"That in all things Christ might have the preeminence."

"I think it worth a lifetime of hardship to prepare, under God, one of our dear defenders thus to die." Chaplain J. Wm. Jones

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Quote from a Confederate Chaplain

After the Battle of Nashville Chaplain McNeilly described his uniform, and this description was eventually in the Confederate Veteran Magazine (October, 1893, 307):

“My hat was of brown jeans, quilted; my jacket of gray, with wooden buttons, had suffered sadly in the battle. I had thrown it off so as to better help a wounded comrade. As it lay on the ground a shell burst over us, and a spark fell on the middle of the back and gradually burned out a round hole in the cotton fabric. My shirt of checked Osnaberg would not button at the collar. My pantaloons were scorched from standing too close to our fires and were in strings from the knees down, and my semistockingless feet were encased in a pair of brogans that let in air and mud through the gaping chinks.”

Chaplain James Hugh McNeilly
49th Tennessee Regiment / Quarles’ Brigade

Editorial

Fellow Compatriots in the Chaplains’ Corps and Friends:

This issue is the first with the contributions of our new Chaplain-in-Chief, Dr. Ray Parker. We welcome him to his special position in the Chaplains Corps. He will introduce himself in the Chaplain-in-Chief’s Message. Brother Parker has been active in the chaplaincy. I think I first met him at a Chaplains Conference. His faithfulness to our Saviour and the Cause is confessed in his first article. Please be praying for him in this new responsibility for Christ and the SCV. Also, be in prayer for the new officers in the SCV International.

We are deeply grateful for the labors of our outgoing Chaplain-in-Chief Mark Evans. His faithfulness to Christ and his honor of the cause have been evident. Before his appointment to Chaplain-in-Chief he was the Assistant Editor of the CCC which duty he actually carried on during his chaplaincy. He continues in that service for Christ and the Chaplains’ Corps. Thank you Brother Mark Evans!

Your editor would like to recommend an article of great import:

Christians will generally acknowledge that God has inspired His Word, but many fail to recognize that the Scripture also teaches that God has preserved
His Word: kept it ‘pure in all ages.’ Sadly, it is a widespread view that while God is perhaps powerful enough to inspire men to pen His Word, the idea that He has been able to preserve that Word throughout the centuries—even in times of persecution and doctrinal error, and despite unintentional mistakes and intentional mutilation—is deemed untenable [Quarterly Record, The Magazine of the Trinitarian Bible Society, issue 607, 17].

The subject of this article is The Doctrine of the Preservation of Holy Scripture, http://www.tbsbibles.org/pdf_information/340-1.pdf

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John the Beloved’s Introduction to Jesus

There was a voice from the wilderness. This voice was of a man wearing rough clothing and by the Holy Spirit preaching soul piercing sermons. This was none other than John the Baptist, who was a guide for John, pointing him to God’s sacrificial Lamb. Providentially it was at the proper hour that Jesus passed by them. This was when the Baptist exclaimed, “Behold the Lamb of God,” and John, along with Andrew, began to follow Jesus (see John 1:36-40). The Gospel of John is John’s spiritual biography, a recording of his growth in grace and a revelation of his Saviour and Lord. What was the Lamb of God going to do? He was going to take away sin once and for all! These were the most glorious and the most consoling words which John had ever heard from the mouth of the great preacher of repentance. When they were uttered, John probably remembered the prediction of the prophet, which described the great Shepherd of the sheep as the Lamb to be offered up a sacrifice for their sins (Ps. 80:1; Ez. 34:23-24; 37:24 ff.).

After John had beheld the Lord, and heard his voice, he received His instruction. He became a sheep in his fold and his disciple. The word “disciple” is a beautiful word for it implies a spiritual and almost a child-like connection. As a child grows and gradually unfolds into manhood under the eyes and guardianship of his parents, so also did the disciples of Jesus, and this included John. When Jesus said, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you” (John 15:16), he stepped at once into a relation as their parents, in order to lead them towards the kingdom of heaven. As every development takes place by degrees in visible nature, and as the earth itself, being at first without form and void, was gradually prepared by the Creator for the residence of man, so Jesus in the same manner prepared his disciples for the kingdom of heaven.

A disciple, however, was not per se an apostle; and even in discipleship there were various stages. An “apostle” was one who was especially commissioned by Christ and one who had seen the risen Christ. Sometimes disciples accompanied Him in His wanderings, heard His words, and saw His miracles, though some did not believe Him to be the Anointed of God. These were the ones who, after a time, were mentioned as those who “went back and walked no more with Him” (John 6:66). Others, on the contrary, more and more openly acknowledged that He possessed the words of eternal life. They joined themselves to Him more closely and were the same as His chosen
disciples, to whom He, their benevolent Master, manifested His glory by word and deed, sign and miracle.

Our Lord ordained twelve, one of them was John. They were to be with Him, and He sent them forth to preach (Mark 3:14). He also gave them power to heal and cast out devils (3:15). Jesus gave John a name that indicated how formative he would become. John, along with his brother James, was surnamed “Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder” (3:17). “Boanerges” is a modification of the Hebrew, Bene Regesh and Regesh, which literally means “tumult or uproar.” It is pleasant to think that the beloved disciple was a “son of thunder,” meaning a man of energy and a force for Christ. Many of the Confederate chaplains would fit the depiction of a “son of thunder” as their lives demonstrated.

Remember when John “answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part” (Mark. 9:38-40). Here is zeal and initiative on John’s part, although he had to be corrected by Jesus. Zeal can be very good if properly directed, but wisdom is needed as with chaplains. John needed more maturity in this regard. When the Samaritan villagers refused to receive Christ because he was on his way to Jerusalem, it was his disciples, James and John, who said, “Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did” (Luke 9:54). Here is boldness in John that may have an importance when it comes to remembering him as the one who “leaned on Jesus’ bosom.” One needs to always remember that we cannot explain everyone’s behavior. Also, these men were not perfect. We know how bold Peter was, but we often forget the boldness of John, his best friend! These “sons of thunder” when confronted by Jesus were asked, “Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.” Jesus said, “Ye shall…” (Matt. 20:22, 23).

But whatever might be John’s errors and imperfections, there was a principle in his soul which was destined, in time, to overcome all human weakness. It was like the breath of life manifesting itself through the body and like the Spirit purifying and sanctifying the whole. This principle was his heart-felt love for his Teacher/Saviour, the leading trait of his Christian existence. Jesus loved John even unto the end or uttermost (John 13:1). In reference to John’s love of Jesus, along with looking back to the period when Jesus walked amongst them, and they beheld his glory, John refers to himself in his Gospel as “the disciple whom the Lord loved” (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20). John was not trying to exalt himself or claim superiority. This would have been far from his mind. He had been humbled by grace. Some have explained this phrase as in reality a paraphrase of John’s name which literally signifies “one favored by the Lord.” However, as John wrote by the perfect guidance of the Holy Spirit he told the truth! John said that we should “love him, because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19). That is the spirit and soul of John’s writings. This kind of love is not to be characterized as mere human attachment, but it was a godly, self-sacrificing, ardent and fiery love expressed by John in describing divine and Christian love. This love is stronger than death which many waters cannot quench, which floods cannot drown, especially in the light of the soul and physical sufferings of Christ. There were Confederate chaplains who had such a love for Christ Jesus and so should their descendents.
John wrote of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, “For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:34-36).

Please find in this issue our Chaplain-in-Chief’s introductory message to the reader. Our new Chaplain-in-Chief gives us an article with a challenge. His article is titled Fear Them Not. Your editor has provided a biographical sketch of Chaplain Ransdell White Cridlin, Part II of III. Next we have an article from assistant editor Evans, titled Second Manassas and Stonewall Jackson’s Faith. This issue as usual includes A Confederate Sermon, submitted by Chaplain Kenneth Studdard. This sermon is by Pastor Charles Minnigerode on Perfecting Holiness. Our Book Review is of the Diary of Rev. L. C. Vass: Chaplain, Stonewall Brigade edited by Elizabeth Vass Wilkerson. The review is by H. Rondel Rumburg.

Soli Deo Gloria,
Editor H. Rondel Rumburg

[Compatriots, if you know of any members of the Chaplains’ Corps or others who would like to receive this e-journal, please let us have their names and e-mail addresses. Also, feel free to send copies of this journal to anyone you think would like to receive it. If you want to “unsubscribe” please e-mail the editor or assistant editor. Confederately, HRR]

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THE CHAPLAIN-IN-CHIEF'S MESSAGE

Dear fellow Chaplains and Friends of the Corps:

It is an honor to greet you in the name of our Lord and in service with the Sons of Confederate Veterans. I want to thank Commander Barrow for allowing me the
opportunity to minister in this way. In addition, I want to thank past Chaplain-in-Chief Mark Evans for his outstanding leadership over the past four years. Chaplain-in-Chief Evans is a grand example of spiritual leadership and I am thus challenged to follow his example. I also thank past Chaplain-in-Chief Ron Rumburg for his outstanding work as editor of the *Chaplain’s Chronicle* – a truly one-of-a-kind publication.

Many have influenced me in the brotherhood of our Confederation. George Bryant invited me to my first Camp Meeting. Dave Wires is a solid Camp Commander (Colonel Robert Martin Camp, Evansville, Indiana). Past Adjunct-in-Chief Steve Ritchie is truly a Southern gentleman and provides powerful direction for the cause. Divisional Commander Gordon Flick guides the Confederate State of Indiana well. These men, and certainly others as well, have been an inspiration and motivation for me.

My hometown is Winston-Salem, North Carolina. My family and I worshiped at Marshall Baptist Church. The Rev. Milton Frazier was pastor of the church when, as a nine year old lad, I accepted Christ as Savior. Rev. Ryland Rock became pastor of the church shortly after my salvation and remained in ministry there until his retirement.

I graduated from North Forsyth High School in Winston-Salem and attended Bryan College (named for William Jennings Bryan) in Dayton, Tennessee (where the famous Scopes evolution trial occurred). Following graduation from Bryan, I attended Temple Baptist Theological Seminary (a division of Tennessee Temple University) in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

With you, I can rejoice in the Lord’s providence. He has allowed me to pastor churches in Tennessee, North Carolina, Kentucky, Virginia, and Indiana. For six years, I had opportunity to serve as a Salvation Army officer. In addition, I have ministered in Christian higher education serving on faculty at Bryan College, Tennessee Temple University, and Trinity College of the Bible and Theological Seminary. Presently I am Academic Dean at Master’s International School of Divinity, Evansville, Indiana.

In these challenging days, one of the high points of ministry is serving as Chaplain-in-Chief of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. In the current culture, Southern heritage seems assaulted almost daily. In the swirl of these attacks, we speak truth. We have nothing to fear from truth and we certainly encourage all to explore truth – whether it be spiritual truth or historical truth. The Southern States in the 1860s were in a struggle for independence, freedom, liberty, and self-determination. This is historic truth. The Southern States had no desire to march armies into Northern States for conquest. This is historic truth. The Southern States had only one request for their neighbors to the North: “Please leave us alone!” This is historic truth. The only reason that 620,000 young Americans died between 1861 and 1865 is the march of armed Federal troops South. If armed Federal troops had not marched South, there would have been no war. This is historic truth.

Another grand spiritual and historic truth is the mighty spiritual awakening that occurred in the Southern armies. Southern chaplains and ministers preached in the camps. The Spirit of God moved in the camps. Hundreds of Southern soldiers in the camps believed and were baptized. These young men were enabled to face the horrors of an enemy practicing total war with the peace of God reigning in their souls. From battle fields long since silent, many gallant souls were ushered into the presence of the living God.

As chaplains serving the descendants of those noble warriors, we are challenged to do as the faithful ministers of the 1860s. Let us make Christ known in the camps. When
we give the invocation and the benediction, let us point our compatriots to Christ the Savior. When we present a camp program, let us point our compatriots to Christ the Savior. When we present a devotional thought, let us point our compatriots to Christ the Savior. When we visit the sick or sorrowful, let us point our compatriots to Christ the Savior. When we counsel the hurting, let us point our compatriots to Christ the Savior.

We do this with the prayer that the Lord who worked so mightily in the midst of our ancestors, would work in our midst.

May our Lord bless and guide you in the challenges of this age. May spiritual and historic truth prevail in the midst of cultural correctness.

Deo Vindice!

Ray L. Parker
Chaplain-in-Chief

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Chaplain-in-Chief’s Article

Fear Them Not

Ray L. Parker

The Lord told Joshua, that great Old Testament general, “Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand: there shall not a man of them stand before thee” (Joshua 10:8). No military leader could ask for a more assuring promise. Joshua recognized that there was an enemy to face. He also understood their strength and tactics (vs. 5). He realized the possibility of defeat. In that threatening situation, Joshua did what every believer has opportunity to do, look to the Lord. The Lord responded to Joshua’s faith with this wonderful promise of providential victory.

In the War against Southern Independence, the Southern people, along with their political and military leaders, looked to the Lord for provision. The Confederate States were filled with multitudes who had a Christian worldview. The Bible was believed. The clergy were respected. Churches were reverenced as places for worship. Prayers were offered. The face of God was sought. Chaplains, missionaries, and pastors were recruited to minister in the camps. The War was thus a spiritual as well as political and military struggle.

The Southern people recognized that a strong, determined enemy had come upon them. The enemy was well equipped, well supplied, and at times seemingly numberless. The enemy practiced total war against the population. Cities were burned. Crops were set afire. Populations were displaced. An honored culture was “gone with the wind.” Yet, the Southern people persevered. It would have been easy to stop, to turn back, to give up. The people of the South pressed on to do their duty in a firm assurance that freedom, liberty, justice, and self-determination were worth the sacrifice.

Southern faith proclaimed, “Fear them not!” (Joshua 10:8). Southerners understood that it was never right to do wrong and that it was never wrong to do right. These committed people determined to do right even when the wrong was popular. General Robert E. Lee, a strong Christian, set a worthy example. When the Confederate
Army moved into Pennsylvania, toward what would be the Battle of Gettysburg, Lee ordered that Southern soldiers respect the people and property. He determined that the Army of the South would not follow the example of the Federals with their burning and looting.

One hundred and fifty years separate us from the independence struggle of the South. Yet the detractors of the Southern cause still stand in strength. As lovers of history and heritage, we see their efforts to skew the facts and silence the truth. The Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond, Virginia is no more. The city of Lexington, Virginia (where Lee and Jackson are buried) will not allow Southern banners for the celebration of Lee / Jackson Day. Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia has removed Southern flags from Lee Chapel where General Lee is buried. The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond will not allow the Southern flag to fly at the Confederate Memorial Chapel. It seems in the current culture, if it is Southern it must be opposed, removed, and denounced.

Our challenge in this culture is to follow the example of our ancestors. We must look to the Lord who is the author of truth and the founder of liberty and freedom. As Joshua, we must hear the Lord say, “Fear them not!” (Joshua 10:8). We must determine that we will press on and do our duty. We will not be silent. We will not stop, give up, or turn back. We will make public our heritage by every means possible. We will be faithful to our Camp meetings. We will be involved in our Division. We will pray for our national leaders and attend our Reunions. Whenever and wherever we can we will fly the Southern flag. Let our detractors see the Southern banner wave in the winds of freedom. They may say, “You cannot ...!” but our reply will be, “O yes we can!”

As Chaplains, we also recognize that our cause is above all else spiritual. In the Old Testament Joshua understood that the power of God was his only means of victory. As we minister in our Camps, like General Joshua, we need God’s providential power. Satan, the power of sin, and the influence of the world will seek to destroy our men. Let us join with our Lord in their defense. Let us be faithful to pray for our men daily and to be an example for our men to follow. In all that we do let us point our men to Christ as Savior. As we stand for truth in the midst of multiple detractors, if we listen, we will hear the Lord say, “Fear them not!” (Joshua 10:8).
The prospects of war interrupted Cridlin’s college work. The turmoil so constantly in the news had an impact on class work as well for his fellow students. The Commonwealth of Virginia left the United States and became a part of the Confederate States of America. The inevitability of war began to decimate the student body of Richmond College as students began to join the Confederate Army. Cridlin was not as anxious as his fellows to become active in the war and stayed in school as long as possible. He confided, “These were days I can never forget,” and then he related:

The Proclamation of President Lincoln for troops from Virginia to crush the secession of her Southern sisters stirred every heart in every man, and the people rushed to the front in defense of what they thought dear to every Southern heart…. I did not care to join the army as a soldier as my five brothers had already enlisted in the Southern Cause. I accepted a position as a missionary among soldiers and continued in this work, laboring among the hospitals and camps.... [Brinsfield, et. al., 98]

With the interruption of war R. W. Cridlin became a missionary and colporter to the men in gray. Where would he be of greatest use? He began working where the men were most needy, as in the hospitals on the Potomac River at Mathias Point, Craney Island, Norfolk and Portsmouth. He also began to visit men in the camps in those areas. His work as a colporter had now come to full fruition. From Christ in the Camp is the following account quoted by Chaplain J. William Jones from Dr. A. E. Dickinson:

Rev. R. W. Cridlin, Matthias Point: “I have disposed of all my Testaments. You can hardly conceive of the anxiety of soldiers for books. One said to me: ‘If I am spared to return to my home, I shall ever love the colportage cause, since it has done so much for me.’ I could distribute 1,000 Testaments to great advantage. I have begged a goodly number from the families around, but you must send me a large number. While urging the importance of Divine things on a company the other day, some wept freely, thus evincing their concern. Oh, let us labor for these dear souls! Many of them may be won to Christ” [Jones, 169].

Cridlin recognized the power of God’s Word and was willing to beg for copies to distribute to men who would be facing death. “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isa. 55:11).
Cridlin found that some of the officers were helpful in his ministry. At Norfolk and the area he visited Craney Island where Colonel Smith was in command of the forces. Smith was a godly man who prayed with his men every night. Cridlin believed him to be a supportive brother [William W. Bennett, A Narrative of the Great Revival, 100]. Rarely did God’s servants find opposition from the Confederate officers.

Thus Cridlin was busy in the Lord’s work as his efforts were expended on the hospitals and in the camps. His place of labor was about to change. His own explanation:

I labored among the soldiers on the Potomac River.... At the evacuation of Norfolk, after having spent some time at Yorktown and Williamsburg in the hospitals, I took the last steamer that left Jamestown for Richmond. After getting to Richmond I was assigned to work in the Chimborazo Hospital, situated on the hill overlooking Rockets, known as Chimborazo Park. There were thousands of sick and wounded soldiers in this extensive place. This became greatly crowded during the Seven Days Battle around Richmond and we often buried as many as fifty in one day at Oakwood Cemetery. I frequently made trips to the army in the field and preached for them. Three of my brothers were in the 30th Virginia Regiment, one in the Salem Artillery and one in the Government Depart in Richmond, though he died in July 1861 of fever [Brinsfield, et. al., 98].

Grass did not grow under Ransdell W. Cridlin’s feet nor moss on him. The Lord began to bless the efforts of His servants with revival. Frequently Cridlin had thirty to forty men claim an interest in his prayers regarding the condition of their souls. He related that at Chimborazo, “Many have professed conversion.” Brother Cridlin told of one conversion, “An old man, who happened to be present a few evenings ago at these meetings, professed conversion,” and he said, “Thank God, tomorrow I leave for Georgia to meet my wife and children, to tell them what great things the Lord hath done for me” [Jones, 181]. People not in the army were claimed for Christ as well.

**Becoming a Confederate Army Chaplain**

Ransdell W. Cridlin was doing the work of a chaplain although he did not call himself one. He had identified himself as a “missionary.” However, on June 9, 1863 there was an earnest request from the 38th Virginia Regiment’s officers and soldiers that he become their regimental chaplain. Cridlin received the appointment and began his duties. On December 6, 1863, he was ordained to the gospel ministry. His presbytery consisted of Rev. Thomas Hume Sr., a native of Scotland and for many years pastor of Court Street Baptist Church of Portsmouth and post chaplain at Petersburg; Rev. J. B. Harwick who was the Baptist chaplain at the hospital in Petersburg (when he received this appointment he resigned as pastor of Byrne Street Baptist Church); Rev. T. G. Keen, pastor of First Baptist Church in Petersburg; Rev. John M. Butler who was filling a pulpit in Petersburg; and Rev. William M. Young who was post chaplain in Petersburg. Thomas Hume, Jr. was in attendance, although not yet ordained. He also became chaplain of the 3rd Virginia Regiment. There was another brother ordained at the same time as Cridlin. He was Joseph F. Deans who was chaplain of the 61st Virginia Regiment [Jones, 381, Brinsfield, et. al., 99; Reuben Jones, A History of the Virginia Portsmouth Baptist Association, 198].
The faithful chaplain asserted, “I followed my command in all their marches and battles.” In the autumn of 1863 God was moving powerfully in all the Confederate armies. Chaplain John Cowper Granbery of the 11th Virginia wrote:

I have never before witnessed such a wide-spread and powerful religious interest among the soldiers. They crowd eagerly to hear the gospel, and listen with profound attention. Many hearts have been opened to receive the word of the Lord in every brigade. It would delight your heart to mark the seriousness, order, and deep feeling, which characterize all our meetings. In Armistead’s brigade, where I have been most constantly working in co-operation with Bro. Cridlin, a Baptist, and chaplain of the 38th Virginia, and with other ministers, there have been some seventy professions of conversion.... The change is manifest in the whole camp. Men have put away their cards; instead of blasphemy, the voice of prayer and the sweet songs of Zion are heard at all hours. There is little gambling, but all seem contented and interested. We have many proofs that it is a genuine and mighty work of grace [Bennett, 321-322].

As Chaplain Cridlin started out with the 38th Virginia heading for Gettysburg he was taken sick at Edinburg in Shenandoah County. He did not make it to the battle with his men. “While I suffered very much, yet it seemed providential that I was not at Gettysburg, as my regiment was cut up, losing many of the best men in the army” [Brinsfield, et. al., 99].

Sickness was not something to which chaplains were immune as the record shows. Chaplain J. William Jones reflected on Rev. Andrew Broaddus’ arrival and remarking that he did not know where he was to preach that night. The old gentleman remarked that if there was no place for him to preach he would not dismount and he would find one himself. Jones remarked, “Oh, there are plenty of places at which you can preach, but I have just received a note from Brother Cridlin, of Armistead’s brigade, saying that he is in the midst of a great revival, is sick, and greatly needs help.” Rev. Broaddus remarked, “All right, now I will dismount. I will eat some of your rations and go at once to help Brother Cridlin” [Jones, 247].

Chaplain Cridlin was busy ministering to those whom the Lord placed within reach of his ministry. His ministry was divinely attested by the Holy Spirit regenerating many. Toward the end of the conflict, if indeed it has ever ended in one way, it was reported:

Brother R. W. Cridlin, of the thirty-eighth Virginia, has been greatly blessed. A large portion of his regiment have made a profession of faith in Christ since Brother Cridlin has been connected with it [Jones, 386].

Chaplain Cridlin preached many sermons, distributed many tracts and Bibles, comforted many wounded men, assisted in the awakening in the armies, stayed close to his regiment, sought to do his duty unto God and baptized many men upon profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He confessed, “I baptized a great many and some times under the guns of the enemy.” One of the men he baptized was Captain Charles F. James of Company F, the 8th Virginia Regiment. This man was eventually called to the ministry, became an educator and author. The following is part of a foreword to the Sprinkle Publication volume by this writer:
God had purposed to change the life of Captain Charles F. James. The winter of 1864 at Petersburg the Lord was calling out a people for His name among the encamped Southern soldiers. There had been many movements of God the Holy Spirit that were known as “revival.” The Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit gave Charles James a new heart during this winter. He was converted in camp near Drewry’s Bluff. He was “a convert both to Christ and the Baptist faith in one of the many camp revivals of the war years.” James made a public profession of his faith in Christ as his Lord and Saviour by being baptized by Chaplain R. W. Criddlin. Ransdell White Criddlin was a Baptist chaplain of the 38th Virginia. At war’s end he was paroled at Winchester on the 8th of May 1865 [Charles F. James, Documentary History of the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Virginia, b-c].

There were many trophies of grace through the ministry of Chaplain R. W. Criddlin. He wrote, “I think my best work for the Master was done through the war” [Brinsfield, et. al., 100]. Chaplain Criddlin was paroled in April of 1865 at Appomattox Courthouse, Virginia, from the 38th Virginia Infantry, Pickett’s Division. The chaplain of the 38th Virginia described his acceptance by his flock,

Having remained with my regiment through all the dangers, they wished to express their appreciation and some friend raised in the Regiment and Brigade, $1,200 with which they bought me a nice horse, saddle and bridle as a present, which I most highly valued and kept them until some time after the war. My men were very kind to me. I believe God greatly blessed my labor as their Chaplain [Brinsfield, et. al., 101; Taylor, 382].

Please consider a letter he wrote to Chaplain J. William Jones which gives an overview of his chaplaincy,

Chesterfield, March 22, 1867.

Dear Brother Jones: Before going into details, allow me to state that I was appointed chaplain of the Thirty-eighth Virginia Infantry June 9, 1863, and remained with it to the surrender.

(1.) I know very little about the early history of my regiment. We had a history of our regiment (and also one of our brigade) written, but have heard nothing of it since the close of the war. This regiment was composed of men from Pittsylvania, Halifax and Mecklenburg counties, Virginia. It started from Danville in the spring of 1861, under the command of Colonel E. C. Edmunds. It was connected with several brigades. When I joined it, it was attached to Armistead’s Brigade, Pickett’s Division, First Corps, and it continued in this position to the surrender, under different commanders. General Armistead was killed at Gettysburg. Our next general was Barton; then George H. Steuart, of Maryland, who remained with it till the surrender. I knew very little about the other regiments—viz., Ninth, Fourteenth, Fifty-third and Fifty-seventh. The Rev. Mr. Crocker, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was at one time chaplain of the Fourteenth; Rev. Mr. Joiner, Methodist Episcopal Church, chaplain of the Fifty-seventh; Rev. W. S. Penick of the Fifty-third, afterwards Brother P. H. Fontaine; Rev. J. W. Walkup, of Rockbridge county, Virginia, was chaplain of the Ninth, afterwards Rev. George W. Easter, of the Episcopal Church. The Rev. Mr. Cosby, now of Petersburg, Virginia (Episcopal), was
the first chaplain of the Thirty-eighth Regiment. He remained a short while. Then a Rev. Mr. Colton, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was appointed, who remained two or three months. I am unable to state how many sermons I preached or prayer-meetings held, Bible-classes conducted, tracts distributed. I have no record and I can’t trust my memory. We had a flourishing Brigade Young Men’s Christian Association, and when in camp had our Sabbath-schools and Bible-classes. I know I distributed thousands of tracts, and I have reason to believe much good was done. Just here allow me to relate a little incident illustrating the good effects of tracts. While carrying around these little messengers of love, I entered a tent and found two young men engaged in a game of cards. At first they seemed ashamed, then they braced up their filling courage (if courage it was) and continued the game. I kindly asked “if I could take a hand.” Waiting for my turn, I first threw down “Evils of Gaming;” then “Mother’s Parting Words to her Soldier Boy.” I found that the game was mine. At the sight of the word “mother,” the tears rolled down their cheeks as they both exclaimed: “Parson, I will never play cards again!”

2.) My first protracted effort was made soon after the battle of Gettysburg, near Orange Court House. In the meeting God was with us and His people were revived and more than a hundred converted. Brother A. Broaddus baptized twenty for me while there. My next meeting (of much interest) was in the fall of 1864, in which about sixty were turned from “darkness to light.” I don’t remember any remarkable conversions, or that any means were employed beyond the ordinary means of grace.

3.) Most of those who professed were steadfast in their love and devotion to Christ and His cause. Many of them died in the “triumphs of faith.”

4.) Our first colonel, Colonel Edmunds, was, I think, a member of the Episcopal Church. His influence was very beneficial to his command. I know nothing of his last moments, as he was killed on the field of Gettysburg. Our next colonel was the young yet brave and accomplished gentleman and officer, James Cabell of Danville. Colonel Cabell was not a member of any Church, but told me a few days before his death “that be felt prepared.” He was killed near Drewry’s Bluff, May 10, 1864, leaving a young bride and many dear ones to morn their loss. Colonel George Griggs, of Pittsylvania, was our next colonel. He was a member of the Baptist Church. He was ever ready to aid me in my meetings, and was not ashamed to exhort his men publicly to enlist under the banner of Christ. His life was spared and he has resumed his place at home, where I hope he may be long spared to labor for Christ. Among my most valuable assistants was Captain J. T. Averett. Captain John A. Herndon, Captain Jennings, Captain Grubbs, Lieutenant Gardner and others were true soldiers of Jesus.

General Steuart and his assistant adjutant-general, Captain Darden, were members of the Episcopal Church. Colonel Phillips, of the Ninth, was a man of more than ordinary talent, and he did all he could for Christ.

5.) It was fully and satisfactorily proved in our regiment that true “soldiers of the Cross” made the best soldiers for their country.

6.) I don’t remember but some four or five who told me that they would devote the rest of their time to the ministry. Captain J. A. Herndon, of Pittsylvania, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, expected to do so. Brother W. A. Morefield, of Halifax; Brother Hodges, Methodist Episcopal; Brother C. Penick, Episcopal Church;
Brother C. F. James (Captain Company F, Eighth Virginia), of Loudon, whom I
baptized, is now at Richmond College preparing himself for the ministry. No doubt
many others will decide to “go and do likewise.” God grant it.

(7.) I baptized about forty. I was not ordained till December, 1863. I think I can
safely put the whole number of conversions in the brigade at 500, as other chaplains
had gracious revivals, and have reason to infer they had many conversions.

My dear brother, you have my best wishes and prayers in your arduous work.
We need such a book. I think it will do much good (referring to Christ in the Camp).
If I can serve you in any way, I am at your service. May the Lord bless us at an early
date with such refreshing showers of grace as we enjoyed in Orange in 1863.

Yours in Christian love,

R. W. Cridlin.

Part III to follow next issue.

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1989

Second Manassas and Stonewall Jackson’s Faith

Mark W. Evans

Past Chaplain-in-Chief

At the beginning of June, 1862, General Robert E. Lee, with a command of 48,000,
faced General John Pope’s force of 75,000. By September, the Union’s Army was in full
retreat. The final action that brought this remarkable conclusion may be attributed to
General Stonewall Jackson. The General marched an army of 20,000 men fifty one
miles in two days around the right flank of Pope’s army and destroyed his base of
operations. Although vastly outnumbered, the South’s hero positioned his command
between the Northern invader and Washington. He next forced the adversary to engage
in battle. The battle began with “unprecedented fury” and continued until 9:00 p.m.
The braggart Pope failed to dislodge Jackson.

On the second day, General Robert E. Lee successfully dispersed Union forces at
Thoroughfare Gap, and sent General James Longstreet forward to assist Jackson’s small
army. Once re-enforcements arrived, Pope shifted the thrust of his attack to the left of
Jackson’s line. This section was under the command of General A. P. Hill and received
wave after wave of fierce assaults. On the extreme left were the regiments of Brigadier Maxcy Gregg of South Carolina. So intense and unrelenting were the Yankee attacks that ammunition was depleted and some units had to resort to throwing stones. General Gregg sent the following message: “Tell General Hill that my ammunition is exhausted, but that I will hold my position with the bayonet.” The valiant General gathered the remnant of his forces around him and stood upon a hill awaiting the enemy. A veteran remembered: “I can see him now, as with his drawn sword, that old Revolutionary scimitar we all knew so well. He walked up and down the line, and [I] hear him as he appealed to us to stand by him and die there. ‘Let us die here, my men, let us die here.’”¹ They heard the cheers of their foes as they began their assault and prepared to meet them with cold steel. As the enemy advanced they heard shouts behind them and thought they were also being attacked from the rear. They turned, and to their amazement, they saw their friends: “Field, with his Virginians, and Pender, with his North Carolinians, relieved by Early and Forno, of Ewell's division, came rushing up, comparatively fresh for the work, and cheering us as they advanced on either side of our little band, waited not the assault, as we were doing perforce, but with a wild Confederate yell, rushed upon Stevens as he was in the confusion of crossing to our attack. The Federals halted, turned and fled, our friends crossing the railroad and pursuing them.”²

The second day ended with Longstreet pushing back the enemy, but nightfall brought the weary Southern warriors back to their chosen lines of combat. Dabney wrote, “The Medical Director, Doctor M’Guire, recounting the many casualties which he had witnessed, said, ‘General, this day has been won by nothing but stark and stern fighting,’ ‘No,’ said Jackson, ‘It has been won by nothing but the blessing and protection of Providence.’”³ The chaplains, returning from their duties after caring all day for the wounded, gathered as many soldiers as they could for prayer and worship. Dabney said, “many were the brave men who joined in these strange and solemn prayer-meetings, whose next worship was offered in the upper sanctuary.”⁴

On the third day, General Lee waited for the Yankee attack. The Northern forces received devastating shells from the artillery coupled with a rain of fire from the infantry. Their great numbers only increased the destruction and the lines wavered and broke. The men in gray arose to attack their foes and began a pursuit that did not end that day until darkness prevented the distinguishing of friend from foe. Dabney said, “Over several miles of hill and dale, of field and forest, the two lines now swept forward with a terrible grandeur, closing upon the disordered masses of the enemy like the jaws of a leviathan.”⁵ General Jackson concluded his official report of this stunning triumph: “For these great and signal victories our sincere and humble thanks are due unto Almighty God. We should in all things acknowledge the hand of Him who reigns in Heaven, and rules among the armies of men. In view of the arduous labors and great privations the troops were called to endure, and the isolated and perilous position which the command occupied, while engaged with greatly superior numbers of the enemy, we

¹ Lt. Col. Edward McCrady, 1st Reg., SC Volunteers, An address to the survivors of the Twelth Regiment, SC Volunteers, at Walhalla, SC on August 21, 1884.
² Ibid.
³ Dabney, p. 531
⁴ Ibid., p. 531.
⁵ Ibid., 534.
can but express the grateful conviction of our mind, that God was with us, and gave the victory; and unto His holy name be the praise.”

Years before the war, Jackson humbly trusted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The General walked by faith until the day he died. Robert L. Dabney wrote: “[H]is soul dwelt habitually upon the plain and familiar promises of Gospel blessings, with a simplicity of faith like that of the little child. He did not entertain his mind with theological refinements and pretended profundities or novelties; but fed it with those known truths which are the common nourishment of all God’s people, wise and simple, and which are therefore the greatest truths of redemption. The eminence of his Christian character was not in that he affected to see doctrines unknown or recondite to others; but in this: that he embraced the doctrines common to all, with a faith so entire and prevalent. This character of his religion often suggested to those less spiritually minded than himself the opinion, that his was a common-place understanding. They forgot that it is by receiving the kingdom of God as a little child that we must enter therein. When they met Jackson in council or in action, in his own profession, they soon learned their mistake, and recognized in him the original force and power of true greatness.”

We have a spiritual heritage that is desperately needed in our present moral upheaval. General Jackson and many other defenders of the Southland exemplified the way of victory through faith in Jesus Christ and belief in God’s Word. Even in the midst of grueling combat, the men in gray lifted up their hearts in prayer. Stonewall Jackson said, “[W]e can but express the grateful conviction of our mind, that God was with us, and gave the victory, and unto His holy name be the praise.” May this be said of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

A CONFEDERATE SERMON
Submitted by Chaplain Kenneth Studdard

Charles Minnigerode (1814–1894) served as pastor of St. Paul’s Church of Richmond for 33 years. He was best known as Jefferson Davis’ pastor. Davis attended St. Paul’s during the War. It was Minnigerode who was first allowed to visit President Davis during his imprisonment at Fortress Monroe following the war. He was a comfort and spiritual guide to President Davis during this difficult time.

Charles Minnigerode was a faithful pastor and preacher of the Gospel. His sermon, “Jesus Christ and Him Crucified,” was considered a powerful presentation of the Gospel. The New York Times, in its obituary of Minnigerode, noted that “it was these words that the good old man had on his tongue in his last hours.”

The following sermon was preached in Saint Paul’s and is a fine example of preaching holiness and the Gospel.

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6 Ibid., 537.
7 Ibid., 541.
Perfecting Holiness

Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and Spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

2 Corinthians vii. 1.

The religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ acts upon His followers in a two-fold manner. It puts them in a state of safety and everlasting happiness, for "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;" and it puts upon them a holy and divine character, for "they walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." This condition and this character of the Christian always go hand in hand.

The object of the wondrous grace of God is certainly the happiness of our poor fallen race; but only as it is connected with its holiness. God would never have sent His Son into the world to save beings that would continue unholy. Only in this connection both the purposes of God and the interests of man can stand. The happiness of beings changed from sinners to saints, the new creation of the power of His holiness, is the highest glory of God which is revealed to men and angels. The holiness which is engendered in the heart of man by the promise of such happiness and the knowledge of the love which brought it to him is the highest element in his happiness.

The promise comes from above; the happy state of salvation and immortal blessedness in the reconciliation of God is prepared for us from without by another, even our Saviour. The holiness which forms the character of those who are endowed by His grace with this happiness is developed from within, in the heart of man, by the powerful agency of the Spirit of holiness.

The great thing, then, for men to do is,—resting on the promises of God and believing in the power of the Saviour—to purify themselves as He is pure, to learn of Jesus, who gives them rest, and strive to be like Him. This is "being a Christian!"

Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness. Here we learn, first, that the earliest work of the Christian (and, alas, owing to our defiled nature, the strength of sin, the weak hold of all that is good and holy, the powerful hold and influence of the world, which lieth in evil, it continues his work unto the end of this life below) is a conflict with evil, a renunciation of sin, a process of purification. And by this very confession, by the vow we take when entering Christ's Church, "to renounce the world, the flesh and the devil," we acknowledge our sinful nature, and our state of condemnation and corruption, out of which we are delivered by the grace of God.

And, secondly, we learn how broad the commandments of God are, how thorough must be the Christian's work: from all filthiness, from all and every sin! Herein the Christian scheme differs so essentially from all the various schemes of reformation which have been pressed upon us. It alone makes of man a new creature! It sets him against all sins, not this or that one which may be so glaring and so destructive to worldly success and respectability among men, that in their renunciation God need not have any share or glory. It knows no sin which its disciple dare indulge in. He who is a Christian at all, fears God and knows that he breaks the whole law if he offends in one point. He knows no venial sins, no indulgences which he may adopt by way of compensation for others which he denies himself. His law forbids every sin; and more—it leads him to contend against sinfulness, against the evil that is within, against the corrupt bias of the heart. He must not only regard the whole breadth of God's
commandments, but he must go the full length of it; pursue sin beyond and beneath its outward phenomena and attack it in the heart. He cleanses himself from all filthiness not only of the flesh, but also of the spirit. It is the motive which, after all, qualifies the act; and the Christian must clear that, clear the ground, tear up the evil root, and not be satisfied with mere pruning. In the heart lust is conceived; there he attacks it and conquers it, and there, too, prevents its bringing forth sin; in the heart it is that covetousness sets up its idols, and there the Christian must defeat it. And it is this searching character of his holiness which unmasks many an act which the world might praise; his prayers, his charitable deeds, his self-denials—all are weighed in the spiritual balance of the law of Jesus and found wanting, if the principle is wrong. And in the heart and spirit he discovers sins which the world scarcely knows or frowns upon; pride, self-love, unbelief, and everything that exalts man and puts down God and His Christ!

Oh, my brethren, is it wonderful that the Christian should have such a deep sense of human depravity, when he has learned it by searching his own heart according to such rules? And can we look upon those who, against the testimony of God, exalt the grandeur of the human soul and deny the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart, otherwise than as guilty of using a false balance and deceitful weights? If you want to know the Christian try him on these points. Try yourselves, brethren, before God and your conscience. If you are at ease in your own mind, careless as to sin or duty, without a deep sense of your sinfulness, you have not striven as you ought to do, to cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. For all those who have not learned to condemn themselves have neither learned to know God’s law nor themselves!—And nothing makes the Christian walk more warily and circumspectly; nothing keeps him closer to Jesus, and more fearful of temptation and even the appearance of evil; nothing, therefore, frees him more from these very abominations, and from everything that God looks upon as filthiness; nothing makes his character shine brighter and qualifies him better for the highest attainments of godliness, than this humbling conviction of his own sinfulness and weakness, which makes him kneel at the foot of the cross and pray "make me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." And nothing, surely, can raise his love to Jesus higher, than the consciousness of all the innumerable sins which only His love that passeth understanding could forgive, "for to whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much." But more; the Christian's virtue is not merely negative. It does not consist in only abstaining from sin. It perfects holiness. It goes out after everything that is true and honest and just and pure and lovely and of good report. It follows the example of the Master and "goes about doing good;" it searches out ways and means to glorify the Saviour and adorn His profession with all the Christian graces, and become as "a burning and shining light," to His praise and glory. Its aim is ever onward; perfection, and nothing but perfection satisfies him, for all else falls short of the glory of God. He rests in His faith indeed, and fears no storm that could move him from the Rock of Ages. And though his horizon be dark and his own corruptions make him weep and mourn, he still lights up his darkness with the undying flame of faith and hope. But his faith is not alone; it has creative energy and is surrounded by all the graces of the Gospel "love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance." In them he follows the bright example which Christ left His disciples; and the Christian, who is "God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works," grows unto the perfect man, "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Thus he perfects holiness in the fear of God. In the fear of God,
brethren! This is the principle which distinguishes all, even his least important acts, from those of others, they are all "begun, continued and ended in God" and thus only are they truly Christian acts; thus only sufficiently guarded against every temptation and every evil; thus only sufficiently supplied with needful strength and light, and thus only the Christian is enabled to fulfill the great commandment of God, to seek that holiness which is unto the Lord.

I have thus, very feebly, drawn the outlines of the aims, the strivings, the whole character of the Christian; that holiness which distinguishes him from all others. Deficient as the image is, I yet boldly ask: show me one in all the history of the world, in all the products of imagination, in all the dreams of philosophy that can compare with it. Aye, Brethren, even if Christianity were what its enemies would fain make it out to be, a mere fable, a fond delusion; if that fable is able to bring about such results, and educate such characters, the like of which nothing else has ever produced; if that delusion furnishes the world with the only specimen of perfect truth and highest virtue; if it converts and has converted millions from profane, idle, debauched lives, into sober, righteous and godly men; if it has furnished a code of morality, in comparison with which the highest productions of Greek or any other philosophers are abominations, and not only furnished the code but illustrated it by living examples; and if, as all history proves, whatever is great and glorious has been fostered by it, and the noblest, the highest, the most intellectual, and most permanently useful men that ever adorned our race, have formed a halo round her crown which sheds a brighter light upon the annals of humanity than all else; then I still, and every rational being still, would rather follow this fable, than all the inefficient and effete abortions of a high sounding, but in comparison with it, not only a low-born but a low-keeping philosophy, or all the scurrilous impostures which have made fools of those who deemed themselves too wise to believe the Bible. Yes, the moral results of Christianity are perhaps the strongest proof of its divinity. There is no enthusiasm or fanaticism here, no temporary success, but a settled principle that has been victorious at all times and among all nations and classes of men. A principle with which none but the libertine, none but those who are willing to boast of their shame can find fault; a universal fitness, even in its language, in all its sentiments, in every reproof, in every promise, which has never left an inquirer without an answer, and a penitent without comfort; and a life-giving power which has lined the canvass of this world's tableau with a shining train of saints, from its founder down to the humblest Christian in this house, before which all other glories of this world fade away. If this institution were not divine, if its author were not God, surely old Gamaliel's saying was full of wisdom—it would have come to nought. But as it is of God it cannot be overthrown; the gates of hell itself shall not prevail against it. And has it ever struck you that nothing ever has opposed it but what comes from hell or goes there? Beware!

But the great question for us, my brethren, to decide is this: Can we claim for ourselves this character of holiness which has been shown to be inseparable from the state of salvation into which Christianity puts its votaries? Let each one ask, Am I thus holy? And is there one who does not bow his head in sorrow and confusion, and smite upon his breast and say, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!"

My dear Christian brethren, if it was necessary for the Christian to boast that he had already attained, either were already perfect, what hope would there be for us? No, thank God, the Christian stands in the righteousness of Christ and not his own; and Paul
himself has taught us to distinguish between attainments and aims or aspirations "not as though I had already attained, but I press towards the mark!" No true Christian ever boasted of his attainments, but all true Christians aim at nothing less than perfection.

The demands of God's law we cannot lower. Whether you are Christians or not, professors of religion or not, they will be made on you. Whether there be a Christ or no, you must—if you do not mean to remain as you are "condemned already," to remain dead here and in all eternity—you must cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and live unto the Lord, "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." This must be your aim if you mean to have any hopes at all, whatever your premises be.

But behold how large and how gracious the offer which is made us, which is made to all, just in this Gospel which we preach, just in the revelation which takes the high ground we have laid down.

There is full, plenary forgiveness promised and ensured to all who will accept Jesus as their Saviour. There are none who do not come under its provisions; none who are at heart worse; none, I dare say, who are worse in their lives than some of those were who have availed themselves of the invitation and laid hold by faith on the promises set before us. "Though your sins be as scarlet and red like crimson, they shall be as white as snow and as wool." What Christian is there who does not confess, that if it was not for this promise there would be no hope for him? Are your sins, my impenitent brethren, worse than these and of a deeper dye than scarlet and crimson? Oh! look upon your Saviour! look upon Jesus, who, from the cross where He died for you, prayed for your forgiveness, and has said to all "Come unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the world!" Look upon Him and take His salvation, for whose sake alone all who ever have gone or shall go to Heaven have been pardoned and blessed with an everlasting salvation. You are just bid to throw your sins upon Him, and thus freed from their burden and their guilt, accepted in His name by God, who will welcome you as beloved children: to resolve, under the influence of that same grace which offers you life eternal, to devote yourselves to a new and better life; "to renounce all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit and strive to perfect holiness, in the fear of God." This is all! All! And is it possible that men will refuse? That you, my dear, my beloved brethren, for whose souls Christ died, to whom heaven has been opened by His death and passion; for whose salvation your pastors, your friends, the whole Church of God bow their knees and offer up their warmest prayers—that you will refuse the salvation offered? Look upon those promises, survey those blessings!

There is God the Father waiting to be gracious. There is Christ, the beloved, who underwent all that suffering for you and now beseeches you to let Him save you, and present you, holy and blameless, to His and your Father! There is the Holy Spirit who has been wrestling with you long and not yet withdrawn, and urges you on the way to holiness and bliss, and woos you to the abode of safety, who engages to help and guide you and to beat down Satan under your feet! Heaven, from one end to the other, is in league with you and interested in your victory, and its holy angels are waiting to welcome you and to rejoice over every sinner that repenteth! There are the millions saved by the same salvation which is offered to you, a cloud of witnesses to the blood and spirit of Jesus, to cheer you on and meet you in the blessed mansions—perhaps an honored father, a loving mother, who even in heaven remembers her prodigal child; a son or daughter gone before, and now whispering to you in the stilly night when your evil conscience beds you on a restless couch, and speaking heavenly words to you in
dreams, and saying "Come!" There are friends, and brothers and sisters, wives and husbands, who never say a prayer, but your soul is prayed for; who never look you in the face but to watch the signs of quickening grace! And more! there is the promise of help, the promise of sufficiency, of strength according to your days, the promise that no temptation shall befall you from which God will not deliver you; that all things shall work together for your good; the promise that

"The soul that to Jesus has fled for repose,
He will not, He will not desert to His foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
He'll never, no never, no never forsake!"

Oh! my impenitent brethren! you who have resisted so many calls, what can I say to you? Do you not feel, do you not know, that we are right and you are wrong? That we urge you to the only course of safety, whilst you are in the straight road to perdition? Do you not know and feel, that this life in which alone you can escape and make your calling and election sure is short, is uncertain? What security have you that another day will be allowed you in which to make your peace with God?

Lo! on a narrow neck of land
'Twixt two unbounded seas you stand:
Yet how insensible!
A point of time, a moment's space
Removes you—where?
WHERE?

Oh! that I could burn this question into your souls: "Where?" That it might accompany you wherever you go, and force itself upon your attention every hour and moment of your lives, in every company, at every occupation, and haunt you with its import, till you have sought the peace which alone can give you rest!

Do you not know and do you not feel that an eternity is before you, an eternity of woe or bliss, and that its issues depend on your choice here?

Oh think, when heaven and earth are fled
And times and seasons o'er,
When all that can die shall be dead,
That you shall die no more.
Oh where will then your portion be,
Where will you spend eternity?

Where? Where? Oh, that I had a thousand tongues to haunt you with this question, and let it sound and resound in your ears, when my voice has died away—"where?"

Thank God, you still have space and time for repentance. Once more you are privileged to hear the Gospel, once more you are called upon to make your choice.

And now in the name of God Almighty, I lay this claim before you; and ere you cross this threshold, ere you add once more the sin of receiving Christ's grace in vain to
your long, long disobedience to his call of love, I tell you choose. By all the authority of God, by all the love of Jesus, by the hopes and fears of your immortal soul, choose!

You cannot leave this house without receiving or rejecting Christ in your heart. You cannot leave this house without choosing whom you will serve.

Mark the alternatives, and may God guide you in your choice; I shall remind you of it in the other world: that you cannot go from these sacred precincts to-night without one of these alternatives. No other issue is possible.

You either resolve,

"God, I will give Thee my heart, Jesus, I accept Thy promises, and with Thy grace assisting me, I will cleanse myself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit and perfect holiness in the fear of God."

Or,

"God I defy Thee, Jesus I spurn Thy promises, and I will not cleanse myself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. I will not perfect holiness in the fear of God."

And can you blame the Gospel, if of such it saith, "These shall go into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."

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Book Review

*Diary of Rev. L. C. Vass: Chaplain, Stonewall Brigade*

by Elizabeth Vass Wilkerson

Bloomington, Indiana: Author House, 2008, 214 pages, PB.

**Review by H. Rondel Rumburg**

This book was put together and edited by Mrs. Wilkerson who is the great granddaughter of Chaplain Vass. From the appearance of the title page she is accredited as the author, but that is not the case. She comments, “This diary has been transcribed as Rev. Vass wrote it as best as I could ascertain.” We should be grateful to this Southern lady for making this diary available for it is primary material on a Confederate Chaplain and should be precious in our sight. Mrs. Wilkerson was assisted by her husband. This reviewer extends thanks to Elizabeth Vass Wilkerson for making this important diary available.

There are additional materials added that enhance the book even more in the Appendices of A to F dealing with:

- Letters ((1862-65)
- List of Presbyterian Chaplains (in the ANV)
- Personal Letters and Poems (1869-1896)
- Galatians: A Sermon (this is actually an overview of the book)
- Photographs
- Civil War Memorabilia
The book is indexed as well.

The book opens with an autobiographical sketch of Lachlan Cumming Vass taken from his *The History of the First Presbyterian Church in New Bern, N. C.* He was born in Fredericksburg, Virginia, on March 20, 1831 and he departed his earthly life on September 28, 1896, in New Bern, North Carolina.

Chaplain Vass was appointed to his chaplaincy of the 27th Virginia Infantry in the Stonewall Brigade in December of 1862. His *Diary* commences in April of 1865 and ends January 4, 1889.

Vass was an instrument of God in the revivals that swept through the Stonewall Brigade. He was a faithful and active chaplain. He was a prominent part of the Chaplains Association in the ANV as secretary. He wrote a letter to his mother on Friday, May 9, 1862:

My Dear mother,

I reached Staunton July and left there yesterday. The army had left, for what point no one knows, and is advancing rapidly westward. This morning I write while sitting on a log in the woods, waiting for the wagon to come up. I think I hear its rumbling on the turnpike now, ascending the mountain, and I will have to stop soon. Last night Hopkins and I, with the rest of the party, slept on the ground near our large camp fires. I feel very well this morning. I was up once in the night mending the fire and warming, then turned over in bed and slept very sweetly and refreshingly. Frost was plenty on the ground and our blankets of course wet. But this life is not so hard in experiences as it looks when talked about.

There was fighting yesterday ahead of us, we judge from the firing of cannon which we heard. We came near capturing a whole Yankee regiment I hear; we got their tents etc. which I passed on the road yesterday. The report is a “regiment,” but I expect it was only a company or so on picket.

I can tell nothing about the chaplaincy until I get with the army. If I succeed, I want to return and get my horse as soon as possible; and such other things as I find needful. I left nearly all my things in Staunton. I telegraphed to Capt. McCorkle to send my oil cloth to Staunton, care of Rev. Wm. E. Baker, and asked him to take care of it.

I had not time to pay Richard for taking down my trunk, but told him you would do so. Give him a quarter for it.

This letter relates to his beginning days in the army. Perhaps some of his views changed regarding the difficulty of the task before him. However, his service for the Lord was faithful.

His comments on May 15, 1865, when he was relieved of duty with the Confederate wounded at General Hospital. Everyone else took their paroles on that day but he did not. He was given assurance that he would be unconditionally released but wrote, “Covenant breaking is no new trait in Yankee character. They are quite unreliable unless there be ability to compel them by retaliation....”

**Wednesday, May 17th, 1865**—Today I presented my papers at the Prov. Marsh.’s Office, and was asked, “Do you wish a parole?” “Yes. Can I preach in the city without taking the oath?” “No, Sir.” “Let me see the oath.” I read it and then signified my willingness to take it. Willingness! What a mockery of words! Bayonets
around me, and restrictions on every hand, so that one has difficulties in even getting a base support, and thus are brought in great necessity up to the oath, and then said to take it willingly! No, I loathed it and never would have taken it, if it was possible to have avoided it. But I suppose everyone will be forced to swallow the bitter pill....

So much for “the land of the free and the home of the brave” when a man is denied the preaching of the gospel if he does not capitulate to these harbingers of a new kind of “freedom.” Freedom? Not in the historic sense or according to the Constitution of the United States. This just evidenced the reason for the war in the first place.

From his Diary on the same day he declared:

I look simply to God for guidance. He has been very kind to me and my faith in ... that he will take care of me. Oh, that my love to Jesus may be increased; and my zeal and usefulness in his service. – My throat has been troubling me greatly of late. This grief I bring to the Cross. O, God, will thou not relieve me for [thine] own sake; for the sake of my dear old Mother, and my own comfort. I pray for this great mercy in submission to thy will and in the name of my Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Here was a chaplain with true grit. He left the scene of war to enter the pastoral ministry where he continued to serve the Lord. This volume gives us another piece of the puzzle in understanding the Corps of Chaplains in the Confederate States of America Army.

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**We must remember who we are and what we must be about:**

*The SCV Challenge* by Lt. Gen. S. D. Lee

**To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we will commit the vindication of the cause for which we fought. To your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier’s good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles which he loved and which you love also, and those ideals which made him glorious and which you also cherish. Remember, it is your duty to**
see that the true history of the South is presented to future generations.

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Chaplain’s Handbook
Sesquicentennial Edition
Sons of Confederate Veterans

This is an enlarged Sesquicentennial Edition of the Chaplain’s Handbook. It is enlarged from 131 pages to 165 pages. A chapter has been added on the topic, SCV Chaplains Should be Gentlemen; there has also been added a third burial service, The Order for the Burial of the Dead of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Confederate States of America; a chapter on Praying in Public has been added; and a chapter on Prayer Suggestions for Public Use. All the other chapters remain the same.

Hopefully, those using the handbook will find it even more useful than before. There is the same cloth cover, acid free paper for longevity, sewn signatures, etc.

The retail price is being kept to a minimum of $12, which is very low for a hardback quality publication. Contact SCV headquarters or biblicalandsouthernstudies.com for a copy.