

"IT'S A GRAND AND GLORIOUS FEELING."

(By Rev. W. E. Smith)

The phrase is a humorous one to make one laugh, found in the comic section of the newspaper and illustrated by a series of ludicrous pictures. The first picture is that of a man with a sort of a woe-begone expression on his face; the next picture is of the same man with the gloom deepening on his countenance as the reality of his bad luck is seemingly confirmed. But in the last picture the homely sad visage changes by a laugh of great proportions. The threatened defeat has been changed into victory; the clouds of adversity have been driven away by the sun of prosperity. The mouth is widely stretched in delight at the transformed situation, which is expressed in the words, "it's a grand and glorious feeling."

For my part I have often laughed heartily at such illustrations. We all do, because they remind us of some of our own personal experiences, when threatened sorrow has turned to joy. But after all to call it "a grand and glorious feeling" is putting it too strongly, for such words only truly describe the feelings of the soul that are wrought not by changing circumstances but by the Spirit of God.

When a sinner weighed down by the consciousness of guilt, feeling the sentence of death upon his soul by the highest tribunal, cries to God for mercy, at the sight of a yawning hell, and very consciously feels the heavy burden removed from his soul, and can sing "My God is reconciled; His pardoning voice I hear;" that person experiences "a grand and glorious feeling."

When the justified believer hungering and thirsting after righteousness, dies out to all carnal desires and places all upon the altar, he feels it to be a painful experience. Going to a crucifixion is not like going to a picnic. There is suffering, agony and death. Ambitions, plans and wishes must lay at Jesus' feet in ashes. There's no laughter or song in such an experience. But, oh, when the Holy Ghost falls upon the trusting soul, cleansing out the inbred sin and making all our being to vibrate with holy ecstasy; when our soul is swept by heavenly gales of bliss and glory, we then can say this is truly "a grand and glorious feeling."

This is what Peter implies when he spoke of "joy unspeakable and full of glory," and Paul, "a weight of glory."

And as we pursue the sanctified life temptations and trials abound. One day we are tempted through the meanness of a friend or relative. The devil suggests, "Give away and retaliate." But the Holy Spirit holds us steady; our hearts keep out the suggestion, although the pressure may be great on the outside, and we win a definite glorious victory which more and more confirms to our own soul the reality of the work God has wrought in us. Say! but there comes a grand and glorious feeling as the blessed Holy Ghost gives us new manifestations of his presence in feelings of exhilaration that made us feel our souls would burst unless we shouted and sang.

These "grand and glorious feelings" are not contingent on seeming favorable

conditions; they well up in the soul when earthly comforts and treasures flee. A sanctified sister whose little house was in flames and all her material substances melting away, shouted and praised God. Some said she was crazy; others asked her why she praised God for the burning of her house. Her reply was, "I don't praise him for the loss of the house, but I praise him in the loss. I praise him that I have a mansion in glory that can't burn down." She had the "grand and glorious feeling."

The New Testament Salvation is a salvation with a great Feel in it. Paul said "be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit." I'll vote every time to make the town dry as to whiskey, but God save us from a dry religion. Oh, the multitude of preachers, professing Christians and churches that have "gone dry" spiritually. They have voted out the Holy Ghost. They giggle, gabble and gobble at church entertainments which show a little creaturely activity, but, oh, they look like a funeral when Holiness is mentioned, and seem to think it is an experience that would kill all their joy. Such people never have an experience to tell, and they endeavour to hide their spiritual bankruptcy by saying "I believe in living my religion and not talking so much about it." Others excuse themselves by saying, "I am not emotional." They needn't have told us that for dead people are never very emotional. It would really frighten one to hear some of the nicely dressed spiritual corpses that go to church, shout and praise God, as it would to see some people who have been in the cemetery fifteen years get out of their graves and begin to shout. There would have to be a mighty resurrection before such things could be.

These people who are not emotional in their religion are those who "were always good." They grew up mamma's good little boy and girl all the year. They learned "Now I lay me down to sleep," and they can't pray much bigger prayer today. They have never known the grand and glorious feeling of a real born again experience. This is why preaching holiness to them is about as useless as trying to feed beefsteak to a dead man. They are sanctimoniously religious, but have no real spirit life or spiritual hunger. The church is full of such people. They enjoy Shakespeare and Longfellow, but they simply endure St. Paul and St. John; they say prayers but know nothing of praying in the power of the Holy Ghost; many of these call themselves Methodists and glory in the fact that they have John Wesley to their father. John Wesley would no more own these spiritual perverts than would Abraham own the pharisees that killed Jesus. Think of preachers glorying in all the sacrifice and devotion of John Wesley and the early Methodists and then being indifferent to or openly hostile to the experience of entire sanctification that Wesley called the "second blessing." No wonder they sing "Prone to wander, Lord I feel it," and "Hosannas languish on our lips and our devotion dies," "Hark from the tomb a doleful sound." God made our souls to be tuned to the key of heaven's minstrelsy. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

"It needs the overflow of heart to give the lips full speech." When Christian experience is low or dead the preacher has to originate topics to encourage attendants at the devotional service to take part. And they think mere talking is testimony. But it does not require an expert leader to get spirit folks to take part in a meeting. God and salvation are real to them. They know of life's pain, temptation, losses, crosses and sufferings, but best of all they know of Christ's deliverances, and extol the power of his all-cleansing blood.

ONLY FIVE MINUTES.

Five minutes late and school is begun,
What are rules for, if you break every one!

Just as the scholars are seated and quiet
You hurry in with disturbance and riot.

Five minutes late, and the table is spread,
The children are seated, and grace has been said;

Even the baby, all sparkling and rosy,
Sits in her chair by mamma, so cozy!

Five minutes late, and your hair all askew,
Just as the comb was drawn hastily through;
There is your chair, and your tumbler,
and plate,
Cold cheer for those who are five minutes late.

Five minutes late on this bright Sabbath morn,
All the good people to church they have gone,
Ah, when you stand at the beautiful gate,
What will you do if you're five minutes late?

—Selected.

A PRAYER IN A PILLOW.

One night the mother of two little girls was away at bedtime, and they were left to do as they would.

"I am not going to pray tonight," said Lillian, when she was ready for bed.

"Why, Lillian!" exclaimed Amy.

"I don't care; I am not going to. There isn't any use."

She tumbled into bed, while Amy knelt and prayed. The prayer finished and the light extinguished, Amy crept into bed. There was a long silence; then Lillian began to turn restlessly, giving her pillow a vigorous thump and saying crossly, "I wonder what is the matter with this pillow!"

Then came a sweet voice from Amy's side of the bed: "I guess it's because there isn't any prayer in it."

After a few minutes Lillian slipped out of bed and knelt in prayer. Then all was quiet, and the two girls slept.

Is there a prayer in your pillow when you go to sleep at night?—Child's Hour.

Methodist ministers in the United States get an average yearly salary of \$480; Episcopal ministers get \$600; Presbyterian ministers \$700, and Catholic priests \$800.