

Chaplains' Corps Chronicles
of the
Sons of Confederate Veterans

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"That in all things Christ might have the preeminence."

"Our duty under God is to give honor to whom honor is due. Therefore, we must accurately recall the past so as to ensure that those in the future will receive a proper understanding and encouragement from their forefathers!" HRR

"I think it worth a lifetime of hardship to prepare, under God, one of our dear defenders thus to die." Chaplain J. Wm. Jones

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Quote from a Confederate Chaplain

"Many of our regiment fell in the terrible battle of Sharpsburg. We occupied the centre, where the enemy made his fiercest attack, hoping to break our lines in that vital part of the field, and so win the day. The enemy were formed in a semi-circle on the side of a hill. Our brave men marched up to the attack until they could see the heads and shoulders of their adversaries over the summit of the hill, when firing commenced. From the two wings and the centre of this semicircle they poured upon us a murderous fire for about one hour. Five times our colors fell, but as often our men rushed to the spot and raised them to the breeze. Finally, a retreat was ordered—at that moment the colors fell and were left. The enemy had suffered too much, notwithstanding his advantages, to pursue, and our gallant lieutenant-colonel, already wounded in the arm, went back and brought them away under a shower of bullets.

"In the midst of this carnage many a heart turned to the God of battles for refuge and comfort."

Chaplain John W. Mills
5th Florida Regiment



Editorial

Fellow Compatriots in the Chaplains' Corps and Friends of the Cause:

Spring brings new growth in the physical realm. God's people should be always growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. We can learn a great deal of infallible truth from the Saviour. Please consider:

Transformed Lives

By Dr. H. Rondel Rumburg

Paul spoke of being "*Transformed by the renewing of your mind,*" Romans 12:2.

We live in a world that is addicted to spiritual mediocrity. What passes for Christianity is often fake or superficial. When a person is born again by God the Holy Spirit that person is regenerated or transformed. True salvation is based on the redemption by the Lord Jesus Christ. We are told that Christ laid down His life for His sheep. Thus, those whom Jesus died for, and the Holy Spirit gives new birth to are eternally transformed! They were in accord with the Apostle Paul who said by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, "*And you hath he quickened [made alive], who were dead in trespasses and sin*" (Eph. 2:1). Yes, Paul talked about the Ephesians Christians being

transformed from death to life. He went on to say that God has “*quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)*” (Eph. 2:5). The kind of Christianity so many foster today is merely talk without a “transformed life.”

What does it mean to be “transformed?” Spiritual new birth is a transformation from spiritual death to spiritual life (See Eph 2:1-5). A Biblical definition is “*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*” (2 Cor. 5:17).

Paul’s way of describing this radical change of being “*transformed by the renewing of your mind*” (Romans 12:2) has reference to their minds being renewed, which also means that their conduct was “transformed” (*metamorphoō*); the word used here means a change in form or a transformation. The renewal of the mind is the one true preservative against being conformed to this world. Anders Nygren, in his *Commentary on Romans*, writing on the renewal of the mind, said, “The mind and memory, reason and emotion, indeed, everything in the Christian’s life, the inmost and the more outward, from the highest to the lowest, all must be included in this metamorphosis....” This is a *transformed life* which Paul wrote about via inspiration, and he stated it in the imperative!

A person who has been regenerated or experienced the new birth by the Holy Spirit has had a *transformation*. Webster noted, “In *theology*, a [transformation is a] change of heart ... by which his disposition and temper are conformed to the divine image.” Thus, when a person is truly born again there is a radical change. What a difference this is to those today who pass themselves off as Christians who have had no transforming change in their lives at all. A person could be the member of every church in America and go to hell unless that person was transformed by the grace of God.

Robert Haldane, in his great *Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans* (1835) explained, “Transformed ... denotes the entire change that passes on a man when he becomes a Christian. He is as different from what he was before, as one species of animal is from another. Let not men be so far the dupes of self-deception as to reckon themselves Christians, while they are unchanged in heart and life.... If there be not a radical difference between their present state and that in which they were by nature, they have no title to the character of Christians. This shows that, in general, it is not difficult to discriminate Christians from the world. If the change be as great as the Word of God here teaches, what difficulty can there be, in most cases, in judging of the character of those who profess Christianity? It is not the heart we are called to judge. If the person be *metamorphosed*, as the word originally implies, from a state of nature to a conformity with Christ, it will certainly appear, and the state of the heart will be evident from the life.”

Today we have fake news, fake history, fake Indians, fake food, fake heroism, fake love, and a great deal of fake Christianity. There is a “Christianity” that is falsely so

called. A. W. Pink stated, “The God of the popular mind is the creation of a maudlin sentimentality.” Yes, today we have many false gods, but the holy eternal God of heaven and earth is rejected.

One who has been *transformed* by God’s grace lives a changed life and when the time comes, he dies a peaceful death. There is such a death described (in the September/October 2018 issue of the *Confederate Veteran*,) where the young soldier, LeRoy Wiley Gresham, was dying. He asked his mother, “I am dying, ain’t I?” His mother described what happened afterward in a letter, “Oh my God, I thank you for the strength given me then, but with streaming tears and choking voice I asked him, ‘If you are ... [dying] are you willing to trust your Savior?’ and the smile which beamed over his poor wasted features will be with me to my dying day as he said, ‘Oh yes—I know in whom I have believed, I know that my redeemer lives. Call them all, & ask Father to read the 24th Psalm & part [of Romans 8].’ ... ‘I wish you had told me sooner that I was dying,’ he said that I might have done all these things [final disposition of them], but for my soul I can trust that to Jesus.” Now he awaits the final transformation by resurrection at the last day into the eternal glory. His body awaits the resurrection while he is present with the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:8).

**My times are in thy hand;
my God, I wish them there;
my life, my friends, my soul, I leave
entirely to thy care.**

**My times are in thy hand,
whatever they may be;
pleasing or painful, dark or bright,
as best may seem to thee.**

**My times are in thy hand;
why should I doubt or fear?
My Father's hand will never cause
his child a needless tear.**

**My times are in thy hand,
Jesus the Crucified;
those hands my cruel sins had pierced
are now my guard and guide.**

William F. Lloyd (1791-1853)



This issue contains our Chaplain-in-Chief's message *The Sufferings of Jesus Christ and Why*. Your editor has provided his editorial on *Transformed Lives* and a biography of *Chaplain John W. McCown*. Assistant editor, Mark Evans, has given us another good article entitled *Remembering True Heroes*. This issue, as usual, includes *A Confederate Sermon* submitted by Kenneth Studdard by Rev. Charles Minnigerode which is titled *Obedience*. Our *Book Review* of *Our Comfort in Dying* is by Forrest L. Marion.

Soli Deo Gloria,
Editor H. Rondel Rumburg

[Compatriots, if you know of any members of the Chaplains' Corps or others who would like to receive this e-journal, please let us have their names and e-mail addresses. Also, feel free to send copies of this journal to anyone you think would like to receive it. If you want to "unsubscribe" please e-mail the editor or assistant editor. Confederately, HRR]

"War is a terrible trade, but when the cause is just, the smell of gunpowder is sweet."
Miles Standish

"If the blood of martyrs be the seed of the Church, the blood of heroes is the life-giving dew to the germs of liberty. The cause is doubly safe since (Stonewall) Jackson's blood has consecrated it." *Literary Messenger*, June 1863



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THE CHAPLAIN-IN-CHIEF'S MESSAGE

Dr. Herman White

The Chaplain-in-Chief's Message

Dear Chaplains and Friends of the Corps:

I greet you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ who loved us and gave himself for us. I trust that you all had a blessed celebration of Easter. Thank God for the

great victory gained through Jesus' death and resurrection! I am still looking for Jesus to return for those that are ready. God bless.

The Sufferings of Jesus Christ, and Why

Matthew 26:36 to 39 John 12:27 to 33

I. The Why.

The why starts in Genesis 3:15 when the first promise was given relative to a Redeemer after the fall (sin) of Adam and Eve. Down through the word of God we can trace the trail that will ultimately take us to the birth of the baby Jesus in Bethlehem of Judea. It will also trace the trail through Jesus' ministry to the cross where he became the One that bruised the head of the enemy of our souls.

All the sacrifices that were offered from the sin of Adam and Eve down through the years taught about this One that would pay the sin debt to satisfy the justice of God. Throughout Jesus' ministry the emphasis was always about accomplishing the will of the Father; for example in John 4:34 Jesus said to the disciples, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

II. The Battle in Gethsemane.

I have never ceased to be amazed at the efforts that I have heard down through the years to say that Jesus was praying to the Father to not drink the cup of death on the cross. What I care about is whether that is true according to God's word, or is it man's doctrine. What does God's word have to say to us? It certainly does not teach us that Jesus of Nazareth was trying to get out of dying on the cross; for we know that over and over he was telling the disciples what was going to happen to him when they arrived in Jerusalem. In Luke 9:51 we read where Jesus was leaving Galilee: "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." Therefore, what was taking place in Gethsemane?

Jesus was in a life and death struggle with the enemy of our souls as the enemy was trying to keep Jesus from going to the cross to pay the sin debt. All my life I have heard some preachers, and others, saying that the devil danced with glee when Jesus was on the cross. How utterly ridiculous, for the devil was trying to do everything that he could to keep Jesus from going to the cross, which meant his defeat. Luke 22:43 tells us that during this battle that Jesus needed help, "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him." Jesus was not trying to avoid the cross, he was trying to get there to fulfill the will of the Father.

The Father heard the prayer of Jesus and saved him from death in the battle taking place in Gethsemane. How do we know this? God's word in Hebrews 5:5 to 10, and especially verse 7; "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared," (or trusted the Father). Now we know that Jesus was not saved from death on the cross, so where was he saved from death? Of course, it was in Gethsemane as the devil sought to keep Jesus from the cross. If the devil had been successful, then all of God's promises from Genesis 3:15 would have been wrong and God defeated. Thank God for the protection promised in Psalm 91:9 to 15, so that Jesus would indeed make it to the cross, and gain the great victory over the devil on it!

III. Thus, Jesus became the only way to the Father.

In John 14:6 Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Peter by the Holy Ghost proclaimed in Acts 4:12, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." And I Peter 1:3 tells us, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

Because Jesus of Nazareth "humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Philippians 2:8 & 9). May we all follow Jesus' example as stated in Philippians 2:5, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Amen.

Rev. Dr. W. Herman White
Chaplain-in-Chief



Chaplain John White McCown

(1833-1910)

Zollicoffer's Tennessee Brigade

Dr. H. Rondel Rumburg

The year of John W. McCown's birth was 1833, and this was an eventful year. On November 12-13 there was a spectacular occurrence of the Leonid Meteor shower that

was observed in Alabama and thus began the famous title, “Stars Fell on Alabama.” This was also the year that J. E. B. Stuart, John S. Mosby, and Dr. Samuel Mudd were born. Andrew Jackson was president of these United States.

Birth and Family

It was in Putnam County that John W. McCown was born. This county, which is now a part of West Virginia, was the place of birth of our subject. He was one of six children, and he was born on February 24, 1833. His father, Joseph McCown, was well-known in that part of the country. His grandfather, Charles Franklin McCown, was a Lieutenant in his military participation in the French and Indian Wars. His mother, Pamela Hughes, was descended from a distinguished Welsh family.

Education

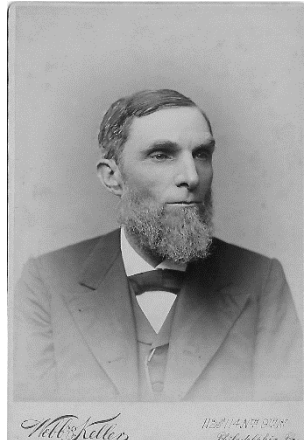
John W. McCown received his earliest education at his parents’ knees, and also learned a great deal from his siblings. He was locally educated. As a young man of twenty he entered Richmond College in 1853. Here he began his studies of the classics, philosophy, and theology. Throughout his life these areas were of interest to him, but especially the Bible and theology.

He and two other fellow students became close college friends. They became known as the “Triumvirate.” There was a rivalry among them as they pushed one another. The other two making up this “Triumvirate” were Charles Crawford Chaplin¹ and John Cralle Long.² The “Triumvirate” also became chaplains in the Confederate States of America Army. Chaplain C. C. Chaplin was Post Chaplain in Danville, Virginia. Chaplain J. C. Long worked for the Lord in the Confederate Hospital in Danville, Virginia. The three friends were called by the Lord to become Baptist ministers and sought to faithfully

¹ Charles Crawford (Charlie) Chaplin, considered to be one of the best Texas Baptist pastors of his time, was born in Danville, Virginia, on September 22, 1831. Charles attended Richmond College, but was unable to graduate due to ill health. He became a Christian in 1853 and was called to the ministry. After he was ordained as a minister in 1856, Charles served as pastor of several churches in Danville, Virginia, Owensborough, Kentucky, and Paducah, Kentucky, and also ministered to soldiers as chaplain in the Confederate States Army. He moved to Texas in 1877. In Texas, Chaplin became pastor of First Baptist Church in Austin, Texas, 4,000 people in three years professed Christ. In 1880 he became the pastor of First Baptist Church in Brenham, a position he held for four years. Chaplin wrote often for religious periodicals, served as chaplain for the Texas Senate, and was President of the Baptist State Convention. Charles also served as trustee for Baylor University, and as Vice President of the Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention. It is not known when Chaplin married Lucy Exall Chaplin, but they were married with five daughters by 1880 at the time of his pastorate in Brenham, Texas. Charles Chaplin died on November 2, 1884.

² Rev. John Cralle Long was born in Campbell County, Virginia on November 28, 1833, and died at Charlottesville, Virginia on August 6, 1894. He was tutored in his early education and then was educated at Richmond College where his friendship with J. W. McCown and C. C. Chaplin began. He was a Baptist minister, a Confederate Chaplain, and a Professor of Theology at Florida State Seminary at Tallahassee, Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania. He pastored Charlottesville Baptist Church. He and his wife, Josephine Hardin Ragland, had six children. They lived in Crozer during school sessions and used Triple Oaks, Elon, Virginia, as their summer home. He wrote many articles for the Baptist papers. According to many obituaries in the Virginia papers, his funeral cortege left Charlottesville by train, then reassembled at the Long Family graveyard at Oak Grove in Elon, Amherst, VA, where he was buried.

serve the Lord in their callings. Reflecting ahead to afteryears when C. C. Chaplin passed away, J. C. Long wrote a tribute to Chaplin for the *Religions Herald*. His article was titled, “A Sprig of Acacia,” and when J. C. Long died, McCown sent the same paper an article about the second member of the “Triumvirate” to be called to glory, and that article was called “Another Sprig of Acacia.”



John C. Long

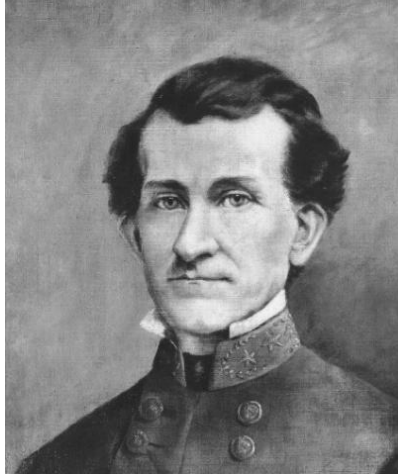
In 1857 McCown graduated from Richmond College. The other graduates that year were Edward Epps, W. F. G. Garnett, A. T. Goodwin, John M. Gregory, Stephen E. Morgan, and Isaac T. Wallace. On July 5, of that same year, McCown was ordained and called to the pastorate of Grace Street Baptist Church in Richmond. He and his college friend, J. C. Long, were ordained at the same time. Dr. R. B. C. Howell preached the ordination sermon, and Dr. J. B. Jeter delivered the charge to the candidates.

Marriage

He was married to the lady who would be his helpmate, and her name was Katharine Fullerton Johnson. She was a daughter of Fullerton Johnson and Mary Neal, a granddaughter of the distinguished Griffith Dickinson. The Lord was pleased to bless their home with children.

Ministry as Pastor and Chaplain

John W. McCown's first pastorate was the Baptist church of Clarksville, Virginia. His second pastorate was in Campbell County, Virginia. When the dogs of war began to howl, his response as a pastor was to organize a company for service in the Confederate Army. Not long afterwards, he became a chaplain in Zollicoffer's Brigade, to which he was attached for the rest of his army service.



Gen. Felix Kirk Zollicoffer
(1812-1862)

With the onset of the War of Northern Aggression, Zollicoffer was commissioned a colonel in the Confederate Army in July 1861 and commanded troops in eastern Tennessee as well as in southeastern Kentucky, defending the Cumberland Gap. Small groups of Zollicoffer's command raided Union forces at Barbourville and Laurel Bridge in Kentucky in the September of 1861. His men made a strategic withdrawal from Federal George H. Thomas's command in October. On January 19, 1862, Zollicoffer commanded a brigade in George B. Crittenden's force, attacking Thomas at Mill Springs, near Logan's Crossroads, along the Kentucky-Tennessee border. Zollicoffer was instantly killed in the confusion of the battle. His body was returned to Tennessee and was buried in Nashville. Zollicoffer's Brigade of the Army of the Tennessee persisted after he was killed. To these men Chaplain McCown ministered the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Being a part of the Chaplains Corps was never easy for keeping body and soul alive, for the road could be rough and dangerous. The omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent Lord was their hope and stay. Being kept by the power of God is the best keeping.

The chief purpose of Chaplain McCown and all the true Confederate Chaplains was to glorify God. This is the purpose of every genuine Christian. The *Confederate Bible* recorded, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). Glorifying the Creator/Redeemer God was/is the chief end of man and especially so to the Confederate Chaplain McCown. The text from Corinthians refers to every facet of life, from the common events in daily life, eating and drinking, to the minister of Christ ministering to men, whose eternal souls were facing death or recuperating or dying. All the doing was to be "to the glory of God."

The godly chaplain was more concerned with God's rights than his own. Their calling and purpose were set forth in the Bible of McCown and the other chaplains. "If

any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (1 Peter 4:11). This was the chief purpose of the ministry to those in the ranks. These men of God took seriously Paul’s admonition, “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Colossians 3:17).

Some of McCown’s fellow chaplains left accounts of their labors which were like the duty of a pastor, except with the complications of war and the threat to life almost daily. Not only did many preach many times on a Lord’s Day, but also during the week; speaking at graveside services; visiting the dying on the battlefield and in the hospitals; marching all night or marching sixteen to eighteen miles in all kinds of weather; holding services upon arrival in the form of prayer meetings or preaching; distributing literature; writing condolence letters; making reports; collecting funds to assist in the needs of the wounded; building or assisting in building shelters; fighting personal sickness; carrying the burdens of family needs at home; reading Scripture to those who could not do so; dressing wounds; nursing the sick; hungering for lack of food or because it had been given away to a suffering soldier; and on we could go with the tasks.

Finally, the atrocities of the enemy came to a close and Chaplain McCown returned from the conditions of war to the struggle for his family’s existence under the occupation of a spiteful enemy. Now he must adjust the new world -- sifting through the rubble, so to speak.

Post War Ministry

John W. McCown returned home to an uncertain future, humanly speaking. It was good to know that the God of all the earth does right and causes all things to work together for good. He headed for his home country in 1866, moving to Gordonsville, Orange County. This is where he had lived for twenty-five years. It was a return to where he had served the Lord faithfully and with His blessings.

He became a missionary of the State Mission Board for a while. Pastor McCown began to organize a Sunday School Association, using the Richmond congregations as his model. This association was made up of five neighboring Sunday schools that began by meeting once a month.

On at least two occasions Pastor McCown served churches outside of Virginia: first at Leakesville, North Carolina, and then, some years later, he ministered in Richmond, Kentucky. For a while he was pastor of the Baptist church at Glade Spring, and on two different occasions, he resided at Bowling Green, Virginia, where he pastored Calvary Baptist Church.

During his life at Gordonsville and Bowling Green, Pastor McCown also served the following Baptist churches: Upper Gold Mine, Pigeon Run, Liberty, Pleasant Grove,

Louisa Court House, North Pamunkey, Upper Zion, Providence (in Caroline County), Crooked Run, and Bethel.

Richmond University, his alma mater, conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. One writer noted: “if culture and scholarship are the basis of such a degree, he was most worthy of the honor. He was a graceful prose writer, and in his early days he expressed his thoughts in verse. The beauty of his diction was remarkable. Quite recently an old woman gave this testimony: ‘He wrote me the most touchingly beautiful letter when my father died thirty years ago; I have it yet, and my brother, in another continent, keeps a copy of it.’ It seems very unfortunate that he did not exercise more freely his remarkable gifts in this direction. His sermons, which are extant, are ‘fine examples of literary craftsmanship.’ Not only in his sermons, but also in his prayers, ‘his artistic temperament found outlet.’ When he led a congregation in prayer, he lifted them away from ‘sordid things and into the atmosphere of the infinite.’ His former congregations still speak of his prayers. One of his friends said, a year after his death: ‘If I could only have him pray with me, I could bear, I believe, this heavy sorrow of mine.’ His keen intellect, his eager thirst for knowledge and service, led him to aspire to wide fields of usefulness, but his sensitive nature suffered from the jars of busy life and made him shrink from the struggle for place. ‘He deliberately chose the quiet field for his sowing and there remained to garner a rich harvest of love and appreciation.’ Not only in mind and heart, but also in person, he was attractive. ‘His figure was tall and well proportioned, and preserved its youthful slenderness through life....’”

About a decade before his removal from this sphere, his throat and body began to be overwhelmed by sickness. Thus, his regular pastoral ministry was over. Yes, he could fill pulpits by occasional preaching engagements, but the pressure of a full-time ministry was too taxing. He was able to minister among those whom he knew.

The Lord was pleased to remove his servant on January 5, 1910, in Richmond, Virginia. On June 5, 1910 “a beautiful service to his memory was held at Gordonsville, Orange County. Addresses were made by Rev. J. B. Cook and Rev. L. J. Haley, and words of appreciation were spoken by many in the congregation. The following day the grave in Maplewood Cemetery was covered with tall white lilies and a blanket of red roses.” His children were Ruth McCown (1859–1935); Albert Kirk McCown (1862–1942); Katherine Daphne McCown (1863–1948); Anne M. McCown (1866–1906); and Ella Thorpe McCown (1879).

Thus, another of the members of the Confederate Chaplains Corps had been called to the Captain of his salvation to ever be with the Lord.



Remembering True Heroes

Mark W. Evans
Past Chaplain-in-Chief

Although Confederate officers rightly deserve our praise, it was the lower ranks that confronted the enemy to the death. A contemporary clergyman, Rev. James A. Duncan, described these heroes: "If the private soldier be a true man, there is something of moral sublimity in his conduct that attracts our highest admiration. And yet how apt some people are to forget him. There is no star on his collar, no glittering ornament on his arm; but his plain gray jacket may enclose as noble a heart as ever throbbed in a human breast, or thrilled with patriotic devotion on the day of battle. In sleepless vigilance he paces his sentinel watch during the long hours and gloom of night, while the quiet stars shed their soft light on his musket, or the storm and rain beat pitilessly down on his shivering body and weary head. Look at him in battle at his gun, begrimed with powder, weary, hungry, almost exhausted, yet the fire gleams in his fearless eye as he rams home the charge, or sights his piece at the foe. 'Forward' is the command along the line, and you can see him as he brings his musket to a charge and dashes on to the very muzzles of the death-dealing guns to win the day or die in the attempt." [W. W. Bennett, *The Great Revival in the Southern Armies*, p. 24.]

Rev. R. H. Rivers wrote: "He is brave. He marches without fear to the brink of death. The booming cannon, the shrill sound of rifle and musketry, the clash of arms, the smoke of battle, the groans of the wounded and the fallen corpses of the dead, inspire him with no terror. Brave, but not reckless, he would stand, if need be, in the very front of the battle, facing danger and bereaving death. Such is true courage, and it is possessed in all its plentitude by the model soldier. [*Ibid.*, 26.]

Adding to their incredible martial feats, their spiritual victories were even more astounding. They endured the hardships of hunger, illness, bitter cold and stifling heat, fatigue, wounds, and frequent exposures to death. Chaplain W. W. Bennett wrote: "In the midst of all the privations and horrors of war 'the grace of God appeared' unto thousands and tens of thousands in the camp and in the hospital, 'teaching them that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.' The subjects of this revival were found among all classes in the army. Generals in high command, and officers of all lower grades, as well as private soldiers, bowed before the Lord of Hosts, and with deep penitence and earnest prayer sought the pardon of sins through the atoning blood of Christ." [*Ibid.*, 18.]

Robert L. Dabney, who served as "Stonewall" Jackson's chief-of-staff, recalled a ceremony in Richmond, Virginia, that celebrated the placing of General Stonewall Jackson's statue. General Joseph E. Johnston, followed by General Jackson's staff led the procession of veterans. Dabney remembered that the eyes and praise of the crowd were not upon General Johnston, nor upon Jackson's staff, but upon the veterans that followed. He said, "Then came hobbling a company of two hundred and thirty grizzled

men with empty sleeves, and wooden legs, and scarred faces, and hands twisted into every distortion which the fiery fancy of the rifle ball could invent, clad in the rough garb of a laboring yeomanry, their faces bronzed with homely toil; this was the company for which every eye waited, and as it passed the mighty throng was moved as the trees of the forest are moved by the wind, the multitudinous white arms waved their superb welcome, and the thundering cheer rolled with the column from end to end of the great city. It was the remnant of the Stonewall Brigade!" [Dabney, *Discussions*, vol. IV, 23, 24.]

Even enemies confessed admiration for the men in grey. In a New York convention, Rev. Dr. Bellows stated: "I think the war must have increased the respect felt by the North for the South. Its miraculous resources, the bravery of its troops, their patience under hardships, their unshrinking firmness in the desperate position they have assumed, the wonderful success with which they have extemporized manufactures and munitions of war, and kept themselves in relation with the world in spite of our magnificent blockade; the elasticity with which they have risen from defeat, and the courage they have shown in threatening again and again our capital, and even our interior, cannot fail to extort an unwilling admiration and respect. [Bennett, p.29.]

In 1866, at the re-interment of Confederate soldiers who died at Gettysburg, Confederate Chaplain John L. Girardeau addressed the departed warriors: "Memory will keep her guard of honor over your graves; love will bedew them with her tears; faith will draw from them her inspiration for future sacrifice; and hope, kindling her torch at the fires which glow in your ashes, will, in its light, look forward to a day when a people once more redeemed and enfranchised will confess that your death was not in vain." [Blackburn, *Life, Work and Sermons*, 129, 130.]



A CONFEDERATE SERMON

Submitted by Chaplain Kenneth Studdard

Charles Minnigerode (1814–1894) served as pastor of St. Paul's Church of Richmond for 33 years. He was best known as Jefferson Davis' pastor, for Davis attended St. Paul's during the War. It was Minnigerode who was first allowed to visit President Davis during his imprisonment at Fortress Monroe following the war. He was a comfort and spiritual guide to President Davis during this difficult time.

Charles Minnigerode was a faithful pastor and preacher of the Gospel. His sermon, "Jesus Christ and Him Crucified," was considered a powerful presentation of the Gospel.

The New York Times, in its obituary of Minnigerode, noted that "*it was these words that the good old man had on his tongue in his last hours.*"

Obedience

Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it. Jno. ii. 5

If I were asked to condense all practical teaching of the Scripture into one sentence, I would quote this text. For in one sense it is true: obedience, aye, obedience is the first and greatest lesson we draw from its revelation of the Saviour's relation to us and ours to Him, the pivot on which its every issue turns, the end towards which every result must lead.

Obedience—you ask? Is obedience to save us? Does not all the Gospel preach faith as the means of acceptance and salvation?

Surely, my brethren, our obedience is never sufficient to work out our justification before God—"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." But it is not a dead faith, it is not a mere creed; nor is it mere devotion! It may come to us traditionally—and thank God generally and in His economy of the Church, it so comes to us, as we hear it at our mother's knees, and receive the promise of God's adoption in the baptismal covenant. But it must grow and become our own. And the knowledge of our own sinfulness and eternal soul-wants, must lead us personally to surrender to Him, and trust ourselves to His atoning power. It is the same faith, but the child is becoming a man. As we advance in life and experience, we learn what that means: "He came to save His people from their sins!" not only their guilt but their power! And by faith in Him, the living, working, struggling, sanctifying faith, we rise to the knowledge of His saving power, and prove it in the obedience of the faith, prove it by developing from it as the root that holy life without which we are none of His.

When the Apostle at the close of his life could say, "I have kept the faith," he meant, indeed, the faith involved in the first revelation of Christ to his soul as the alone Saviour; but as learned, practically, and exercised in a life in which he lived to Him that saved him, and followed His sinless, holy example, ever reaching forth for greater growth of His faith, more enlargement, grasp and power; more comprehension of it, by pressing towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Why, the true object of Christ's coming and dying for us was not to save us in our sins but from our sins; was and is, to lead us back to that obedience, and make it the habit and the joy and glory of our hearts and lives, without which no creature can live in God's world.

Obedience is the law of creation. It cannot be otherwise. If we live in a world of order, law, government, we must be in accord, in harmony with it; violation of its order, law and government is death, ruin, misery, exile!—Just think of inanimate nature. Let the sun, let the stars forsake their orbits—what follows, or would follow were that possible? Let the flower be deprived of the legitimate sources of its support and well-being, sunshine, and dew, and it dies! — Let the animal be misled against its true instinct, it

suffers and dies! And the moral creature, the free agent? Aye, he can disobey, but can he disobey without suffering, without "sin finding him out?" Man can choose, but he chooses wrong at his peril, and his only law of normal existence and possible happiness is obedience. He has fallen, hence his suffering and death; recovery made possible only by the Redeemer's merits and the sinner's faith in that Redeemer's work. Recovery remains an impossibility without the return to obedience.

Whatever people may say there are but two lines of conduct, but two roads of life. Man has the power to choose; but, with the road chosen, he must take the end to which each leads. He has no choice there; and the end of happiness, blessedness, eternal life is only in the road of right, truth, and godliness.

The end corresponds with the road. Which is the right one? Which must we choose to be saved? Philosophers may twist and turn and try to avoid the issue, or deny our premises and conclusions as not scientifically demonstrable. But after all, there sleeps in every heart, there lives in every breast, the conviction, and the knowledge that God presides over this world and over his own life and choice, and that only what He saith, what God and Christ say, is the right, the only road which leadeth unto life. I need say no more. If men are ostentatiously loud in proclaiming "the reign of physical law," and lay down obedience to that law as undeniable and imperative, they will not lower themselves by denying their higher nature and God's spiritual law and refuse to obey that.

Whatever He saith, therefore, is our rule of life. And oh, He has said it so plainly in all His revelation of nature, in the invisible witness of our own hearts by the voice of conscience, and in the solemn and authentic revelation of His Holy Word. The whole world is divided into but two classes. Those who obey that Rule or Law or Word, and those who do not.

Let us take the two classes:

There is one road, and over it is written "I came to do Thy will oh God, the will of My Father which is in Heaven." We might take the life of Enoch, of Noah, of Abraham, Moses, the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, of every Christian man and woman that lives, has lived and shall live in this world, but none are perfect. And we turn to the great example and forerunner of all righteousness, Jesus Christ, who came to earth as man, to show us how to obey the law of God and walk in the narrow path that leadeth unto life; not as God, but as man; not with divine power, but the power of pure, unsullied manhood; the true Son of Man. In His life we see our own. As He walked its rough and thorny road and toiled up its steep heights "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," but from that holy life on earth walked straight into heaven: so it is with all His followers; who after many a conflict and self-denial, and much crucifixion of the flesh, yet with many comforts and helps and promises, copy His bright example here and follow Him to the life of glory and bliss above.

There is the other road—and over it is written "who is the Lord that I should obey His voice?" I might speak of Adam and Eve in their fatal choice, of Cain, and a thousand others; but Pharaoh is a fair type, and his defiant cry the war-cry of those who walk in the broad road which leadeth to destruction.

You say, that is a hard saying, and that you do not accept his position. Does not every sinner do so? everyone that rejects Christ? everyone who neglects so great salvation?

Just think a moment. I know, few would use the words of Pharaoh, but—act like him? My dear brethren, I have known more than one who flatly refused to be Christians; who almost took offense at being approached on the subject, and at last closed the interview with an oath, "d— it! I don't mean to be a Christian!" I do not make an exaggerated statement, but I know it will grate fearfully on many a mind.

Well, if after all the lessons taught you, all the heart-burnings you have experienced, all the moments of hope and a better life you have had, all the urgent appeals, you just turn away: do you not say "No, I won't!"

There comes the call. Oh! in such love and tenderness and anxiety for your souls, and your happiness here and hereafter, and every comfort and blessing of earth and heaven—No!

There comes a temptation; you know it is wrong, sinful, deadly. Conscience speaks, all you ever learned comes back to your mind to warn you; examples of perishing sinners lift their pleading voices; God seems to be all but present and look into your very soul; Christ stands and pleads and points to His crown of thorns and cross of atonement: No!

Your old habits rule you. No, I cannot give them up, and you let go Christ! the idols of your life, pleasure, honour, riches.—No, I must worship them, and let go Christ!

Where is the difference? In the end, is there so much difference between Pilate saying "I see no fault in Him," yet delivering Him to His murderous enemies, or the Jews who crucified Him? between Ananias who lied to the Holy Ghost, and the young ruler who went away sorrowful, because he could not sacrifice his love of money for the salvation of his soul in the service of God and holiness?

Does not all turn on practical faith, life, obedience? aye, my brethren, the giving of the heart, which involves all life?

Two more remarks on the obedience we are speaking of:

1. It must be instant; delay is disobedience, and generally fatal disobedience!

All life teaches the sin and folly of procrastination! Let me give you illustration from my own knowledge and recent experience.

A woman living in the country was taken desperately ill; the doctor lived some miles off; she had had similar attacks before. Her only son was dispatched for the doctor. He thought, no doubt, it was one of her old attacks; he went off on his horse, rode at his ease, stopped at a neighbor's, and paid a visit, and at last, leisurely reached the physician's home. I don't know if the doctor was in a greater hurry. Both came to the residence of the woman—she was dead.

Let me give you another illustration: A man is involved in debt, (how many have realized that condition!) It may be an individual, or a company, or a whole people; it does not change the issue or the principle. Let it be a man. Well! he may say, it is hard, hard. I don't see how I can manage it and save, even by close living and many self-denials and privations, enough to pay it; but it is an honest debt, a binding obligation. My debtors

would suffer less by my dishonesty than I would do in my own conscience and sense of right before God and man! Of course, it would be better, more pleasant, to do it right off; but if that is impossible, the instant obedience requires instant retrenchment, instant self-denial, instant endeavor to turn all into that channel. I have known a family that were unfortunate and failed. They set to work at once, and manfully, and I may say in a godly way; they lived on \$50 a month (it was a large family) till they were clear. The children are living now, and God is prospering them in the world. That was instant obedience!

But there are others. What? to give up the life they are living and their position, and the things they are used to? it would be preposterous! And instead of trying how to pay their debts, year after year they use every ingenuity and every evasive plea and every plausible pretext to try, how not to pay their debt. Well, you may call it by a great many names, but in the sight of God and His law, it certainly is disobedience! God have mercy upon them!

And brethren, so it is in all things. These are mere illustrations. Any parleying with sin, any giving in, any postponing, is just that disobedience of which we are speaking now. "Oh! I am going to be a Christian?" Are you? I don't believe you; and you cannot believe it if you do not set to work about it at once, and be one, and as a poor sinner come to Christ and renounce your sins.

A dear and noble Christian friend sat by my fire side, a fugitive during the war. With all his trials he felt God's mercies gratefully; he turned to me and said, "yes I am resolved if God helps me through this, I am going to be a better man and serve Him more faithfully." I said, "why wait? why not do it right off?" He blushed and said "Amen."

As long as you say I am going to be, there is no hope. You but make Christ the minister of sin and fool your own self. Why, what keeps you? Are you honest in it? Can you plead the farm you have bought, the yoke of oxen you have not proved, the wife you have married? Ah! should not every claim of earth lead us nearer to God, and every tender tie of love lead us to bring with us to Christ the souls which He has given us?

I cannot dwell on the many miserable pleas made to excuse men's present disobedience. People can't believe the Bible when they don't study it. Christ is such a hard Master? when He says my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Such a struggle! as if it were harder than the struggle of sin! — I am not prepared? when all that is needed is to go to Him. I am not good enough? when Christ came to save sinners, not the righteous. Shaw! What was the course St. Paul pursued? "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Can any reasonable, honourable soul excuse itself from that course? How was it with the Apostles? "Follow me," and they forsook all and followed Him. And whatever form it may assume, that is the only answer: Instant obedience!

Why, brethren, just take the question of right! Is it right? is it not sin to put it off, when we acknowledge the binding force of our obedience, and rob God of that much of our time and service? Yes, and take the question of safety! Putting off? for what—in comparison with what you refuse now? Till when? putting off—and with it you put off your chance, your time, your eternity! "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee."

There was wonderful tact and insight into human nature in Dr. Chalmers' treatment of that young girl whose mother had complained to him that she could not persuade her child to be a Christian; that she had talked to her and talked, but it was of no use. He proposed that he should see her by herself. "They are bothering you a great deal with this question," he kindly said to her, "suppose I tell your mother you don't want to be talked to any more for a year—how will that do?" The girl stared at him with her large eyes in perfect wonder, and new thoughts seemed to come to her; she cast down her eyes and said tremblingly, she didn't think it would be safe to wait for a year, something might happen, she might die before that. "Well, that's so," replied the Doctor, "suppose we say six months." She didn't think that would be safe. "That's so, let us cut it down to three months." The girl looked down. "I don't think it would be safe to put it off three months: Doctor, I don't think it would be safe to put it off at all." And down they went on their knees, and it was settled.

There is no other way, my brethren; now is the accepted time, this is the day of salvation.

2. But, secondly, obedience cheerful, willing. There is no godly, no acceptable obedience without it. Suppose a man obeys from fear, from dread of punishment and hellfire, does that change him? Change his mind, change his heart? Make holiness lovely and dear to him? Can any forced obedience live in heaven or be safe here? Will it not break down, will not the natural heart break through? The apostle says, "the law was not made for a righteous man, but for the unrighteous." Why? Because the righteous is in harmony with the law, obeys it spontaneously and does not feel its restraints. As long as a man loves sin, he will find the service of God as a man finds the temperance pledge while the love of liquor is in him. It may restrain him for a while, in the sight of others; he will be sure to give way to such temptations as overrule his fears, and never be genial and happy in his constrained position. "Walk in the spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh," is, the Scripture-panacea. No, brethren, we cannot give it to ourselves, but God can give it to us—a love for Him and His holy ways—this conquers the heart, and with it, the man.

Oh! the burdened life, the struggles of the man that attempts to be merely moral, and neglects and refuses the spiritual power of Christ's Spirit, which alone gives freedom! and never rises to the liberty of the children of God, who, because children, count it their glory and privilege to live as such and be followers of God! Here is the point, and the only solution: We must have the heart for it, out of which are the issues of life. The heart, given to God; the heart, loving Christ: it must learn the lesson of purity and holiness and honesty and justice and truth. — Mere reformation is a legal burden and an all but certain failure! Regeneration, the birth of the soul into a higher and better and purer and heavenly life, carries with it the victory over sin, and the obedience of the faith.

It may be feeble, it may often be surprised, there may be states of lukewarmness, and sorrow over the momentary triumph of the adversary and our old nature. But hold on! keep on! press on! and the victory is certain. God and Christ are pledged for it!

Do it, do it at once, for ye know not what the morrow may bring forth.

Do it, as the craving of your better self, the living power of God in your soul.

Do it, in all things—"Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God!" "Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ!"



Book Review

Our Comfort in Dying

Sola Fide Publications, 346 pages, Paperback

by R. L. Dabney, Jonathan W. Peters, ed.

Review by Forrest L. Marion

Dabney "*was fearless and faithful in the discharge of every duty.... [He] was a Chaplain worth having.*"—Col. Robert E. Withers, Commander, 18th Virginia Infantry Regiment, 1861

In the current American dystopia, the life and ministry of an Old School Southern Presbyterian minister such as Robert Lewis Dabney (1820-1898) is likely to be dismissed out of hand by many – though it will be to their shame – regardless (or perhaps in part because) of his towering intellect, unshakable convictions grounded in the Bible and its principles, and prescience regarding ideological afflictions (among them feminism and socialism) that came to fruition in later generations.^[1] But for more mature students of history and culture who are willing to examine a man's life in the context of his own time and place and whose reliance was on the whole counsel of God, a newly released work – with the main title, *Our Comfort in Dying* – may be highly recommended as an addition to one's devotional and Southern history shelf at home. Comprehensively and beautifully edited by Jonathan W. Peters, including citations with enriching detail (such as excerpts from letters of soldiers who heard Dabney preach in their camps), the work makes available 20 of Dabney's sermons, all of them preached in Virginia, most of them between May 1861 and June 1863.

Almost 25 years ago, as Presbyterian pastor David Coffin labored on his doctoral dissertation, haunting the archives of historic Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, Coffin discovered a package "wrapped in a distinctive paper band." Upon examination, he counted 12 manuscript sermons of Dabney's. They apparently had been undisturbed since the 1880s or 1890s, by which time Dabney had completed the writing out of the sermon texts which he had first preached from an outline format by memory. Several were published in Presbyterian periodicals in the late 1800s, but others probably had not been heard or read in any form since Major R.L. Dabney's voice echoed through the verdant camps of the Virginia volunteer regiments which gathered to worship the "captain of the host of the LORD" (Joshua 5:14). On at least one occasion, Dr. Dabney preached to young Virginians – some of whom never again were to hear the words of life offered to them – within the sound of the enemy's artillery only a few miles away.

Realizing these sermons were of great value especially to students of Dabney's preaching, Union seminary digitized the 12 sermons and placed them on their website. (Does one dare consider what might have befallen these sermons had they been uncovered in the madness of 2021?) In

early 2020, Jonathan Peters, an administrative assistant at Harford Christian School, in Darlington, Maryland – and a costumed Gettysburg tour guide – encountered the army sermons while studying the life of Dabney. In the following months, Peters transcribed the 12 and included 6 of Dabney’s previously published sermons. Adding 2 more unpublished Dabney sermons from Union’s archives (both of those were pre-war), Peters compiled the 20 and edited them for publication, which now happily comes to fruition.

Dr. Dabney preached sermons 1 through 5 between 1851 and the close of 1860. In sermon 2, “Secular Prosperity,” Dabney observed, “The past does not furnish an instance, in which the spiritual health of the church has survived a season of high secular abundance.” A few minutes later, he added, “Dearly beloved: have not your steps in advance towards heaven been chiefly taken in the season of private affliction, on the sick bed, in the chamber of bereavement, beside the dying couch or the fresh graves of those you love?” The decade prior to the devastation of the 1860s witnessed economic prosperity for many, and the minister admonished the Richmond, Virginia, congregation, “. . . our present ease will be our ruin. . . . Can you reasonably flatter yourselves that you shall be an exception to all previous history?” His answer to the dangers of secular prosperity was found in missions: “We must burst forth on every side, into a magnificence of missionary enterprise, as marvelous as the growth of our commerce, arts, agriculture, and general prosperity.”

From early June through late August of 1861, Dabney took a leave of absence from Union Theological Seminary where he taught in order to minister mainly to the 18th Regiment, Virginia Volunteers, which included many Hampden-Sydney men. The first significant engagement of the war, the First Battle of Bull Run (or Battle of First Manassas), took place on July 21, 1861. It was there, following Federal advances throughout the morning, that the retreating Virginians rallied around the brigade of Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Jackson, known to the world thereafter as “Stonewall.”

In the very month of First Manassas, in sermon 9, “Immediate Decision” – which Dabney preached multiple times during the war – he asked, “If indecision is disastrous in temporal affairs, what must not be its mischief, in the more momentous concerns of the soul?” He warned his listeners, “The idol which divides your convictions with Jehovah, is not, indeed a pagan image. It is that universal object of the worship of unconverted men, this world, with its pleasures, riches, honors. For that to which you look for your prime happiness, which you seek with supreme devotion, and in which you rely as your chief good, is practically your God.” Near the end of this sermon, Dabney implored the soldiers, “O perishing man, cast out of thy heart thy self-will, thy besetting sins, and thy delays, before they sink thee in the burning lake.” Thanks to Peters’s editorial labors, readers learn that Jedediah Hotchkiss (1828-1899), a skilled topographical engineer who served under Jackson and later, directly under Robert E. Lee, heard this sermon by Dabney on two occasions, in 1862 and 1864. In later life, Hotchkiss was active in the Second Presbyterian Church of Staunton, Virginia.

Dabney preached sermon 11 in late August 1861 before the 27th Regiment of the Stonewall Brigade. In the sermon which gives this book its title, “Our Comfort in Dying,” Dabney alluded to the ninth chapter of the Book of Hebrews: “In the season of health and prosperity it will be wholesome for us to remember that it is appointed unto men once to die. . . . He alone of all the

universe has fathomed the deepest abysses of death, has explored all its caverns of despair, and has returned from them a conqueror.” He closed with words as needed today as they were amidst the internecine combat of the 1860s: “Call on Christ, then, today, in repentance and faith, in order that you may be entitled to call upon him in the hour of your extremity. Own him now as your Lord, that he may confess you then as his people.” At the end of the summer, Dabney debated whether to continue his chaplain service or return to teaching at Hampden-Sydney; for several reasons, including an outbreak of typhoid fever which had scattered the soldiers beyond his ability to visit them, he decided on the latter.

The following spring, Dabney acceded to the repeated, earnest invitations of Stonewall Jackson to come and serve as his “parson-adjutant” – officially he became Jackson’s chief of staff. In this capacity, Dabney served with Jackson between April and July 1862. On May 8, Jackson’s forces fought at McDowell, one of the engagements of his famed Valley Campaign. Four days later, on Monday, May 12 – the day prior was the Christian Sabbath, but the aftermath of the McDowell operation had precluded its observance – the general, who held the holy day in the highest regard, allowed his men half of the day as a rest near Franklin (now West Virginia) and invited Dr. Dabney to preach. In sermon 13, “Public Calamities Caused by Public Sins,” Dabney preached in the “verdant meadow of the South Branch, beside a cluster of haystacks.” Major General Jackson and his staff, and General Francis H. Smith, the superintendent of the Virginia Military Institute where Jackson taught before the war, attended. Dabney began with words that shed light on his views of the faithful gospel ministry, as edifying today as in 1862:

Men ask anxiously, “When will the war end?” I reply, when God has gained those purposes, which he proposes to himself in it. It is not we, nor our enemies, who began this war, or who can end it; but God. That it is his agency, is proved by this fact: that the struggle has notoriously been precipitated against the purposes and expectations of both parties. I shall then attempt to give an answer to this anxious question, from Sacred Scriptures. But do not fear that I propose to inflict upon you that nuisance, so justly hateful to all Christian souls, a political sermon. Far be it from me to make the sacred pulpit a partisan in any secular debate, or an advocate of any social plan or advantage. But the attempt will be made to apply God’s own truth to the explanation of his providences towards us. Were this oftener done, we should see more life and interest in the Sacred Scriptures, and should derive more profit from the lessons of our Father’s chastisements.

By July 1862, Dabney fell ill and was forced to take sick leave and return home. His sufferings from the “camp fever” continued, however, and he was forced to resign from his position on Jackson’s staff, which his commander reluctantly accepted. By the end of the year, Dabney’s health had been restored somewhat.

In sermons 17 and 18, Dabney preached on the occasion of the remembrance of a fallen compatriot. Offering correction to today’s tendency to pretend that death is something less grievous than what it is, in “The Christian Soldier” (December 14, 1862) he spoke to a gathering that mourned the loss of a friend of Dabney’s, the heroic Abram C. Carrington (Virginia Military Institute, Class of 1852), killed on the sixth day of the Seven Days’ Battles outside Richmond:

Death, and especially what men call a premature death, must ever be regarded by us as a natural evil.... The very instincts of man's animal nature abhor it, and his earthly affections shudder at the severance which it effects between them and their dear objects. So, the death of friends cannot but be a felt bereavement to survivors, be its circumstances what they may.

Six months later, in early June 1863 Dabney preached a commemorative sermon following the death of his friend and former commander, Stonewall Jackson, whose mortal wounding on May 2 at Chancellorsville marked the Confederacy's high tide. "Our dead hero is God's sermon to us," Dabney said. Faithful to his solemn charge, Dabney continued, "I stand here, as God's herald, in God's sanctuary, on his holy day, by his authority. My business is, not to praise any man, however beloved and bewailed, but only to unfold God's message through his life and death." In his sermon entitled, "True Courage," Dabney addressed several types of courage, one of which he said ". . . is the moral courage of him who fears God, and, for that reason, fears nothing else. . . . Jesus Christ is the divine pattern and fountain of heroism. Earth's true heroes are they who derive their courage from him." Could there be any message more desperately needed in today's culture than this?

Under God's providence, this book appears at a most opportune moment: statues are vandalized or hauled off, buildings renamed, and lies propagated by the one "who is pure in his own eyes" (Proverbs 30:12). R.L. Dabney is well known as the adjutant-chaplain of the famed Jackson; and he was Stonewall's earliest biographer. Exactly 50 years from Jackson's mortal wounding, on May 2, 1913, the *New York World* wrote, "A united nation can be proud that he was numbered among her sons."

But Jackson's name is badly maligned today according to CRT's divisive, pernicious poison. Thankfully, every week more Americans are awakening to the barbaric, dignity-depriving, and soul-destroying ideology of what some have rightly called "Critical Rac-ist Theory." (Such terms are *not* hyperbole: any ideology that seeks to destroy the foundation of civilization – the nuclear family – is, in fact, *barbaric*; one that views all persons either as oppressors or oppressed, is *dignity-depriving*; and the denying of individual responsibility for one's actions, is *soul-destroying*.) *Our Comfort in Dying* points its readers to much better things – true, honorable, right, and pure, as the Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians (4:8).

Bottom line: if the book burners come a'knocking at your door – for the sake of government efficiency, perhaps the vaccine checkers can pull double duty here! – this little gem of truth, high courage, and authentic manliness should be one of those works you have tucked safely behind a panel or under a floorboard, comprising part of what noted journalist and author Rod Dreher's *Live Not By Lies* refers to as one's "small [fortress] of memory" in an era of government-led "forced forgetting." You'll be glad you did.

[1] For one example, see Dabney's "The Public Preaching of Women," *The Southern Presbyterian Review*, Oct. 1879. Dabney began as follows: "In this day innovations march with rapid strides. The fantastic suggestion of yesterday, entertained only by a few fanatics, and then only mentioned by the sober to be ridiculed, is to-day the audacious reform, and will be to-morrow the recognized usage. Novelties are so numerous and so wild and rash, that in even

conservative minds the sensibility of wonder is exhausted and the instinct of righteous resistance fatigued.”

Forrest L. Marion

Forrest L. Marion graduated from the Virginia Military Institute with a BS degree in civil engineering. He earned an MA in military history from the University of Alabama and a doctorate in American history from the University of Tennessee. Since 1998, Dr. Marion has served as a staff historian and oral historian at the Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell AFB, Alabama. Commissioned in 1980, he retired from the U.S. Air Force Reserve in 2010.



We must remember who we are and what we must be about:
The SCV Challenge by Lt. Gen. S. D. Lee

To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we will commit the vindication of the cause for which we fought. To your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles which he loved and which you love also, and those ideals which made him glorious and which you also cherish.

Chaplain's Handbook

Sesquicentennial Edition
Sons of Confederate Veterans

This is an enlarged Sesquicentennial Edition of the *Chaplain's Handbook*. It is enlarged from 131 pages to 165 pages. A chapter has been added on the topic, *SCV Chaplains Should be Gentlemen*; there has also been added a third burial service, *The Order for the Burial of the Dead of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Confederate States of America*; a chapter on *Praying in Public* has been added; and a chapter on *Prayer Suggestions for Public Use*. All the other chapters remain the same.

Hopefully, those using the handbook will find it even more useful than before. There is the same cloth cover, acid free paper for longevity, sewn signatures, etc.

The retail price is \$14, which is very low for a hardback quality publication. Contact biblicalandsouthernstudies.com for a copy.