

STRAIGHTWAY

"And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him" [Mark 1:18].

CHRISTIAN PURITIES FELLOWSHIP

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Bob Jones University, Greenville, South Carolina (July 5-8, 1999)
by **Dr. O. Talmadge Spence, Founder & President**
Foundations Bible College

By the request of a number of telephone calls and correspondences to the editor of Straightway, the following article is the exact message written by Dr. O. Talmadge Spence for the panel. It was read by his son, Dr. H. T. Spence, in his father's absence because of a voice problem of recent months. We are presenting it in this issue by those requests.

July 7, Wednesday Afternoon,
1:30 PM - Panel: "Pastors/
Preachers: Facing the Future
Trends"

My father, Dr. O. Talmadge Spence, wanted me to preface his written presentation for this Congress with his regrets of being absent. Although he is

blessed with unusually good health, he is presently suffering from a throat condition that hinders him from public speaking. He requests your prayers for a complete recovery. Also, as his son, I welcome the opportunity of filling in for him. His remarks are as follows:

The appearance of the human happenings in history may be understood in only a few ways: one, history tends to be a series of driftings as it did for over sixteen hundred years after Adam; or, two, history may appear to man through a catastrophe as it did between the days of Noah and the Tower of Babel; or three,

history may appear to man as only a trend or turning point in human affairs. However, behind all human history stands our sovereign Lord in complete control, directing all things.

It is the "trends," however, the smaller tendencies in history, which deceive mankind the most. I quickly outline five major trends which we, as Fundamentalists, must face around the world in our time.

First, we must remember that historic Fundamentalism began about one hundred years ago. It was a magnificent hour. Men took a stand with such conviction that they were either defrocked by their denomination and seminary, or they made a voluntary exodus of separation for the fundamentals of the Bible. In those same days, men of different denominations laid aside the denominational agenda and sought an agenda from God. In a personal study I made of only 218 early Fundamentalists, 91 were Baptists; 59 were Presbyterians; 20, Non-denominational; 15, Metho-

dists; 11, Congregationalists; 17, Brethren; 6, Anglicans; 4, Lutherans; 3, Salvation Army; and 2, Missionary Alliance.

There is a trend now, and it is not evil, that after paying the price of being successful in church planting, building, and programs, to think of Fundamentalism only in a denominational context. We must be sure, at this point in our history, that we do not view Fundamentalism as denominationalism. The denominational trend is dangerous for our future as a pattern to follow in these ecumenical times when a host of heresies has permeated the entire protestant system. There also remains the Body of Christ around the world. This is said to strengthen the need of fundamentalists.

Bob Jones University, a place where I, as a freshman student, was saved by the grace of God, was founded with a precious "interdenominational" identity, and it has been a great leader in our cause. Students came from a number of denominations and then became fundamentalists. I was one of them.

The fellowships between John Wesley, George Whitefield, and Jonathan Edwards would be an example of this spirit in the Body of Christ. There is a great need of our returning to that first spirit in Fundamentalism. This trend needs to return to us in full force as it was when the battle was so thick we needed the fellowship and strength of every possible member of the Body of Christ to fight the war.

STRAIGHTWAY

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Will Fundamentalism die because of the lack of warriors. Our testimony of this spirit could restrain confusion among some denominations that we are a cult. This spirit keeps the "hyper" position of theological systems from rising up and getting away from the balanced fundamentals of the infallible, inspired, and inerrant Word of God.

Second, there is already a definite trend to soften the precious Biblical teaching of "separation." This is appearing in several ways. The standards in many Christian schools are completely gone. Often this has been the result of parents. Of course, there have been some among us who have changed from an earlier position in musical standards. There is no united definition among us of what is to be our scriptural and separatist position concerning music as a testimony in our contemporary world. Every fundamentalist must be involved in the musical catastrophe: music is too tragedian in our time for silence or compromise. There has been no direct action taken by any Congress in the matter of music as far as a principle to follow for fundamentalists. Many at the grassroots are actually floundering in the sea of a contemporary Christian music. Still others no longer care for the burden of choice in the matter because we have neglected a position on music by the Congresses and they know not what to do. The breakdown has now appeared on both sides of the Atlantic concerning music in our fellowship. We seem to be getting further and

further away in our testimony for the noble practice and meaning of music. Performance and the chordality-arrangement of the music itself has often overwhelmed the congregation in simple worship with music. We must not follow certain composers, arrangers, and personalities in Christian music who are drunkards or on drugs, or those who fellowship the apostasy. We pray for a return to the classical and traditional hymns of our English and American musical heritage without the modern attachments, extensions, arrangements, and fashions of this art form. We must not change the theme and chord-progression of our historical hymns. It is unethical to change the composer's song. Brethren, we should choose musicians like we do preachers.

The third trend is most encouraging to us. There is the trend among a considerable number, we believe, to keep faith and spirit with the men of the past who went before us, who are now our best examples. Some of those men still live among us; a number have already gone to heaven. But while they lived with us we imbibed their ministries, their hopes, their messages, their love. Fundamentalism is the most recent remnant movement God has chosen for our time. We must respect its historical place in all of church history. History, today, is a fragile entity everywhere. Men are rewriting history—or trying to—to suit their own modern purpose. We must not rewrite Fundamentalism to suit our own changes and/or presuppositions. Rather, we must

plead for its revival and survival today. This will identify us with former remnants who stood tall and true for the Word of God in their time when trends and tangents were adverse to the ways of God. We must remember them: the Pilgrims and the Puritans, against the Church of England; the Reformers, against Rome; the Revivalists, against lukewarmness and backsliding of the church; and the pious divines who were against mere scholarship without holy living and holy dying. Let us not forget their obedience to Christ in all.

The fourth trend concerns a direct evangelism of the lost into the teaching and training of young people to fill the ranks as Fundamentalists. This is our greatest challenge. The young men among us today have not been in the battle yet. They were only born when we were in the battle. We do not expect them to be fully aware of the war of the past, but we must teach them to use the sling and the bow. The battle before us now is greater than the battle behind us, and the artistry of error increases. We must train the young to be both militant against the apostasy and magnificent for the Lord. There still remains in our generation the apostasy of neo-orthodoxy, neo-pentecostals, the charismatics, the neo-evangelicals, cults, as well as the ecumenical movement in its larger proliferation. There is no indication that this will change in the immediate future unless God uses us. The push is on: (quote) "return all protestants back to Rome" (unquote). Dr. Billy Graham

has gone into still deeper excursions with his ecumenical movement. When he dies, it will still live. He has fallen in love with his generation. We have carefully watched this development in him since the 1950s. The Promise Keepers are typical of fellowships with Romanism. The Charismatics continue to follow their own extant "revelations" and "voices," in their famine of the hearing of the Word of God.

The fifth and final trend is already standing in the wings of the modern stage of our world. It is the fact that we are indeed nearing a global world. Everywhere in the Holy Scriptures we are warned of the Empires – that they are empowered by both antichrist personalities and false prophets. Many things are already in place – international legal channels, monetary money systems, and political compromises which edge us on to the destruction of the nations. In reaction to this, we must maintain our Biblical view of national government as God ordained it in total contrast against the empires. We need to respect and preserve love for God, home, and country, with especial emphasis upon the distinctive culture, custom, and Christianity of the unique nations of earth. America has had such a past; Northern Ireland has one; England has had one; and Europe and Germany have lost one. This return to national government must be brought about in a pluralistic society announcing to all mankind that God so loved the world, and Christ so loved the Church.

In conclusion, let no one of us take these trends in our time lightly. Let no one think of these trends to stir controversy or trouble among ourselves. I have faithfully loved all six Congresses and our leaders since 1976. I cannot measure the blessing it has been of knowing you in such a testimony

of our time during a universal apostasy. God has been very gracious to me in this since I quit being a puritan in an apostate system and became a pilgrim as a fundamentalist. I want to die with these duties and delights.

Thank you. O. Talmadge Spence



The Lord's Will

Much has already been said and written about *The Lord's Will* in all of the Christian sections of literature. It is magnified in the devotional materials of Christianity; we are alerted to the subject back in the time of the early Christian Fathers; and, sermon upon sermon has addressed this hope through every possible door of approach.

Undoubtedly, the only people on the face of the earth who really know the will of God are those who have come into union and communion with God through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Every Generation

In every generation this has been a priority need for all of God's people and especially those called to the ministry of the Gospel. Man has two capacities: he can know the past by the reading of the writings of history or by the memory of his individual human experience. The second capacity marks with emphasis the present tense while the individual is going through each experience. These two human capacities also speak of the will of God in more of a past tense.

The future tense is the elusive tense as far as man's actually knowing what will happen. The Bible, of course, through its own history and prophecy, brings the will of God to the peoples of earth with a very sharp focus. The Bible reveals certain principles which guide the outcome of sinners and saints—unbelievers and believers. The prophecies of Abraham upon his sons; the prophecies of Isaac upon his children; and even more so, Jacob's prophecies upon his twelve sons—all consort to huge revelations of the way and will of God involving Israel—the Jews—for the future. Daniel commences his prophecies in his image of the empires of the world and yet speaks about their future destiny—both their successes and their downfalls. In the Book of Revelation, as given to John, we see from the present

priority in each of our lives as knowing, commencing, continuing, and finishing *The Lord's Will*.

If we do not know His will today, let us begin today to know it and continue to do it to the very end through all of our tomorrows.

The Noble and Personal Will of God

We must never isolate the will of God from a noble and personal relationship with the Lord Jesus. Every Christian, after regeneration, must consider the doctrine of sanctification and its fruit of personal and ecclesiastical separation. The first deals with the individual; the second deals with his generation – the Age. Ecclesiastical separation must follow: the apostate and the apostasy must be identified, in spite of the fact we cannot build on what is wrong with our generation but rather with what is right and true. However, the true reveals the wrong. Scriptural separation must be practiced to restrain iniquity.

The Protections of God

This treatise must be resolved around the protections that God, Himself, has for His people in *The Lord's Will*. Regarding our lives, born in the spring season with our finale in harvest, we must be able to rightfully say, "God kept me all the way." Our prime resolve lies in the truth that we have laid all our pride and works down; we stand in grace alone! Therefore, it is necessary that God have certain protections for all who follow Him and live and labor and love in His will. We are not alone in our search to know and do and finish His will. The Word of God is our protection and support throughout life.

In my own lifetime as a Christian, I have kept a record of about two hundred passages from the Bible that I believe the Lord gave me across some fifty-two years in the diverging avenues in which I have served Him. They all were received at particular times in which I did not desire to do my own will. I had thought to share some of them with the reader but was then restrained, believing that the subjectivity of my testimony might get in the way of the greater hope of teaching the ways of the leadership of God through His Word and the Holy Spirit. Along with the good providential circumstances, He leads our lives in harmony with His Word. It may be yet that in an appropriate time, in a different purpose, those scriptures may be forthcoming as a testimony to others.

The Four-Panel Vision of Life

In my book, *Charismatism: Awakening or Apostasy?*, I presented "The

tense of certain churches in John's day, as well as from our study of the huge declaration of "The Day of the Lord" in the Old Testament, that God gave His greatest revelation of His will involving multitudes for the last days. In this we see great detail even of the order of certain events which will come to past.

For Every Individual

However, the Biblical revelation of the sovereign will of God through history is not one and the same with the individual's discernment of the will of God for the peoples of the past and the present, and on through the end of time.

Therefore, because of this need of the consciousness of the individual will of God's people, we advance the purpose of this treatise—*The Lord's Will* for the individual.

After the New Testament was completed there came into early church history the immediate acknowledgment of two great priorities: the Text and the Interpreted Text. It must be remembered, the Text was finalized into sixty-six individual books in the Canon. However, specifically speaking, the Text had not been interpreted. Of course, there are incidents within the Word of God that as the Text was being written certain interpretations, locally, became a part of the Text. However, and primarily, the Text was given to the future for those who would come and preach, teach, proclaim, and give final interpretation of the Text. We must acknowledge this distinctive between the Text and the Interpreted Text. God left His Word for the Body of Christ, as deposited in the individual will of God for certain individuals, to extend the clear interpretation of the Text—the Bible—down through church history.

The Jerusalem Principle of the Text would finally be extended through the Antioch Principle—the Apostleship of the Lord Jesus, the Twelve Apostles, and then on out through the Apostolic Message in God-chosen apostolic preachers and teachers. They would fill the future days in the will of God, preparing the hearers with evangelism for the lost and revivalism for the saved, as well as preparing the Bride of Christ for the end of the age.

The Unique Twelve

The uniqueness of not only the Twelve Tribes of Israel but also the Twelve Apostles of Jesus would give way to the spill-out of the Apostolic Ministry. Romanism perverted this will of God for church history and invented Apostolic Succession in spite of the fact that the Body of Christ is one, equal in each part, with each member distinct

in gifts and callings. None of the individual callings, however, indicates that any member of the Body, within himself or herself, is above another. It is true, however, each equal member of the Body is called and led with an authority in the seven offices from deacon to “bishop,” pastor, elder, or other. None of these seven offices allows a caste system to exist of any kind of institutional episcopacy. Therefore, there is no title of any person or ministry which may be construed to be “pope,” “priest,” with special powers or pieties above that to which any and every redeemed Christian has access or authority. All are unique, but there must be no eccentric or exceptional personality involved. Nothing greater could be said of any Apostle of the Lord Jesus, within himself, than that he is a redeemed child of God. Jesus settled this in his observations and responses to the Twelve when they spoke of being “greater” in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus persisted that being the last or the least could make one the first in heaven. The will of God is the will of God to each individual so that the Body of Christ may do the will of God.

The general continuance of the general will of God for the church would follow, in principle, until the Lord Jesus Christ would come and reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords—in the Millennium. The Throne upon which Jesus would sit would not be a throne which could or would be shared with any other. That was all settled when the Word of God revealed that all men and any man would be saved by grace through faith alone.

Knowing the Lord’s Will

There are many human concepts concerning the knowing of the will of God for a person. There is the concept of Elihu, in the days of Job, of David, and of Paul, in a better time. We must study these concepts and profit by those who followed the Biblical truth of knowing the will of God.

Our Puritan Fathers gained much concerning the will of God in their coming, by faith, to the new world—to New England. The Old England had lost the will of God in the Biblical sense for its people. The Puritans were not perfect, but they were exceedingly right in many Biblical truths and leadings from God. They were indeed unique.

The prerogatives of the will of God are taught in the Holy Scriptures. No one can really know the will of God, personally, without the truth of regeneration by the grace of God and access to the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. Never have there been such days as we live in at this point of history. We would do well to set the first

Four Panels of the Whole Vision Needed in a Generation for Christ.” This was taken from several Old Testament presentations: first, the fourfold vision of a generation (Proverbs 30:11-14); and, in the individual values of one being placed in proper estimations before God of a full life (Leviticus 27:1-8). These “estimations” of the individuals were as follows: (1) 1 month-5 years; (2) 5-20 years old; (3) 20-60 years old; and (4) age 60 and above. These four distinctives and evaluations were identified as: The Potential Vision of life in a child; The Preparing Vision in the life of a young person; The Prime Vision in the life of the most mature years; and The Past Vision of life in the elderly years.

The value of these estimations indicates what God had on His mind in the potential, preparation, prime purposes of His will for the whole life unto the elderly years. Therefore, the will of God may commence very early in His leadings even if and when the child may not be fully aware of this blessing from God. Of course, in the teenage years to twenty years old, the child now, as a Christian, could begin to see the guiding purposes of God’s good providences and proceed with a consciousness voluntarily. The prime period of life, however, must be brought about by the individual’s full consciousness and preparation to that end.

We could, therefore, identify a lifetime in *The Lord’s Will* for the entire lifetime of a person with the following summary:

The Potential Will of God in a Child
The Preparing Will of God in a Young Person
The Prime Will of God in the Adult Years
The Past Will of God Finished in the Aged Christian

Thus begins the will of God in a life: to come to know His will; to begin to do His will; to continue to do His will; and, to finish the will of God through all the years.

*This is the introductory chapter of the book *The Lord's Will* by Dr. Spence. The entire book may be purchased at \$6.95 plus postage.*

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August 23rd, Monday - 8:00 AM
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August 24th, Tuesday - 5:00 PM
Dormitory Students Arrival
"Buffet, Acquaintance"

August 25th - 8:00 AM
Worship and Information
Registration 12:30 PM
by
Academic Dean

Foundations Christian Academy, after morning worship
7:00 PM - Evening Worship

August 26th, Thursday
Half-Classes begin for College

August 27th, Friday
Full College Sessions
Fall Semester Ends: December 18th

"The Human Presupposition"

If we were to select six sons from any one family of the human race and give to them the very same teacher for their twelve years of public education, we would see individuality anyway. Let us suppose that Technology, Science, Religion, and Art would be the total curriculum for their years. For the sake of our illustration we will designate this entire education as **TSRA**. This represents the content of all they will have learned.

These sons, at the end of their twelve years of academic achievement, will have inevitably taken the very same instruction and resolved it in their minds differently. This is because there is a fifth inward reality called "a presupposition." This will influence them the rest of their lives with any conclusion they may make for life. This presupposition lies deep within the heart of every man and woman and acts as a pair of looking glasses through which they will read all things and use their ears to hear all things.

One son will spell life's conclusion of **TSRA** just like that—**Tsra**, a meaningless word without a dictionary definition. His life will be lived that way—meaningless.

A second son, with a different presupposition, may spell life's conclusion of **TSRA** as—**Rats**. His life will be a great tragedy for himself and others.

A third son may spell life's conclusion of study input as **Tars**—and be a utilitarian person, bringing practical assistance to the human race.

A fourth son may spell his life's meaning as **Arts**—and lend beauty and aesthetics to the lives of others.

A fifth son may conclude life's meaning as **Star**—and give to the world a vision of hope or even God.

A sixth son may see that life's meaning must also include a knowledge outside the academic pursuits of study and bring in a new word to his epistemology—**Bible**. He, by including the Holy Scriptures, would gain the presupposition of **BARTS**—a German word rooted in the meaning of "strong." He will become a Christian.

Therefore, it is not the academic knowledge, alone, that tells the character of the whole life; it is what the presupposition of the heart is that determines what we really believe in after all.

The Bible makes this truth clear: **Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life** (Proverbs 4:23); **...for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh** (Matthew 12:34b).