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FAITH.

Grace expresses the attitude and relation of God to a sinner. And grace justifies and saves the sinner. However, saving grace is not an irresistible fiat of the Almighty. Grace may fail of its aim and end. No sinner is justified and saved parforce. There must be a proper attitude and an adequate relation of the sinner who is being justified and saved to God who justifies and is saving him. Faith expresses this latter attitude and relation. "By grace are ye saved through faith," Eph. 2, 8. This means that salvation in individual instances, the saving of this or that particular sinner, requires the effectual operation of *two* forces. True, "the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men," Tit. 2, 11, regardless of men's attitude toward it. The word of grace has been issued to all men prior to their knowledge and wish, Matt. 28, 19. There is a salvation, perfect and complete in itself, independent of the faith of the saved; comp. Acts 4, 12: "Neither is there salvation in any other," etc. Neither man's faith nor man's unbelief alter the fact of this salvation. The *Τετέλεσται* on Golgotha, John 19, 30, was spoken before unbelievers and scoffers. This cry has been ringing through the centuries. The "word of reconciliation" conjures up no mirage to pilgrims through this desert of sin, but points to the *fact* that "God was in Christ, *reconciling the world unto Himself*, not imputing their trespasses unto them," 2 Cor. 5, 19. This salvation "is finished." Whether its tidings are carried to the husbandman on his farm or to the trader

BROADCHURCHISM AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

On this topic Prof. W. Brenton Greene, Jr., D. D., on October 10, 1904, delivered an address at the religious conference in Princeton Theological Seminary. His remarks deserve more than passing notice, in the first place, because of the concise and forceful statement of truths that cannot be set forth too often, and secondly, because the address was delivered on the eve of the first convention of the Inter-church Conference on Federation in New York City, which represents an effort in behalf of Broadchurchism such as was never before attempted. We quote from an extensive extract of Dr. Greene's address in *The Presbyterian* of November 1, 1905.—Ed.

“Broadchurchism is the tendency to regard Church union as more important than Church distinction. In every one of its degrees it differs from the tendency toward federation. The latter is animated by love of the truth. For the sake of the truths which the Churches agree in holding it would have them cooperate in work, while for the sake of the truths distinctive of them it would have them retain their individuality. Broadchurchism, on the contrary, is always characterized by more or less of indifference to truth. It would sacrifice even truth for the greater efficiency which it supposes would result from the organic union of denominations. In a word, Broadchurchism is ecclesiastical utilitarianism. Broadchurchism prevails widely and is increasing. This appears in the passion for denominational union, and it is rendered significant by the simultaneous movement for federation. It must, indeed, be strong to exist alongside of a tendency so opposed. That it does is explained when we consider the soil in which Broadchurchism is growing. Indifference to religious truth is well-nigh universal and is spreading. This is so even in our own church. Of our 8681 Sabbath schools, in only 3326 was the Catechism taught last year. Ten years ago, however, though our schools were 812 fewer, those in which instruction in the Catechism was given were 490 more numerous. Is it strange that Broadchurchism flourishes? Is Broadchurchism favorable to the Christian life? It might be presumed to be. It aims to be. It is indifferent to the truth, not because hostile to it, but because it regards Christian life as more important. Its sincere endeavor is to bring in Christ's kingdom. This it might be argued that it is doing.

Never was the Church so organized or so aggressive as now. In spite of corruption in high places, individual life also and character attest more generally than, perhaps, in any age the prevalence of Christian principles. Must not, then, Broadchurchism favor the Christian life? I believe not, and for the following reasons:

“First, It tends to mental suicide. It would secure the organic union of churches by ignoring the differences between them. It is, however, through the recognition of differences that the mind is developed. Even generalization, the highest exercise of the mind, depends on such recognition. The Broadchurch attitude must, consequently, be opposed to mental clearness and vigor. If unchecked, it would issue in mental suicide. It must, therefore, in itself be sinful. Could it, then, foster the spirit of holiness? Not unless evil can produce good.

“Secondly, It expresses indifference to God. As we have seen, it is rooted in indifference to truth in general and to religious truth in particular. A lower value is put on it than on intention and conduct. Truth, however, is the real conception of reality. Of such conception God is always the author. Consequently, indifference to it must be disrespect to Him, and so cannot be favorable to the ‘life hid with Christ in Him.’ Especially is this so in the sphere of religious truth. Here God is not only the author of truth; He is Himself ‘the truth.’ He is Himself the object of our perception and conception. The various doctrines are just so many different views of God Himself. They are God as we see Him. Hence, to be indifferent to them is to be indifferent to Him.

“Thirdly, We see at once how this is when we inquire into the nature of truth and its relation to moral character and so to Christian life. There is a prevalent theory, that truth may be of the feelings as well as of the intellect; that what is true to the feelings may be false to the intellect, and vice versa; and that Christian life, because rooted in the feelings, would better be developed without reference to such intellectual conceptions as doctrinal statements. This theory is radically false. There

is no knowledge of the heart. 'Feeling is a state of mind consequent on the reception of some idea.' So far from giving knowledge, it presupposes it. Hence, the religion of the heart is impossible without the theology of the head. Genuine religion can no more be creedless than pleasure or pain can be unconscious. Again, the head and the heart are not opposed. They are not even different faculties. They are only differing modes of the one and indivisible activity of man. For this reason, too, the religion of the heart and the theology of the head cannot be divorced. Unless the heart be disposed toward Christ, the head cannot, because it will not, discern the truth of Christ; and, on the other hand, zeal in His cause will be strong and abiding in proportion as the faith from which it springs and by which it is nourished is intelligent. Hence, the destructive tendency of Broadchurchism is explained. It inclines to ignore the intellect, which is one of the two indispensable factors in all right action and life.

"Fourthly, The argument is only strengthened by the objection, that, while truth is the primary element in right conduct, it is not all truth that has reference to conduct, and that the truth to which Broadchurchism is indifferent is not truth of this particular kind. The truth that it would ignore is too abstract to have any practical application. Even mathematical truth, however, has practical relations. Though it neither prompts nor indicates any special course of conduct, its comprehension will depend, in part, on the disposition, and will affect the character. But this is not the main consideration. The doctrines of Christianity are never mere abstract propositions. Every one of them both indicates duty and inspires to its performance. As every truth concerning God's will has direct application to our lives, and as His will is the expression of His nature, so every truth regarding the latter must bear on the obedience due from us. Hence, our Lord teaches that 'life eternal is to know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.'

"Fifthly, The argument is further confirmed by the history of the Church. It shows, that Christian life has been according

to doctrine; that devotion to the truth of Christ has issued in effective activity in His cause; and that indifference to the truth as it is in Him has resulted in undirected effort and at last in loss of energy itself. The proof of this appears in the Huguenots of France, in the Dutch Republic, in the Covenanters of Scotland, in the English Puritans. Nor do the organization and missionary activity of the Church of to-day break the force of this reference. These most admirable characteristics are not due to Broadchurchism; they are in spite of it. They are not the fruit of what the Church is, but of what it was. A strong man who has been well nourished will work on after his nourishment has been withdrawn; and that Broadchurchism is not feeding the activity of the Church as it was fed and needs still to be fed, appears in such symptoms as the marked decline in the number of candidates for the ministry and especially in the loss of power on the part of the Church to maintain her individuality in the midst of the world.

“Sixthly, That Broadchurchism is directly opposed to the Christian life — such is the plain teaching of the Word of God. So far from many of its truths being too abstract to have any bearing on conduct, ‘every Scripture,’ in addition to being ‘inspired of God,’ is said to be profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: ‘that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.’ Unless, then, God has inspired the unnecessary, the whole Bible and every one of its teachings is called for, if any man is to be all that he ought to be. Could there be a more entire condemnation of Broadchurchism?

“It will follow, therefore, first, that the great business of the minister of Christ is to preach the truth of Christ in all its length and breadth and height and depth. This is his work: the Holy Spirit has promised to make the application. Yet how often do we reverse this divine order. We urge the performance of duty; but we do not set forth the facts and truths which makes duty and in which the Christian life is rooted. There could not be a more fatal mistake. Only the Holy Spirit

can draw to Christ and quicken with His life those who are 'dead through trespasses and sin;' but being the Spirit of truth, He has covenanted to draw only in connection with, and by means of the truth. Of what use, too, will spiritual discernment be, if the spiritually enlightened man is to have no more truth to discern than much of the preaching and teaching of our day set before him? In a word, true religion becomes impossible when Broadchurchism is weaning us from its only nourishment.

"Finally, just because of the importance of doctrinal distinctions, must they be presented popularly and in relation to life. Only such preaching can discredit Broadchurchism, but such preaching will do it."

Since the above article was written the Conference on Federation has met, and has adopted a scheme of permanent federation, which Dr. E. F. Shearer has summarized for *The Presbyterian* of Nov. 22, 1905, as follows:

1. The body shall be called the Federation Council of the Church of Christ in America.

2. The following Christian bodies shall be entitled to representation in this Federal Council on their approval of the purpose and plan of the organization: The Baptist churches, North; the Baptist churches, South; the Free Baptist churches; the Negro Baptist churches; the Christian connection; the Congregational churches; the Disciples of Christ; the Evangelical Association; the Evangelical Synod, the Friends, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, General Synod; the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; the Primitive Methodist Church, the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church of America; the Methodist Protestant Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, the Mennonite Church, the Moravian Church, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the Welsh Presbyterian Church, the United Presbyterian Church, the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Reformed Church in America,

the Reformed Church in the United States of America, the Reformed Episcopal Church, the Seventh Day Baptist churches, the United Brethren in Christ, the United Evangelical Church.

3. The object of this Federal Council shall be: (a) To express the fellowship and catholic unity of the Christian Church; (b) to bring the Christian bodies of America into harmonious service for Christ and the world; (c) to encourage devotional fellowship and mutual counsel; (d) to secure a large combined influence for the churches of Christ in all matters affecting the moral and social condition of the people.

4. This Federal Council shall have no authority over the constituent bodies adhering to it; but its province shall be limited to the expression of its counsel and the recommending of a course of action in matters of common interest to the churches, local councils, and individual Christians. It has no authority to draw up a common creed, or form of government or of worship, or in any way to limit the full autonomy of the Christian bodies adhering to it.

5. Members of this Federal Council shall be appointed as follows: Each of the Christian bodies adhering to this Federal Council shall be entitled to four members, and shall be further entitled to one member for every 50,000 of its communicants or major fraction thereof. The question of representation of local councils shall be referred to the several constituent bodies, and to the first meeting of the Federal Council.

6. Any action to be taken by this Federal Council shall be by the general vote of its members. But in case one-third of the members present and voting request it, the vote shall be by the bodies represented, the members of each body voting separately; and action shall require the vote, not only of a majority of the members voting, but also of the bodies represented.

7. Other Christian bodies may be admitted into membership of this Federal Council on their request if approved by vote of two-thirds of the members voting at a session of this council, and of two-thirds of the bodies represented, the representatives of each body voting separately.

8. The Federal Council shall meet in December, 1908, and thereafter once in every four years.

In his report of the Conference Dr. Shearer also mentions the following:

"There has been much confusion in the popular mind arising from a failure to discriminate between the Inter-Church Federation now in conference and just made permanent, and the Federation of Churches which has existed for years. Even some of the delegates to the present Conference seem to have perceived no difference, or else to have supposed that the highest attainment of this Inter-Church Federation is to be along lines of pure sociology. An indication of this was shown by one speaker who expressed the hope that every locality, including the most sparsely settled rural district, would be divided and assigned by the Federation to be cared for by shepherds of the Federation.

"Bishop Fowler, of the M. E. Church, in an eloquent and most witty address, was most emphatic in pointing out that his denomination did not propose to surrender one iota of its antinomy, and Bishop Whittaker made it very plain that he and others of the Protestant Episcopal Church, although delegates, acted only as individuals."

On November 29, 1905, *The Presbyterian* said editorially:

"It was unfortunate that in the original announcement of the Federation scheme, and in the letters of invitation seeking the cooperation of the Churches, the qualifying word 'Evangelical,' or equivalent phraseology, was omitted. Had this unambiguous position been indicated at the outset, much unfortunate discussion and questioning would have been avoided. Despite the decision of the committee not to recognize the Unitarian delegation, the question was still an open one when the time of assembling arrived. Hence the Conference itself had to determine whether in the Federation, as it was taking shape, the term 'Christian Churches' should be understood exclusively as meaning those bodies which confess Jesus Christ as Supreme Head and 'crown Him Lord of all,' or should be

taken in a more elastic and comprehensive sense as including also those organizations which in any degree acknowledge the historic Jesus of Nazareth and are known as social and moral forces in the land. Aggressive and persistent efforts were made by certain members of the Council — men of high character and influential position — to secure the latter interpretation. But the great body of delegates stood firm for the evangelical testimony on this point as a standard and test of membership. This they did by refusing certain propositions which indirectly aimed at securing the open door, and more positively by so amending the Preamble in the Plan of Federation as to give expression to a distinct testimony and confession as to the divinity of Jesus Christ.

“At the same time it was painfully evident that even among those who thus acknowledge the Savior there were some who deeply regretted the exclusion of the Unitarians, and who still find themselves unwilling to join in the ringing declaration made by Dr. Buckley in his speech, ‘I cannot federate in so close an association with people who cannot cry: “All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name!”’ Among this minority are men of leadership and moral earnestness. They remain of the same opinion still. They have the courage of their convictions, and it is to be feared they will not give over their contention, but will labor for a possible change in the basis, to be made in the future.

“A reason for this attitude on the part of men who for themselves acknowledge the divinity of Christ, we surmise, may be found in the view they take of the nature and scope of the Federation’s work. If it is conceived of chiefly as a movement for the ethical betterment of the nation, for temperance, for the stay of the divorce evil, for the improvement of the political and social and business realms, and for all that pertains to civic righteousness — then these members of the Conference may have been right, and there would be no reason for excluding the Unitarians. Indeed they would prove valuable allies in all such work. We must understand, then, by the course the Con-

ference took in determining the kind of constituency it shall represent, that they conceived of the work set before them as distinctly Christian work, and to be done on the distinctive lines of the Christian faith and testimony. And in view of this we are sorry to note the absence from the Plan, or from the Preamble, of any reference to the Scriptures as the source of light to the understanding, and of authority to the conscience. And in the document of a federation which has restricted its membership to the Evangelical Churches, we see not why the Cross of Christ, as well as His divinity, might not have found mention."
