

STRAIGHTWAY

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

CHRISTIAN PURITIES FELLOWSHIP

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"Fundamentalism: The Next Generation"

By Dr. H. T. Spence, President

I write this article in my father's home as he is in the final, providential throes of Lou Gehrig's disease. He has been part of a generation that is now quickly passing off the scene of the battlefield. Although he has just turned seventy-four years old, my own age of fifty-one places me in an awkward time frame as one caught between two generations found in Fundamentalism. I am certainly younger than my father's generation but older than those in their thirties and early forties, who are taking hold of leadership in Fundamental-legacy ministries. There are a few like myself whom God seems to have appointed for their birth in a time slot of the overlapping of two generations. I have been close enough to the older generation to view their spiritual intimacy with God in

the battle while the generation just behind me have only known the older generation by association. Perhaps I, and those who find themselves in the same time-frame generation as my own, will be honorably used of God to keep the voice and heart memory alive of the passing generation to the next generation. Fundamentalism is now entering its fourth generation. The fourth generation in Church history has often been the generation to finalize the apostasy of a movement or organization. The first generation has been viewed as the Bible-based generation; the second generation tends towards neutrality; the third generation has strong tendencies towards compromise; and the fourth generation becomes the generation to produce the movement's apostasy.

This does not mean that every individual within that particular generation will be characterized by its master principle, but the generation itself will be so.

God's Gift of Men To The Body of Christ

In Psalm 48:12 and 13 we read,

Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.

Within the stream of the history of the redeemed, there are a number of individuals who have been divinely appointed of God to be custodians and stewards of the Gospel truth in a specific way. They can be viewed in this passage of Scripture as the *towers*, the *bulwarks*, and the *palaces*. The towers are symbolic of the watchman, or the prophets. The bulwarks are symbolic of Zion's reformers and defenders of the Faith. The palaces are symbolic of those uniquely known in history for their unusual

piety with God, the human dwellings of God. This trilogy that marks Zion represents those lives, hearts, affections, energies that would be found in the valiant men surrounding the bed of their Solomon (Song of Solomon 3:7).

When Christ died, arose, and ascended to the right hand of the Father (Acts 2:33), God gave Him the gift of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit that would be tokens of grace for His Son's Body on earth. Christ then turned and poured forth that gift of the Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father, on the Day of Pentecost and gave gifts unto His Body on earth (see Psalm 68:18a, and Ephesians 4:8). In the New Testament these gifts are presented in five different contexts. We are adamantly opposed to the Charismatic concept of these gifts and believe they use the wrong dictionary for their definitions of the gifts. But there is a Scriptural view and we must not deny it. Martin Luther, the great Reformer, spoke of this in his worthy anthem "A Mighty Fortress," in the phrase, "The Spirit and the gifts are ours through Him Who with us sideth."

Ephesians 4 is one of the contexts dealing with the gifts. It is here that we carefully note the gifts of the Spirit to be different than the other contexts in that here the gifts are human beings, gifted men of the Holy Spirit, who have a measure of faith and grace given to them to lead and discern in the Body of Christ for their generation. These are prime vision men who stand for Christ giving meat in due

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season to the household of faith, giving discernment, and giving the "burden of the word of the Lord" for their generation.

How often our souls are inspired in reading of these appointed "gifts" in their exploits for God against the enemies that assaulted the Zion of their day. Some died with the sword in their hand as martyrs, while others lived out their natural life not compromising the legacy given to them. They fought their Goliaths down in Ephes-dammim ("the border of bloods," I Samuel 17:1). But there will come a day in the ongoing kingdom of God when an Aaron will die on the mount, when Moses the servant of God will be taken, when David is gathered to be with his fathers, when Elijah is taken in a chariot of horses, when Paul is beheaded, when Luther dies, and when Wesley and Whitefield yield up the ghost. A next generation will then be pressed by providence to step forward to take their place in divinely appointed leadership such as Joshua, Solomon, Elisha, and Timothy.

The "World" of My Generation

There are two Greek words in the New Testament that demand our understanding in the light of a given generation.

The first word is *kosmos* which has two meanings, and the specific meaning is dependent upon its context. The literal translation of the word is "an adornment," for God brought *kosmos* out of chaos in Genesis 1:2-3. In one context the word means "the world of

humanity," as is in John 3:16. Yet in another context it means "the world system." In this second context the *kosmos* is that singular system which has ever been mutating since the Fall of man; it is the world of men who are living alienated and apart from God. This translation is seen in the phrase "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (I John 5:19b). The one-world system is ever flowing from one generation to the next; each generation is linked with the past generations. The world system *cannot* be saved; only souls may be saved out of it.

But this ever-flowing, singular world system is to be viewed in increments. This observation is seen in the second Greek word for "world," the word *aion* or "age." R. C. Trench, the Greek scholar of the 19th century, gives a classic definition of this Greek word:

It is "all that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, and aspirations at any time current in the world, which it may be impossible to seize and accurately define, being the moral or immoral atmosphere which at any given moment we inhale and inevitably exhale."

Every age has its own unique characteristics of the world system. The Scriptures give the following: "the god of this world (*aion*-age)" (II Corinthians 4:4); "the care of this world" (Matthew 13:22); "the wisdom of this world" (I

Corinthians 2:6); "the rulers of the darkness of this world" (Ephesians 6:12); "the princes of this world" (I Corinthians 2:8); and, "the children of this world" (Luke 16:8). Before Christ found us, we walked according to the course of this world or the age of this world system. But, thank God, we are no longer of this world system, even as Christ was not of this world system.

But the world system mutates; it is never at a standstill. It is continually begetting deeper mysteries of iniquity. It is flowing to a climax which will be realized when a man will come forth from the system, the Antichrist. He will be the embodiment or the incarnation of the system; he will be the man of sin or sin's man.

Every age takes the system deeper, with the next age inheriting the characteristics of the previous age and adding to it. This is then passed on as the philosophical legacy to the next generation. In I Corinthians 10:11 we read, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world (ages) are come." The Endtime will be the apex of every age rolled up into one. Christ Himself spoke of the time of His coming as being a combination of several ages: "As it was in the days of Noah," and "as it was in the days of Lot."

The Battle Continues

"Moreover the Philistines had yet war again with Israel." Thus are the words recorded in II Samuel

21:15. A number of years before this incident David as a youth had killed the giant Goliath (I Samuel 17). The concept of Giants in the Bible can be taken back to the Rephaim, a numerous race inhabiting the region east of Jordan and various parts in the southern Palestine. But in David's time only a few of this line remained and these were found among the Philistines. David slew *the* giant, but this giant was the father and founder of a class or family remarkable for their strength and stature. David truly was a "gift" from God to Israel; and, we read in I Chronicles 12 there were others whom God appointed as gifts to aid David during his flight from Saul. These men later became outstanding warriors in David's army with talented abilities for battle. The roll could be called of such men of our immediate past who were a "light of Israel." They faced the enemy of their day in such heretical contexts as the Modernists, the Liberals, Neo-Orthodox, the Social Gospel, and even the early days of Neo-Evangelicalism and Neo-Fundamentalism. But just as there was an offspring of Goliath, who came in later years seeking occasion to destroy David (now a much older man, II Samuel 21:15-22), there are offspring of the giants in the above listing that are coming. They are a little different than their father. But they all seem to have the same glory — glory in their strength, their bigness, their power, and in their numbers.

As the world system mutates, the next generation will have

somewhat of a different foe, though it will be of the same family father, Satan. Humanism, the father of all philosophies of man, has continued its seed since the Garden-of-Eden temptation. In the earlier days we read of the seed in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. In the days of the Greeks we read of the Naturalists, the Pluralists, the Sophists, and the Metaphysicists. Then came the Patristic period of Neo-Platonism and Conceptualism. The Enlightenment brought the French Moralists, the Utopians, and Secular Rationalists. British Empiricism brought the writings of John Locke and Berkeley. Then came Kant, Hegel, Feuerback, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Comte, James, and Dewey.

But the enemy continues to be born with new strains in its genetic apostasy. The enemy arises in all the compartments of life such as religion, philosophy, art, music, architecture, designer clothing, education, government, social sciences, history, science, medicine, ethics, and the list continues. Yes, sin and its system are ever mutating. When one enemy is defeated another looms on the horizon. By the time the books have been printed to reveal the subtle purpose of one error or heresy, another one is standing in the wings of the arena to take its place. Each becomes a little more finely tuned in artistic deception than the previous one.

The Final Conflict

How often in war the best and more powerful weapons or men are saved for the final conflict. It is

evident that this will be true in the future. It is this generation that will be facing the most artistic and most crucial battle of all, the conflict just before the Rapture of the saints. The final enemies, yet to come, will have learned well from their diabolical forefathers. Such enemies will be as their father: "men of war from their youth" (I Samuel 17:33c). They will come in power, might, money, prestige, religion, and education. Even their sheep's clothing will look more like the real thing. They will *seem* to have power with God and the obvious evidence of being successful. In Genesis 6 a principle is given concerning the offspring of giants. Such is conceived and birthed when sons of God marry the daughters of men, or spiritually, when godliness is wedded with godlessness. Dear reader, there is coming a seasonal time before the Rapture when a final play of deception will become evident, and only the elect will make it through!

We must earnestly pray for the next generation of prime vision leaders. We must not do what politicians do: to manipulate everything to look all right for us in the present generation, not caring what the successor will have to face because of our failures. Preachers of the "world system" only care about getting the shout for the immediate or to get through a worship service with whatever it takes. Such an approach sees only the existential moment of the present, not caring how the Church is living in its carnalities and sins. They live for the present, believing the future will take care of itself.

A principle is evident in history: the future generation's beginning is only as strong as its predecessor's conclusion. If we fail and compromise, the next generation will be two-fold in its compromise. If we do not stand for truth in the strength that we should, the next generation will have less of a stand. If biblical separation is waning with us, it will be even more so in the future. If we refuse to deal with problems and failures in our lives and in God's camp, then the next generation will do less. If the present generation's music leans toward the sounds of the contemporary the next generation will assimilate those sounds with greater tenacity.

Today we are witnessing the so-called sons of Goliath coming into their prime. We have seen Oral Roberts and his son, Robert Schuller and his son, Pat Robertson and his son, Billy Graham and his son, etc. Who is being groomed in the delusion of Jerry Falwell, James Dobson, Charles Stanley, etc.? Unless God raises up some men, who as Issachar have an understanding of the times and to know what Israel ought to do (I Chronicles 12:32), Fundamentalism will be severely crippled and possibly laid aside as an instrument and weapon of righteousness in the hand of God.

The Training of the Next Generation

Will our young men be untrained, or even worse, mistrained for their appointed season on the battlefield? There is a shift coming in our generation in the concept of

"training" that should cause alarm. It is a shift to psychology, to counseling, to administration, to soul-winning alone, and to "practical" training. Such pursuits do not ready the heart, the mind, and the life to meet what must be faced. The sons of Goliath are strong and knowledgeable; they know the pulse of the times and of the people. One such pulse is the Charismatic principle which has permeated every aspect of Neo-Christianity; it is going to be the power backing Rome in the coming world church. Do we know them? Do we know how they think and the existential principle upon which they are founded? Do we see the powerful influence of their music infiltrating our churches through dissonance, modern chordality, and contemporary stylings? Only those who are trained to be strong in the Truth are going to make it through their generation; the rest will be sucked into the vortex of the contemporary's assimilation. It is going to take more than a bag of jokes for pulpit preaching; more than shallow music to teach the people musically, and more than administrative ability to keep the House of God. It is going to take every fiber of our being consumed by the power of God to make it through this artistically deceptive age!

Crucial Needs For God's Men of the Next Generation

What is needed in the lives of God-appointed men to give evidence of their being a gift to the Body of Christ for a generation? Perhaps the following list could be appropriately given.

- (1) Such an individual must know he is saved, but he must also pray for a life of consecration in a burnt-offering life.
- (2) Such an individual must be consumed in his affections for Christ.
- (3) Such an individual must see and believe that biblical separation is the guardian principle of the heart and private life. Such a principle was to be the keeping of Samson and wherein laid his strength.
- (4) Such an individual must pray for deliverance from secret thoughts and affections of lusts, pornography, and the powers of fornication in imagination.
- (5) Such an individual must be willing to count the cost for godliness, for it will not come easy or naturally.
- (6) Such an individual must study, not just for sermon material, but to meet his generation and its deceptions. Homiletics is fine, but one will need the tools of the biblical languages, philosophy, history, and music philosophy in order to know his generation in the light of God's Word.
- (7) Such an individual must fully believe that the Bible is the only infallible source of Truth and it is the Supreme authority for all things. It must be understood that sin mutates, but Truth does not; Truth is consummated! However, God does provide within His Word specific truths for each generation that other generations may not have seen.
- (8) Such an individual must not rest on the belief that the only enemies we face are Modernism, Liberalism, and Romanism. For there are other enemies that our forefathers did not face that this generation must be prepared to meet.
- (9) Such an individual must not let the so-called "Christian" counseling take the place of preaching. The latter is the singular method that Scripture has ordained by heaven for the Christian.
- (10) Such an individual must not allow the Charismatic principle of music to influence his church. Do not be duped into believing that God will accept praise in the place of godly living and a separated life. It must also be acknowledged that the psalms are filled with militancy as well as praise. The Church's music must have its proper diet of didactic militancy commingled with the magnificence of Christ.
- (11) Such an individual must pray that God will give him a double portion of the Spirit that our forefathers had. The prime vision will demand a greater empowering of the Spirit of God because the age will be deeper in its deception of the apostasy.
- (12) Such an individual must pray for revival! There seems to be no evidence that another national revival will come (with the exception of the

Scripturally predicted revival to Israel in the Tribulation Period). But we must pray that our individual lives and our churches will have revival, and we must live in revival as we anticipate the coming of the Lord in the Rapture. Preach it and pray for it.

Conclusion

We are now witnessing a two-fold reality among us at Fundamentalists. First, the Elijahs are being taken by God to heaven (II Kings 2:6-14) and second, there are other mentors that are leaving the prime vision and entering the past vision (II Samuel 21:15-17). In the first context Elisha stepped forward and picked up the mantle. In the second context Abishai "succoured" or ran to David's aid when he cried for help "and smote the Philistine and killed him." Yet in both contexts there were the dedicated successors who came,

and they were men of great love for their mentors. The first was truly a prophet with the prophet's mantle and Spirit upon him; the second was a warrior to take up the battle in behalf of the fainting "light of Israel." Unless God gives us the heart, godly spirit, love and respect for our mentors we will not know the power of God in our generation as they did in theirs.

Fundamentalism faces a crossroads of the third and fourth generation. What will its future be? The answer will be found in the heart and private life of each individual in those generations. Christian professionalism will not do when facing the enemy spiritually; it will take God alone in the soul of the individual. It is still true, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." May God help us to see our need in Fundamentalism for the next generation.



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*If the foundations be destroyed,
what can the righteous do? (Psalm 11:3)*