

May 2, 1961

## SUMMARY OF SERMON

## RESPONSIBILITY -- ARE YOU QUALIFYING TO ASSUME IT?

We see about us nothing but chaos and confusion -- in the family, communal and national lives of all people! President Kennedy has appealed for strict censorship of the press -- a measure necessary for the security of the United States -- but has failed to get co-operation! Those responsible for press policy have refused to heed the advice of the President of the greatest nation on the face of this earth! Think of this! Are the citizens of the U.S. really responsible individuals -- are they actually following Christian principles in the way they act? In Australia, Prime Minister Menzies has been made a laughing stock by the press, expressing public opinion! He has every right, as leader of this nation, to appear before any type T.V. panel he so chooses -- just as President Kennedy has every right to institute censorship of the press -- yet most people don't think so! Why?

Let us get one thing straight -- our very lives depend on it! In God's sight no one has a right to rebel against or accuse or criticize anyone in an office of authority, regardless of how he may have been placed in office. God says, "honor the king" not dishonor him (I Pet. 2:17). People are to be obedient to their leaders with fear and trembling, AS UNTO CHRIST (Eph. 6:5). Not only to those who rule righteously but those who are mis-ruling as well -- yes, those who may have gotten into office through dictatorial or democratic means (I Pet. 2:18). You are to be subject to all authority -- to anyone in authority, whether he be policeman, judge, mayor or prime minister (Rom. 13:1-5). We are to put obedience to God first, however, if we can see clearly -- from Scripture or what Christ through His Church has revealed -- that God commands us to do something different from one of these leaders (Acts 5:29). Christ specifically revealed that those in authority were to be obeyed -- so long as their command did not violate a clear Biblical injunction -- in spite of how evil their personal conduct may have been (Mat. 23:1-4). Paul realized and lived by the Truth that we are not to speak evil of the ruler of the people, in spite of how he got into office or just how he conducts himself (Acts 23:1-5). Most of us don't believe this as fully as we ought and tend to agree with the multitudes when they speak evil of President Kennedy or Prime Minister Menzies or some other leader. Shame on us! If you are not in a position of authority in God's Church -- established to warn the evil leaders of their way as a spokesman for God as Christ condemned the evil practices of the Pharisees, etc. -- you had better watch how you look on rulers! Rather, we had better pray that God will cause them to rule in such a manner that offers us freedom in which to live IN CARRYING OUT THE COMMISSION OF PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS TO THE WHOLE WORLD! God condemns those who speak evil of rulers and who feel they have a right to help decide how things are run -- that they, the majority, are responsible for telling the leaders how they ought to govern. NO! -- God doesn't sanction but, rather, condemns DEMOCRACY. He knows it is the worst thing for us. It not only restricts the power a ruler has in governing a nation but breaks down the vital pattern of RULE FROM THE TOP DOWN. If people understood that the only way to effectively govern a body of people is to have one individual in a position of authority over them, then they would be learning to think along Theocratic lines. Consequently, when God opens their minds to see His Government and that it is above all others, they would withdraw themselves from all man-made governments and place themselves under God's authority and rule. BUT PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO BE RULED IN SUCH A MANNER, they want to have the freedom to express their own opinions as to how they think the government ought to be run. Let us learn the lesson our forefathers failed to learn -- that we will never have a voice in how God runs His Government, or whom He places in authority, so let us humbly HEAR and OBEY.

Our forefathers disagreed with God's form of Government -- they didn't like the fact that God didn't let them vote leaders into office and have a voice in the government -- so they rebelled, removing themselves from under the rule of God and forfeiting the resulting blessings which automatically follow obedience to God's government (I Sam. 8:1-7). In spite of a warning of what a democratic form of government would bring on -- where they could have voting stalls in which they cast votes as to whom they wanted to have govern them -- they chose such a way in preference to God's system of Theocracy -- rule from the top down where offices of authority are filled by appointment and not as a result of public opinion (I Sam. 8:8-22).



God permitted our forefathers to do this so they might learn the lesson that man can't properly rule himself -- that nothing but misery, chaos, unhappiness and destruction can result from a rule that is not directly from God. What is going on in the United States and Australia evidences why God didn't want our forefathers to choose such a way -- but the lesson had to be learned by experience, human beings aren't willing to believe that God is always right and just accept without question what He says.

As mankind follows the democratic form of government or any form of human government, evil men gradually work their way into responsible offices, making it impossible for a just man to rule -- he soon finds his hands are tied, preventing him from legislating certain things which would be good for the nation (Hos. 7:5). And as each political faction stoops to all sorts of underhanded, dishonest tactics in trying to get its leaders voted into office, the whole nation becomes more and more dishonest and evil in its ways. They set up leaders -- leaders who will pretend they are pleasing their group but who are actually out after personal gain through dishonest means -- to their own hurt (Hos. 8:4; Isa. 3:12). This system has been followed until now people have lost all right knowledge of God's way of love and giving -- they now believe to acquire things by any competitive manner is not only all right but necessary to survive in this present evil world. People have lost the Truth, the knowledge of God and increase more and more in the way of competition and strife. Each generation develops a more selfish outlook and uses tactics that are more wicked to get its party elected to office. This was foretold in God's Word of our peoples today (Hos. 4:1-11).

What sort of complexion do the democratic nations -- the U.S. and Australia -- have today? A pretty dishonest one! God says "The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not!" (Isa. 3:9). We not only experience all kinds of failures in the U.S. and have a nation filled with crime and corruption, but we also display it before the whole world through the medium of newspapers, news magazines, radio and T.V. The people not only want to continue with the evil, democratic system they have amassed to themselves, but they want the whole world to know all about what it has brought on. Newspaper reporters informed President Kennedy that it would be against our democratic principles of government to withhold news from the people and the world. God is letting the whole world get a good look at what happens to a people who reject His righteous Theocratic rule and accept a democratic form of government -- this will be an eternal witness to mankind that only God's system of government can bring about the desired result.

I want to quote a news item which appeared in the NEW YORK POST, February 5, 1961 which pretty well sums up the attitude and general outlook of a generation bred on democratic principles of government, "A college education, it has been said, should prepare young people for life. And to judge from a small-scale survey conducted by The Post in several college campuses around the city, most students agree it does prepare them -- for success and survival by dishonesty....The question was raised after comment Thursday by Dr. Buell G. Gallagher, president of the City College of New York, that an honor system -- self-policing by students at exams -- would be 'impossible' at the college....At the Baruch school, a sophomore, male, 18, said: 'You've heard that 78% of the kids cheat here. That's an understatement, by 22%. An honor system would only encourage further cheating.' Sandra Kroog, sophomore, 19, 'Dr. Gallagher is right. I don't think students today are honorable. What you can get you take.'

"Junior, male, 20: 'Sure it's New York City. Rush, rush, rush. Compete, compete, compete. We're just learning early in life. There's very little real ethics in the business world.' Arthur Jablon, senior, 21: 'You've gotta keep your marks up or you go under. It's self-preservation....Everybody's competing. Everybody wants to stay alive....'It isn't just a question of an urban area and non-resident students,' said Associate Dean Brahna Hoffman, of Hofstra. 'It's the total American Culture.'" Do you get it -- a democratic form of do-as-you-please-ism breeds such a society! That is why God doesn't want us to feel that such a thing is good and follow it -- it just will not work. Human nature is against God's law (Rom. 8:7). Rule by the majority of carnal minded individuals will bring about a society which manifests the natural way of flesh (Gal. 5:19-21). Any nation that rejects right knowledge from God and His rule over them, automatically reaps the horrifying conditions existing about us in Australia today -- and Australia is rapidly following the example of the United States in all things (Rom. 1:28-32; Dt. 28:15-28). The system existing about us today appears to be right when viewing it from a carnal standpoint, but it leads to death (Pro. 14:12). When a leader is not respectfully obeyed but, rather, each person rebels and wants to express his opinion about how the government



ought to be run -- have a voice in the government, feeling his way is bound to be right, failing to realize how wrong the natural reasoning of man is -- there is nothing but confusion and bloodshed in a nation (Judges 17:6; 21:25; Jer. 16:10-12). A typical picture of modern-day Israel was revealed through the prophet Isaiah years in advance (Isa. 59:1-14). Recently a man in Los Angeles, California found and returned to the rightful owner 240,000 dollars only to be condemned by many for his honesty. He received letters from all over the nation, condemning him for returning the money. Do you know why? The people knew what they would have done -- kept the money -- and since the light hurt their eyes, they wanted to condemn him to feel justified in their own conscience for what they would have done. His son was so ridiculed at school by other students who stated, "your father was stupid for returning the money," that he finally left school and ran away from home. These students were only manifesting the teaching they had received from their parents -- whether by word or example. By nature, people are dishonest, selfish, greedy, self-willed and rebellious. A democratic form of government offers them an opportunity to gratify their deceitful lusts to their own hurt (I Pet. 1:14; Titus 3:1-3). **GOD COMMANDS US TO PUT OFF THESE FORMER DECEITFUL LUSTS** (Eph. 4:22). Some of you still are being led by them too much and too often! Some of you still want to have a democratic form of government in God's Church; you are still wanting to voice an opinion as to how things ought to be run; you still have too much of a desire to follow ancient Israel in departing from the **RULE OF THE ETERNAL** through His called and chosen leaders (I Sam. 8:1-7; I Cor. 12:18; Eph. 4:11-15; Heb. 13:7, 17).

Do you fully understand and see that only God's system of Theocracy is the only thing good for you, for me and for all concerned? **IF YOU DO**, submit to God's rule, **TRUST HIM AS A FAITHFUL CREATOR** (I Pet. 4:19), realize He has placed Christ as Head of the Church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18; 2:19), that Christ is responsible for taking care of any mistakes made (Eph. 5:26-27) -- that He does this through the system of government God has placed in the Church (Eph. 4:10-13; II Cor. 10:8, 15). The ministers realize that they are accountable TO GOD for leading the flock in the right direction and have to answer to the **CHIEF BISHOP**, Jesus Christ (Heb. 13:17; I Pet. 5:1-3). We also realize that we are not perfect and do make mistakes. The Apostle James, the brother of Christ, in realizing this, stated that we should not become "many teachers" for the teachers are going to receive stricter judgment -- don't try to assume more responsibility than you can properly shoulder (James 3:1). In other words, study and strive to become more qualified to carry out any responsibility which might be delegated to you (II Tim. 2:15; II Pet. 3:17-18) but **WAIT** until one in authority appoints you to an office of authority or gives you a responsibility to carry out (I Pet. 5:5-6). We know that in "many things we all stumble," therefore we view the fruits manifested in a person's life and appoint the one we feel will make the fewest mistakes in carrying out a given responsibility. This is done so that the ones affected will suffer the least by mistakes which are made. And, when the mistake is made, you must not assume to yourself the responsibility of correcting that person or speaking evil of him but, rather, commit it to Christ, the righteous judge, and He will take care of the matter as He sees fit. How many of us realize that **JUDGMENT IS NOW ON THE CHURCH OF GOD** (I Pet. 4:17-18)? How many of us realize God is judging us to see if we really believe Christ is the Head of the Church, that there is a system of government in His Church, that we have to prove ourselves faithful to His Theocratic Government, that we must eradicate all tendencies toward democracy, that we must trust Christ to render decisions through His Government in the Church -- that He will do this in an absolutely righteous manner -- and then commit ourselves to a **FAITHFUL CREATOR** who will take care of all of our needs? Before you will ever be given great responsibility, you must first of all prove to God that you know BEYOND ANY DOUBT that Christ is faithfully carrying out His responsibilities as **HEAD** of God's Church in guiding the decisions which are made and in correcting any mistakes He permits us to make because of the weaknesses of the flesh -- that He will, however, back up the decision made by one in authority and deal with any correcting which should be brought about **IN HIS TIME AND BY HIS MANNER** through God's system of government in the Church. Just how much are we proving to God we are responsible citizens of His Government in our day to day activities and in adhering to all we hear over The **WORLD TOMORROW** broadcast and in the sermons given and as we study our Bibles, The **PLAIN TRUTH**, The **GOOD NEWS**, The Correspondence Course and other literature received from **GOD'S CHURCH**, through which Christ is disseminating precious **TRUTHS** (John 8:31-32; John 14:6; Eph. 4:21; Gal. 4:16; Eph. 4:15-16; II Tim. 1:10; Rom. 10:14-15; I Tim. 2:7; Titus 1:3; I Pet. 4:11; Eph. 4:11).

Brethren, don't judge the decisions made by those in authority over you -- whether it be the hiring of needed personnel, the running of an office, or the



ruling of the Church (I Tim. 3:5) -- for God will take care of that which is His own. What you need to do is remain faithful to God and trust Him for all things, regardless of how they may look to you. God is faithful to His promises -- He will never leave nor forsake you. He will supply all your needs and use you in the position which is best for you and the Church.

SUMMARY OF SERMONETTE

"HOW WE KNOW THE APOSTLE PAUL WAS TAUGHT DIRECTLY BY CHRIST."

From time to time you may hear us say from the pulpit that the Apostle Paul was taught directly by Christ. But how can this be when Christ was crucified in 31 A.D.?

The first mention of Saul (who became the Apostle Paul) is several years later when he watched and gave his consent to the stoning of Stephen (Acts 8:1-4). Here was one who was serving God diligently but notice in Acts 7:51-53 why they hated Stephen so much. He was telling them straight from the shoulder just what they were. They could not bear the truth which they knew Stephen was telling them, so they "gnashed on him with their teeth" (7:54). Then they cast him out of the city where they stoned him to death (7:55-60).

Acts 7:58 is the first mention of Saul in your Bible and this was several years after Christ's death. From this time forward Paul made havock with the Church (Acts 8:1-3) until God struck Paul blind on the road to Damascus where he was to persecute every Christian he found (Acts 9:1-5). Acts 9:18-22 Paul was healed and received the Holy Spirit. (This occurred in 35 A.D.) Here between verses 22 and 23 we have a 3 year break in time.

Paul was converted but he still had to have a time of training and learning the Truth of God. Just as one today has to be taught God's ways after they are converted.

Gal. 1:15-16 shows Paul was not taught by another apostle but by supernatural means. He didn't go to Jerusalem to be taught, he went into Arabia. From Damascus and returned to Damascus (v.17).

While Paul was in the Arabian desert for three years he was taught by Christ. Verse 18 "Then after three years" speaking from time of his conversion, he went up to Jerusalem -- the same expression is used in Gal. 2:1 and we know this council (Acts 15) was in 49 A.D. which would have been 14 years after Paul's conversion.

CHURCH NEWS

News was joyfully received that the office will soon expand to include a printing department -- so many printing needs exist that it is economically wise to have our own press. This, of course, opens up a job for another member in God's Church. Mr. Glen Davies of Padstow will fill this position, commencing in about one month. Yes, God's Work continues to grow -- perhaps other positions will open in the future.

Many favorable comments have been received from the scattered brethren relevant to the church news letter. Here are a few: "We look forward to receiving the sermonettes and sermons and other news items in the 'News Letter'. The 'News Letter' will be a blessing to us who are scattered." "Just a few lines to advise you that we received your circular and it was a great joy to us to learn of the rapid expansion of God's church in Australia. The idea of keeping scattered brethren officially informed of the context of Sabbath services, and matters of church interest will be received with great appreciation." "This is just a short note to say thank you; firstly, for the strong sermons you gave during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and secondly, for this wonderful weekly 'News Letter' which you have inaugurated here... Again allow me to thank you for the 'News Letter' which is going to be of inestimable value, to those of us who cannot attend regularly the sabbath services." "This is the first chance I've had to write since I received your weekly letter of church news and the Sabbath sermon and sermonette. God truly knows our needs before we even ask...."

I am sure you brethren blessed with the opportunity of regularly attending Sabbath services and Bible studies here in Sydney are very thankful to God for what He has made possible. But let us not forget our scattered brethren -- let us pray that God will make possible churches in other cities in the near future.