

WILLIAM BELDEN,  
CITY ISLAND, N. Y.

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My Dear Cousin

It may be that you are not aware that oftentimes - in fact as a rule - those who address others on religious matters as you did address me - look upon any strong or forcible language used by the recipients of their addresses as being altogether wrong if not really blasphemous.

Possibly you are not one of that kind and at any rate I do not drop you this line in order to find fault if you were.

Things look very differently according to the standpoint of observation taken by the onlooker. My experience has been that few will grant to others the right to use weapons such as they themselves go armed with when it comes to a discussion on religious matters.

If time permitted I think that I could show you that this is one of the very greatest of reasons why it is so hard for the Church and its ministers to make headway in these days. And why so many do not attend churches of any sort.

You may have thought that in my letter to you I was one of those unbelievers who must use strong language that was unwarranted - if not as I said above blasphemous - because my position was weak and when argument is wanting abuse must be resorted to. Now while I by no means believe in Parkhurst or his methods - I enclose a slip to show you how one of the chosen looks upon the Briggs matter. His language is certainly as strong as mine was.

WILLIAM BELDEN,  
CITY ISLAND, N. Y.

My respect for you personally would  
make me respect whatever your opinion might  
be as to the Riggs case. I have merely  
sent you this - not to prove that I am  
right or to prove anything - but to call your  
attention to what I consider the great  
weakness in the argument of such religious  
people as you are allied with.

It is a well established maxim that  
we must set our own house in order before  
we go out to fight. It is of no avail to  
claim that both sides may think they  
are doing right in the Riggs matter. So  
long as the truly elect in the Church  
can engage in such a controversy  
so long will they cripple and weaken  
their own citadel and its defenses.

Yours cordially

William Belden

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CITY ISLAND, N. Y.

It just occurs to me that you may say  
they are trying to "set their house in order"  
I am what would you think of a general  
who on the eve of battle for some or for any  
cause set about the task of rearranging  
disorder in his own troops and tried to  
drive half of them away. Merely to show  
that he was right as to a matter of  
discipline or some construction of a rule.

10 13.  
"MAY I BE A PAGAN," SAYS PARKHURST.

Prefers Heathen to Ministers Who Put Orthodoxy Before Christianity.

The Rev. Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst, in his sermon yesterday in the Madison Square Presbyterian Church, devoted the greater part of his discourse to criticism of the ministers who uphold doctrinal Presbyterianism to the detriment of true Christianity.

The Church, he said, needed another reformation on as large a scope as the reformation begun by Luther. St. Paul was the true embodiment of Christ's idea of what a Christian should be. God personally localized himself in St. Paul.

"There are a lot of people in the Christian Church," he continued, "who would like to butt their heads against St. Paul's thoughts. St. Paul did not save anything from the wreck. When he came to be converted every one of the former ties that held him were cut. He became a new man.

"People nowadays want a little of what is not Christ mixed up with a little that is Christ to compose the essence of their Christianity.

"It is true that when Paul became a Christian he did not throw overboard the Christian catechism, because he had never learned any. As soon as the power of Christ came upon him he took himself immediately out of the road of everybody who could have taught him doctrinal lessons. He did not go up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before him.

"The little modern Pauls make it their first object to take these lessons. Instead, he isolated himself for three years. The result was that Paul has been able to shake the world for 1,800 years and it now takes 1,800 modern Pauls to shake the world for one year and they do not shake a great deal after all.

"These people will give more credit to a man who is orthodox but who never had a Pentecostal baptism than they will to a man who is not orthodox but who is a Christian according to St. Paul's standard.

"I have sat down there in the Scotch church in Fourteenth street and listened to ministers fill the air with their tiresome talk and small twaddle upon subjects on which an archangel would fear to tread.

"If this is Christianity may the good Lord deliver me, and may I be forever and ever a Pagan.

"It is this spirit that is in some part responsible for the existence of a condition of affairs with which the city is burdened. This damnable exists while Christianity is neglected."