

THE COST OF SIN.

Not to be a Christian costs the sacrifice of the highest, deepest, purest, holiest most overflowing joy that can be known here on earth. As we read in I Peter 1:8, "Though now ye see him not, yet believing in him ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." That was Peter's testimony. That is the experience of every true Christian. A real living faith in Jesus Christ gives a man joy unspeakable and full of glory. "Oh," but you say, "I know many a Christian that has not joy unspeakable and full of glory." A real Christian? You know there are two kinds—professing Christians and real Christians. Now I will admit that there are a great many people in the world that call themselves Christians who have just enough religion to make themselves miserable. They are holding to the world with one hand—generally the right hand—and to Jesus Christ with the other. Of course, they have not joy unspeakable and full of glory. But show me a Christian who has dropped the world with both hands and laid hold of Jesus Christ with both hands and I will show you a man or woman that has joy unspeakable and full of glory, every time. But nobody out of Christ has joy unspeakable and full of glory. How Satan deceived me along that line for many years when I was a mere lad! I went one day up to the third storey of our home, where we had a great store-room, where we put away the old books out of the library, and as a boy I loved to go and sit on the floor of that room and get the books around me and look through them, and, one day, I came across the covenant of the church of my mother and commenced to read it, and I said to myself, "I wonder if I cannot be a Christian." I can say, "Yes" to that and can say "Yes" to that and that, and after a time I came to a place where it said something to this effect: "If I became a Christian I was to be willing to do anything God said and go anywhere he said." I shut up the book and said: "No, just as likely as not I'll have to be a preacher if I say 'Yes' to that and then life won't be worth living." And I threw that book away and deliberately refused to think about it any more. Then I said to myself, "I am going in for all the pleasure I can get," and I had a good opportunity to get it. My father was well off in this world's goods, and as a boy of fifteen I was sent off to the university and matriculated for a degree, and my father sent me up all the money I wanted. Now, if you put a boy into the university, who learns easily and has no trouble to keep up with his class, a boy with a rich father who does not ask him how he spends his money—I have often thought it would have been a good thing for me if I had—if anybody can have a good time, he can, and I went in for a good time. Did I find it? You know whether I did or not. I did not. And I went deeper, deeper, deeper, into dissipation and sin to find joy and satisfy my unsatisfied heart. I did not find it, and one awful night, a mere boy still, with all hope gone, with life desolate and bare, life so barren that there was just one step between me and hell, in fact that very night I had started to take that awful step, to take my life by my own hand. I sprang out of bed and drew open a drawer to take out the instrument that would end my life. For some reason or other I could not find it. God did not let me find it, and I dropped upon my knees and said, "O God, if you will take this awful burden from my

heart I will preach the gospel," and God not only removed the burden, I found a joy I had never dreamed of in this world, and all the years since has gone on increasing, with the exception of a short time when I fell under the blighting power of skepticism and agnosticism; all the rest of the time all these years the joy has grown brighter, brighter, brighter, every year. If you want the deepest, sweetest, purest, most overflowing joy there is to be known on earth, come to Jesus Christ.—R. A. Torrey.



TEN DON'T'S FOR CHURCH MEMBERS.

1. Don't neglect your church and your Saviour because some one in the church has offended you.
2. Don't do nothing and try to find fault with everything others try to do.
3. Don't think because you are in the church you are a benefit to it. You must carry some, at least your own weight.
4. Don't expect the church to employ a pastor every one dislikes except you.
5. Don't think that simply because your name is on the church record your name will appear in the Book of Life.
6. Don't think the church must go your way, or not at all. Submit to the majority and work in the church.
7. Don't be a stumbling-block. Get further in the church.
8. Don't ask, "What are they going to do?" but say, "What are we going to do?"
9. Don't expect your church-working brother to see like you, while you are standing out and looking in. Get into church and look out. Things look better. You'll see what your brother sees.
10. Don't be afraid to examine yourself honestly; see if you are really in the church, or standing out.—Unidentified.



THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS.

Live as long as you may, the first twenty years form the larger part of your life. They appear so when they are passing; they seem so when we look back on them; and they take up more room in our memory than all the years that come after them.

Take good care of the first twenty years of your life. On the use which you make of them your happiness and usefulness in after years will very largely depend. See that they are spent in learning right habits and cultivating good tastes.



FEET SALVATION.

"I remember at Stonehaven, when I was minister there," says the Rev. Dr. John Robertson, of Glasgow, "I was swimming out in the clean, cool bay, when the water suddenly got choppy, and my strength seemed to go from me.

"You that are swimmers know the sensation—exhausted, the waves flapping on your face in repeated blows, as if to stun you, and beat you back to the current that is ready to seize you. No one in sight, wearily on and on, and you know that you are making little or no progress, and the feet go deeper and deeper in the water.

"You cannot swim any longer. You have lost the power of propulsion and progression, and you are more inert, and mere paddling with your hands. I had almost given up, when suddenly there came to my feet a sensation of solidity amid the waves.

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"What I felt as I stood there to recover breath! Rescued from death, how solid the rock felt!

"How I thanked God that rock had just been placed out in the bay for me, and that he had taken my sinking feet and placed them there.

"That is the nearest that I can give you to the sensation of the soul when Christ lays hold of you, saves you, and sets your feet on the Rock of Ages."



SILENT INFLUENCE.

More than forty years ago a great English school (in those days that state of things was common), no boy in the prayers. A young new boy—neither strong, nor distinguished, nor brilliant, nor influential, nor of high rank—came to school. The first night he slept in his large dormitories—ever dared to say his prayers. But the new boy knelt down, as he had always done. He was jeered at, insulted, pelted, kicked for it; and so he was the next night and the next. But after a night or two, not only did the persecution cease, but another boy knelt down as well as himself, and then another, until it became the custom of every boy to kneel nightly at the altar of his own bedside.

From that dormitory, in which my informant was, the custom spread to other dormitories, one by one. When that young new boy came to school, no boy said his prayers; when he left it, without one act or word on his part beyond the silent influence of a quiet and brave dormitory not one boy knelt to say his example, all the boys said their prayers. The right act had prevailed against the bad custom of that little world. The boy who "dared to say his prayers" was Arthur P. Stanley, afterwards the famous Dean Stanley, of Westminster Abbey.



On a life of obedience and faith God shines as the sun shines on a block of crystal, sending its radiance through the willing and transparent mass and warming and lighting it all into its inmost depths.—Phillips Brooks.

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