

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 Holiness.—Isa. 35-8

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OUR HERITAGE THROUGH THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR

Sermon preached by Rev. W. Edmund Smith
in the Grace Methodist Episcopal Church
Cambridge, Mass., on the evening
of Good Friday.

Text: Hebrews 13:12 and 13: Wherefore
Jesus also that he might sanctify the people
with his own blood suffered without the gate.
Let us go forth therefore unto him without
the camp bearing his reproach.

As this is Good Friday I am expected to
speak on an appropriate subject. We are
coming to the climax of the Lenten Season,
which is pre-eminently a religious time, and
Passion Week, the week of all weeks, to
many people who have the ceremonial and
ritualistic conception of religion. The Len-
ten Season did not have its origin at the time
the Christian Church was at the height of
its spiritual power and glory, but in the time
when spiritual experience had waxed dim and
the intimate consciousness of personal con-
tact with Jesus had been lost. The church
had to do something to give the semblance
of life and devotion, and so they called upon
professed Christians to practice special self-
denial forty days prior to the celebration of
Christ's passion, and to hail the Resurrection
morning with special music, and display of
worship and adoration. And next Sunday
the ruffles and frills on the music will be
equalled only by the grand display of finery
of those who crowd the churches.

Religion that merely consists in doing
things is an awful bondage. The more you
have of it the heavier the load, and it is a
very hard thing for some people to carry a
full load of religion for forty days. They are
very glad to let it drop with a thud at the
end of that time. But I am glad that a man
called John Wesley was raised up to teach a
religion that was not a burden, but a means
of carrying your burdens. He did not origi-
nate it, 'tis true, but he was the servant of
God to call the church back to the reality
and simplicity of the faith once delivered to
the saints. And I make bold to say that a
true Christian, be he Methodist or any other,
is one that loves and serves God every day
of the year. He is just as devout in August
and September as he is in March and April.
Feast days and fast days mean little to him
since he is indwelt by the living Christ. True,
he glories in the death of Jesus for that
death made possible his emancipation from
sin, but he glories more in the living con-
quering Christ who having redeemed us by
his death is able to save us by his life, seeing
he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

Coming to our text it suggests three lead-
ing thoughts which I wish to briefly amplify.

First the sufferings of Jesus. Secondly the
purpose of His sufferings, and thirdly the
personal exhortation to go forth unto Him
without the camp.

First, Jesus suffered. That was one of the
indubitable marks of his fulfillment of Mes-
sianic prophecy. Had Jesus come as the Jews
expected him to come, in regal splendor and
kingly power, trampling down all opposition
by the force of arms, living in a splendid
palace and clothed in purple and fine linen,
faring sumptuously every day, he would not
have been the Christ that Isaiah saw, and
saw so vividly and distinctly that he drew
his portrait, not in colors as the artists have
tried to paint it, but in language that grips
the soul so potently that it leaves the image
there. I have never seen a portrait of Jesus
that fully satisfied my heart. I have seen a
face that bore the traces of sorrow and an-
guish, but there was always something lack-
ing. I have had to turn to Isaiah, and when
I read of what he said about the Christ who
was to come, and when I read of how Christ
lived and suffered and died, I am compelled
to say that God sent Jesus' picture on ahead
so that men might know him when they saw
him.

Jesus suffered; but don't for a moment
think that all of his suffering was confined to
the Cross. As soon as Herod learned that a
child had been born that was heralded as the
King of the Jews, he sought his life. He un-
leashed the sword in Bethlehem and slaugh-
tered all the male children of a certain age.
Joseph and Mary took the young child Jesus
and fled into Egypt. Humanly speaking
Jesus did not remember that experience, but
divinely speaking he knew of it well. And
that was only a prophecy of what he was to
suffer all the way through. Jesus was ever
the holy, undefiled and separate from sin-
ners. He did not begin his ministry till he
was thirty years of age. He grew up in the
Carpenter's family as one of the children. He
was something like them but very unlike
them. When he was only twelve years old and
had gone up to the Temple with his parents,
to the Feast of the Passover, we remember
that his parents started back home and had
gone a long way before they missed Jesus.
They supposed that he was in the company.
They returned to the Temple and found him
asking the Doctors questions and answering
all theirs with marvellous intelligence. I
think that Mary felt like chiding him a little.
Anyway her words bore reproof. And there
is no impudence in the lad's reply, "wist ye
not that I must be about my Father's house?"
I think there was sorrow in the heart of

Jesus because he knew even then that he
must bear the burden of being misunder-
stood. And don't you suppose that burden
was upon him before he entered upon his
ministry? The youth Jesus and the young
man Jesus was peculiar in the home, amongst
his companions, in the workshop and in the
synagogue. If carnality was just the same
then as it is now, then spotless purity could
not dwell in the midst of impurity without
people seeking to tarnish it.

When Jesus entered upon his ministry, the
first year has been called the year of obscur-
ity. The second year was the year of popu-
larity. That was the year when his fame
went abroad. His wonderful teaching and
marvellous miracles drew the people to him,
and more than once they were on the point
of taking him and making him King. That
very popularity gave special sting to the re-
jection and ignominy that was to come.
Jesus knew that the very ones that were
loud in their praises and most demonstra-
tive in their approval, would in the trying
hour become indifferent, dumb and even
antagonistic. The time came when Jesus be-
gan to preach the principles of renunciation
and self-sacrifice, that the crowd began to
dwindle, and with weeping heart Jesus turned
to his little band, that had left all to follow
him; and asked that question: "Will ye also
go away?" O there was sorrow in that
question. And I think there were tears in
the eyes of Jesus when he asked it.
And I think there were tears in the
voice of Peter when he cried: "To whom
shall we go but unto Thee for thou hast the
words of Eternal life! There was suffering
in the heart of Jesus when he told those dis-
ciples that the time would come when they
would all forsake him.

We like the suggestive name garden, be it
of flowers or vegetables. In planting time it
is a place of joy and expectation. I think it
a joyfoul experience to plant a garden. For
nine years I have felt lonesome for a plot of
ground where I could plant seeds and vege-
tables, nurture them and care for them and
watch them grow. You go to a home down
East in July and August; they will want you
to look at the garden. I shall never forget
the gardens I saw in England and Scotland.
The wonderful Botanical gardens of Glasgow
and Edinburgh; and the public gardens down
here on the Commons are wonderful. We
say they are lovely places for things of
beauty grow there. But there is a garden
we have heard spoken about, that has no
beauty to those whose eyes are blind to

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Mrs. Loren Wilson, Dec. 25