

Lift High Our Banner

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Psalms 60:4

The banner.

- Psalms 60:4, *“Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.”*
- Num. 1:52, *“And the children of Israel shall pitch their tents, every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard, throughout their hosts.”*
- Num. 2:2, *“Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father’s house: far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch.”*

In time of war a banner, or flag, has many uses, but it is principally an ensign showing on whose side we belong.

It is the duty of all of us who belong to Christ to let the world know exactly where we stand. We are not to leave any doubt concerning “whose we are, and whom we serve.”

All too frequently, we Christians fail to unfurl our banner. As a consequence, the world does not always know our true position.

In studying this text, let us observe the following questions:

- What is our banner?
- By whom is it given?
- To whom is it given?
- For what purpose was it given?
- What will be the results of lifting our banner?

What is our banner?

Our banner is Christ.

Heb. 12:1-4, *“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners*

against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.”

We are not to proclaim ourselves, but Christ. 2 Cor. 4:5, *“For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.”*

We are to lift Him up that all men may draw unto Him.

In the Christian religion Jesus Christ is:

The object of chief attack.

In battle the banner is always the object of chief attack. The moment the adversary sees it, his object is to strike there.

Jesus Christ has always been the object of attack. The infidel threatens to rend the gospel to pieces, but it is as glorious as ever. Modern skepticism seeks to pull it thread from thread, but it has not been able to rend a fragment of it.

The symbol of defiance.

When Christ is preached, there is a defiance given to Him by His enemies. 1 Cor. 1:18, *“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”*

If you want to defy the devil, talk about Christ, preach about His death, tell sinners that Christ died for their sins, and straightway the devil will build up a great ambassage.

The emblem of victory.

Francis Scott Key wrote “The Star Spangled Banner” when he saw the American flag still flying after the English had bombarded the town from ships at sea.

- 1 Cor. 15:57, *“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
- 2 Cor. 2:14, *“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.”*

Through Christ we have victory.

Over sin. Col. 1:13-14, *“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”*

Over temptation. 1 Cor. 10:13, *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”*

Over difficulties and sorrow.

- Psalms 46:1, *“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”*
- Psalms 50:15, *“And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.”*
- 2 Cor. 1:3-5, *“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.”*

Over death. 1 Cor. 15:55-57, *“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

By whom is it given? ***(“Thou hast given a banner.” - text)***

Christ was given by the eternal Father.

Gal. 4:4, *“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,”*

He was given in the manger when the Word was made flesh.

John 1:14, *“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”*

He was given on the cross when the Father sacrificed His Son’s blood to die for our sins.

- John 3:16, *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*
- 1 Cor. 15:3, *“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;”*

To whom was it given? ("to them that fear him." - text)

Not to all men, for God has a chosen people: "to those that fear him."

Who are they? Eccl. 12:13, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."

Those that fear God are the only ones that ought to carry the banner.

Shall the banner be put in the hands of the unrighteous or the worldly-minded people in the church? What about the cowardly?

Should we assist those who carry another banner than that which we have been given? 2 John 1:10, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

There are a number of ways in which we may unfurl our banner.

By word of mouth. Acts 8:35, "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."

We open our mouths to eat, to buy and sell, to talk of many things, but too few of us open our mouths to preach Jesus Christ.

The average Christian is not vocal enough about his faith. Psalms 107:2, "Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy,"

By manner of life.

- Eph. 4:1, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,"
- Phil. 1:27, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,"

If all Christians were under the influence of the gospel there would be something in their speech and habits that would distinguish them from others.

- 2 Cor. 6:17, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."

- 1 Pet. 2:9, “*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light;*”

If our daily lives, speech, and demeanor were more in harmony with the gospel, we would convince others of the truth and bring them to Christ.

For what purpose was this given? (“that it may be displayed because of the truth.” - text)

That is, in the cause of truth, or in the defense of the truth, our banner is not to be unfolded in an unrighteous or unjust cause.

We are to be ready to give an answer for every question about our faith. 1 Pet. 3:15, “*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.*”

This requires diligent study.

- John 5:39, “*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.*”
- 2 Tim. 2:15, “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*”

In order to display a banner, you must take it out of its case. Too many leave their Bible inside the bookcase or on the table. How can they know the Christ of the Bible the Christian’s banner if they never study God’s word?

If Jesus be lifted up, He will draw all men unto Him. John 12:32, “*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*”

Even though He was lifted up when He was placed upon the cross to die for our sins, He today expects us to lift Him up, to preach Him to the world by lip and life.

What will be the results of lifting our banner high?

Making such an open statement of our faith is our best security against the entanglements with the world, the flesh, and the devil.

To declare ourselves is to protect ourselves, for the man who does not let it be known where he stands puts himself at a disadvantage when he is in company with Christ's enemies.

Compromise and denial are made easier when we are timid about stating our position. This is what led to Peter's denial of the Lord.

Such open acknowledgment will give courage to the fainthearted. Courage is contagious; one loyal heart helps to keep another true.

An open declaration of our faith will give to the world the one and only remedy for her ills. The world is suffering from sin; we have the secret to the remedy; can we be forgiven if we keep it to ourselves?

Conclusion

You and I have received a banner blazoned and adorned with our Savior's blessed name, and God means that we should display it.

