

Trust in God & Keep Your Powder Dry

by Alan Cairns

The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting in God's sovereignty and provision, while also being diligent and prepared in our efforts, just like the Protestant Reformers who faced persecution and adversity.

Duration: 1:27:42

Scripture: Jeremiah 2:1

Topics: "Trust"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of recognizing that every generation of God's people faces a day of battle. He encourages the audience, particularly the students and faculty of Bob Jones University, to learn from the founder's ministry and the impact of the gospel in the past. The preacher emphasizes the need for warriors who are grounded in the Word of God and who rely on the power of God in their battles. Ultimately, the preacher reminds the audience that victory in the war belongs to the Lord, and that the power of the Word of God is what can bring about true change in America.

Transcript

I know that we have visitors with us. As Dr. Barrett has said, we're glad to have you. But if the singing of Psalms is something new to you, I hope that you get a taste for it.

We're not a Psalms-only church. I don't think that that is something that is really establishable from Scripture, although it's an ongoing debate. But nonetheless, the Psalms have a wonderful place in the worship of the Church of Jesus Christ.

And I love to hear them sung with heart as well as with reverence. So I trust that you enjoyed the singing of the 46th Psalm, at least of a fair part of that Psalm. Today is a special day for us here, because courtesy of Stephen Lee and Sermon Audio, Stephen is our resident wizard.

Whatever can't be done, we get him to do it. But courtesy of Stephen, we are now able to have live webcasting of the services here, so that to start with, a limited number of people are able to listen in anywhere in the world. Of course, if you're in many parts of the world, you'd have to be very sleepless to be listening in at the moment.

But they can listen in and participate with us. Pray about this, because I trust it will be a blessing to many. I do appreciate all the effort Stephen has put in to making it come to pass.

I have no idea what he has to do to do this. All I know is it's difficult, but he's managed to do it. And we really do appreciate all the effort that he's put in, not only in this, but in every other part of our ministry over the internet.

And I do get feedback from that. This week I'll be replying, God willing, to, in many ways, what's a heart-wrenching email from the other side of the world of a man who's lost his family and lost his home because they have been caught up in one of these fancy, American-based, mega-church-growth outfits. And his family, because of that, are so wrapped up in it, they cannot stand anything that would savor the historic Protestant faith.

And he's seeking to win them, seeking to win others. But he wrote to tell me that he's a caregiver for terminal cancer patients. He uses the downloads of the messages that I preach here in Greenville.

He said, I just wanted you to know of two souls who have come to Christ through your preaching. And one of them, after proving her testimony, went on to be with Christ. And the other is facing great difficulty, but day by day, feasting on the Word of God and rejoicing in what the Lord has done.

We hear of others, so I say I appreciate all that Stephen's doing to get this out. Pray that the Lord will bless it, and that there will be people out there who have nowhere to go, no church to attend, no hope of really ever being in a live service. And perhaps this will be some way the Lord can sanctify the Lord's day for them in a special way.

So do pray about this new webcast. And perhaps Dr. Barrett will keep it in mind and sort of be civilized to his minister when he gets up here to make the announcements. Doesn't say that I'm going to be civilized in return, but you never know.

There's always an excuse for an Irishman. You heard about today, all you men, you heard it, you've got to turn in your name and your money today for the men's retreat. I was glad to hear that announcement that if it catches you at a bad time, you see Mr. Brame, he's the rich man around here.

So I'm seeing you now, David, I'm going, but I'd like my cheque back. I'd enjoy the retreat all the more if you were paying for it. But we do trust that the men will be there.

All you married men, no doubt, will have to have permission. But make sure you get it before the service is over tonight. You don't have to be married to be there.

Some of you younger fellows may turn up and find that the old fellows can show you a thing or two and whatever they're going to do up there, they can beat you at it. If they can't, at least they can imagine it. So we trust you'll be there.

Remember to sign up tonight, young and old, and let's make this first men's retreat a great time together as we welcome Reverend Frank McClellan from our Toronto church as our guest speaker on that occasion, the end of this month. And do remember the final Wednesday evening of this month, Dr. Pinozian will be with us to do one of his first person presentations coming as a Protestant reformer. And we're looking forward to having Dr. Pinozian yet again this year as our guest.

And I know that you will be blessed. If you've never been here for one of these, then you need to come. It certainly is a wonderful time, not only of learning history, but of getting an insight into the hearts and the ministries that have shaped our modern world.

Now tonight we're turning to read a few verses in the book of Jeremiah, chapter 2. We're reading the first eight verses of the chapter, but our text will be taken from the book of Proverbs. So Jeremiah, chapter 2, reading verses 1 through 8, and then turning back to Proverbs 21, verse 31 for the words of our text. Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.

Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the firstfruits of his increase. All that devour him shall offend, evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord. Hear ye the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel.

Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain? Neither said they, Where is the Lord that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt? And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof, and the goodness thereof. But when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination. The priests said not, Where is the Lord? And they that handled the law knew me not.

The pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Beal, and walked after things that do not profit. Amen. The Lord will add his blessing to the reading of his precious word for his name's sake.

As I said tonight, the words of the text that I want to start from are found in Proverbs 21, verse 31. Proverbs 21, verse 31. The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety or victory is of the Lord.

The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but victory is of the Lord. Solomon's message to the people of God in this little verse is clear and simple, but yet profound. If you wanted to deal with it theologically, which I am not going to try to do tonight, here is a key to the ongoing theological debate between the responsibility of man and the absolute sovereignty of God.

The more you understand this text, the more you will understand that far from one being the enemy or the antithesis of the other, they are necessarily the two sides of one coin. Believing in the sovereignty of God, which I gladly do as a Protestant, as a Presbyterian, but most of all as a Bible-believing Christian, believing in the sovereignty of God does not in any way, to any degree, lessen the intensity of my commitment to a belief in the responsibility of man for his actions. That is a theological angle on the text tonight.

But as I've said, it's not the theological, more the historical, that I want us to deal with this evening. In stating this clear message from Scripture, Solomon teaches us that God's people are provided with the necessary instruments of war. And they employ them diligently in the day of battle.

But in the final analysis, they must trust their God for the victory. I want you to understand that. God's people have to have the necessary instruments of war.

And having them, they don't just admire them, they employ them diligently in the day of battle. But as they do so, they trust in Jehovah, who alone can, with the smile of His approval, give them the victory. Many, many centuries after Solomon, when he was the leader of the fight for English freedom over the tyranny of

the Stuart monarchs, Oliver Cromwell grasped this truth and he burned it into the hearts of his armies.

Reportedly, Cromwell advised his followers, trust in God and keep your powder dry. Coming from one of England's greatest ever military commanders, as well as one of her greatest ever statesmen, and I'll say in passing, though I'm not preaching on Cromwell, despite all the revisionist history, one of England's greatest Christians, coming from him, this is truth to lay hold of. Trust in God and keep your powder dry.

That is your gunpowder dry. It's not talking about that stuff that helps you smell nice. Cromwell was a true son of the Protestant Reformation.

What he spelled out to his men in 17th century England was the way that the 16th century European reformers conducted their business and their lives. Those reformers were men of faith. Any treatment of their lives that does not give that the preeminent place is a lying, deceiving treatment.

And in saying that, I'm saying that much of what modern historians have written about the Protestant reformers is deliberately a work of deception. They were preeminently men of faith. They were, at times, men who had to fight.

If I may refer to Cromwell again, he described his typical Puritan or roundhead captain of whom he was so proud like this. He spoke of the plain, russet-coated captain. And he said, he knows what he fights for and loves what he knows.

I like that. He knows what he fights for and loves what he knows. Now, I'm really tempted to preach on Cromwell.

I'm really tempted to get away from the whole plan of the message tonight and deal a little bit with the necessity of having men like this. Men in the pulpit who know what they're standing for. God save our churches from a bunch of weak-kneed opportunists.

Give us men who know what they stand for. Who know why they're standing for it. And who love the things they know.

I hope in the final weeks of this Reformation month, to use some of the Reformers to try to paint the character, the type of person we need in the pulpit of the church today. And one thing that I would put in right now, is to have men who not only know a little bit because they have been to seminary. After all, you can train a dog to do many things, and apparently he knows them.

But I want men, and this is the vision and the burden of this church, men who love what they know. Who have hearts that are gripped by what their head has grasped. Men who are not living in the airy, fairy, unreal world of academic titillation, but who are taking the great truths of the Word of God and applying them first to their own hearts.

Men who are mightily moved when they read this book. Moved when they preach this book. Who are preaching in a way as Martin Lloyd-Jones described, whereby they are not merely talking, they are not merely conveying information, they are not merely using their brains or their lips, but their heart, their soul, their being, their body, everything is in it.

It's the kind of man we need. I'll deal with that hopefully a little further. I want to tell you the Protestant Reformers knew what they believed.

They loved what they knew, and they were willing to fight to defend it if the occasion demanded. In taking such a bold stand, these men often displayed unimaginable courage, supported by the realization that though they were ready to stand and fight, their trust was in one who was higher than they and mightier than all the energy and all the exertion that they could put forth. Tonight I want us to get to know those men who knew what they stood for and loved what they knew, as we think a little about fighting the good fight with all our might in the assurance that the battle is not ours but the Lord's, or in Cromwell's phrase, let's learn from the Reformers what it is to trust in God, but keep our powder dry.

The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but victory is of the Lord. God's people always have to face the day of battle. God has prepared His war horses for such a day.

But as they ride forth into the conflict, they must remember that the outcome of the battle, in the final analysis, depends upon the intervention of God on behalf of His people. That's the teaching of the text. And as we consider it tonight, I will highlight four things.

The warfare, it's the first thing. There is a day of battle. The warriors, the horses don't go into battle on their own.

The warriors, the weapons and then the winning of the war. You'll understand that this could quite be long enough for Dr. Barrett to get down to preach in Columbia tonight and come back again and still find us here. But we'll do our best to cover the ground.

The warfare, the day of battle. That day is not restricted to a particular place or a particular time. Every generation of the people of God has to face a day of battle.

We see this throughout history. Time does not allow me to go into it in detail. But go back to the New Testament and the early church.

There was a day of battle for the early church. They faced first the Jews who were riled up against them. Then they faced the Romans and all the might of the empire.

Then they faced Judaizing Christians who were seeking to compromise the whole Christian religion and move it into a place of acceptance with Judaism. Then they had to fight the pagans. And if that were not enough, then they had to do battle with the heretics who came in first of all attacking the person of Christ.

And then from that introducing a whole host of satanic lies. So the early church had its battles. It has been popular, probably not all that accurate.

Popular things rarely are all that accurate. But it has been popular to say that the first 300 years of the Christian church were marked by 10 great persecutions. Well, there were many persecutions.

I don't know that that covers the whole story, the 10 persecutions. There certainly was a price to pay before the church of Christ had some kind of safety and some kind of calm. When you travel through a few centuries, you come to the Waldensian church that had its strongholds in the Alpine valleys.

But even there they were not safe from predators and persecutors. It's one of the most moving stories of church history to see the courage, the tenacity with which these men of the book took their stand for God. They were a threat to no one except Satan and his kingdom as they took the gospel around Europe as best they could.

They fought no one in a battle of conquest. They defended their lives and their hearths and their homes and their families. But they were certainly constantly hounded and persecuted.

John Wycliffe's followers in England, the Lollards, faced constant, constant opposition. And again, they posed no threat except the threat that truth poses to error. They were not a military-minded people.

They were called the poor priests, men who renounced the world just to go out and give out handwritten copies of the gospel to poor people and tell them of the Lord Jesus. For that, they suffered endlessly. In Bohemia, John Huss, the Hussites, the Bohemian brethren were constantly held up to ridicule, hounded out of their homes and their cities.

Huss was burned by the order of the Council of Constance in one of the darkest days, even by popish standards, one of the darkest days of papal betrayal in the history of Europe. You come to the Reformation. The Reformers faced the combined might of the Pope and of the Holy Roman Emperor.

You think of this, that princes were either for the Pope or the Emperor or sometimes both. You had princes and powers like France and England that were willing to use the might of the monarchy to crush the gospel of Christ. Luther lived most of his life under a papal and imperial ban.

Doesn't sound very dangerous, but in his day, it was like sticking a wanted poster, dead or alive, and carrying it around like a placard. He lived under the ban. Zwingli, the great Swiss champion of the Reformation, died defending his canton on the field of battle.

Calvin, as a young man, rising as a brilliant preacher to the pastoring of believers in Paris, was forced to flee Paris and then forced to flee France to its everlasting loss. The English Reformers were burned. You go to Oxford to this day.

If ever you go to England, of course, you should go to Oxford. It's well worth visiting. But as you go down the street by the side of the Bodleian Library, there is a mark in the middle of the ground.

The buses and the cars drive over it thoughtlessly. That's the spot. The Protestant bishops were burned.

All around the corner, they have erected a martyr's memorial. And at least that was done, thank God it was done before this present godless bunch got into power in England. Otherwise, there'd never have been a monument to the Protestant Reformers who were burned.

What a price they paid. Up in Scotland, Patrick Hamilton, George Wishart paid with their lives. John Knox became a galley slave for a year and a half.

When you get over to Europe again, to Sweden and Denmark and Holland, you find that they all had their baptisms of blood. For almost a century, indeed for more than a century, Europe reeled under the cruel bondage of religious wars. It wasn't until 1648, in the Peace of Westphalia, that there was a semblance of order brought to an exhausted continent.

In Britain, the battle lasted even longer. After a period of comparative calm, and the word there is comparative, the Stuart monarchs, James I, now there's a name to conjure with, That's why I don't like calling the authorised version of the Bible the King James Version. I know that he called the Hampton Court Conference, and it was that conference that set up the committees to translate the Bible.

But I don't like the name of that very learned king, very cultured king, but very proud, arrogant, and probably sodomite king, in any way to be associated with the Bible that I hold in my hand. That's just by the way. Nothing to do with anything except that it gets it off my chest.

But after a period of calm, the Stuart monarchs set up their hatred of the Puritans, following right along in the footsteps of Elizabeth. Then they drove the country all the way into civil war. Cromwell, thankfully, deposed Charles I, led the foundation for English parliamentary democracy, and a constitutional monarchy.

But he could only reign or rule for a little while. He refused to be king, he refused to reign. The man who refused to be king was Oliver Cromwell.

He didn't want that position, but he, after ruling a little while, he died, Charles came back to the throne. Do you know who it was who helped him back more than any? The Scottish Presbyterians. Hard to believe the way some minds work.

But anyway, he got back, and he and his brother who followed him, James II, launched Britain and especially Scotland into years of bloodshed and trouble. In England, hundreds of preachers were thrown out of their churches. In fact, you can buy from the Banner of Truth a book that's called Sermons of the Great Ejection.

In 1662, hundreds of the best men in England were kicked out of their pulpits. They were prohibited from entering towns. They were prohibited from coming, if my memory's right, and I'm stretching back nearly 50 years to a history class for this, five miles from the town.

They were not permitted. As if they had had the plague, all they had was the Word of God. Some were imprisoned.

John Bunyan, of course, is the outstanding example there. Many others had to go into exile. In Scotland, it was even worse.

The Covenanters, the very Presbyterians who brought the Stuarts back to the throne, got the worst of their hatred. The Covenanters were proscribed. They were persecuted.

They were hunted, and they were murdered. In desperation, they took up arms in self-defense. The 1680s were for them what are called in British history the Killing Times, which were not ended until 1689, William of Orange deposed his father-in-law, James II, and Britain got a constitution that gave freedom to her people.

In our day, some believers still face such awful persecution and opposition. We tend to overlook this, but in the last century, the 20th century, there were as many martyrs for Christ across the world as in any century, or almost any century. In South America, in Russia, in China, in Eastern Europe, and to this very day, in parts of Central India and other parts of India, getting worse all the time, but in one particular part of Central India, there has been institutionalized persecution of the people of God for many long years.

Many have paid the price for their faith in the shedding of their blood unto death. Now, many of us, most of us, do not have to face bodily persecution. We may therefore be tempted to think that the day of battle is something that we're not in.

We don't have to face a day of battle. But we'd be absolutely wrong. We are in the midst of the day of battle.

It's a different kind of battle. It's a different kind of opposition. But it's real, and it's of immense importance nonetheless.

This war is being fought in America tonight, and it's being fought on many fronts. On the religious front, there is the battle with ecumenical apostasy. This movement that is meant to disembowel Protestant Christianity, to evacuate it of every truth that is essential to the gospel, to make Protestantism passe, and to unite it with an unreformed Roman Catholic system.

An ecumenism that wants to extend its arms, to bring into the one fold everything and anything that in any way names the name of Jesus Christ. Ultimately, of course, under the aegis and authority of the Roman Pontiff. We're fighting ecumenism.

Let me tell you, that is a battle that is ongoing. It is to the shame of our churches, whether they are Presbyterian, or Baptist, or whatever you want to say. It is to their shame that our people hardly know what the ecumenical movement is.

Last year I publicly criticized the Presbyterian Church in America, and I will repeat it. They have lived since the year, I think 2000, under the shame of a General Assembly decision that exonerated their college choir's participation during a European tour in the Roman Catholic Mass. And I wonder where are the men, where are the people who have backbone enough in that denomination to say, Enough is enough, and we will not stay under the government of an assembly that is so weak that it will not do what Protestantism must do.

What our confessional standards state, what we sign at ordination as Presbyterians, that the Mass is most abominably injurious to the once for all sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We are fighting ecumenism. You realize that in most fundamental churches, they have never heard of the ecumenical movement.

They have never heard of it. They know nothing about the World Council of Churches. They know nothing about the National Council of Churches.

All they will fight against New Evangelicals. And by the way, I certainly am in favor of opposing the compromise of New Evangelicalism. The trouble is that in our fundamental churches, anybody who doesn't agree with me, label them a New Evangelical and have a go at them.

That's the way it goes. I know fundamentalists that would fight with you to the death, because you didn't believe in a pre-tribulation rapture, for which they can't find one single verse in all the Bible. Now, a wee bit like Dr. Schofield, he finds it between Revelation 3 and Revelation 4. Between it.

In my Bible, the only thing there is blank space. Now, if you want to believe that, I'm not going to be your enemy because you believe it. But I'm saying, isn't it crazy that we will make enemies of people over some point of eschatology, but we don't fight the real enemy.

We don't even know he exists. The ecumenists are the enemies of truth. In the religious front, we're fighting liberalism still.

It comes in many guises. It changes its theological name tag. But liberalism is apostasy, the denial of the Word of God.

We're fighting a battle for the very existence of that book. I don't mean for its existence absolutely, but for its existence in our churches, on the throne of authority where it has historically been and where it rightly must be. We have churches that are so busy telling people that they have got to have a new version as if this somehow or other is un-understandable.

There's a good Irish word for you. You cannot understand it. Let me tell you, I have no difficulty.

I have no difficulty in people who need to have archaic expressions modernized. Let me tell you, behind the English text, there's a Hebrew and a Greek text. And I will make this statement that the movement to the minority text of the Bible will be the death of fundamental witness.

I'm not getting into that in any more detail. Mark my words, God has not preserved the text of His Word in the overwhelming mass of witnesses from ancient times. He has not done it for a bunch of theological eggheads to throw it all out because they want to exercise their imagination on better readings from a minority Egyptian text.

I don't believe it. It will be the death of the historically strong witness of fundamentalism. I could go on there, did time permit.

We are fighting a battle ultimately against what's called syncretism. Syncretism is simply the bringing together not only of so-called Christian denominations but of all kinds of religions under one umbrella. See, anything goes religious attitude of the day in which we live.

And these forces are powerful and we are at war with them. When I say we, I trust I include you. I want to tell you the Free Presbyterian Church is a church at war.

From our inception we have deliberately been a battling church. Where Jesus Christ has been attacked, we have stood for Him. We have been spat upon, imprisoned, cursed, misrepresented, you name it.

It's happened. So be it. We are fighting a religious war.

It's not a war with guns or swords except the sword of the Spirit. But it's a war nonetheless. On the political front, this is a day of battle where we are battling secularism. We see the evidence of this every day in the press where there is this constant drive to put Christianity right out of public life.

That's the aim of the secularists. To drive Christianity out of public life. That's the battle on the political front.

I trust you'll never lose sight of that. That's what makes the abortion issue bigger than the abortion issue. Abortion in itself is a big enough issue, but it has a bigger issue attendant on it.

It is a major plank in the secularist policy to demean and drive out Christian ethics and Christian belief. From the public forum, on the social front, we have what's often called the culture war. The effort to replace all moral consciousness based on the word of God with the immoral.

Some people say amoral, don't you believe it? There is no such thing as amoral philosophy. Or they may call it that. Anything that is not for God is against Him.

There is no neutrality. If it's not moral, it's immoral. Not amoral, as if there were some center ground.

It's this effort to replace the moral consciousness based on the word of God with immoral philosophy. That philosophy of hedonistic self-worship. Man-lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

To replace it with a theory of godless relativism and pragmatism. If it works for me, it must be true. If it works for me, it must be good.

That's where we are today. Now the outcome of these battles depends, or on the outcome should I say, depends the future of the nation. And indeed the future of the church.

The church that does not line up in the day of battle will soon be swallowed up. And its existence is not worth maintaining. And if the church does not stand, this nation will certainly suffer.

The battle has been declared. The lines have been drawn up. Today no less than in Reformation days we face a day of battle.

We pass on for a moment to the warriors in this day of battle. In such a day, thank God, He always prepares His warriors. You see it in the New Testament.

It's not an accident that there happened to be a Paul. That was God's provision. He was the warrior.

There were many others. True of the Reformation period as well. When you look at that period, one of the richest as far as personalities go in all of church history.

There are names that most of us know. Now I hope that some of you will take the time to read the biographies of some of these men. Martin Luther, the monk who shook the world.

What a wonderful story. I like to think of Luther hammering the nails into the church door in Wittenberg. That's what he was doing.

That's what he thought he was doing. In reality, he was hammering the nails in the coffin of medieval potpourri. Wonderful story.

How he came to the knowledge of justification by free grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ. How he came to the knowledge of the authority of scripture, the priesthood of believers. How he came to the knowledge, which he expressed much, much more strongly than John Calvin ever did, of the absolute sovereignty of God in his predestinating purpose and in his salvation of sinners.

Martin Luther, a great warrior. Ulrich Zwingli, who planted the gospel standard in Switzerland. Now let me have a little word with all the professional historians here.

I have a lot of, you know, I wonder at my temerity. Ignorance gives you courage. Dr. Matsko is here.

His wife is here. Dr. Sidwell is here. His wife is here.

Dr. Abrams is usually here. He's backslidden tonight. These are just a few of the professional historians.

Now what I want to suggest, my apologies brother, I didn't mean to leave you out, but you have, you see, you've removed yourself from the front row to the back row, and how you can stay a historian and look after a high school, I don't know. That's a history in itself to write. But I would like to suggest to one of

these men that you get your resources together and let the world have a good biography of Ulrich Zwingli.

He's a man well worth having. Another one, I mean an up-to-date biography, a real sympathetic but honest biography. Another one would be William Farrell.

I get mad when I read what's available to me on William Farrell, written by people who really have very little skill and they haven't done the work. So here are a couple I would really like to see. There's more in Zwingli than in Farrell, but you fellas are good.

Can you have that ready for Tuesday, Mark? Thank you. John will do the other one for next weekend. Anyway, William Tyndale.

Never take this Bible in your hand without thinking. William Tyndale, by his massive linguistic labors, his lonely death in a cold and damp prison cell, gave me that book in the English language. John Calvin, scholar, preacher, teacher, pastor, and how this sticks in the craw of most historians, the man more than any who's the framer of our modern society.

Much of what we take for granted from the labors of Calvin, Hugh Latimer. Now, some of you who have been coming here for years will know all about Hugh Latimer, for Dr. Pinozian came here as Hugh Latimer. I have preached on Hugh Latimer.

Some of you may never have heard of him, which is a pity. Read about him, one of England's martyred bishops. I love Hugh Latimer because he was a very down-to-earth man.

He wasn't born with a silver spoon in his mouth. He was just a very ordinary man, greatly gifted of God. He was saved in a wonderful way.

Hugh Latimer was a papist, and he hated the Reformation. The Protestants wondered, how could we win Latimer for Christ? Impossible, you couldn't talk to him. He was such a stone-headed man, you couldn't get through to him.

And then Hugh Bilney, little, not Hugh, Thomas Bilney, Little Bilney they called him, he conceived a plan. You see, when you're going fishing, you don't always jump in and clobber the fish over the head with a sledgehammer and drag it out. There are ways to lure it.

Well, he went fishing. And so he went to Latimer, Father Latimer, as he was. And he said, Father, I would like to make my confession to you.

And Latimer was delighted. He said, here at last, I'm winning the battle. I'm getting this leading Protestant to come.

He's coming to confession. And so they got to the confessional. And Hugh Bilney, or I will give him Latimer's name, Bilney started.

And he gave him his testimony. And he confessed the gospel of Christ. And as Latimer listened, God opened his heart.

And he became one of the fieriest men of God England ever had. I love to think of Latimer standing before Henry VIII. Who else but Latimer would have had the temerity to go to the royal presence and preach on command.

And take as his text, whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. But that's what he preached on. To Henry VIII.

His life was in peril. He was commanded to come back the next time to preach. But this time, Master Latimer, be careful what you say.

And it was then that Latimer came. And he apostrophized in front of Henry VIII. And he said, be careful, Hugh Latimer, what you say today.

You stand in the presence of King Henry who can have your head. No doubt the old reprobate king was thinking he had the preacher where he wanted him. But Latimer went on and he said, but be careful, Hugh Latimer, what you say today.

For you stand in the presence of the King of Kings who can have your soul. And then he announced his text and preached again. Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Give us preachers like that and we can go into any fight and into any battle. It was Thomas Cranmer, first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury. Not by nature a fighting man.

Not a Latimer. Not even by nature a courageous man, a diplomat, a courtier, but a warrior nonetheless. And of course the one I love to come to, John Knox, the father of Scottish Presbyterianism.

In many ways in my book the father of the Scottish nation. Other were warriors we have all got to hear about. There are some not so well known.

Few people nowadays know much about Philip Melanchthon. One of Europe's leading scholars. A gentle soul.

In many ways a contradictory character. Hard to sum him up. And yet Luther's right hand man.

Patrick Hamilton of the Royal House of Scotland. The proto-martyr of the Protestant Reformation. George Wishart, John Knox's mentor.

The man through whose death Knox was set apart on his course to lead the Scottish Reformation. Martin Butzer, theologian. Bridge builder among Protestants.

Who ended his days a theological teacher in Cambridge University. And so you could go on of others not so well known. And I should say then there were the Anabaptists.

There were some Anabaptists who were very wild spirits. Thomas Muntzer was a wild leader of wild men. Some of them were so mystical that they gave up the Bible.

So spiritual they thought they didn't need the Bible. They had God speaking them directly. Some of them would take the scriptures so literally become as little children.

That they would sit down and play with little dolls. Bring the whole work of God into disrepute. But there were many powerful men of God among them.

Conrad Grebel and Felix Manz were Swiss preachers and martyrs. Balthasar Hubmeier was once a student of the famed Roman Catholic theologian Dr. Eck. He became a Protestant and then he became an Anabaptist.

He died as a martyr in Vienna in 1528, still a young man. But before he died he had led thousands, literally thousands to the knowledge of Christ. There were many others.

There were princes. Some had little feeling for the Reformation. But the Lord still used them.

There were others who were openly behind the Reformation. Very few like the King of Sweden. A man known in history as Gustavus Adolphus.

A great soldier. An honorable prince. A genuine Protestant.

A champion of Northern European Protestantism. Who in the course of the Thirty Years War saved the cause of liberty and of truth. These are warriors.

Now I have names. I haven't said much about them really. It's too big a field to cover.

The point I'm making is this. We're in a war. We need warriors today.

In every realm. We need men in the political realm. Men of God.

I don't want to get into party politics. That's nothing to do with me. But I want to tell you I would as soon sell my soul to the devil.

As sell my soul to the Democratic Party. Or the Republican Party. Or any other party.

It's time we had men of God who took their stand on that book as Luther did. And say my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I don't think men like that are eminently electable in modern America.

Well if they're not electable so be it. Better keep your conscience and be unelected than to be elected and sell out the truth of God. I realize there are issues where compromise is the art of politics.

There are issues where you've got to deal incrementally. I understand that. And I do not condemn men for getting part of what they want when they can't get all of what they want.

But there are other issues where it's black and white. Truth and error. God and the devil.

Heaven and hell. And there's no room for compromise. We need warriors in that realm.

We need warriors in the church. We need men for ministers. Men.

Not apologies for men. Not time servers. Not people looking for a job.

God saved the free Presbyterian church from ministers who have it as a job. I'd rather be a garbage collector. And I mean this sincerely.

Than to have the ministry for a job merely. Men called to stand. Who will not bow nor bend nor break.

Under the pressure. There's a place for great men. But very few of us can be great.

There's a place for little men. What I'm saying to you if you're saved. Whatever you're calling in life.

Whether you walk the shop floor. Work in the factory line. Teach in school.

Or whatever. There's a place for you. In this day of battle.

God's looking for his warriors. He's given us the weapons. In the reformation the princes wielded the sword.

The reformation however was fought not so much with sword as with better weapons than these. The reformers wielded words. They wielded ideas.

They wielded their pens. They were men of peace. I know that as Wingley died in the battlefield.

If the cantons had taken his advice. A few years earlier there would have been no such necessity. But even men of peace at times.

Have to be willing to die. On a battlefield. Luther.

Despite all his bellicose utterances. That lead some people to think that he was a man of war. Luther was a man.

Who at the cost of his own popularity. Denounced the peasants revolt. He was not in favor of seeking.

To forward the cause of liberty. By revolution. The reformers realized what Paul said.

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal. But they're mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. What were the real weapons in the reformation.

I will list them for you. I dare preach on them. First and foremost the Bible.

And placing it in the hands of the people. What was Luther's greatest work? It was not the 95 theses. That was important.

It was not his work the Babylonian captivity of the church. That was important. It was not all the many books that he wrote.

They were certainly important. The greatest single work of Luther. Was his translation of the Bible.

To put the word of God in the hands of the German people. What did more than anything else. To bring the cause of truth to England.

And bring it, drag it, kicking and screaming. Out of many evil superstition. It was the production of the Bible.

This was Tyndale's great aim, ambition and prayer. It was his ambition that he would put this into the hands of the plow boy. And make him no more than the ignorant priests who filled the pulpits.

Can I tell you. If you and I will start taking this book seriously. Dare to believe it.

Let's get out of this modern mold. This arrogance of the modern mind. Of coming to criticize this book.

Let me tell you the word of God is beyond my criticism. Hebrews 4 tells me it is the critic. It is the judge.

Let's dare to believe this book. Now everybody here almost I'm sure. Would say we believe the Bible.

It's the word of God. I don't want to be guilty of saying the same thing again and again and again. But I can do no better than what Spurgeon said.

When he said you believe it's the Bible you put it up on the shelf. And you can take your finger and trace damnation. The word damnation.

In the dust that's gathered on it's cover. We're talking about young men. Taking their stand for God.

Young fellas you're never going to amount to anything until you're man of that book. The saying of John Wesley. He was the man of one book.

That book. Martin Luther commented on the 40th Psalm. In the volume of the book it is written of me.

He said what book? There is only one book. That's the attitude. Dare to believe the book.

Be like Jeremiah. Thy words were found and I did eat them. Young man are you in the book of God? Are you studying the book of God? Don't make your school studies an excuse for neglecting God's word.

If you're learning biology at the expense of learning Christ you're sinning. Oh let's get to the book of God. Read it.

Learn it. Study it. Imbibe it.

Eat it. Till it becomes part of us. Think in the categories and terms of Scripture.

Speak in the categories and terms of Scripture. Let this be the most natural thing in the world. That wherever you go you're putting God's word in the hands of men and women.

What will change America? If anything is to change America for the good it will not be an act of Congress. It will not be a judicial action. It will not be because of a right wing Supreme Court.

It will be by the power of the word of God. Let loose in the nation. You know what that means? The most critical bunch of people in America to its future are God's people.

Secondly it means that among God's people the preachers are the ones who are called in this day of battle to the most important position. That God can give a man this sight of heaven. This is the weapon.

This is the sword of the Spirit. Learn to use it. Don't simply hold it up for admiration.

We have enough preachers who can do that. They can hold it up and talk about the jewels in the hilt. Men and women use the sword.

That's the weapon. There was also the spread of evangelical literature. The dissemination of Christian information.

Whatever the cost they got out the truth. They were a witnessing people. It's a great mark of both the Waldensian church and the Reformation churches.

Be they Lutheran, Calvinistic or Anabaptist. They were witnessing people. They were a people who were on the move to make converts.

That's what they were. Now we're living in a day when that's called proselytizing. If it hasn't already reached your business it soon will.

It will be against the law to speak to somebody about the truth of the gospel. You'll be harassing them. Soon we're going to have to pay to be witnesses.

But spreading by literature, by word, the gospel of Christ. That was a weapon. Here's a big one.

So big I thought of giving a night to it in itself. But I'll not do that. That was their commitment to the education of preachers.

You see Luther and the others realized something. God has given me a work to do. But unless the work is to die with the first generation of reformers.

They needed men to carry it on. The Old Testament prophets had the school of the prophets. What did Luther do? He made his name in the university in Wittenberg.

The Elector Frederick didn't really intend it to be a Protestant university. That's what Luther made it. At least his part of it.

As preachers, young men got the vision. And they came and they sat around his feet to learn the word and go out on fire for God. Philip of Hesse realized the same need.

Established the University of Marburg. Martin Boucher in Strasbourg in the 1640s. As I said, the 1540s.

He established first the gymnasium and then the seminary. John Calvin in Geneva established the academy. Later became the University of Geneva.

In England, Cambridge University was the home of the Reformation. In Scotland, Knox established a general education system. And in time, the universities of St. Andrews and Edinburgh became training ground for preachers.

Here in America, the same trend continued, did it not? The men who came here to establish this nation on a Protestant basis made sure that they had places for the training of young people and especially for young preachers. They founded Yale and Harvard and Princeton. All to keep up a stream of young men prepared to be warriors for God.

Men and women, that's the need for today. We need trained warriors, not weak-kneed compromisers. Not whirlings, warriors anointed of God.

Men who know what they believe, why they believe it. And love what they know. In the free church, ever since our inception, we have maintained a denominational seminary.

Why? God has given us great leaders. As a young fellow, I got to listen to Ian Paisley in his praying. Dr. Paisley, in my opinion, is one of the greatest Irish men of the 20th century, if not the greatest.

Combination of theologian, church historian, orator, preacher, soul winner, church planter, evangelist, and pastor. God has used his ministry in a marvelous way. But unless it's to die with him, he realized we need to train men to carry on the work of God.

It's the same here in the United States. I must confess to my, well, in honesty, but I must confess to my own shame, I have never, never approached anything near the level of a Dr. Paisley. I consider it my honor to have served under him.

But whatever ministry God has given me over the past 20, what, 3 years, in this congregation and in the denomination here in North America, can only succeed, can only be significant, as God raises up men of vision, of courage, of vigor, who will say, this is my vision, I want to take this work forward. We have a seminary, I thank God for it. I also thank God I don't have to teach in it anymore.

That's Dr. Barrett's job with Mr. Bream and others, eminently qualified to teach. Their burden is to see young men ablaze with the love of God, called, preparing to be warriors in the great Protestant tradition. When they come, they will take all the weapons that I have mentioned, and they will use those weapons, but at the end of the day, they will have to get alone with God, pour out their hearts to Him and say, Lord, I have served you with all the energy and ability that you have given me, but victory is of the Lord.

That's the winning of the war. When you stop to think of it, the cause of God doesn't look like a victorious cause, never did. You know, when Luther arrived in the scene, the Pope didn't even take him seriously.

The Pope thought, you know, this is some little pebble thrown into a tiny little pool in the back of Beyond in Germany. It will never trouble me, but it troubled him before very long. It didn't look very hopeful, but God gave the victory.

And I could go right through church history showing you the but-Gods, but-God, but-God, victories of the Lord. Do you know what that means? Nothing is impossible. I can't tell you what God's purpose for America is, but I can tell you God's purpose for you and me is to stand for His truth, to be faithful to His Son, to preach His gospel, to carry it out and to take the battle to the enemy of God and His truth and His sovereignty.

He will give us the victory we need. So then, what's wrong today? This is why I read Jeremiah 2 and I really can't even get into it. What's wrong today? If all this is so, if victory is there for us from the Lord, what's wrong? Well, read Jeremiah 2 again, think of it very carefully.

The trouble is, so many professing Christians are so backslidden. Am I talking about you? God says to you as He did to Israel, I remember when you were first saved. I remember the love of your espousals.

I remember how you went after me. I remember how your heart was open to me. What's happened that you've forsaken me? There's a question that should be in everybody's lips tonight.

Jeremiah gives it in verse 6. Where is the Lord who brought us up out of Egypt? Where is the Lord who has done great things in the past? Where is He? Does that question never haunt you? I have to say it haunts me constantly. I read of the early church. I read of the Reformation.

I read of the Jonathan Edwards Revival. I read of the Whitfield Wesley Revivals. I read of the Moody Sankey Revivals.

I read of God's moving here and there. And again and again the question haunts me. Where is the Lord who has done such great things? Where is He? Oh, the Lord's where He always was.

Trouble is, as Jeremiah says, nobody seems to be even asking. My people have settled down in a worldly attitude. Quite happy to be saved from hell.

But live as much like the devil as they can get away with. Here's a desire for restoration. Where is the Lord? You'll find Him where you left Him.

A desire for restoration. A willingness for repentance. To deal with the causes of our estrangement.

With the reassurance that there's nothing facing us today that the Lord hasn't dealt with in former years. What He did for the Reformers, He can do for us. What He did for the Revivalists, He can do for us.

Let me bring it up to date. Many of you are students or faculty at Bob Jones University. Especially of the students, I wonder how many of you have ever bothered really to find much out at all about the life and the ministry of the founder of the institution that you're a part of.

Read of how God used him. Read of a day when a preacher didn't go to preach for three nights and have the absolute lunacy to call it revival. Read of a day when a man went blazing a trail across America and people listened.

Read of a day when through the preaching of the gospel, not only were sinners saved, liquor establishments were closed down, never to open again. Then ask yourself, where is the Lord who did such thing? All we face a battle on. We have the weapons.

We need the warriors. We have the God of battles on our side. The big question is what we were singing earlier.

Who is on the Lord's side? Who will serve the King? The horse has been prepared against the day of battle. But victory is of the Lord. Let's trust in Him and be ready with powder dry to serve Him whatever the cost may be.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. In just a moment the meeting will be over. Who is on the Lord's side? Who will serve the King? What a question.

I wonder what the answer is. Am I talking to people tonight? Do you remember when you were saved? Do you remember even how you were committed to Christ? And yet, you've left the love of your espousals, wandering through life, a miserable Christian. And if God were to take you home tonight, you'd have to say, Lord, I've never done anything great for God.

This is a day to get right with Him. A time to commit ourselves again to be the man and woman we need to be in the service of Christ. Time to get such a vision of our Savior to say He is worthy of all that I can do in His name.

This is a time to become a warrior, to serve the King. If you're not saved, if you're backslidden, if you'd like to talk with Dr. Barrett or Mr. Brim or me, we'd be happy to seek to help you to Christ. If you're saved and want you to do what the Lord challenged me to do many, many years ago, you go get alone with God and ask the Lord, Lord, what would you have me to do? What do you want me to do, Lord? I give you my life.

Use me in the battle of God and truth. Father in heaven, bless Thy word to every heart. Save us, O Lord, from a backslidden heart, a cold indifference that leaves us unmoved at the call of God or the cause of Christ.

Lord, we pray that Thou wilt launch forth man into the work of God across this nation and across this world. Lord, give us vision. Lord, give us vigor.

Lord, give us the victory. Let us see sinners saved, churches established, communities moved, truth uplifted, Satan defeated, the nation impacted by the mighty power of God. Lord, as we battle against

ecumenism and other forms of apostasy, as we battle against secularism, as we battle against the hedonism that so curses modern society, Lord, we cry to Thee, give us the power of Thy Spirit, the anointing of Thy grace, the smile of Thine approval and the success of Thine intervention on our behalf.

Hear our prayer and give lasting fruit for this time spent together this evening. Part us now with Thy blessing and keep us in Thy fear. Be the abiding portion of all Thy people both this night until the Lord Jesus either calls us home or comes again in all His glory.

We ask in our Savior's precious name. Amen.

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