

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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HOLINESS MINISTRY LEAGUE

A SPIRITUAL MINISTRY

J. H. S.

There are desires and demands everywhere for a truly Spiritual Ministry and there are drawbacks, difficulties and dangers which largely defeat or deflect from the same. If one-half the present day yearning and sighing, and even praying and crying for the things of the Spirit were fruitified and realized, all Christendom would be under an up-to-date Pentecost, and the nations of the world would be in the throes of a great Evangelism. But most of this longing is unmet. Much of the travail is abortive.

Present programmes of the Church itself set drawbacks to a Spiritual Ministry. In the ministry of Christ and of the Apostles, Materialism, Educationalism and Institutionalism are so far in the background that the effulgence of things directly Spiritual glows them well nigh out of sight, as the shining of the sun conceals the stars.

Today these tower so high and are kept so to the front, not only as the work of the church but as the well nigh required objective of the ministry—that things of the Spirit drop out of sight, or at best, are driven to secondary place. The premiums or rewards held out for service are mostly for material or numerical successes and rarely for spiritual achievement. Nay, it even goes farther than this in some instances, and under either real or feigned dread of fanaticism too much or too pronounced spiritual ministry is positively discouraged as being distasteful to a class that is supposed to give educational and cultured prestige to a church, or annoying to a "constituency" upon which modern drives are depending for a considerable measure of financial support. So that to the natural (or carnal) difficulties which spiritual ministries encounter in the hearts of men, there are added there 'hold backs' of those in office and power in the church. An anti-spiritual sentiment, even though voiced by but a minority, can often have a spiritual element and desire in the church can not have their request for a pastor granted against the influences over officials of a few unspiritual church bosses. In fact, a request or call from such an element may discredit and prejudice against such a pastor in officialdom. It is scarce a month since we heard of a case at point, where a general superintendent explained to a minister, as an excuse for ignoring or declining the request for his

appointment to a certain field, "that it was only the Holiness people in that church that had asked for him." Now, it is a long time, even in that good bishop's area, since we have learned of a single instance where such a request or call had been turned down because it was only the college class, or only the monied class. No, nor not even because it was only the Klan or the Secret Order class that wanted him there.

Now these difficulties, which would hedge the way of a Spiritual Ministry constitute dangers to the minister himself. And that these are not imaginary dangers; but actual menaces we will note three palpable effects that are now before our eyes:

I. Some ministers are giving less place to things of the Spirit since they have risen in ecclesiastical rank, or have advanced in favor with those in official power. Their evangelistic note is gone or going. Their stand for Holiness is less pronounced. They are more "conservative" about things spiritual, and more concerned about institutions, collections and education.

II. The activities of the more prominent and popular ministers are extended to those lines which can be (and often are) pursued by men who have no (nor do they claim any) spirituality at all. And their heralded successes now are therefore in other directions than that of soul saving.

III. Younger ministers who once flamed with evangelism, seeing that their rank and rating are to be fixed more by their scholastic training, their ability as platform speakers and money raisers, rather than by either their piety or their spiritual power, are giving no such heed and diligence to their own spirituality or the feeding of the souls of the flock, as the New Testament enjoins, and the needs of the church and of the souls of men require.

Many are afraid of losing college caste if they are too positive and pronounced in things of Holy Ghost experience.

An increasing number are afraid to strike clear and aggressive notes on spiritual lines, lest they must "change" more frequently than they like, or drop in grade of churches or appointments.

Numbers—once foraging towards Spiritual leadership, are becoming more "churchy"; under guise of "faults of independent movements"—more afraid of "inter-denominational" Holiness work.

Few are climbing the mountains in

Canaan them, or leading the saints from grace to grace and from glory to glory. Consequently, they and their churches are making no progress in Holiness.

And yet, contradictory as it may appear to all this, we repeat: "There are desires and demands everywhere for a Spiritual Ministry." Here are some half dozen evidences and proofs of this:

In every conference, presbytery, yearly meeting—yes in every considerable church we touch or hear from, there is a restless sighing and surging of prayer from at least a respectable minority for a revival of Holy Ghost religion.

There is in every preacher's meeting or assembly, a heart leaping of joy in the breasts of many, whenever some one in authority or leadership, as a bishop, strikes a clear note of spirituality in sermon, exhortation or prayer.

Not only our distinctive holiness camp meetings, but spiritual life visitations and ministries of men of distinction are followed after by all denominations.

A growing un-satisfaction (not to say dissatisfaction) is sometimes openly, but more frequently in silence, felt by multitudes of God's loyal church people with what they are getting for their souls and for their households from the average ministry of the day.

Large numbers, as sheep without shepherds, are flocking to other (sometimes dangerous) places in hope of finding spiritual refreshing food and furnishing.

Many ministers themselves are haunted and, at times, harrowed by the reflection that: "This that I am at—is not what I was separated unto the Gospel for." And not a few are wishing they could be freed to give themselves wholly to the Word of God and to prayer; and wondering if there is not a way out somewhere?

Now in an attempt to answer this last question, I would say:

There is

There must be

A three-fold consideration from us to this conclusion.

The Judgment Day accounting will call upon us for a truly and strictly Spiritual Ministry.

The famishing and the wondering flocks of God, we were appointed to shepherd, expect and demand of us the "living bread."

Our own consciences refuse to acquit

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Mrs. Wm. Churchill, June 26
R. F. D.

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