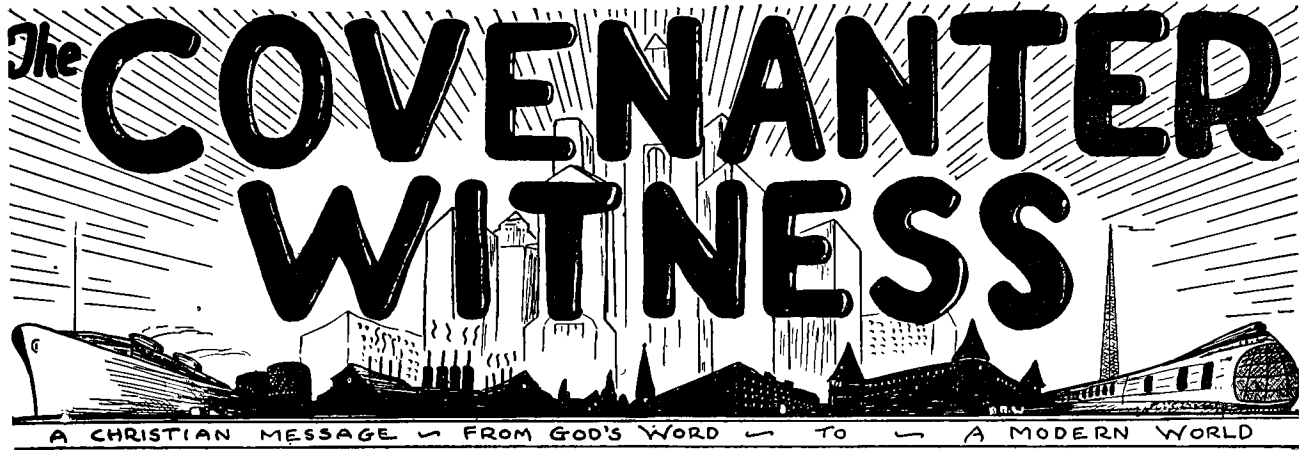


The COVENANTER WITNESS



A CHRISTIAN MESSAGE — FROM GOD'S WORD — TO — A MODERN WORLD

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THE HAIRS OF YOUR HEAD

Jesus once said, "The very hairs of your head are numbered." This is a phrase of Christ's teaching which brings great comfort and uplift to His people. It declares Divine interest in, and ordering of life's little things. Now, this is very important, because, for most people, life is made up of little things. And even for those who amount to something more, it is not difficult to discover that the greatest of their achievements began with, and hinge on little things. How good it is to think that God cares about little things! Better still, how comforting to know that He invites His children to seek His counsel and control concerning them!

But there is another side to this matter. If God is careful of little things in our lives, so, too, must we be. And, remember, herein lies our chief concern, from day to day. On the one hand, there are the trifling slips; the small irritations of speech and grammar; the little thoughtlessness of action; on the other hand there are the constant, almost unseen chances for doing good; the opportunities for self-sacrifice. These things require constant watchfulness and exercise of continual obedience. They are the "trifles" which go to create and preserve that Christian character which is God's children's strongest witness before the world.—*J. Stuart Holden, D.D.*

A Dream . . . ?

REV. F. M. FOSTER, PH.D.

"Say Will, I had a dream."

"Well, there is nothing remarkable about a dream. People have been dreaming for six thousand years."

"True; but this was not the usual run where you are just one jump ahead of a bear."

"Well, tell us about it."

"It was about our Seminary. You know students, after graduating from college study Theology and related subjects for three or four years. They learn to read the Bible in the original languages so that they can get as near as possible to the Spirit's meaning. They study Homiletics—how to prepare a sermon. They study Church History. They study the Doctrines of the Church so that they may be thoroughly grounded in the faith, and can be trusted to teach them. They deliver Specimens of Improvement before the Seminary Faculty and students which are carefully criticized. They deliver sermons before the Board of Superintendents which receive careful analysis. All through the years they pass examinations. After all this, before being licensed to preach the student must pass examinations before Presbytery and give trials in sermon and lecture to show that he is prepared to go out and preach the most seriously important of all messages—the message of salvation through the blood of Christ, with its doctrines, its laws, its ordinances, its warnings, its manner of life. He goes forth in the Name and by the authority of Almighty God. Ezekiel 33 sets forth his serious responsibility. 'No man taketh this honor unto himself; but he that is called of God, as was Aaron' (Heb. 5:4). Those who are conscious of this responsibility hesitate as did Moses. The Son of God prepared until He 'began to be about thirty years old.' Saul, after his conversion, went into Arabia (probably Bachau), and after three years he went up to Jerusalem—three silent years during which God was preparing him for his great work. The disciples were under the teaching of the Son of God during the years of His ministry. And this is God's command to those He calls to preach: "I charge thee therefore before God—preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables' (II Tim. 4:1-4). See how God guards His message, 'Oh Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust.' 'Because many false prophets are gone out into the world.'

"Well, John, we know how seriously important these things are. But what are you getting at? What was your dream?"

"My dream was—The seminaries are to be closed up. It has been found that the studies are unimportant and that the students have wasted

three or four years when they should have been out preaching. People are turning to boys and girls in colleges and schools—Teams of Preachers! They travel over the church, and seek appointments, occupying pulpits. Some lift collections. And here and there is heard—'How wonderful!' A minister announced an eight-year-old girl would preach in his pulpit Sabbath. Probably the audience was larger than usual, for people unwittingly define themselves. Here is an advertisement that appeared in a town paper—"The male quartet of—College will have charge of the services at—Church on Sabbath at 11 a.m.' (not Covenanter). The advertisement also announced a number of appointments for said Team of Preachers. 'On June 16 a Gospel Team had charge of the services at—'" (Covenanter). The team was composed of boys and girls.

A Methodist minister of wide reputation said, "You can preach 'Come to Jesus' until people starve to death!" It would be helpful if all could have heard the remarks of the sturdy, accomplished President of our College on a motion to license students at the end of their first year in the Seminary. His words questioned 'boys and girls' going into pulpits. One statement was, "Preaching is a matter of tremendous responsibility!" The motion was lost by a decided majority. That vote covers more than students. The bars are being pulled down. Error runs unrestrained and is gaining head. The church of God thinks nothing of retaining in membership those who deny the divinity of the Son of God and His sacrificial death. One denomination shouts out with high enthusiasm that anybody and everybody can preach and administer the sacraments! Probably most of them do not know there are seminaries; and if they do, they rather pity those who feel it necessary to attend them. But God's charge—"Lay hands suddenly on no man" still stands, which means—The courts of Christ's House are to make thorough examination into the character, the knowledge, the soundness in the faith, the ability to 'rightly divide the word of truth,' the devotion to the whole Word of God and to the souls of men, of those who go forth as God's messengers. The finding of the Court, sitting in Christ's Name, as to the preparation of the candidate is of outstanding importance. "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (Heb. 5:4). And who, if he really understands, would not insist on having the judgment and authority of the Court sitting in Christ's name before he takes on himself this responsibility?

The stronghold of the Anakim became the possession and habitation of Caleb (Joshua 15:13). The point of peril was the place of possession. It is where special foes are encountered but met in the courage of faith that the mightiest victories are won; our foes become our food; our dread is changed to our bread.—*Selected.*