

ARE YOU BEARING THE CROSS?

Rev. R. C. Potter.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. 2:10. Good resolutions and noble ambitions are desirable and commendable, but many have possessed these who did not have the saving grace of God.

The church in Smyrna was a suffering one. The name Smyrna signifies myrrh, a fragrant discharge from a thorny tree, which was used by the ancients in embalming the dead. Here we have a church that had been persecuted almost unto death, yet no complaint is made regarding this body of people, but to her the message is "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Hallelujah! God has not promised his people an easy passage from earth to heaven. He does not ask us to enter a life of ease; but He does say: "Whosoever will come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." This the Church at Smyrna had done and God, wishing to encourage, says: "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."

One of the great difficulties today in the religious world is that men are preaching a crossless religion, a religion that has no place for the martyr spirit.

"Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me.

"How happy are the saints above,
Who once were sorrowing here!
They ever taste unmingled love,
And joy without a tear.

"The consecrated cross I'll bear,
Till Christ shall set me free.
And then go home my crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me."

Polycarp may have been the angel addressed in this church. When he was martyred it is said the Jews united with the heathen in demanding the life of the devoted old bishop and were ready to carry the fuel for the fire which was to set his spirit free.

"Be thou faithful unto death." Nothing less will avail, anything short of this brings dishonor on the cause of Christ. On every hand we can meet men and women who made a profession of religion at one time, but alas, many of them "walk no more with Jesus." They were not ready to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," and He has no crown for such.

A few years ago a promising young man was attending a religious school, where he was preparing for God's work. During the recent war while crossing the ocean on an errand for the King of Kings, a deadly bomb ushered him into eternity. Again and again he had used his beautiful and consecrated voice, but never before had he had such an audience as when he sang in the midst of the angry waves of the sea—

"All that I want is in Jesus,
He satisfies, joy he supplies,
Life would be worthless without
him,
All things in Jesus I find."

Eternity will reveal the result of the singing of that song. He was faithful even unto death. Hallelujah!

What are hardships, ridicule, slander, pain or even death, to the man who has a soul throbbing with a passionate passion for the lost and needy? But alas, how few of such we find. Unless one really enjoys the blessing of holiness, there will be an inward shrinking when called upon to live this life. The old man will say, "Spare thyself;" and this is precisely what professors in general are doing.

CHURCH COMPLETED AND EVANGELISTIC SERVICES IN PROGRESS.

The Church at St. John have finished their repairs on the inside and outside of their building. It is a decided improvement and makes the interior of the building look very attractive. A new roof has also been put on, thus insuring safety. The trustees have pushed the work rapidly to completion in a very commendable way, and has met all the expenses, which was a considerable amount. Evangelistic services in charge of Evangelist Archibald of Quincy, Mass., were commenced as soon as the church building was ready, resulting in much blessing, enjoyed and united effort in the salvation and sanctification of believers. Brother Archibald is a straight holiness preacher, one who has a message without fads or fancies. He was assisted a few days by Brother Hilyard, who has now received a unanimous call to become pastor and has accepted and will enter upon his duties at once. For all of which we praise the Lord.

VACATION AND RELIGION.

Vacation time is trying on a Christian's religious life. When he leaves his business, his home, his church and his community, he is apt to feel that change is the natural order.

Obligations and responsibilities are largely laid aside for the time being. This results in his failing to keep up his religious duties, such as reading God's word, prayer and church attendance.

The restraints of home and home friends being removed, he is far more apt to yield to the temptation to do things that he would not do at home.

The result is that he is likely to return home with a lowered spirituality. If he will stop to think, and will be honest with himself, he will see that this is the case.

He will also see that he has failed to use the time, which he could have controlled so easily, for doing something to advance the Saviour's cause. He will find that his life has really hindered, rather than helped God's work.

When we take our vacations, let us not give our religious life a vacation. It does not need it. Let us not forget that Satan takes no vacations.—Presbyterian of the South.

The demonstrations of men's wisdom are seldom accompanied by the demonstration and power of the Holy Spirit.—Clarke.

"The way to feel like doing our duty is to do our duty whether we feel like it or not."

FOURTEEN POINTS ON KILLING A CHURCH.

1. Don't come.
2. If you do come, come late.
3. When you come, come with a frown.
4. At every service ask yourself, "What do I get out of this?"
5. Never accept office. It is better to stay outside and criticize.
6. Visit other churches about half of the time to show your pastor that you are not tied down to him. There is nothing like independence.
7. Let the pastor earn his money; let him do all the work.
8. Sit pretty well back and never sing. If you have to sing, sing out of tune and behind everybody else.
9. Never pay in advance, especially for religion. Wait until you get your money's worth, and then wait a bit longer.
10. Never encourage the preacher; if you like a sermon, keep mum about it. Many a preacher has been ruined by flattery. Don't let his blood be on your head.
11. It is good to tell your pastor's failings to any stranger that may happen in; they might be a long time finding them out.
12. Of course you can't be expected to get new members for the church with such a pastor as he is.
13. If your church unfortunately happens to be harmonious, call it apathy or indifference or lack of zeal, or anything under the sun except what it is.
14. If there happen to be a few zealous workers in the church, make a tremendous protest against the church's being run by a clique.—Christian Work.

NUGGETS FROM C. H. SPURGEON.

A lame foot may tread the right road. Allow no furlough to your obedience. Do not say to yourself, "At all other times I am exact, but once a year, at a family meeting, I take a little liberty."

A ton weight of human literature is not worth an ounce of Scripture.

A little too late is a lot too late.

Ask Christ to be your Owner. Run up the red flag of the Cross, and give yourself to Jesus.

A sentinel must not leave his post even to gather pearls or diamonds.

As well hope to grasp a star by the hand as divine truth by reason.

A gospel that is after men will be welcomed by men; but it needs a divine operation upon the heart and mind to make a man willing to receive into his inmost soul the distasteful gospel of the grace of God.

At our strongest we are weak enough.

A sermon of Christ, even a single word of Christ, set in the light of the Holy Spirit, shines like a diamond; nay, like a fixed star with light that is never dim.

Some want all their frills and nice frocks, and a sweet, fruitful, sanctified life, but it is impossible.—Selected by Rev. Maurice Gibbs.

"You will find as you look back upon your life that the moments that stand out are the moments when you have done things in the spirit of love."