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WHAT IS PROTESTANTISM?

One of the noblest testimonies ever uttered for the Reformation, was the Protest offered by the Christian princes of Germany at the Diet of Spire in 1529. The courage, faith, and firmness of those men of God, gained for succeeding ages liberty of thought and of conscience. Their Protest gave to the reformed church the name of Protestant; its principles are "the very essence of Protestantism." . . .

"The principles contained in this celebrated Protest . . . constitute the very essence of Protestantism. Now this Protest opposes two abuses of man in matters of faith; the first is the intrusion of the civil magistrate, and the second the arbitrary authority of the church. Instead of these abuses, Protestantism sets the power of conscience above the magistrate, and the authority of the word of God above the visible church. In the first place, it rejects the civil power in divine things, and says with the prophets and apostles, 'We must obey God rather than man.' In presence of the crown of Charles the Fifth, it uplifts the crown of Jesus Christ. But it goes farther; it lays down the principle that all human teaching should be subordinate to the oracles of God." The protesters had moreover affirmed their right to utter freely their convictions of truth. They would not only believe and obey, but teach what the word of God presents, and they denied the right of priest or magistrate to interfere. The Protest of Spire was a solemn witness against religious intolerance, and an assertion of the right of all men to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences.

The declaration had been made. It was written in the memory of thousands, and registered in the books of heaven, where no effort of man could erase it. --Great Controversy, pp. 197, 203, 204. Quotes from D'Aubigne, b. 13, ch. 6.

CHRIST WAS A PROTESTANT

Christ was a protestant. He protested against the formal worship of the Jewish nation, who rejected the counsel of God against themselves. He told them that they taught for doctrines the commandments of men, and that they were pretenders and hypocrites. Like whited sepulchers they were beautiful without, but within full of impurity and corruption. The Reformers date back to Christ and the apostles. They came out and separated themselves from a religion of forms and ceremonies. Luther and his followers did not invent the reformed religion. They simply accepted it as presented by Christ and the apostles. The Bible is presented to us as a sufficient guide; but the pope and his workers remove it from the people as if it were a curse, because it exposes their pretensions and rebukes their idolatry. --Review and Herald, June 1, 1886. Vol. 63, No. 22, p. 338.

TENFOLD MORE INFLUENCE

If the church would manifest a greater interest in the reforms which God Himself has brought to them to fit them for His coming, their influence would be tenfold what it now is. -- Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 171.

THE BIBLE AND THE BIBLE ALONE

Those who claim to be Protestants are not today what Luther was. They have left the old landmarks, and have depended on forms, ceremonies, and outward display to make up for the lack of purity and piety, meekness and lowliness, found in obedience to God. Sin is ruining nations to-day just as it has done in time past. Even leaders in the religious world have not a good conscience toward God.

Men need an intelligent knowledge of God's law. There is no true standard of righteousness apart from this law. By obedience to it the intellect is cultivated, the conscience enlightened and made sensitive. Righteousness exalts a nation. The words of the Bible, and the Bible alone, should be echoed from the pulpits of our land. This book is God's great director. It is a lamp to our feet, a light to our path. It flashes its light ahead, that we may see the path by which we are traveling; and its rays are thrown back on past history, showing the most perfect harmony in that which, to the mind in darkness, appears like error and discord. In that which seems to the worldling an inexplicable mystery, God's children see light and beauty.--Review and Herald, February 6, 1900. Vol. 77, No. 6, pp. 81, 82.

While the Protestant world is, by her attitude, making concessions to Rome, we should arouse to comprehend the situation, and view the contest before us in its true bearings. While men have slept, Satan has been stealthily sowing the tares. Let the watchmen now lift up their voice like a trumpet, and give the message which is present truth for this time. Let them know where we are in prophetic history, that the spirit of true Protestantism may awaken all the world to a sense of the value of the privileges of religious liberty so long enjoyed.

This nation has been highly favored of God. It has been the great center of religious light and liberty. O, do not sleep now, and in your inactivity feel that you are doing the will of God! The experience of God's commandment-keeping people now should correspond with the events that are crowding upon us. --Review and Herald, January 1, 1889. Vol. 66, No. 1, p. 1.

We are engaged in an important and an essential work, and we must carry on an aggressive warfare. We are to stand for true Protestant principles; for the policies of the papacy will edge their way into every possible place to proscribe liberty of conscience. Every eye should now be single to the glory of God.--Review and Herald, September 9, 1909. Vol. 86, No. 36, p. 8.

OPENING THE WORD OF GOD

In visions of the night representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God's people. Many were praising God. The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought. . . . Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families, and opening before them the word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence. Great blessings were received by the true and humble people of God.--Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 126.

A PEOPLE TO DEFEND THE BIBLE

When God sends to men warnings so important that they are represented as proclaimed by holy angels flying in the midst of heaven, He requires every person endowed with reasoning powers to heed the message. The fearful judgments denounced against the worship of the beast and his image, should lead all to a diligent study of the prophecies to learn what the mark of the beast is, and how they are to avoid receiving it. But the masses of the people turn away their ears from hearing the truth, and are turned unto fables. The apostle Paul declared, looking down to the last days, "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." That time has fully come. The multitudes do not want Bible truth, because it interferes with the desires of the sinful, world-loving heart; and Satan supplies the deceptions which they love.

But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines, and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority,--not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain "Thus saith the Lord" in its support. --Great Controversy, pp. 594, 595.