

The Golden State Scroll



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change the world . . .*

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*And the things that thou hast
heard of me among many
witnesses, the same commit
thou to faithful men, who shall
be able to teach others also.
(2 Tim. 2:2)*

"We Band of Brothers"

Among the many things I read on a daily basis, both joy and profit come from reading a little Shakespeare. Among my favorites of his plays is *Henry V*. In one of the most dramatic scenes in the history of English literature, Henry is speaking to his troops before the Battle of Agincourt in France (1415). The heavily armed French knights were standing between the English troops and Calais, the port city that Henry's band needed to reach for their return to England. War weary and suffering from dysentery, morale was low as the dwindling band gazed upon the over-whelming, four-to-one, force of the French knights. Rising to the occasion, however, King Henry stood before his men and spoke words of encouragement that rallied them together and carried them to victory. While the incident was true, Henry's speech is fiction, but it still serves to underscore the critical nature of unity in a fighting force, whether in medieval or modern times. Dubbed the St. Crispin's Day Speech, the core of it reads:

This story shall the good man teach his son;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be rememberèd;
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition:
And gentlemen in England now a-bed
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

Interestingly, there seems to be no doubt that Shakespeare was, in fact, the first to use the term *band of brothers* in classical literature. It has appeared several times since, such as in Friedrich Schiller's play *Wilhelm Tell* in 1803. We find it often during the American Civil War. Stephen Douglas used it during the great Lincoln-Douglas debates. Frederick Douglass also used it in reference to his days in slavery. It even became a line in the second most popular war song of the South, "The Bonnie

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The Waning Authority of Christ in the Churches (1) A. W. Tozer

Here is the burden of my heart; and while I claim for myself no special inspiration I yet feel that this is also the burden of the Spirit.

If I know my own heart it is love alone that moves me to write this. What I write here is not the sour ferment of a mind agitated by contentions with my fellow Christians. There have been no such contentions. I have not been abused, mistreated or attacked by anyone. Nor have these observations grown out of any unpleasant experiences that I have had in my association with others. My relations with my own church as well as with Christians of other denominations have been friendly, courteous and pleasant. My grief is simply the result of a condition which I believe to be almost universally prevalent among the churches.

I think also that I should acknowledge that I am myself very much involved in the situation I here deplore. As Ezra in his mighty prayer of intercession included himself among the wrongdoers, so do I. "O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens" [Ezra 9:6]. Any hard word spoken here against others must in simple honesty return upon my own head. I too have been guilty. This is written with the hope that we all may turn unto the Lord our God and sin no more against Him.

Let me state the cause of my burden. It is this: *Jesus Christ has today almost no authority at all among the groups that call themselves by His name.* By these I mean not the Roman Catholics nor the liberals, nor the various quasi-Christian cults. I do mean Protestant churches generally, and I include those that protest the loudest that they are in spiritual descent from our Lord and His apostles, namely, the evangelicals.

It is a basic doctrine of the New Testament that after His resurrection the Man Jesus was declared by God to be both Lord and Christ, and that He was invested by the Father with absolute Lordship over the church which is His Body. All authority is His in heaven and in earth. In His own proper time He will exert it to the full, but during this period in history He allows this authority to be challenged or ignored. And just now it is being challenged by the world and ignored by the church.

The present position of Christ in the gospel churches may be likened to that of a king in a limited, constitutional monarchy. The king (sometimes

depersonalized by the term "the Crown") is in such a country no more than a traditional rallying point, a pleasant symbol of unity and loyalty much like a flag or a national anthem. He is lauded, feted and supported, but his real authority is small. Nominally he is head over all, but in every crisis someone else makes the decisions. On formal occasions he appears in his royal attire to deliver the tame, colorless speech put into his mouth by the real rulers of the country. The whole thing may be no more than good-natured make-believe, but it is rooted in antiquity, it is a lot of fun and no one wants to give it up.

Among the gospel churches Christ is now in fact little more than a beloved symbol. "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" is the church's national anthem and the cross is her official flag, but in the week-by-week services of the church and the day-by-day conduct of her members someone else, not Christ, makes the decisions. Under proper circumstances Christ is allowed to say "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden" or "Let not your heart be troubled," but when the speech is finished someone else takes over. Those in actual authority decide the moral standards of the church, as well as all objectives and all methods employed to achieve them. Because of long and meticulous organization it is now possible for the youngest pastor just out of seminary to have more actual authority in a church than Jesus Christ has.

Not only does Christ have little or no authority; His influence also is becoming less and less. I would not say that He has none, only that it is small and diminishing. A fair parallel would be the influence

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of Abraham Lincoln over the American people. Honest Abe is still the idol of the country. The likeness of his kind, rugged face, so homely that it is beautiful, appears everywhere. It is easy to grow misty-eyed over him. Children are brought up on stories of his love, his honesty, and his humility.

But after we have gotten control over our tender emotions what have we left? No more than a good example, which, as it recedes into the past, becomes more and more unreal and exercises less and less real influence. Every scoundrel is ready to wrap Lincoln's long black coat around him. In the cold light of political facts in the United States the constant appeal to Lincoln by the politicians is a cynical joke.

The Lordship of Jesus is not quite forgotten among Christians, but it has been relegated to the hymnal where all responsibility toward it may be comfortably discharged in a glow of pleasant religious emotion. Or if it is taught as a theory in the classroom it is rarely applied to practical living. The idea that the Man Christ Jesus has absolute and final authority over the whole church and over all of its members in every detail of their lives is simply not now accepted as true by the rank and file of evangelical Christians.

What we do is this: We accept the Christianity of our group as being identical with that of Christ and His apostles. The beliefs, the practices, the ethics, the activities of our group are equated with the Christianity of the New Testament. Whatever the group thinks or says or does is scriptural, no questions asked. It is assumed that all our Lord expects of us is that we busy ourselves with the activities of the group. In so doing we are keeping the commandments of Christ. *(To be concluded)*. 

Taken from *God Tells the Man Who Cares* (Christian Publications). Originally appeared in *The Alliance Witness*—a publication Tozer edited for many years—on May 15, 1963, just two days after his death. In a very real sense it was his valedictory, for it expressed the concern of his heart. —Editor

Sermon Starters

Nebuchadnezzar's Life Lesson Daniel 4

1. The King's Deposition (1-3)
2. The King's Dream (4-5)
3. King's Decree (6-7)

4. The King's Daniel (8)
5. The King's Discussion (9-17)
6. The King's Declaration (18)
7. The King's Deciphering (19-27)
8. The King's Dwelling (28-30)
9. The King's Demise (31-32)
10. The King's Delirium (33)
11. The King's Determinant (34-35)
12. The King's Dignity (36-37)

Dr. William Taylor, Mentor

The Presence of God With His People Exodus 33:14

- I. The Path We Pursue
 - A. Delivered from spiritual bondage.
 - B. Strangers and pilgrims on the earth.
 - C. Traveling to the land of promise.
- II. The Privilege We Possess
 - A. God's guiding presence is with us.
 - B. God's sustaining presence is with us.
 - C. God's abiding presence is with us.
- III. The Peace in which We Pleasure
 - A. Rest in the present life.
 - B. Rest in the hour of death.
 - C. Rest in the world to come.

*Adapted by the Editor
from Charles Simeon*

The Seven Sayings of Christ

1. Forgiveness from the Cross (Lk. 23:24)
2. Future of the Criminal (Mk. 15:32; Lk. 23:43)
3. Favor through Custody (Jn. 19:27).
4. Forsaking the Christ (Matt. 27:46)
5. Famish and Craving (Jn. 19:28; Ps. 69:21).
6. Father on which to Confide (Lk. 23:34)
7. Finished the Task (Jn. 19:30)

Dr. William Taylor, Mentor

*I preached as never sure to
preach again, and as a dying
man to dying men.*

Richard Baxter

O Come Let Us Worship

Part 3 of 10

Worship (3)


seghid

A fascinating contrast to *shāchāh* (see parts 1 and 2) is the Aramaic *seghid*, which appears in the Old Testament only in the book of Daniel, where it is always translated **worship** (or similar) and always of a false god. This is noteworthy simply because it is Aramaic, the language of pagan Babylon, from where Daniel wrote (Aramaic was the international language of commerce and diplomacy that came with the Assyrian empire in the eighth century BC). Significantly, *seghid* corresponds to the Hebrew *sāgad*, which appears only four times, all in Isaiah (44:15, 17, 19; 46:6) and always of an idol.

The scene in Babylon, of course, was that Daniel and a few other nobles were forced into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar in 605 BC to serve in the king's court, followed by the remainder of Judah in 597 and 586 BC. It is in Daniel 3 that Nebuchadnezzar, motivated by his arrogance and sense of self-importance after his dream about being "the head of gold" (2:32, 36), built a ninety-foot-tall statue of himself (Dan. 3:1–3). He then required that at the hearing of special music, played on a variety of instruments, everyone was to "fall down and worship [*sāgad*]" the image (vv. 5, 6) or be cast into a furnace. As we recall, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused, were thrown into the furnace, but were miraculously delivered (vv. 8–30).

The beloved J. Vernon McGee makes this smile-inducing comment: "I would like to give this orchestra a name: the Babylonian Beboppers." His point is that that music was designed to appeal to the flesh and aided in forcing people to worship. While music is a very subjective medium—we all have our own tastes, likes, and dislikes—we still need to be very careful when it comes to the music we use in worship. Most importantly, the music should be appropriate to the message, that is, the lyrics. For example, did you know that metrically you can sing the words of that great hymn Amazing Grace to the tune of the silly television show Gilligan's Island? But would that be appropriate?

Many look for a church based solely on the style of music it offers. That is anything but worshipful. Deep doctrinal hymns have all but vanished, being replaced by simplistic and theologically ambiguous songs. Let us sanctify our music in worship.

Scriptures for Study: Read the account in Daniel 3 and rejoice in the pure worship we can offer God. 

Excerpted from our editor's upcoming devotional book, *A Hebrew Word for the Day* (AMG Publishers), due for release in April.

With heart and mind, and memory and fear, and hope and joy, we worship The Most High. . . . With lowliest reverence, with truest love, we worship God in Christ Jesus, uniting therewith with all the redeemed host above, with angels and principalities and powers.


C. H. Spurgeon,

Words of Counsel for Christian Worker, p.15

"We Band of Brothers" from page 1 . . .

Blue Flag": "We are a band of brothers, / And native to the soil, / Fighting for our liberty, / With treasure, blood, and toil." The line also appears in the song "Hail Columbia," which many have referred to as America's first national anthem: "Firm, united, let us be, / Rallying round our Liberty; / As a band of brothers joined, / Peace and safety we shall find." Finally, contemporary (though late) historian Stephen Ambrose titled one of his many books *Band of Brothers*, the true story of the 101st Airborne's Easy Company, which fought with distinction at Normandy, the Battle of the Bulge, and on to the end of the war.

The theme in all this, of course, is a martial philosophy, where unity and unit cohesion is absolutely critical for victory. This should strike us all profoundly because Christians are, indeed, in a war, and unity among this *band of brothers* (and obviously *sisters*) is crucial. One of the most serious and devastating things that can occur in a church body is a lack of love among believers for one another. Most of us have seen, to one extent or another, a lack of love among believers, and it is a heartbreaking thing to witness.

Based upon 1 John 4:20–21, therefore, I share my heart on this grave matter in the full article that you can read at the following website: <http://www.thescripturealone.com/TOTT-56.htm>. I hope it will be an encouragement. 

The Editor