

The Fight Is On

By: Tom Wacaster

The battle rages and the Captain of our army encourages' us to stand in the gap, to *"put on the whole armor of God...and having done all, to stand."* A recent bulletin reported that the Episcopal Church is on the verge of allowing homosexuals into their pulpits. Another bulletin reports that the Catholic Church is about to capitulate on this same moral issue. Meanwhile, toleration is in, opposition is out, and it is apparent that our brethren are about to succumb to the same kind of "pluralistic" thinking that is sweeping our society." Judge not that ye be not judged" has become the battle cry for those weak of spirit. Controversy is no longer politically correct, whether it is in the political or the religious realm. I, for one, am grateful that neither Jesus, nor His apostles, ever adopted such a philosophy in order to promote and promulgate the *"faith once for all delivered to the saints"* (Jude 3). Had the restorationist pioneers held to the same attitude toward religious division and error as some of our brethren do today, they would never have gotten to first base in bringing about a restoration of the ancient order of things. J. S. Lamar wrote the following approximately 30 years after the death of Alexander Campbell. I share it for no other reason than to show that firm conviction and a stalwart stand for the truth is the only way by which the citadels of error will ever be torn down and the truth of God exalted. Here is what Brother Lamar wrote: "Every party had made its own creed, and set forth its conception of Christianity in a form chosen by itself. Every builder had erected a structure in accordance with his own architectural ideas and designs; and the results were satisfactory to the builders and really, for human structures, very good. It was while resting in fancied security in these corrupted and beautiful temples, the product of their skill and the pride of their hearts, that Alexander Campbell, as with the voice of God's thunder and the sword of God's Spirit, broke upon them, and aroused them to a sense of their danger. Now, if instead of thus assaulting them, he had been content to accept their gauge, and to meet them on their own chosen ground, both the conflict and the result had been different. They were fully prepared to contest the question of comparative merit; and if the issue had been, for example, whether the English church was better or worse than the German; whether the Methodist had more or less truth than the Presbyterian; whether the creed, the doctrines, the practices, of any given sect, approximated in more respects than those of some others to the apostolic model and teaching -- in such case the conflict would have been most welcome. But Mr. Campbell did not condescend to engage in any such useless strife. The peculiarities of sects and their varying degrees of Excellency were treated only as side-issues and incidents, while with ponderous and pounding logic he battered upon the very basis of sectarianism -- contending that, whether they had more of the truth or less, they were still wrong, fundamentally wrong, wrong in being sects, wrong in not being what Christ had founded, while yet assuming to occupy the place, to command respect, and to wield the authority of the divine institution. And now the fight was on. It was Alexander Campbell against the whole sectarian world -- and all this world combining to resist him." Thank God for such men as Mr. Campbell, "Raccoon" John Smith, Barton W. Stone, and a host of courageous men who refused to bow to the "pluralistic" mind-set that so dominates our world, yea even our own brotherhood at this very hour. It is readily admitted that when we take a stand on the side of truth, we will be criticized. But at least we know we stand with good company, *"for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you"* (Matt. 5:12b). And, should it be our lot to stand alone, or at best with the minority, and should the host of the armies of darkness assail us, we can be assured that in the final analysis, when all has been said and done, and we stand before the Captain of our army, we will hear the sweet words, *"Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."* It will have been a well fought battle, and the victory shall be ours to enjoy for all eternity. *"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord"* (1 Cor.15:58).