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Clarksville 17th April '81, 80807

1. - 561 - 155 "So, what a glorious sight appears," -
2. - 558 - 198. "Say who is she that looks abroad," -
3. - 590 - 155 "Sing to the Lord in joyful strains," -

"In the name of our God we will set up our banners." Ps. 20: 5.

^{in order} ~~to~~ to represent Him & His Govt. on earth; ^{in order} ~~and~~
to uphold and maintain ~~this~~ warfare vs.
Sin, God has chosen to organize His Church
upon Earth, for the double purpose of conquering
and subduing sinners to Himself, and ~~then~~
after winning them back, to furnish
them a safe and secure fortress,
and refuge against the influences
that would draw them ~~back~~ away from
Holiness, Peace, and Truth. When therefore
men are thus sweetly conquered by the
spiritual weapons of this Holy War, it is
not only the suggestion of a newborn love & gratitude

to God that springs up within the regenerate heart, that prompts the entrance into the army of their Lord, but it is a part of their ^{new} nature; there has been infused into them ~~the~~ measure of the Holy Spirit, whereby they have become partakers of the Divine nature; so that what God loves they love; what God abhors they hate; what God's cause requires they are ready to do, and their Will co-incides entirely & universally with the will of God, and His service becomes their highest happiness & their chief delight, and ~~which~~ they only ask with Paul, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?"

(The object ^{which I have} in view, is to introduce) the Characters who are represented as speaking the words

of our text: "In the name of our God we will set up our banners." — They are God's people (who say this;) once rebels; now saints; once against God; now enlisted on His side; once fighting against Him; now fighting for Him. And as this warfare is waged against the Powers of Darkness, as it will continue to be waged until Satan shall be bruised under X't's feet, and as God's works are performed by His people, as His agents, so the people of God when they begin the X'tian warfare set up banners, as they proclaim this war, ^{not only} ~~whether it be~~ to defend themselves against the assaults of Satan, ^{and} ~~to~~ to drive Satan from the control of the world, ^{but} ~~to~~ to convert sinners to God as well.

561 }
558 }
590 }

¹⁴
Ps. 20: 5

"In the name of our God, we will set up our banners."

I. We inquire into the meaning of the Banners here mentioned; and

II. Why such resolutions should be made.

1. It is to be observed that a banner is ~~an~~ flag or standard bearing always a symbol, and very often an inscription or motto. In the case of the banner set up by the people of God, the symbol is the Cross of X^t. and on it is inscribed in ineffaceable letters of light and glory "The Lord our Righteousness." and it is dedicated unto Him that loved us, and saved us with an everlasting salvation, to Him be glory + honor majesty and dominion forever and ever. The banner of the individual X^tian is the pro-

session of His faith in X^t. All men can see that.
 He is not ostentatious with it. But he believes
 in what X^t said; "Whoever confesseth
 se. and so just the moment he becomes
 a conquered rebel himself, and enters
 into the number of the followers of the Re-
 deemer, he ^{becomes a banner bearer} ~~displays his banner~~ in the
 army of the Great Captain of his salvation,
 and comes out fearlessly, honestly, sincerely;
 and confesses X^t before men, and is not
 ashamed of Him. For the Cross is
 not obtrusively thrust before you - in its
 sensible and tangible form, - and worn
 upon the bosom externally; and erected
 on the steeples of your Ch^rs. That is not
 the Cross of X^t. It is but the Crucifix, the

It may be abused & has been abused, so that it
~~abuse of which by an unholly Apostate Ch.~~
has caused the true soldier of Jesus to turn
away from it, and to regard it as any
thing but an emblem of salvation.
But the Cross of Xt which is the true
coat of arms of the Christian Soldier, is
the Gospel of Truth, and it is deeply
imprinted upon his heart shown by
his outward conformity to the
doctrines of that Gospel, Not needing to be
shown by this trinket, or ornament, but "known
& read of all men" by "a well ordered walk
and a godly conversation;" - a "living
epistle" - a "lively stone" in the spirit-
ual building, - that temple of the living God
the invisible body of the Lord Jesus Xt. - the blood

bought Church. This display of the banner of profession is made that all men know the X'tian to be what he professes to be, and that he is on the side of the Lord. Then again; II. we learn the reasons for the use of banners in Religion from analogy.

1. Banners are ~~to~~ chosen by those who proclaim

war. The banner bearer of the Army of the Lord, — the true Child of God — impels his banner to let it be known that he proclaims war against all that is at war with God. ^(Let it be ever be borne in mind that) ~~the~~ the spirit, the principles, the declarations, the laws, precepts, & injunctions of the Gospel are all ⁱⁿ ~~at~~ deadly hostility against the spirit & maxims and principles of an ungodly world, the corruptions, ^{of human nature} the ruinous heresies of human society — the sinful follies & fash-

-ions which so absorb and pre-occupy the minds
 of vast numbers. The word of God, which is the
 Book of Constitutions for His Government & King-
 dom, distinctly states that His design in redeeming
 sinners was "to purify unto Himself a peculiar
people." Now if they are a peculiar people, then
 there must be some method of distinguishing
 them from those who are not His. What if in
 a battle between two powerful Armies a
 detachment of one of them should assume
 the banner & all the equipments and uniform
 of the other; what would be the possibility of
 distinguishing them from those they resembled?
 How are Professors of religion, ^{then} to demonstrate
 their loyalty to Jesus Xt., if they fling to the
 breeze the self same flag or banner that is ^(now waving over) the

men of the ~~banner of the~~ world? It may be said truly that in
 these days of degeneracy it is very often one
 of the most difficult tasks to distinguish the
 members of the Ch. from the children of
 the world. In their commercial transactions; in
 their social habits; in their intercourse with
 the men of the world; in their indifference
 to the services of God's House; in their neglect
 of family religion, "what do they more," or dif-
 ferently from "others?" Their righteousness does
 not exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees,
 and X^c. declares of those who ^{are} thus ^{deficient} ~~not~~, that
 they shall, in no case, enter into the Kingdom
 of Heaven! Such members of the Church are
 not true soldiers of the Cross; they are deserters;
 they are not under the banner ^{which} ~~of~~ the people of

God have set up in His name. They are marching under the banner of the world; the trumpet of their xtian life gives forth an uncertain sound, and carries with it no significant meaning, and utters no word of encouragement to the army of the living God; echoes no word of cheer promising of victory; but it cheers and encourages the enemy; disheartens the timorous; and distresses even the true soldier of the Cross; weighs like lead upon the spirit of the watchman upon the Walls of Zion; and, what is worse, provokes God Himself; brings disgrace upon the name of Jesus; grieves the Holy Spirit; and sets back the advancement of the Church in its conquest of the world for many a long, dark, and wearisome year! Such

men may be in the camp of the Lord; but they are not true men; they not only do nothing for God's glory but a great deal to the dishonor of God.

They are Achans in the Camp; and very often it is on their account that the hosts of God are defeated and turn their backs before the enemy. But I remark

2 Banners are set up as Centres of Attraction; to rally and to lead the hosts engaged. Often in the midst of the smoke & confusion of battle the line wd be broken, and the troops dispersed but for the sight of the banner waving aloft, and every eye must be seeking for its familiar folds, and its emblems and mottoes, or they are in imminent peril of ruin and overthrow. So it is eminently true of the army of the living God and of every individual

al soldier of the Cross, that the ^{eye} must be firmly, unwaver-
 ingly fixed upon the banner of the Truth, with its Gospel
 emblems and its glorious mottoes. Sometimes the
 powers of darkness, and the influences of spiritual
 wickedness in high places, the Clammers of Infideli-
 ty, and the assaults of worldliness, gather all
 their forces for one combined attack upon the
 Church of God. Under such a "battle of warriors with
 confused noise and garments rolled in blood,"
 the crucial test is applied, and the true & tried
 spirits of the Church stand firm, and undismayed
 amid the terrors of the onset. There are those
 whose names are upon the roll, however,
 whose souls are melted within them when
 the "enemy comes" thus "rushing in like a
 flood," and failing to understand that then

the promise is "the Spirit of the Lord will lift
 up a banner vs him," look not for the banner as
 it still floats high above the din of battle, & the reach
 of defeat. Such men reach suddenly the conclusion that
 the cause is lost, that the Ch. is about to be overwhelmed
 that Lawlessness, Atheism, and worldliness are
 about to triumph, and that it will not be long
 until Satan & his hosts will achieve the victory
 and drive the armies of the Redeemer, and all
 the soldiers of the ^{ignominiously} Cross, from the field. But
 under such a pitiful ~~representation~~ presentation of cowardice,
 the true courageous warrior stands by & bids him
 look for the banner of the Truth; to rally to that;
 to follow that even through the thick of the fight,
 even to the fore-front of the hottest battle; and though
 he may not be much of a warrior yet let him lay hold

of the cross, and cling to that, and all will go well; and let such timorous X'tians take Spurgeon's words "God is not dead, and He will beat the Devil yet. As surely as Jesus Christ won the victory on the cross, He will win the victory over the world's Sin." Look for your banner & if you can find that, you need apprehend nothing. The Ch. is in no danger.

It may be that the ~~heavy~~^{hostile} assaults made upon her outworks are heavy, but her towers and bulwarks are immovable and impregnable; and so long as the people of God continue to set up their banners in the name of their God, "the gates of Hell shall not, cannot prevail against her." This is just as true in the case of the individual X'tian. Many a hurling storm of fiery darts must he endure from the wicked

one, which will try the strength of his faith,
 and the courage of his heart. Temptations
 may come upon ^{him} in the most powerful &
 unexpected manner, and before it he may
 feel that all must give way as the forest
 before the hurricane's breath. And so it will,
if he rely only upon human strength to
resist.

There has never yet been ^(upon this earth, even so much as) found, one man who possessed, in himself alone, the courage, the strength, the will, the fierce indomitable hatred of sin, whereby he can conquer in the strife with the great enemy that goeth about seeking whom he may devour. But thanks to God! All along the march of history, and all along the line of our lives

the banners of God's eternal Truth are standing
 set up by His people in past times, set
 up by them "in the name of our God" &
 underneath their ample folds is the spot
 where "the least speckle may abide, Uninjured &
 unawed, while thousands fall on every side,
 They rest secure in God." So when found
 the only safety is in keeping close to the
 standard. Peter "followed afar off" and
 fell. Thomas absented himself from the
 gathering of the disciples for prayer, &
 was faithless & unbelieving. Judas loved
 the wages of iniquity and died by his own
 hands. David allowed his heart to go astray
 from the banner of truth & virtue & in
 an evil hour became guilty of the double

crime of murder & adultery. So be warned in time,
 and avoid everything that is not stamped with
 the image & superscription of the Gospel. Al-
 lured as you may be and will be time
 after time to scenes & places of earthly
 entertainment, always look to ascertain
 whether the banner of the Gospel, ^{with} the
~~inscriptions~~ "Holiness unto the Lord" ^{deeply}
 ingrained into it, is floating from their
 battlements, and if not "avoid it, pass
 not by it, turn from it and pass away."
 "Remove thy way far from" all such places
 & resorts, "and come not nigh the door of the house"
 for of the presiding genii of such sinks of in-
 quity, it may be truly said, "while their lips drop
 as an honey comb, and their mouth is smoother than

oil, their end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword; their feet go down to death; their steps take hold on hell!" I remark.

4. Banners are used sometimes as emblems of Peace. Preliminary to the close of the war, a flag of truce — a white flag~~gy~~ is set up and this is token of a desire for peace. I would not, my beloved, that you sh^d be left under the impression that God in all the conflict with sin & error has ever had other than thoughts of Peace toward you. Hard fought fields there have been and the object has been to conquer you, & deliver you from the power of Sin. But all the period of this warfare the only feelings of enmity felt by either party are those you have felt toward God. He has

had none but thoughts of Love & peace. And when
by the power of Omnipotent Grace He has over-
come yr hostility and brought you to see & feel
your sinfulness, and yr lost & ruined condition
what time you have feared to come to Him
He has mercifully displayed the banner of
peace — He has made the way open to a cessa-
tion of hostilities, and while it is the same
blessed banner of ~~the~~ Gospel, stamped
all over with the emblem of the Cross,
it is full of invitations & promises, and
beseechings, and intreaties to you to come
unto Him & He will "in no wise cast
you out;" and while the glorious proposal "Come
now & let us reason together, saith the Lord, tho'
yr sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow,

and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool;" He declares, "He that believeth upon the Son of God, hath eternal life." So under this emblematic representation of a banner of peace & hope, we read & understand the meaning of the Apostle's declaration:

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you, in X^t's stead be ye reconciled to God."

We plant here today the flag of truth, the white and spotless banner of peace, and we invite you to come & be reconciled to God. He is already pacified by the work of X^t., He "wants to be gracious;" all that is needful to the establishment of peace between you is that you come & be reconciled to God. Come then and come without delay.

5. Banners are symbols of victory. God's word
 makes frequent mention of Victory Triumph.
 Conquerors in ane^r times were decreed what was
 called a triumph. Arches were erected under
 which he passed amid the congratu-
 lations of his countrymen, the weaving of
 garlands of honor, and the waving of ban-
 ners, amid great rejoicing. The conquests of the
 Cross over men's hearts by the power of
 Divine Truth and under the influences
 of the Divine Spirit, are but feebly & faintly
 set forth by such displays. The victory acquired over
 Sin & Satan when
 one soul is converted is frequently alluded to in
 such terms in Scripture as show conclusively
 that it is deemed a very precious & glorious event.
 The banner of this victory has on it such inscriptions as

these: "There is joy in the presence, &c. Rejoice with me
for I have found the piece ^{which I had lost.} ~~of treasure~~ "There is more
joy than over 99, &c. This my son ^(dead is alive again, was) lost is found."
"Let him know that he that ^{converteth} ~~turneth~~ &c."

2. But a succession of victories awaits the faithful sol-
dier of the cross. The banners set up on such occasions

have written upon them such inscriptions as these

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even
our faith" - a realizing belief in God's word; fear of God's wrath;

hope of Heaven; and receiving X^t. trusting upon Him

alone &c. a sense of God's presence evermore around

Him to witness every thing - to uphold & support. Only victo-

ry can come to such, and it is of such, that the

words "they come off conquerors & more than

conquerors, thro' X^t. J. &c." and the promise

"Hold out faithful unto death & I will give thee a

crown of Life". To all which we have Paul's personal testimony:— I am now ready to be offered up^{to}

3. The banner of Victory is set up over one more scene, & "the last enemy that shall be overcome is Death." The fears & doubts that harass the ~~the~~ on view of death may be overcome. But that is not the triumph here mentioned. It is completed on the morning of the ~~resurrection~~ resurrection. "When this corruption shall have put on incorruption, &c." and when

"Arrayed in glorious grace,
Shall these vile bodies shine,
And every shape and every face
Look heavenly & divine!"

When to those who "hold out faithful unto death" shall have a crown of glory that fadeth not away— and so an entrance shall be ministered unto them abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord & Saviour