles of the past for freedom. All should know at what cost our liberties have been purchased.



"RENDER THEREFORE UNTO CÆSAR THE THINGS WHICH ARE CÆSAR'S;
AND UNTO GOD THE THINGS THAT ARE GOD'S"

they hold mass meetings, conduct conventions, lobby legislatures, circulate petitions, campaign States, use the boycott, and scatter their literature. And because of the political influence which they are able to exert through the churches and through various church organizations, they are making themselves felt in legislative assemblies. Men are found there, or if not found, are sent there, to introduce and champion their measures. Already within the last few years, acting under pressure from this source, the Congress of the United States has passed several Sunday-closing measures; and others of a like nature are being urged and demanded. The most determined efforts are being put forth to get the national government thoroughly committed to a course of religious legislation.

What the Movement Means

Many connected with this movement are doubtless honest, earnest, conscientious men and women. They are seeking to better existing conditions, and to inaugurate a needed religious reform. But they do not understand the character of the movement in which they are engaged, nor perceive to what it will lead. In asking that religious observances shall be made compulsory, they

government, the decline of piety, faith, and genuine religion, and the end of civil and religious freedom. If it succeeds, the rights of conscience will be invaded, religious persecution will be revived, and, in the face of oppression, men will again have to choose whether they will obey God or men.

Any movement, however mild and Christian at first in appearance, which seeks to advance religion by religious legislation, will, when fully developed manifest the same intolerance and oppression that have prevailed in past ages. Human councils then assumed the prerogatives of Deity, crushing under their despotic power liberty of conscience, and freedom of speech and action. Imprisonment, exile, and death followed for those who opposed their dictates. If this principle shall again be legislated into power, the fires of persecution will be rekindled against those who, like Daniel and his companions, will not sacrifice conscience and the truth in deference to popular errors. History will be repeated.

Connected with this movement may be reforms which the people need; but this only makes it the more dangerous and deceptive. Error mixed with truth is the most dangerous form of error. In the forbidden fruit "good and evil" were combined.

There is need of a general awakening in regard to the dangers which threaten to overthrow human rights, and take peace and prosperity from the earth. There is need of setting forth again the great fundamental principles of civil and religious liberty. The

natural, God-given rights of man, and the rightful province of the state and the church, need to be defined again in the light of Christ's words: "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

Proper Relation of Church and State

A BIBLE STUDY

The Author of Liberty

1. How is the bondage of Israel in Egypt described? "The children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage." Ex. 2:23. Compare with James 5:1-4.

2. Who heard their groaning? "God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." Ex. 2:24.

3. What did God say to Moses? "Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt." Ex. 3:9, 10.

4. In giving Israel his law, how did God describe himself?

"I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." Ex. 20:2.

5. What fault did God find with the way in which Israel came to celebrate her fasts and seasons of worship?

"Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labors. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness." Isa. 58:3, 4.

6. What does God set forth as the acceptable fast to him?

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye brake every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" Verses 6, 7.

NOTE.—All this shows that God loves liberty, and hates bondage and oppression.

7. What was Christ's mission to this world?

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18.

NOTE.—The Gospels show that a large part of Christ's time, even on the Sabbath, was devoted to relieving the oppressed and distressed.

8. By what scripture is the equality of rights clearly shown?

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Lev. 19:18.

9. What rule of conduct has Christ laid down in harmony with this command?

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Matt. 7:12.

NOTE.—Selfishness, then, must be uprooted from men's hearts before they will recognize the equal rights of their fellow men.

10. Who alone can cleanse men's hearts from selfishness?

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. See also 1 John 1:9.

11. Who alone, then, can give men real freedom?

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:36.

12. What is present where the Spirit of the Lord is?

"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

2 Cor. 3:17.

The Powers That Be

13. Who should be subject to civil government?

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God." Rom. 13:1.

14. By whom are the powers that be ordained?

"The powers that be are ordained of God." Same verse.

15. What does one resist, who resists civil authority?

"Whoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." Verse 2.

NOTE.—"That is, they who rise up against government itself, who seek anarchy and confusion, who oppose the regular execution of the laws. It is implied, however, that those laws shall not be such as violate the rights of conscience or oppose the law of God."—Dr. Albert Barnes, on Rom. 13:2.

16. What do the Scriptures indicate as the proper sphere and legitimate work of civil authority?

"Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. . . . If thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God,

a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." Verses 3, 4.

17. For whom is law made? "Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient." 1 Tim. 1:9.

18. How are Christians admonished to respect civil authority?

"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work." Titus 3:1. "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. . . . Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king." 1 Peter 2:13-17. "For for this cause pay ye tribute also; for

"Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Verses 16-18.

23. How only did the envious princes and rulers under King Darius conclude that they could effect the downfall of Daniel?

"Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." Dan. 6:5.

24. To this end, what decree did they prevail upon the king to make and sign?

"Whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions." Verse 7.

NOTE.—Unlike the decree of Nebuchadnezzar, this decree forbade the worship of the true God, and was therefore in direct conflict with the first commandment, which forbids the worship of any other than the true God. Like it, however, it was religious and persecuting in character.

25. How did Daniel regard this decree?

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his

whatever the consequences may be. God himself has set the seal of his approval to such a course. John Bunyan was imprisoned for twelve years for daring to preach the gospel contrary to law.

31. When the apostles were called before the council again, what question did the high priest ask them?

"Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." Verse 28.

32. What reply did the apostles make? "Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." Verse 29.

NOTE.—"Obedience is to be rendered to all human governments, in subordination to the will of God. These governments are a recognized necessity, in the nature of the case, and their existence is manifestly in accordance with the divine will. Hence the presumption is always in favor of the authority of civil law, and any refusal to obey must be based on the moral proof that obedience will be sin. . . . It is still true that obedience to human law often involves sin against God and man. There are cases so clear that no one can question the duty to refuse obedience. In all times and in all lands such cases have arisen." "It is too obvious to need discussion that the law of God, the great principle of benevolence, is supreme, and that 'we ought to obey God rather than men' in any case of conflict between human law and the divine."—"Moral Philosophy," by James H. Fairchild, pp. 178-181.

Individual Accountability

33. What is religion?

"The recognition of God as an object of worship, love, and obedience."—Webster. Other definitions equally good are: "The duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it." "Man's personal relation of faith and obedience to God."

34. In religious things, whom alone did Christ say we should recognize as Father?

"Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." Matt. 23:9.

35. When tempted to fall down and worship Satan, what Scripture command did Christ cite in justification of his refusal to do this?

"Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.'" Matt. 4:10. See Deut. 6:13; 10:20.

36. To whom alone, then, is each one accountable in religious things?

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Rom. 14:12.

NOTE.—With this agree the words of Washington: "Every man who conducts himself as a good citizen, is accountable alone to God for his religious faith, and should be protected in worshiping God according to the dictates of his own conscience."—Reply to Virginia Baptists, in 1789.

37. To whom, then, as servants, are we responsible in matters of faith and worship?

"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." Rom. 14:4.

38. Where must all finally appear to render up their account?

"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. 5:10.

NOTE.—Inasmuch, then, as religion is an individual matter, and each individual must give account of himself to God, it follows that there should be no human constraint nor compulsion in religious affairs.

Sabbath Legislation

39. Who made the Sabbath?

"In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. 20:11.

40. To whom does the Sabbath belong?

"The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Verse 10.

41. To whom, then, should its observance be rendered?

"Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Mark 12:17.

NOTE.—When men make Sabbath laws, therefore, they require Sabbath observance to be rendered to the government, or, presumably, by indirection, to God through the government, which amounts to the same thing.

42. In religious things, to whom alone are we accountable?

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Rom. 14:12.

NOTE.—But when men make compulsory Sabbath laws, they make men accountable to the government for Sabbath observance.

43. How does God command us to keep the Sabbath day?

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." Ex. 20:8.

44. What does he indicate as one of its purposes?

"Six days shall work be done; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings." Lev. 23:3.



DANIEL PERSECUTED IN BABYLON FOR HIS FAITH

they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." Rom. 13:6, 7.

19. In what words does Christ show that there is another realm outside of Caesar's, or civil government?

"Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." Matt. 22:21.

20. To whom alone did he say worship is to be rendered?

"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Matt. 4:10.

The Hebrew Captives in Babylon

21. What decree did King Nebuchadnezzar once make respecting worship?

"To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psalter, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up. And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace." Dan. 3:4-6.

NOTE.—This decree was in direct conflict with the second commandment of God's law which forbids making, bowing down to, and serving images. It was religious, idolatrous, and persecuting in character.

22. What answer did the three Hebrew captives, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, return when asked by the king why they had not fallen down and worshipped the golden image, as he had commanded?

windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." Verse 10.

Christ's Apostles and the Civil Power

26. Before leaving his disciples, what command did Christ give them?

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15.

27. What counter-command did the Jewish Sanhedrin soon afterward give them?

"They called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus." Acts 4:18.

28. What reply did Peter and John make?

"Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Verses 19, 20.

29. For continuing to preach Jesus, what did the Jewish rulers do to the apostles?

"Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison." Acts 5:17, 18.

30. What did an angel of God then do?

"The angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." Verses 19, 20.

NOTE.—Here once again is demonstrated the fact that men have no right to interfere with the free exercise of religion, and that when the laws of men conflict with the law and Word of God, we are to obey the latter,



"WE OUGHT TO OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN"

45. Seeing, then, that the Sabbath is *holy*, is to be *kept holy*, and is a day for *holy convocations*, what must be its character?

It must be religious.

46. What, then, must be the nature of all Sabbath legislation?

It is religious legislation.

47. When the state enacts religious laws, what is effected?

A union of church and state.

48. What has always been the result of religious legislation, or a union of church and state?

Religious intolerance and persecution.

Who Persecute, and Why?

49. Because Jesus had not kept the Sabbath according to their ideas, what did the Jews do?

"Therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath day." John 5:16.

50. Why did Cain kill Abel?

"This is the message that ye have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." 1 John 3:11, 12.

NOTE.—The following comment upon this passage by M. de Chesnais, a Catholic priest of New Zealand, is well put: "If you would read the Word of God, you would find that from the beginning all good people were persecuted because they were good. Abel was slain by his brother because he was good, and Cain could not endure the sight of him."—*Kaikoura (New Zealand) Star*, April 10, 1884.

51. Commenting upon the treatment of Isaac, the son of Sarah, by Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, what principle does the apostle Paul lay down?

"As then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." Gal. 4:29.

52. What other instances of persecution mentioned in the Bible, demonstrate the correctness of this principle?

a. Esau, who sold his birthright, persecuted Jacob, who avowed his loyalty to God. Gen. 25:29-34; 27:41; 32:6.

b. The wayward and envious sons of Jacob persecuted Joseph, who feared God. Genesis 37; Acts 7:9.

c. The idolatrous Egyptians persecuted the Hebrews, who worshipped the true God. Exodus 1 and 5.

d. The Hebrew who did his neighbor wrong thrust Moses, as mediator, aside. Ex. 2:13, 14; Acts 7:26, 27.

e. Saul, who disobeyed God, persecuted David, who feared God. 1 Samuel 15, 19, 24.

f. Israel in their apostasy, persecuted Elijah and Jeremiah, who were prophets of God. 1 Kings 19:9, 10; Jer. 36:20-23; 38:1-6.

g. Nebuchadnezzar, while an idolater, persecuted the three Hebrew captives for refusing to worship an idol. Daniel 3.

h. The envious and idolatrous princes under Darius, persecuted Daniel for daring to pray to the God of heaven. Daniel 6.

i. The murderers of Christ persecuted the apostles for preaching Christ. Acts 4 and 5.

j. Paul, before his conversion, persecuted the church of God. Acts 8:1, 9:1, 2; 22:4, 5, 20; 26:9-11; Gal. 1:13; 1 Tim. 1:12, 13.

NOTE.—The history of all the religious persecutions since Bible times is but a repetition of this same story,—the wicked persecute the righteous. And thus it will continue to be until the conflict between good and evil is ended.

53. Who does Paul say shall suffer persecution?

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Tim. 3:12.

54. What is essential to extensive religious persecution?

Ecclesiastical control of the civil power, or a union of church and state.

55. Under what terrible deception did Christ say men would persecute his followers?

"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." John 16:1, 2.

56. What does Christ say of those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake?

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Matt. 5:10-12. See Rev. 2:10; 6:9-11.

57. What divine precepts received and obeyed would do away with all oppression and persecution?

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Matt. 22:39. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Matt. 7:12.

58. What does love not do?

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13:10.

right. The law of right and wrong is a law antedating and wholly independent of any legislative enactments. Legislators are bound to shape their legislation by their knowledge of this law of justice which is inherent in the human mind, and their legislation will be excellent in proportion as they approximate to this ideal standard. It is proper to say, therefore, that the province of the legislature is not to create law, but to ascertain and define it. Righteousness is a law, and has been such from the foundation of the world. It is binding upon men everywhere, and at all times. All men are bound, always, to do right.

The question, What is the law? is therefore not the question lying at the foundation of one's duty in any religious or spiritual matter which is brought before him. There is another question lying deeper than this, and that is the question, What is right? Sometimes injustice becomes enthroned in law; but this does not put upon any person an obligation to do morally wrong. He is still bound to do right, still bound by conscience to the higher law of God. This higher law must be obeyed at any cost.

A statute commanding one to commit murder on certain occasions, or to steal, or to swear falsely, would not be binding on any one, and would not be obeyed; and the reason given for disobedience to it would be that it was unjust. No one would claim that it ought to be obeyed simply because it was "the law," and what would be true of such a statute would be true of every enactment that is contrary to the law of God. Unjust enactments do not derive any sanctity

from being on the statute books. They ought to be repealed, not enforced.

In secular affairs, the principle of majority rule is at the foundation of government; and this is proper and necessary. But in matters of conscience, majority rule has no place. An individual's duty toward God cannot be determined by a majority vote. Every individual's relation to God is a direct relation, not sustained through any other individuals or through the government. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

Faith, which is the essence of Christianity, is individual belief of God's Word, irrespective of the belief or opinions of any or all other persons. In religion, the majority have always been on the wrong side. It is the majority that throng the broad way leading to destruction, and only the small minority who travel the narrow way leading unto life. Thus the spheres of religion and of civil government must be kept wholly separate.

Within its legitimate sphere the civil power should have the unhesitating obedience of all persons. Only the higher claims of duty toward God can justify any one in refusing obedience to the civil ruler. Only a plain conflict with the higher law of God can justify any disobedience to the laws of men. The legitimate realm of the civil power is that of preserving the rights of the people, and within this realm it has the sanction of God. No one can, under a plea of conscientious conviction of duty, be permitted to invade the natural rights of another person. These rights do not conflict, and each one must respect the rights of others.

Why Sunday Laws Are Wrong

BECAUSE Sunday is an institution of the church, and is therefore religious.

Because legislation in reference to a religious institution is religious legislation, and the passing of such laws is a long step toward the union of church and state.

Because, as James Madison says, "there is not a shadow of right in the general government to intermeddle with religion. Its least interference with it would be a most flagrant usurpation."

Because, as expressed in the protest which gave rise to Protestantism, "in matters of conscience the majority has no power."

Because Sunday laws mean enforced idleness, and idleness fosters intemperance, vice, and all other crimes.

Because, while frequently urged as temperance and other reform measures, their

freedom even of those who regard Sunday as the Lord's day.

Because their whole tendency is to make men hypocrites instead of Christians.

Because they are both un-American and unchristian.

Because they require that men shall render to Caesar that which belongs to God.

Because, as stated in the Memorial of the Presbytery of Hanover to the Virginia General Assembly, in 1776, "the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, and is nowhere cognizable but at the tribunal of the universal Judge."

Because it is the very genius of Christianity to grant to every man the right to believe the gospel or not to believe it, to obey the



THE MARTYRDOM OF JOHN HUSS

Limits of Civil Authority

By L. A. Smith

THERE are limits to the authority of the civil power, and these limits should be clearly understood by the people. A republican form of government, as contrasted with an absolute monarchy, implies a limitation to the powers of the government beyond which it cannot rightfully go.

Civil government is not the custodian of the souls of the people. Upon all the pages of human history the truth is written plain that there are two spheres of life within which man moves, with one of which—the higher sphere of conscience and of his relation to God—the civil power can rightfully have nothing to do. Again and again the Almighty has vindicated the course of those who, in order to be true to him, have refused obedience to unjust mandates from the civil authority. The darkest pages of history are those recording the results of the invasion by the civil power of the realm of conscience. The early history of most of the leading religious denominations of this day was marked by their resistance to the dictates of the civil power outside the sphere of its legitimate authority.

The true sphere of civil government was well defined by the men who founded the American Republic. The Declaration of Independence, which led to the founding of this nation, says: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal: and that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." This is the principle of government upon which this nation is established.

Governments are instituted among men to preserve the natural inalienable rights which men have by creation;—that is, as individuals;—not to curtail these rights, or to take them away. When civil government invades these rights, it does exactly the opposite of that which it is instituted to do. This is a perverted and illegitimate use of its power.

Legislatures cannot create natural rights, neither can they make right wrong, or wrong

real and ultimate object is the compulsory observance of the day.

Because, although professedly in the interest of the laboring man, such laws really enslave all labor. The assumption of the right to forbid honest labor on one day of the week involves the right to forbid it on any or all days of the week.

Because, as Neander informs us, they were the means through which church and state were united in the fourth century; and instead of preserving the Roman Empire, they contributed largely to its downfall.

divine law or not to obey it; and what the Author of Christianity has granted, no authority has the right to abridge or take away.

Because they deprive a considerable and respectable portion of the Christian community—the observers of the seventh day—of one sixth of their rightful working time.

Because they make criminals of a class of citizens against whom no criminal charges ought to lie.

Because they make criminal on Sunday acts which on any other day of the week

are considered perfectly lawful and right. Honest toil and innocent recreation and amusement, while not consistent with proper Sabbath observance, are not crimes on any day. Crimes are not determined by the day of the week upon which they are committed. Because Sunday laws are contrary to the principles of the gospel and of good government, and are in direct conflict with the law of God. They enforce a rival to the Sabbath appointed by Jehovah. If it is wrong for the state to enter the domain of religion and require the Sabbath observance of the day divinely appointed, it cannot be right for it to enter this domain and enforce the Sabbath observance of a day not thus appointed.

Genealogy of Sunday Laws

[The following statements are not direct quotations, but merely statements of fact in the form of quotations.]
 YOUNGER STATES OF AMERICA: "In Sunday legislation we have followed the example of the older States."
 OLDER STATES: "In Sunday legislation and judicial decisions we have followed the example of the oldest States."
 OLDEST STATES: "In the matter of Sunday legislation we have followed the example of the original colonies."

ORIGINAL COLONIES: "In the matter of Sunday legislation we have followed the precedents and example of old England, which had an established religion and a church-and-state system."
 OLD ENGLAND: "In the matter of Sunday laws and religious legislation, they are the relics of the Catholic Church, incorporated among us when that church was the established church of the empire. When Henry VIII, about 1544, renounced allegiance to the Pope, we retained, and are still cherishing, these papal relics."
 CATHOLIC CHURCH: "Sunday laws and religious legislation were incorporated in our church by the craft, flattery, and policy of Constantine and the ambitious bishops of his time, together with the decrees of the popes and councils of later date, by which we transmuted the 'venerable day of the sun,' the 'wild solar holiday of all pagan times,' into the Christian sabbath, in honor of the resurrection."
 PAGANISM: "With us, Sunday observance originated in sun-worship, the day on which the Almighty began his work of creation, and on which light was created, the day, the first in the week, being dedicated by us to the greatest, the brightest, and the most luminous visible object in the heavens, the sun." See Rom. 1:21-25; Eze. 8:15, 16.

which avowedly tolerates all beliefs, I claim the right, as a first-day Sabbatarian, to keep that day as the Sabbath." Well, I do not assail that right. I claim the right also to have my own views of the day; the right to sanctify the first, second, or third, or all days, as I think proper.
 "Now I turn to that first-day Sabbatarian, and ask him how he dares to dictate to me to keep the day which he regards as holy, and to say, 'If you do not obey me, I will put my hands into your pocket, and take out as much as I please in the shape of a fine; or if I find nothing there, I will put you in prison; or if you resist enough to require it, I will shoot you dead.' How dare he do this?

gard to faith and observance. The case is so plain that it does not need an argument; and I am confident that in the course of a few years, there will not be a Sabbatical enactment left unrepealed in the United States, if in any part of Christendom. It belongs to the tyrannical legislation which formerly sent men to the stake, in the name of God and for his glory, because they did not agree with the theological views of those who burned them.
 "Christianity as taught by its Founder does not need any governmental safeguards; its reliance for safety and prosperity is not on the rack or the stake, the dungeon or the gibbet, unjust proscription or brutal suprem-

William Lloyd Garrison's Protest Against Sunday Laws

THE time was 1848. The occasion, a convention in Boston, in response to a call issued by Garrison and a score of associates, "To the Friends of Civil and Religious Liberty." In that year an organization called the American and Foreign Sabbath Union had been particularly active in urging the enforcement of Sunday observance, and in the midst of the historic antislavery agitation, of which Garrison was the leader, it was felt by friends of liberty that the occasion called for the sounding of a note in behalf of religious liberty. Truly a clarion note is sounded in the resolutions introduced by Garrison, and his speech upon them, which follow. It was of Garrison and his championship of civil and religious liberty, that John Bright, the English statesman, wrote to James Russell Lowell, "I know no nobler man than William Lloyd Garrison."
 In view of the present widespread agitation for Sunday enforcement, this trumpet call in behalf of true principles will be read with deep interest.

The Resolutions

"1. Resolved, That they who are for subjecting to fine or imprisonment such as do not receive their interpretation of the Scriptures in regard to the observance of the first day of the week as the Sabbath, are actuated by a mistaken or malevolent spirit, which is utterly at variance with the spirit of Christ; which, in various stages, has resorted to the dungeon, the rack, the gallows, and the stake, for the accomplishment of its purpose; and which ought to be boldly confronted and rebuked.
 "2. Resolved, That the penal enactments of the State legislature compelling the observance of the first day of the week as the Sabbath are despotic, unconstitutional, and ought to be immediately abrogated; and

State in which such laws exist, protesting against their enactment as an unhallowed union of church and state.
 "5. Resolved, That if the legislature may rightfully determine the day on which people shall abstain from labor for religious purposes, it may also determine the place in which they shall assemble, the rites and ordinances which they shall observe, the doctrines which they shall hear, and the teachers which they shall embrace; and thus entirely subvert civil and religious freedom, and enable bigotry and superstition, as of old, to—
 "Go to their bloody rites again; bring back The hall of horrors and the assessor's pen, Recording answers shrieked upon the rack, Smile o'er the gaspings of spine-broken men, And perpetrate damnation in their den!"
 "6. Resolved, That as it has been found safe, politic, and beneficial to allow people to decide for themselves in all other religious observances, there is no reason to doubt that the same good results would attend their liberation from the bondage of a Sabbatical law; for 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.'"
 Garrison's Speech upon the Resolutions
 "Of all the assumptions on the part of legislative bodies, that of interfering between a man's conscience and his God is the most unsupportable and the most inexcusable. For what purpose do we elect men to go to the general court? Is it to be our lawgivers on religious matters? . . . This passing a law forbidding me or you to do on a particular day what is in itself right, on the ground that that day, in the judgment of those who make the enactment, is more holy than another,—this exercise of power, I affirm, is nothing



THE CHURCH RUNNING ONTO THE POLITICAL REEF

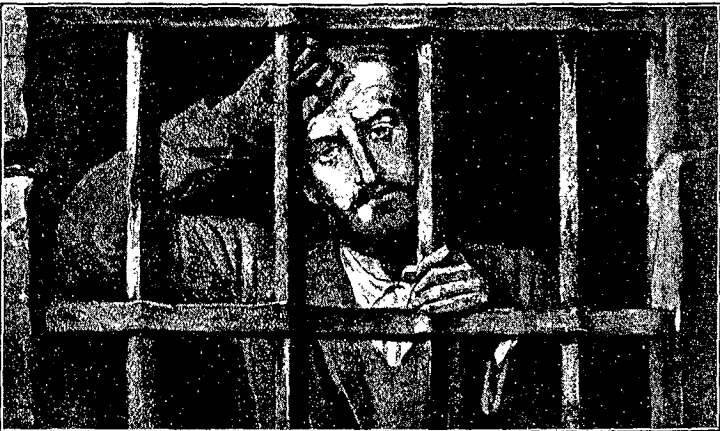
If he is not a ruffian, is he a Christian? Talk of the spirit of justice animating the bosom of the man who comes like a highwayman with, 'Do, or die!' Who made him a ruler over other men's consciences?
 "In a government which is based on equality, we must have equal rights. No men, however sincere, are to wield forceful authority over others who dissent from them in re-

acy. No; it is the only thing under heaven that is not afraid; it is the only thing that repudiates all such instruments.
 "Let us be careful how we trample on human liberty or human conscience. Said the apostle, 'Every one of us shall give account of himself'—not to the legislature of Massachusetts, not to the Congress of the United States, but—to God.' . . ."

What Eminent Authorities Say

GOD: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." Lev. 25: 10.
 JESUS CHRIST: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Matt. 7: 12.
 "If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not." John 12: 47.
 "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Mark 12: 17.
 PAUL: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Cor. 3: 17.
 GEORGE WASHINGTON: "Any man conducting himself as a good citizen and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience."—Reply to the Baptists of Virginia, 1789.
 THOMAS JEFFERSON: "Almighty God hath created the mind free; . . . all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burdens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the holy Author of our religion, who being Lord both of body and mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercions on either, as was in his almighty power to do."—Virginia Act for Establishing Religious Freedom, 1786.
 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: "When religion is good, it will take care of itself; when it is not able to take care of itself, and God does not see fit to take care of it, so that it has to appeal to the civil power for support, it is evidence to my mind that its cause is a bad one."—Letter to Dr. Price.
 JAMES MADISON: "The settled opinion here is that religion is essentially distinct from civil government, and exempt from its cognizance; that a connection between them is injurious to both."—Letter to Edward Everett, 1823.
 U. S. GRANT: "Leave the matter of religion to the family altar, the church and the private school supported entirely by private contribution. Keep the church and state forever separate."—Speech at Des Moines, Iowa, 1875.

religion, and to enjoy it freely without molestation."—Sunday Mails Report, 1829.
 UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: "Despots may regard their subjects as their property, and usurp the divine prerogative of prescribing their religious faith; but the history of the world furnishes the melancholy demonstration that the disposition of one man to coerce the religious homage of another, springs from an unchastened ambition, rather than [from] a sincere devotion to any religion."—Sunday Mails Report, 1830.
 JOHN STUART MILL: "If all mankind, minus one, were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind."—Essay on Liberty.
 JOHN WESLEY: "Condemn no man for not thinking as you think. Let every one enjoy the full and free liberty of thinking for himself. Let every man use his own judgment, since every man must give an account of himself to God. Abhor every approach, in any kind or degree, to the spirit of persecution. If you cannot reason nor persuade a man into the truth, never attempt to force a man into it. If love will not compel him to come, leave him to God, the judge of all."
 SPURGEON: "I am ashamed of some Christians because they have so much dependence on Parliament and the law of the land."
 GLADSTONE: "Wherever the British rule exists the same respect which we claim for the exercise of our own conscientious convictions is yielded to the professors of every other faith on the surface of the globe."—Prime Ministers of Queen Victoria, p. 363.
 QUEEN VICTORIA: "Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects."—Proclamation, 1853.



IN PRISON FOR CONSCIENCE' SAKE

that the interference of the State in matters of religious faith and ceremonies, is a usurpation which cannot be justified.
 "3. Resolved, That as conflicting views prevail in the community, which are cherished with equal sincerity, respecting the holiness of days; and as it is the right of every class of citizens to be protected in the enjoyment of their religious sentiments on this and every other subject pertaining to the worship of God, all classes should be united in demanding a repeal of the enactments alluded to, on the ground of impartial justice and Christian charity.
 "4. Resolved, That this convention recommend to all the friends of religious liberty throughout the country the presentation of petitions to the next legislature, in every

better than usurpation. It is the spirit which in all ages has persecuted those who have been loyal to God and their consciences. It is a war upon conscience, and no religious convalesce or political assembly ever yet carried on that war successfully to the end. You cannot by enactment bind the consciences of men, nor force men into obedience to what God requires.
 "Who wants to be persecuted on account of his own conscientious views? I will ask the first-day Sabbatarian, Do you claim a right to entertain your views, without molestation, in regard to the holiness of time?—'Most assuredly.' How do you make it out that the first day of the week is the Sabbath?—'I believe it to be so: if it is not, to my own Master I stand or fall. Under a government

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."
 UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press."
 UNITED STATES SENATE: "It is not the legitimate province of the legislature to determine what religion is true, or what false. Our government is a civil, and not a religious institution. Our Constitution recognizes in every person the right to choose his own

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