

The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness.

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

VOL. XXXVII.

MONCTON, N. B., MAY 15, 1926.

NO. 145

"GOD'S CALL TO ALL."

God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto Holiness.—1 Thess. 4:7. Faithful is He that calleth you who also will do it.—Thess. 5:24.

Now, "beyond all question, we are all called unto holiness. A man's calling is that at which he works, and by which he is distinguished from others who follow different callings. The Christian's calling, the one thing he is to work at, and which will distinguish him from those who are not Christians, is Holiness. But alas, many Christians have almost ceased to work at it. They did run well, but something hindered, things went wrong, they were disappointed over some in whom they had trusted, they were perplexed by conflicts and controversies around God's truth; they lost hope, and began to forget their sacred calling. To such there comes this plain word of Scripture, "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

It sets forth three things—What God is, What God has done, What God will do.

1. It tells us that God is faithful. But is that a comfort to a sinner? The criminal draws hopes from the possible fickleness of the jury or forgetfulness of the judge rather than from their faithfulness. Yet God's faithfulness is the sinner's sheet anchor. And for this reason only, that God is altogether prejudiced in our favor. A prejudiced person is one who has pre-judged the case before it comes into court. Our case was prejudiced at Calvary, where the Lord made to meet upon the Lord Jesus the iniquity of us all. There God entered into a covenant with our Sinbearer and Advocate. God's faithfulness holds Him to that covenant. So it is a real comfort and encouragement to know that God is faithful. "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. In our hour of deepest guilt we can cry, "O Lord, remember the covenant" and cast ourselves with confidence upon the faithfulness of God.

2. It tells us what God hath done. God hath called us with an ever-present call. There are many names in the New Testament for those who belong to Christ. They are not addressed in the Epistles as Christians or the converted, but rather as "the saints and faithful brethren," them that are "called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ." One of the most common titles is just this, "the called." Christian children are taught in the Church Catechism to say, "I thank God that He hath called me to this state of salvation." God's people are "called to be Jesus Christ's" (Rom. 1:6). They are "the called according to his purpose."

It is called in person. Some ladies turned up the corner of their visiting cards to show that

they called themselves, and did not send the card by another. So God called in person. Bethlehem and Calvary bear witness to the stupendous fact that "God hath visited and redeemed His people." So we read, "God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth whereunto He called you by our Gospel." Yes, the Gospel is the good news of God's call—a call charged with power to save the uttermost because of the mystery of the incarnation and the virtue of the Cross. So by the Cross the two classes of men are discriminated and discerned. Christ crucified is to the ordinary Jew and Greek a stumbling block and foolishness, "but unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks" He is Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. The called are those who can appreciate the inner meaning and power of the Cross.

It is a call with a purpose. God calls us because He wants us. He wants our love and society, as well as our homage and service. He calls us unto Himself, to come near unto Him and abide with Him. So it is a high calling. No honor can compare with that of being intimate with God. It is a holy calling. We cannot have fellowship with God if we harbor evil in our hearts. It is a heavenly calling. It means setting our minds upon things above, not on things that are on the earth.

It is a call which comes to us individually and personally. The Good Shepherd calleth His own sheep by name and leadeth them out. The first mark that we are His is that we hear His voice and respond to His call. In every life there comes a turning point when the call that has reached us from our earliest days becomes effectual through the secret working of the Holy Spirit, and is heeded and obeyed. For the Master's call is not the only call that reaches us. The voices of the world are so loud and clamant that for some time the call of Him who died for us falls upon deaf ears; but what makes a man a real Christian is just this, the hearing and obeying the call of God.

3. It tells us what God will do. This faithful God, who has called us, will also do it—i. e., He will do what is necessary to make the call effectual. He will not merely call us and leave matters there. He will carry the thing through. What the doing it means we gather from the preceding verse. This verse is a welcome addition and contrast to those which precede it. From verse 14 onward we have a series of godly counsels, bidding us to "be patient toward all men," "never to render evil for good, but always to follow that which is good," "to rejoice evermore," to "pray without ceasing," "to abstain from all appearance of evil." There are alto-

gether in these nine verses fourteen bits of good advice, covering the whole area of our behavior towards God and man. But all good advice is futile and impotent apart from good news. We listen to the admonitions, and our hearts sigh at the high standard set before us, and we ask, "Who is sufficient for all this?" The answer comes in the good news of verse 23, "And the God of Peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The work consists of two parts—sanctification and preservation. The work covers the whole area of man's being, "spirit, soul and body." The work continues throughout the whole time of man's need, "unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is a great word, "God Himself sanctify you wholly." It is the Aorist tense, and implies a definite crisis rather than a continued process. It suggests the restoration of spiritual health, such a cleansing of the inner man as separates it from those evil humors which bring about disease and spiritual weakness, such a separation from self and sin as leads to a real God-possession. "Sanctification," said one of old, "is a God-possessed soul." There is no sanctification apart from the indwelling Christ. "He is made unto us * * * sanctification." As He is revealed to us by the Spirit in the word of truth, and apprehended by faith, He dwells in our hearts by faith and separates them from their natural uncleanness." But if this sanctification is to be permanent, and not intermittent, there must be the further work of "preservation." David realized this when he prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." "Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." Lack of steadfastness is often our chief trouble. The cleanest heart God ever created in sinful man will not stay clean of itself. There must be the constant renewing and garrisoning by the Holy Spirit. Holiness is always a maintained condition, a condition of separation unto God and fellowship with God, maintained supernaturally by the paraclete—i. e., the unceasing comfort and advocacy of the Holy Ghost.

This work covers the whole area of our being. There are the three departments, "Spirit, soul and body." Notice the order. The natural man is "body, soul and spirit;" he walks after the flesh; his thoughts and purposes are governed by his animal nature rather than by the Spirit of God. The true Christian is "spirit, soul and body." The spiritual controls the carnal. Brings by the Holy Ghost into right relationship

(Continued on Page Five)