A sermon preached in Hollond Memorial Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, on Sunday morning, February 21,1932, by the Minister, The Rev. H. McAllister Griffiths "But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

"So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shall hear the word at my mouth, and **warn** them from me." (Ezekiel 33: 6, 7.)

I.

THE minister of Christ, when he comes forth to preach in the sanctuary, must always feel a sense of immeasurable and solemn responsibility. Before him are the souls of men. On his pulpit is the truth of God. Watching him is the God of Truth. He, weak though he is, must so expound God's word to his people that it will become mighty in their hearts, that souls may turn to the Saviour. The issues of eternity are in his keeping, and woe be unto him if he fails! Yet not to fail he must only be faithful,—faithful to the truth as it is in Jesus, faithful lest he mix with the gold of God's revelation the clay of man's speculation.

Yet as I come to you this morning it is with an even greater sense of responsibility and solemnity. The subject that engages us now is one of more than ordinary moment.

It is a duty which I believe God has laid inescapably upon me, to speak out plainly and clearly for the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Word. More, I must needs be not only general today, but particular, that my warnings may be understood, that my words may not be glittering generalities that would leave you more puzzled than when I began. After the flesh, I truly wish that someone else could preach this sermon. I do it in fear and trembling, not out of opposition to men but out of loyalty to Christ and to His Church. I have been reluctant to speak out as I must speak out,until God has made it clear that I can be silent no longer if I am to be His true servant. In so speaking, there is no malice in my heart toward any man.

A few months ago I came before you with the answer to the question, "When may we expect a great revival?" One of the replies to that query was: "When the Church repents of the unbelief in her midst and takes steps to restore the lost purity of her witness to the Gospel." The words "if I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me", are true of Churches as well as of individuals. If we want to keep the heritage handed us from the fathers, if we do not wish to see the Presbyterian Church become a proud but drifting derelict, tossed by every wave of human fashion, we must avoid the sin of crying "peace, peace" when there is no peace. Controversy for its own sake, or for the sake of advantage or place is contemptible; but the kind of controversy that

ensues upon the beginning of doctrinal purification will be simply loyalty to God, and because He has commanded such conflict, it will be blessed of Him.

Peace! It is a great word. It is beloved of men and angels. The Saviour is named the "Prince of Peace." But there is sometimes a state named "peace" that is really no peace at all,--that is only an offense to God. The peace of man with sin,-God regards that as such blasphemy and rebellion that man must be cut off from the Divine fellowship and life. Man at peace with sin is man at enmity with God. There is no peace without its corresponding, inescapable enmity. The man who loves beauty will abhor ugliness. The lover of goodness will hate wrong. A man cannot love justice without cherishing in his breast a hatred of tyranny. The children of the light are at enmity with the darkness. Peace is not always desirable,--it may be the worst possible human state. For a man to be at peace with all that is base in his life, spells ruin. Nor can churches escape the working of this universal law. A church at peace with the world, conformable to that world's demands in its life and teaching, is a church in rebellion against God. A church at peace with unbelief, whether that unbelief be found without or within, is at enmity against God. It may desire to maintain peace all round,-to be at peace with God and with that which dishonors Him as well. But that cannot be. Neither churches nor men can serve two masters.

It is my conviction that the Presbyterian Church is standing upon the brink of irremediable apostasy. Outwardly, indeed, every attempt is being made to suppress the fact that two entirely diverse religions are living and working within her. Her people have been assured that "the late Modernist-Fundamentalist conflict" is over. My Christian friends, the conflict between faith and unbelief is never over. It is not over in the Presbyterian Church, but what is happening is, that those who hold to the historic faith of the Church are being quietly and gradually smothered. In the name of "peace in the church" in the name of "an inclusive church," the power of modernism is attempting to secure complete control over the church. The kind of "peace" she now enjoys is only and merely the peace of a church that is dying without a struggle. If the process should continue unchecked, fifteen years more will see historic Presbyterianism regarded as a quaint relic in the then-so-called Presbyterian Church, while the red banners of Modernism replace the bonnie blue flag over the towers of the Zion built, loved and for so many years jealously defended by those who are now of the Church triumphant.

Peace with Unbelief a Sin

If we are at peace with unbelief, then, with doctrines that dishonor God's word and the Christ of that Word, the sooner war is declared against unbelief the better. For if this be so, only a conflict will save the

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Church, and the man who does not rise to take part in it is disloyal to his God, to the truth he professes, and to the vows he has taken.

Nor let anyone imagine that to come into the open in opposition to unbelief and heresy is to introduce a new method into the Presbyterian Church. Our fathers in the faith gave to our church one of its supreme characteristics: its historic zeal and jealousy for the truth of God. Almost the entire history of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, Ireland, the Low Countries and in North America is the record of how the unbelief that steadily finds entrance into the Church has been opposed and resisted by those who were faithful. The Protestant Reformation itself was one long protest against the idea that outward unity and peace in the Church are more important than purity of doctrine. When matters of faith are at stake, the Presbyterian custom is to speak out, to speak clearly and boldly, not counting the cost. Anyone who tells you that good Presbyterianism means a quiet surrender to the religion of the day simply does not know what he is talking about. So that in making my protest this morning I account myself no schismatic, but as simply a humble follower in the steps of men far greater than myself, and who, if they were here, could speak in mightier accents.

II.

In 1923, the General Assembly, replying to the overture of the Presbytery of Phila-

delphia regarding the preaching of Dr. Fosdick in the First Presbyterian Church of New York, expressed its sorrow for what had taken place, and reaffirmed deliverances of previous assemblies that five doctrines were "essential doctrines of the Word of God and our standards." I will read you these doctrines in a moment.

Immediately after the Assembly of 1923, opposition to its decisions began to be agitated. These oppositions culminated, in 1924, in the publication of a document entitled "An Affirmation," issued by a Committee of ministers who, while not all living there, issued it from Auburn, New York. Hence it has become known as the "Auburn Affirmation" and its signers as "Affirmationists." Originally signed by only a small group it received finally the signatures of nearly thirteen hundred out of nearly ten thousand ministers of the Church.

This "Affirmation" (so-called) opposed the Assembly's deliverance on two main grounds: (one) that the General Assembly lacks constitutional power to bind the Presbyteries of the Church to *any* "necessary and essential articles" for admission of men into our ministry without concurrent action by the Presbyteries; (two) that the "fivepoints" themselves, entirely apart from any constitutional questions involved, are not, singly or all together, essential to "the system of doctrine" taught in the Holy Scriptures and contained in our Confessional standards.

Now if the first point only had been raised by the "Affirmationists" the matter would hardly be worth recalling. For they asked a perfectly fair constitutional question, and in it they might be right. It may be that the Assembly does lack power to bind the Presbyteries to any "essential or necessary articles." I will not dispute that point now. It is relatively unimportant. The representation has gained wide currency, however, that the "Affirmation" concerned itself with this point only, and that it is merely a plea for correct constitutional practice. That representation is not true. It is the second of the points raised by the Affirmation that makes it of historic significance.

The "Five Points" of 1923

We cannot understand the second point made by the Affirmation unless we have before us the "five points" of the Assembly of 1923. They are:

"One. It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God and our standards that the Holy Spirit did so inspire, guide and move the writers of Holy Scripture as to keep them from error.

"Two. It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God and our standards that our Lord Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary.

"Three. It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God and our standards that Christ offered up Himself a sacrifice to

satisfy Divine justice and to reconcile us to God.

"Four. It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God and of our standards concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, that on the third day He rose again from the dead with the same body with which He suffered, with which also He ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of His Father, making intercession.

"Five. It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God as the supreme standard of our faith that our Lord Jesus showed His power and love by working mighty miracles. This working was not contrary to nature, but superior to it."

Now what does the "Affirmation" say about these five points? With regard to the first, which represents the Bible as inerrant, it says, in part, "the doctrine of inerrancy, intended to enhance the authority of the Scriptures, in fact weakens the testimony of the Church . . ." And this is in spite of the fact that the General Assembly of 1893, sitting judicially, solemnly suspended Dr. Charles A. Briggs from the Gospel Ministry for teaching, inter alia, that the Scriptures contained error. That Assembly decided that to teach the doctrine of an erring Bible is in conflict with the law of the Church and a violation of ordination vows. The court was plainly right, and its judgment should be respected. Auburn "Affirmationists" flout it. For this reason and for others that will appear I solemnly declare and protest that they have violated the vow they

took at their ordination when they gave an affirmative answer to the question: "Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?", as the highest court of the Church has defined that vow. Like Dr. Briggs they have violated their ordination vows and should be suspended from the ministry until they repent. I can see no escape from this conclusion.

What is the "system of doctrine" of the confession? This is raised by the "Affirmation's" rejection of the four remaining points of the deliverance, and is not difficult to answer. It is that fabric of related and interdependent truth called "Calvinism," or the "Reformed Faith." It is more than mere evangelicalism, although Calvinism is evangelical. It is a systematized statement of the teaching of Holy Scripture concerning God, His nature, His purposes, His decrees, His methods and His revelation; concerning man as he was in creation, as he is in sin and as he becomes by grace; concerning redemption by Jesus Christ crucified and risen; concerning the ultimate destiny of man and the ends of his being,-all this and more.

The Affirmation Anti-Christian

It is not claimed that the "five points" of 1923 are any kind of summary of Calvinism. They are not to be confused with the famous "five points of Calvinism"—total inability, unconditional election, limited atonement,

efficacious grace, and the perseverance of the saints. But while it is freely agreed that the five points of 1923 do not summarize Calvinism or any system of doctrine, yet, my claim is this: if the five points of 1920 are not true, then Calvinism, the system of our Confession, is not true. Even more then: "evangelicalism" is not true; more: then Christianity, in any of its historic forms, is not true. Here is the test: if you take the five points of 1923 from the confession what have you left? The stark answer is, nothing. No system of doctrine at all. One does not need to be a trained theologian to see how inescapable is this dreadful conclusion. Take away the inerrant Bible, a Christ born of a Virgin, the atonement as a sacrifice to satisfy Divine justice and to reconcile us to God, the resurrection of Christ in the same body in which he suffered, and the supernatural miracles of our Lord,take them all away, and what have you? It is as though some rough cannon-shot had entered the living, breathing body of Christian truth, tearing out heart, lungs and spine. There may be other organs left in that body-just as there are other doctrines the Affirmation does not deny-but they cannot continue to live or function. The life of the body is gone,-gone because organs essential to its continuance have been shattered and shot away. So with the system of doctrine of the confession,---if the "Affirmation" is true, then historic Christianity, then Calvinism, is shattered and dead.

I am well aware that the "Affirmation" attempts to weaken the force of this inescapable conclusion in two ways: (First) -it declares that some of its signers themselves believe all the five points while agreeing with the others that they are not necessary to our system of doctrine. But is this really any defense at all? How deep can a belief in these five points be on the part of those who can complacently contemplate a Christianity without them? Can a man really "believe" these doctrines in any truly Christian sense if he holds at the same time that they are quite unnecessary to essential Christianity? Further, is it not a commonplace of Church history and law that heresy has to do with false teaching as much as with errors in personal believing? Regardless of what some few "Affirmationists" may believe about any of the five points, the really important thing is what they teach others to believe concerning them. If an "Affirmationist" stood up at this moment here in this church and claimed that he personally believed in all of the five points I would yet be compelled to point out to him that his heresy consisted in his public teaching,---that he had publicly taught that the five points were not necessary to the system of doctrine of the confession and that that teaching is the baldest heresy.

The "Affirmation" and Scripture

The second method by which the Affirmation tries to cover up the gaping wound its denials leave in the body of Christian truth,

is subtle and clever. In opposition to the five points of 1923, it offers five statements of its own-which, while at times similar in language to the five points, are as far apart from them as the poles are from each other. The five points they dub "theories," while upon their own five statements they bestow the sonorous and impressive title of "facts and doctrines." Now we all believe. they say in effect, these facts and doctrines, -but belief in these "theories" (the five points) is a different matter. Then let us see what these "facts and doctrines" are. To point number one, which is the inerrancy of Holy Scripture, they oppose this statement: "we all believe from our hearts that the writers of the Bible were inspired of God." That sounds innocent enough-at first blush. By itself the statement is quite true. Then one remembers that this statement was issued because its framers do not accept the first point. The "inspiration" to which they refer then, is, inescapably, one that admits of errors in God's word. Such "inspiration" may mean almost anything or nothing. Here it clearly involves the low view of inspiration that may accompany belief in a Bible that is not factually or doctrinally trustworthy. That is no "fact and doctrine"-it is a theory of inspiration -a bad theory-not the theory of our standards, which clearly maintain that the Bible is errorless because it came from God. The "Affirmation" here plainly teaches heresy.

The Virgin Birth

To point number two, which states that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, the Affirmation blandly opposes the belief of its signers "that Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh." The Virgin Birth then is a "theory"-of what? Evidently the Affirmationists think it a theory of the incarnation. But the Virgin Birth is no theory, never was, never will be. It belongs in the realm of fact: "true or untrue." Either it happened, or else it did not. The Bible says it did,-the "Affirmation" clearly implies that if one believes that Christ was "God manifest in the flesh" such belief is a good substitute for belief in the Virgin Birth. It happens, however, that historically, Christians have never felt called upon to choose between belief in the Incarnation and belief in the Virgin Birth. The attempt of the "Affirmation" to call the Incarnation a fact and doctrine of which the Virgin Birth is but one theory is a piece of monstrous absurdity. The only incarnation taught in Scripture includes the Virgin Birth, not as a theory, but as a fact. Here again the "Affirmation" is clearly heretical.

The Substitutionary Atonement

To point three, which asserts that on the cross Christ "satisfied divine justice and reconciled us to God" the "Affirmation" sets off "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself and through Him we have our redemption." Here is the very language of the Scriptures—should this not

be enough? No, not when these verses are wrenched out of their context and placed in seeming contradiction to one of the most precious doctrines of the Bible! That Christ died to satisfy Divine justice may be a theory, but if so it is none the less true since it is the revealed "theory" of the Word of God! It is the clear teaching of our confession-the very words, "The Lord Jesus . . . hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father . . ." are found in the Confession's great eighth chapter. We all ought to believe in the majestic declaration of the Scriptures "that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself,"-how the heart leaps at the words! But any man who would teach his fellows that those words are a substitute for or an alternative to belief in Christ's satisfaction of God's justice, is giving men poison, not food, for their souls. Neither the Bible nor the standards of our Church know anything of a redemption that was not secured by Christ's offering up of Himself as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and to reconcile us to God.

The Bodily Resurrection

To point number four, which declares the bodily resurrection of our Lord, the "Affirmation" says "that having died for our sins He rose from the dead and is our ever-living Saviour." But what kind of resurrection is implied here? The statement is offered as a substitute for the phrase describing Christ's resurrection as being "in the same body in which he suffered." Inescapably, then, the

"Affirmation" means us to understand that this "resurrection" of which it speaks need not have been a bodily resurrection. What then? The only other kind of "resurrection" left to believe in is a non-bodily "resurrection"-which is nothing more than the simple survival of the soul after death. According to the "Affirmation," then, all that is necessary is to believe that somehow the Cross did not quench or destroy the living personality of Jesus. This is a complete denial of the Resurrection in any historic or Christian sense. The only Resurrection Christianity knows is a resurrection of our Lord's body. According to the "Affirmation" this precious doctrine is only a "theory" that can be discarded without doing violence to the Christian Faith. God help the Presbyterian Church if she is willing to consent to that heresy!

The Miracles of Christ

The fifth point of 1923 is that which speaks of Christ's miracles as "not contrary to nature, but superior to it" that is, as supernatural. The "Affirmation" counters with "in His earthly ministry He wrought many mighty works . . ." There it is,— "mighty works" instead of miracles, as if His miracles could be explained upon some natural basis! Christianity is supernaturalistic to the core. The "Affirmation" implicitly denies the supernatural by substituting for it a description of Christ's miracles with the miraculous left out. Thus, to this extent at least, it takes its position beside

the hosts of naturalism that have tried and are ceaselessly trying to persuade men not to believe in the supernatural record of God's supernatural redemptive acts recorded in the Scriptures. At this point again, truth and candour force me to say: this is heresy.

In Defense of Precious Souls

Such is the doctrinal teaching of the "Affirmation," stripped of its polished veneer, its professed loyalty to our system of doctrine. It had better be called the Great Denial than an "Affirmation"-the Great Denial of all that gives hope and faith and redemption to fallen and struggling mankind. For let no one be deceived: this conflict is not a mere "strife of tongues", it is not a mere dialectic in the interest of one system of human theology as over against another. I speak this morning in the serene beauty of this place so dear to us, in defense of all that placed this stately building here, in defense of the truths that have made it dear. The battle against Modernism is a warfare in defense of human souls. We are fighting for the eternal destiny of boys and girls, young men and women, precious, immortal spirits committed into our care. Upon what they are taught about the trustworthiness of the Bible, the Person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, will depend their eternal destiny. Shall we allow their minds to be poisoned with subtle, false doctrines that will lead them to eternal destruction, and do it without a protest? Forbid it Almighty 20

God—forbid it by the tears, the groans, the wounds of our Saviour, by all the burdens He bore upon the cross. Forbid it by the love we should bear to human souls, for whom Christ died,—forbid it as we love the Church, as we are worthy to be called Ministers of Christ! As long as we cherish compassion and tenderness for one poor soul struggling in sin and yet longing to know the light, O God forbid that we should acquiesce in the preaching of doctrines, belief and trust in which would lead that soul down to the awful abyss.

III.

I hope that throughout this sermon, its letter and spirit will make it abundantly plain that I am not engaging in any "personal attack" upon anyone. Nothing could be farther from my intention. My point is one,-namely that those who accept the doctrinal pronouncement of the Auburn "Affirmation" cannot truthfully be said to accept the Bible as the Word of God or to receive and adopt the system of doctrine of our Confession of Faith, and that, because of this, they ought to demit the Ministry of the Presbyterian Church. I am not blind to the fact that many signers of the "Affirmation" may sincerely claim that they do really accept the system of doctrine of the Confession. They may say that this declaration of theirs should settle the matter. But the fact that they are sincerely mistaken does not make them any less mistaken. It is hard for me to conceive how any intelligent 21

man, theologically trained, can be honest in thinking there is no such contradiction between the Affirmation and the Confession of Faith, but if any man insists that he is sincere in so holding, I will gladly accept his word. But I will still insist that he is wrong and ought to leave the Presbyterian Church without delay. If a minister cannot adopt the doctrines of any Church according to their historic meaning he will be happier without it than within it. He will be free from the stigma of having introduced strife and dissention where there ought to be heart-unity, peace and love. Equivocation and mental reservation lead to uncertainty and strife.

If I must mention names today it is not because I have any desire to slander or to humiliate. God forbid! But you yourselves know that ever since I have been with you in this pulpit, my yea has been yea, and my nay, nay. I have not dealt with innuendo or with equivocation. You have known exactly where I stand with relation to every great issue before the Church. Should I merely speak to you today about the Auburn Affirmation, and denounce it, without naming its signers in our midst, I should do two wrongs: first, I should leave you mystified, your minds filled with generalities. I should warn you of danger without telling you where to expect it. The mission of Christian preaching is not to confuse a people but to inform it, to lead it. The pastor is under a solemn duty to guard the flock committed to his care, and I have 22

tried to discharge that duty. Second, were I not particular in naming those implicated in the Auburn propaganda, I should perpetrate a grave and unpardonable injustice upon all the ministers of our Presbytery who are not signers of the "Affirmation." You would go forth this morning saying, "I wonder who he meant? Perhaps it is so-andso." And the finger of suspicion might be pointed at men who are entirely innocent of any connection with the "Affirmation." Once I had resolved to speak out on this subject, it did not take me long to see that, no matter how much my act or its motives might be condemned or misconstrued, I should have to name the signers in our Presbytery. I did not then think, nor can I now believe, that they can justly be offended, for it is they not I, who have offered the "Affirmation" to the Church. I am only telling you of something these men have done openly, proudly. How can they object to my naming them if they are not ashamed of their document? Certainly they can have no wish to hide it! It is, therefore, with a solemn sense of responsibility, and without the slightest intention of engaging in personalities that I read you, in alphabetical order, the names of the signers of this document who are now in our Presbytery. They are:

[Here was read a list of the "Affirmationists" in the Presbytery of Philadelphia.]

It may be asked why, if the Auburn Affirmation is an heretical document, formal charges are not now filed against its signers.

The answer is simple and direct. While the Affirmation was first published in 1924, and is still being supplied to those who write to Auburn asking for it, and while its principles and signers have gained and are gaining a domination in the Church which is a danger and a menace, so that the issue raised by the Affirmation is more alive and urgent today than in the year it was originally signed, section 117 of our Book of Discipline provides that: "Prosecution for an alleged offense shall commence within one year from the time of its alleged commission or from the date when it becomes known to the judicatory which has jurisdiction thereof." There is some doubt as to whether, under this section, "Affirmationists" could escape trial now because of this purely technical time-limit. Why any of them should wish to plead such a defense, and not be willing to have the case settled upon its merits, I do not know. But I have had no wish to begin a judicial case where this plea might be raised, and which might be taken to the General Assembly upon a purely technical issue that would settle nothing when it was all over.

The Minister's Duty to Warn Against Error

There are those who will say that I have no right to preach this sermon, that I ought to prefer charges; that if I cannot prefer charges I ought to remain silent (as if eight years of time made the doctrines of the Affirmation less pernicious!). Those who take this position show at one glance their 24

utter ignorance of the basic principles of the Presbyterian Church as expressed in its history and standards; and their superficial and inadequate understanding of the nature and duties of the minister of Christ. It is an obligation of Christ's minister to bear testimony against error not only jointly with others as a member of a Church court, but as a minister: it is an essential portion of the character and nature of his office. He may not abrogate this obligation without ceasing, in any full sense, to be a minister of Christ. I protest against the idea that a minister must cease from his plain duty simply because Church courts may fail in their duty!

If the Church Becomes Apostate

And I further protest, before the great Searcher of all hearts, that if in the Presbyterian Church it becomes a crime and an offense for a minister of Christ to warn precious souls against false teaching and teachers within or without the Church, which duty is laid upon him by Holy Scripture, that then the Presbyterian Church will have become an apostate Church. Nothing is more clear in God's Word than the sacred duty of the Christian minister to bear witness to truth as opposed to error. For what other purpose does he exist? And what person with any maturity of mind could conceive that the bringing of judicial charges, filed privately, heard behind closed doors by secret courts, with rumor and innuendo as the only source of public information, will 25

be any warning to precious souls against false teachings and teachers? There is no law now in the Presbyterian Church upholding the ridiculous contention that the only way to protest against error is to bring formal charges. But if the day ever comes when such a law exists, or when the highest court of the Church decides that in order to remain a Presbyterian minister one must surrender this essential ingredient of his ministry, then let the Presbyterian Church remember the words of the fifth paragraph of the twenty-fifth section of her Confession of Faith; for they will be graven upon her tombstone for a warning to posterity: "The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error; and some have so degenerated as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan."

I value my ministry and the succession in which I have received it. I love the Presbyterian Church. I am a Presbyterian not by convenience, but by conviction. But if the Presbyterian Church seeks to force upon us an emasculated ministry, prohibited from that warning against error and errorists which is a solemn and inescapable duty, then I would rather leave the Presbyterian Church, rather exercise a full ministry without her walls than remain within her. I would depart in sadness, but would do it because I "ought to obey God rather than men."

No Liberty to Defend the Gospel?

Further, I am amazed at the position taken by some: that in the Presbyterian Church there is liberty for men to attack the doctrines of the Bible and our standards (As the Auburn "Affirmation" does)-to belittle the very Person of Christ as He is described in Scripture, but no liberty to defend the standards of the Church, the doctrines of the Scriptures and the person of our Lord by calling public attention to attackers and their attacks. They are to be given liberty to attack the Church by boring from within, we are to be denied the right in the name of the law of the Church, to defend that Church's law, doctrines and Head. They may attack Christ. We may not attack them! What could be more absurd?

Please allow me earnestly to repeat that the preaching of this sermon is no easy matter. It has followed literally months of heart-searching and seeking of Divine guidance. Once that guidance came there could be but one question left,-namely the time that should be chosen for speaking out. What our age needs is a profounder emphasis upon God as the source and ground of truth than it has ever known before. Because He is our God, and because truth is of the essence of His nature and acts, His minister may not dare to despise it, or handle it or alter it as though it were his own. Recently I listened to the pithy observation that "a man who is willing to sacrifice truth for the sake of expediency is a 'yes-man', and in their hearts all honest men despise

him." How true! True today as when Paul withstood Peter to his face because he was to be blamed, true as when Athanasius said with the proudest humility the world has ever known, "The world against me? Then I am against the world!" True today as when the erstwhile Brother Martin, the sledgehammer of God, nailed his ninety-five theses on the church door at Wittenberg,at one blow knocking down age-long prison walls of superstition over whose ruins the refreshing breezes of the Spirit of God could blow untrammeled and free. We have received a noble inheritance preserved to us by the courage and constancy of the fathers. Shall we give it up without a struggle?

An Appeal to Modernists for a Peaceful Separation

The characteristic plea of Modernism is, "Let us give up all that conflicts with truth!" It is a noble cry, and despite its ghastly errors, Modernism would, in the estimation of the world, gain in moral stature if it would seriously practice it. Conscientious Modernists know that the system of doctrine of the Presbyterian Church is not Modernism, but its very antithesis. In their hearts they know that no honest man can be at permanent peace with himself, even if his modernism be sincere, when he has gained the right to be a teacher by giving formal assent to doctrines that he does not and cannot believe. Further, every intelligent Modernist (alas! there are many) knows that two contradictory religions,-28

alien in foundation, structure and objects of labor-ought not to be struggling with each other within the confines of a single church. Modernists and Evangelicals should be able to go their separate ways,-each to bind up the wounds and bruises of the world in his own manner-not to add to that world's hurt and confusion by a disgraceful compromising that enthrones temporary and only temporary tranquility above a clear, ringing proclamation of the truth, whatever that truth may be. Even if Modernism were right and historic Christianity wrong, when will Modernists not see that, in attempting to hold to forms they can no longer believe, in attempting to crowd those who do believe the old faith out of the churches to which they belong by conviction, or to silence them into a doctrinal indifferentism, they are themselves sinning against the truth? There are probably relatively few here who have been affected by Modernism, but feeling that what I say may be read by a considerable number of Modernists, I dare to make this appeal to their candour, their honesty, their sense of fairness: If you really love truth above buildings, endowments, historic seats of learning and the prestige of ancient names, then withdraw from us,-leave us at peace. Go your own way,-build up your own churches, or else join the communion of some body which has taught from the beginning what you teach. If you are right, the God of truth will bless you. Never will there be peace in the church until she is truly one,-one in agreeing upon 29

her essential message and purpose. The peace which we formerly enjoyed is not of our breaking, but of yours. If it continues to be broken, the responsibility will be yours. You have intruded into our pulpits, our agencies, our seats of learning and instruction. It is your presence in the church that makes peace impossible,-more, disgraceful and dishonorable to you and to us unless we all are willing to confess that we value expediency above truth. Let us part in peace. Take with you the new light and truth you think you have, and leave to us the Church of our fathers,---those fathers whose memory we bless and whose faith we share.

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