**“Intolerant of Evil” The Signs of the Times, 20, 39.**

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At the fiftieth annual meeting of the London Y.M.C.A. one of the speakers, the head master of Harrow, said in this course of his address:— {SITI August 7, 1894, p. 611.1}

If a Christian would be like Christ, he must be strong and even fierce in character. He must be intolerant of the things that are wrong; he must not suffer them, must not endure them for an instant. {SITI August 7, 1894, p. 611.2}

Just think what influence might be exercised by this great meeting if we were all resolved that in public and in private life we will be intolerant, as intolerant as Christ was, of things that are evil, and base, and vile. Talk about public men and public opinion! We are public opinion. It is in our power to say, as Christian men and women, what we deem to be right; and, depend upon it. If we stick to that which we deem to be right in Christ’s name, there is no power on earth that can stand against us. {SITI August 7, 1894, p. 611.3}

Unfortunately, that idea is very common. This very statement was highly eulogized by a daily paper that is prominent in the ranks of reform, and most people would read it without thinking of its real tendency, which is the worst sort of persecution. It means that every professed Christian is to make his ideas of right and wrong the standard of everybody else, and then to do the best he can to force others to come to that standard. Of course people working singly in such a way would accomplish nothing, and would be regarded as nuisances; and so they must unite and agree on certain points, and then by their combined power and influence compel other people to come to the same standard. There is in human nature enough tendency in that direction, without clergymen teaching it as a Christian duty. {SITI August 7, 1894, p. 611.4}

The only way in which a man can rightly be intolerant of evil is to be intolerant of it in himself. The Christian is represented as a soldier, and the Christians life is a warfare, but not against men:— {SITI August 7, 1894, p. 611.5}

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh; (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. {SITI August 7, 1894, p. 611.6}

Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God. He resisted even unto blood, striving against sin; but by no means could he be called intolerant. Fierceness is not a characteristic of a lamb. He was the light of the world, which means that he enlightened the world in respect to righteousness. He “condemned sin in the flesh,” both by his life and his words; yet he did not presume to condemn men. He said, “If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.” John 12:47. {SITI August 7, 1894, p. 611.7}

And so he instructed his disciples. “Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.” Luke 10:3. It is the wolves and not the lambs that are intolerant. Christ’s followers are simply to bear a plain testimony, leaving the Holy Spirit to impress it upon the people, and the Lord himself to deal with those who will not accept it. {SITI August 7, 1894, p. 611.8}

This was made very clear by the parable of the wheat and the tares. When the servants of the husbandman told him that tares had appeared in the wheat, and asked it they should root them out, he replied: “Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.” Matthew 13:29, 30. In the same chapter the Saviour explained that “the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.” The end of the world and the coming of the Lord is the time when evil is to be rooted out by force. And it is to be done only by the Lord and his angels. {SITI August 7, 1894, p. 611.9}

The spirit of intolerance is the spirit of the Papacy. It is a most insidious evil. The intolerant one persuades himself that he is actuated solely by righteous zeal for the Lord, when he is in reality moved only by zeal for his own opinions. He opposes an evil, not so much because it is evil, but because it seems to defy him, or, in other words, “it outrages public sentiment.” And he seeks to enforce something that he judges to be right, simply because he judges it to be right, and not because the word of the Lord commands it. If he knew the commandment of the Lord, he would know that it is love, and that force and intolerance are a violation of it, because “the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.” 2 Timothy 2:24, 25. {SITI August 7, 1894, p. 611.10}