

The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness.

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness—Isa. 35-8.

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TEXT:

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" Phil. 2:5.

I once thought the text required more than was possible for the human, however, as I study the Scriptures I find it is possible, practical and necessary in order to a true Christian life to have in us the mind of Christ.

We must remember that the Apostle has no reference to the intelligence of Christ. In this sense, the mind of Christ is infinite and is quite impossible for the human. If in the study of the text we substitute the word mind with the word disposition we shall more readily grasp the thought the Apostle wishes to convey.

The object of the Christian religion is not only to save men from the consequences of a sinful life, but to save them from sin itself. Redemption is to bring man back to the original purity of the first lovely pair; not that man can ever reach a state in this life that will enable him to hand down to posterity inherent righteousness, but that every fallen man, individually, may be born again—made in Christ a new creature. In a word, the grand object of Christianity is to make sinners by the power of the Atonement as much like Jesus as it is possible for the human to be like the divine. Hence, it is the duty of every Christian to cultivate the disposition and duplicate, as nearly as possible, the character of the Son of God.

The importance of living right cannot possibly be overestimated. The Holy Scriptures have by no means been silent on this subject, but from the Ten Commandments written by the finger of God on Sinai, to our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, line upon line and precept upon precept, the path of duty to our Maker and our fellow man has been marked out with great care and plainness. We have not only had precept but we have also had example. Jesus Christ came into the world, lived and labored among men and, although he was closely watched by those who would have gladly detected in him the least discrepancy, there is not on record against him a single unwise word or improper action. A short time before his ascension, he said to his disciples, "I have given you an example."

It is much more difficult to originate than it is to copy or to imitate. Hence, surrounded by many difficulties, we have this advantage; we are to copy the example of Christ. It is the purpose of this sermon to tell in plain and simple language how we may be like Jesus; what it means to have in us the mind of Christ—the disposition and attitude of our Lord.

Much might be said with regard to his obedience to the Father; the patience with which he labored, the zeal with which he spread abroad his teachings, the fortitude with which he suffered, and the general humility that characterized every act of his life; but it is my purpose to speak especially of his obedience to the Father and his mercy toward the sinful, and to urge upon all the importance of

following his example and cultivating his disposition in these essential particulars.

Early in his ministry, Jesus said: "I came not down from heaven to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Even before this, when his disciples urged him to partake of food which they had prepared for him, he said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." When his disciples said, "Hath any man given him aught to eat?" he said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." When the shadow of the cross was falling over him and the bloody sweat was bursting from his face, he prayed to the Father saying, "Father, if thou be willing remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will but thine be done." Paul says "he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

We certainly have a wonderful example of obedience here in our divine Master. We will do well to lay this to heart. No degree of faith or service releases the Christian from a careful and strict obedience to the law of God. Obedience is the foundation stone of Christian character. To search the Scriptures, to know his will, to pray and trust for light, strength and guidance to do his will, is the spinal column of Christian manhood and womanhood. Watchful obedience in the little as well as in the larger things, means much to the soul. No doubt, to live an obedient life would make one peculiar, to appear eccentric; might subject one often to ridicule and sometimes to persecution, but the platform of obedience is built directly under the open windows of promise and blessing.

The faith that falls short of leading a man to search the Scriptures and regulate his life according to their instruction, the laws and the truths laid down in them, is a dead faith. Certainly we are saved by faith, but that faith that fails to bring a soul into conformity with the law and will of God is not a saving faith. We should remember that Jesus has said, "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." And as if to impress this important truth indelibly upon our minds, we read the same in the very last chapter of the New Testament, "Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have the right to the Tree of Life and enter in through the gates into the city." The language of Samuel to Saul comes home to many of us laden with bitter reproach, "To obey is better than sacrifice." Shall any intelligent, moral being with all these scriptures looking us squarely in the face, make any pretensions to a religious life, and yet habitually and wilfully violate the laws of God legislated for the just, equal and happy regulation of human society and our attitude of humble and constant obedience to our heavenly Father? It were better to make no pretention to religion than to trifle with God.

I now call attention to the attitude of our Lord to sinners. His mission in the world was truly a mission of mercy. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. This was by no means an easy task. No-

thing but infinite mercy could have led him to undertake the solution of the great problem of sin. It seems that in order to save men, he must hunt them up, search them out, and come into close contact with them. In tears and sweat and blood, he wrought out and announced to the world the plan by which God might be just in the justification of the ungodly. Our Lord Jesus was not merciful in a general sense only, but in a special sense as well. Whoever came to him that was in any wise turned away without compassion? Upon what would our hope rest but for his compassionate mercy? Mercy is a great central fact in the Atonement. Take it out of the Bible and that good Book has no promise for us. Mercy is the keystone in the arch of the plan of human redemption; remove it and the whole structure will fall into ruin. It is the electric light of Christianity that is illuminating the prodigal's return road to the Father's house. It is the magnet of the Church that must draw the world to Christ. The Lord Jesus wants us to have within us his mind and practice among our fellowbeings this same attitude of mercy. It is a pearl of great price. The Christian heart must know how to bear and forbear, how to forgive those who sin against us, how to follow up and seek to save the lost, how to bless and help the unworthy, how to support the weak, to be patient toward the feeble minded, to give succor and assistance to the unworthy, to hold on, to pray for, and to love those who backslide again and again. Jesus taught us this, Jesus practised this. This has been the attitude of Jesus toward us in the past. Can we who are so dependent upon the mercy of God refuse mercy to the objects of his love? Shall we not pray earnestly that our Lord Christ may put his mind in us? May he, by the Holy Ghost, work in us his own disposition of obedience toward the Father and compassion toward our fellow-beings so that we shall follow with untiring feet the lost sheep, lift up the fallen and bear the burdens of the weak? Let us be careful to cultivate in ourselves this quality and disposition of our great Exemplar that will lead us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, forgive the erring, throw the veil of charity over the faults of our brethren and sisters, and pray for the salvation of our enemies.

Shakespeare wrote almost like one inspired when he penned those immortal words:

"The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth like the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. 'Tis twice blest,
It blesses him who gives and him who takes.
'Tis mightiest in the mighty.
It better becomes the throned monarch than his
Crown,
'Tis an attribute of God himself, and earthly power
Doth show likest God when mercy seasons justice."

O, that such divine life may be wrought in us by the Holy Ghost that we shall go forth into life filled with the Spirit of obedience to our God and mercy toward all our fellow-beings.—Rev. H. C. Morrison, D.D.