

July 20, 2010

...Praise Him with the timbrel and dance. (Psalm 105:4)

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I Must Go On

I must go on: my hand is put unto the plough;
The wind blows cold; the sluggard leaves the sod un-
turned;
Nor cares that in the time of harvest he must beg.
But I have seen a Ploughman, spite of wind and snow,
Plough an unbending furrow to the end;
And, ceaseless in His toil, break up the fallow ground.
And through the mist and murk of unpropitious days
Lay up in store the summers golden harvest joy.
That Ploughman is the Master of my soul:
Therefore, in spite of storm and stress, like Him,
I must go on.

I must fight on: I have in conscience drawn the sword.
The fight is hard: the armed Ephraimites may flee
And fill the streets of Gath and Askelon with mirth;
But I have seen a Warrior take the field alone,
Unsheathe His sword against infernal foes,
And, with undaunted soul, cut through the serried ranks
And, though forsaken of the men He came to save,
Pour out His blood to win for them the victor's crown.
That Warrior is the Captain of my soul.
And I, though I should stand alone, like Him, - -
I must fight on!

And I must love: my heart is longer not my own.
The world allures, and fickle hearts may turn aside,
Nor care that ashes mark the place of yester's flame:
But I have seen a Lover, spite of scorn and hate,
Love through an agony of blood and tears;
And, ceaseless in His love for e'en His enemies,
Lay down His life, forsaken of the earth and sky,
And, rising, win a bride, and ring the marriage bells!
That Lover is the Lover of my soul;
And I, unto the endless end, like Him,
I too must love.

T. T. Shields •t&dw

Christian Patriot's Quote of the Week.

Andrew Jackson, *Seventh President of the U.S.*

“The Bible is true. Upon that sacred volume I rest my hope of salvation through the merits of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

From The first clause of his Will.

•t&dw

Feature Article:

Following Beck?

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. Galatians 1:8

Now John answered and said, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us.” But Jesus said to him, “Do not forbid him, for he who is not against us is on our side.” Luke 9:49-50

Glenn Beck has ignited the nation and its churches in a fervent, and sometimes heated, dialog concerning the founding of our nation, its true history, the significance of the role of faith, and the goals and methods of the *progressive/socialist* agenda. Christians I've known for many years seem to be renewed in their faith, and in a vibrant commitment to advance the restoration of our nation to its roots. The question for many conservative evangelical pastors regarding this phenomenon is the appropriateness of supporting, or working together with, a Mormon - a Mormon who is bringing together many branches of professing Christendom under one umbrella of Christian Patriotism. Is this another wave of ecumenism that will dilute the Gospel and undermine biblical doctrine in the churches? To some evangelicals it is a cut and dried issue - the Mormon church (LDS) teaches doctrine repugnant to biblical Christians. From the potential deity of all men to the denial of hell, there is certainly plenty in the church dogma to refute. Therefore, they say, no true Christian should have anything to do with Beck.

On the other hand, over the past thirty years I've talked to many Mormon “evangelists” at my front door, and never has one of them said the things that Mr. Beck has said regarding Christ and the need for personal repentance and faith. He has, unlike any conservative or fundamentalist preacher I've known, brought to the *broad public arena* the fallacy and evil of the “*social justice*” agenda that has been integrated into liberal churches by those with a clearly socialist agenda. And he has provided a platform for many articulate conservative evangelicals to speak truth into the current national debate. It is also significant that a number of Mormon groups have distanced themselves, even publishing websites against him.

In light of all of this, I would humbly ask that we consider the following points prayerfully as we come to our *own* conclusions.

1. Christian *citizens* of a given nation, being called to be purveyors truth as salt and light, may (should?) endorse public leaders or spokesmen who, overall, articulate truth concerning *public* issues.
2. There is a fundamental difference between responsibilities within a church body, and those regarding society at large. As a pastor-elder charged with the well being of a local body

of Christ, I am sternly admonished by the Lord in scripture to sharply rebuke, and if necessary, remove, those who would persistently propagate false teaching, or a false gospel. But, at the same time, I might support a candidate for public office who is not even a Christian, but whose positions on key issues are most compatible with my Christian convictions.

3. While all Christians should be educated in the Christian principles of government, every Christian has the personal *liberty of conscience* to decide for himself what he/she deems to be the “key” issues involved in the public debate. We may strongly disagree with one another, but we dare not divide fellowship with brothers and sisters in the church over such issues.

4. Jesus said *both*, “He that is not for us is against us”, and, “He that is not against us is for us.” It would seem that wisdom (with the Spirit’s leading) is required to know the difference. Beck has strong appeal to conservative Christians because there are many things with which we agree, and he openly promotes and encourages conservative Christian churches in their ministries. Furthermore, he is viciously hated by liberal Christians. It seems to me that he is “for us” and not “against us.”

5. That *some* Christians may be theologically led astray is more a problem of the failure of Christian pastors to teach solid and balanced doctrine, than it is of individual Christians getting involved in the various national restoration movements which happen to include many different faith groups (e.g. the Tea Party, 9-12ers, Freedom Works, etc).

6. We must be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Beck has demonstrated to the nation an open, unashamed, almost “matter of fact” identification with Christ, that has emboldened (and/or convicted) many Christians in their public “owning” of the Savior. It seems we would be wise to discern the times and increase our own public engagement of others to consider the claims of Christ.

7. In our own churches we must stop being intimidated by the antichristian world and its elements in the government. It wasn’t until 1954 that the churches were forbidden to speak politically or face losing their tax exempt status. How is it that the churches rolled over and played dead? We are accountable to Christ to proclaim the full council of God regarding *all aspects of life*, and that certainly includes governmental issues. Beck has been directly responsible for many pastors waking up and boldly proclaiming the truth without fear.

8. As I have always insisted, the church’s primary task is to preach the Gospel; and that it is only the mercy and grace of God that can spare America. Beck has repeatedly stated that our only hope as a nation is for *individuals* to turn to God, reexamine their lives, and live for Him.

In conclusion, I am *not* about to turn to Glenn Beck as my spiritual guide or favorite theologian. But I do believe that God has raised him up as a “voice in the wilderness” of American decadence, greed, political deception, and governmental decay. You may certainly disagree. But I plead

for graciousness in dealing with other Christians in your churches who may be being reignited in their faith and witness from a *most unlikely source*. Think about it. That’s so “Jesus”! ●ejr3

Walking with Jesus... a devotional minute. **That Isn’t Fair!**

So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the laborers and give them their wages... And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. And when they had received it, they complained... But he answered one of them and said, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Matt 20:8-12

If we understand grace, we must understand that all who come to labor for Christ - whether for a lifetime or for one hour - all receive the full measure of Jesus and His merits.

I believe there is also a very practical admonition embedded in this parable. While we have a responsibility to deal fairly and justly with our fellow man, we also have a responsibility to live by principle and integrity, not allowing greed, or our pursuit of personal gain, to cloud our judgment. Those who went out early agreed on their wages. It wasn’t until they saw what others got that they became dissatisfied. The landowner honored his agreement, but because he showed mercy to others, they deemed him unfair.

Be content with your wages (Luke 3:14). I have worked in factories and businesses most of my adult life. Whenever I have abided by that admonition, I have been extraordinarily blessed in my labors. On occasions when I felt I deserved more and made an issue of it, though I may have gotten my request, things didn’t turn out well in the long run.

We serve Christ, whatever our calling. We may be assured that He is a just “Landowner”, and that He always gives what is fair. But if our eyes are on others, we will always be dissatisfied, and God will not be glorified.

Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing let us be therewith content. 1Tim 6:6-8 ●ejr3

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