Pillars of the Truth

Article #4

*The Church Must Be Kept Militant!*

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This spirit of pacificism is taking the fight out of the church. But conflict between truth and error is unending. Victory does not come by truce. God’s terms are unconditional sur­render. A questionnaire and survey, to deter­mine what kind of writing and preaching a *brotherhood* wants, bear on the face of them a total lack of knowledge of the spirit and ge­nius of the Gospel, or else a gross disregard for it on the part of the promoters. To receive such a thing is an insult to a Gospel preach­er and its circulation in the name of Gospel preaching and writing is a travesty on the spirit of Christ, Peter and John, Stephen and Paul.

The church grew when the fight was waged and the battles raged. When the let-up came in the fight, the let-down came in the church. It is said that the denominations do not fight any more. That is because the church has quit fighting and they have nothing to fight. If Gospel preachers will fight now as Gospel preachers fought then, the denominations will fight now as they fought then and truth will triumph now as it triumphed then. Shall we yield to the line of least resistance, or shall we challenge error in its strongholds?

Such veterans as B. C. Goodpasture and Foy E. Wallace, Jr., each who served in per­ilous times as editors of the *Gospel Advocate*, met the foe unflinchingly—we enjoy such blessings as the church affords today because of such soldiers. Basking in the sunlight of Alexander Campbell, David Lipscomb, R. L. Whiteside, C. R. Nichol, et al, buoys us and commands our generation to reach the heights of responsibility in our time even as those veterans, now gone to their reward, met the foe.

Time marches on—men must step forward in dutifulness. Error affecting the church the past Century has been on isolated issues or questions that could not erase the non-de­nominational character of the church—only pose local difficulties, at worst, split congre­gations mercilessly in publication of unbelief so negating our influence on the world. Er­ror facing today’s church is of such magnitude that if it is not met and defeated the entire church will be swallowed up in sectarianism. The issue is not a single one—liberalism will erode every distinctive quality that makes us the New Testament church of Christ and will give us the appearance of being just one more of an overcrowded world of denominations! Losing that distinctiveness disqualifies us for existence. If we are not the church we have no license to be.

God’s cause must neither be diminished nor destroyed by the dilatory spirit of weak men—strength must lay hold in confident ac­tion for we are the men of this generation, day, and hour. May we press forward as men of God attending sheep rather than lambs. “Ye shall henceforth return no more that way” (Deu. 17:16).