

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

VOL. XXVIII.

MONCTON, N. B., NOV. 30, 1932

NO. 32

A message given by Rev. P. Wiseman on the occasion of the ordination of five men to the Christian Ministry.

There are many inspirational and appropriate passages of Scripture for ordination messages. Take for instance, the Scripture reading this morning, Acts 20:17-38. There are many good texts in this reading. But after praying a good deal over this service, my mind was taken back to a passage of Scripture that was used two years ago, if I mistake not, for the basis of the morning message. Not having had any notes on paper we are not able to recall just now what was said on the subject. In spite of the fact, however, that we cannot recall using the passage in mind on that occasion, the Spirit, we feel, would not have us settle on any other for this morning.

The Scripture in mind is recorded in Mark, chapter 3, verses 13 and 14, "And He goeth up into a mountain and calleth unto Him whom He would; and they came unto Him. And He ordained twelve that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach."

THE NEED

By way of introduction it might be suggested that there is in the background a need; that is, a need for the Christian Ministry. The question might be asked, "Why did Jesus the Lord need a Christian Ministry?" In answering we might recall the words of Dr. Gordon in one of his books. The story is that after Jesus ascended to Heaven, He took a walk one morning with Gabriel. "Master," said Gabriel, "did you really become man and die on the cross of Calvary for the whole world?" "Yes, Gabriel." "What provision, Master, didst Thou make for the carrying on of this work?" The Master is said to have replied, "I called a few fishermen, a tax-gatherer, and others from various vocations in life, saved them, taught them, sent My Spirit upon them, and sent them out to carry on the work." Then Gabriel said to Jesus, "But, Master, if they should fail, hast Thou made any other provision?" "Gabriel," replied the Master, "I have made no other provision. I am counting on them."

The suggestion here is that Christ, shortly after entering upon His earthly career, going to the cross to die for the world. He was brought to realize the need of a band of men who would sit at His feet and learn of Him; men who would afterwards carry on the work that He had made possible. We are well aware of the fact that the Holy Spirit in a very real way took the place of Jesus, but there is also a real sense in which Jesus needed a ministry that should imbibe His Spirit, His ideals and should carry on the work that He made possible while in the flesh. The great need was evident, hence the call and ordination.

THE SECRET

There is also suggested in the background

the secret of the wonderful life, the ideal life. The secret is found in prayer. I am glad for that selection in song this morning, "Ever will I pray." If we are to be an efficient Christian Ministry we must live on our knees, that is, live in the spirit of prayer, independent of the posture of the body for that matter. We must walk and talk with the King. If we do there is no danger of failure. There may be mistakes but God will over-rule for our good and for His glory. There is no doubt regarding the ultimate outcome of the Christian Ministry if the prayer life is kept up. We have that wonderful secret, "He went up into a mountain alone." He spent many nights there alone with God, the Father. When there was some great responsibility bearing in upon Him, He made His way to the Mountains. "Alone with God," and if the great Master, our Christ and Saviour, had need for this aloneness with God, how much do we in the crushing problems and the challenging difficulties which come in our labors, whether as pastors, evangelists, or in any other office in the ministry?

THE CALL

As to the message proper, we have first of all, the call. "He called unto Him whom He would."

The call to the ministry is Divine and human. God called whom He would. It is the prerogative of God to call. "No man taketh this honor unto himself but he that is called of God as was Aaron." We cannot choose it because we may desire such a vocation. Bishop Simpson puts it very nicely when he says that a man may desire to enter upon a medical career; he may wish to be a lawyer, and so on; but if he has the call of God upon him, he feels that he must be a minister. That imperative 'must' bears upon him. With him, it is not so much a matter of choice but a matter of Divine imperative. God in His own wisdom has placed His hand upon him for the work of the ministry. The inward argument is, "I now preach the gospel." He may argue against it, and around it, but ultimately, there is the conclusive urge within. "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel."

THE ORDINATION

Then follows the sacred ordination performed by Jesus Christ Himself. There is a sense in which that same sacredness is needed today, and if we enter this sacred calling and ordination in the same spirit as did the early primitive ministers, God will put the same sanction upon it as He did in the long ago.

THE HUMAN TOUCH

There follows that call and ordination what might be termed "the human touch." He called them and ordained them "that they might be with Him." There is a pathetic touch here. He wanted some to be with Him. With all due consideration of His Deity and of His ability to meet the crushing circumstances and the great difficulties that He did meet in His ministry, we find that during

that ministry He sought for the human touch, human sympathy. You will recall that in the garden He took with Him three a little nearer. "Could you not watch with me one hour?" was His gentle reproof, and it spoke of His desire for cooperation and sympathy. Thus it appears very clear from the context that it was not solely a matter of their spiritual uplift but there was a need from His standpoint. He desired their fellowship, their cooperation, and any human sympathy that they might be able to give during this time when His precious body, which had never known physical disease, became so crushed by the pressure of redemption that every pore in it became an open wound and forthwith came sweat as it were drops of blood falling down to the ground. No human mind can conceive of the physical, mental and spiritual agony of Christ in Gethsemane. He wanted some persons to be with Him. Brethren, there is the ministry of intercession.

THE PREPARATION

"That they might be with Him that He might send them forth."

There is here the idea of association, impartation, and proclamation. Association led to impartation. He imparted to them of His very self. They saw what He did, heard what He said, and felt the touch of the Almighty Christ. They received of Him, and thus were qualified to go out and proclaim Him; a proclamation by word and by radiation, showing the Christ-likeness. One might suggest the order here, association, impartation, assimilation, and proclamation.

Christ is the Teacher, "Learn of Me," and He is the lesson, "I am the Truth." "Learned Christ." It is thus summed up in a word. "As the truth is in Jesus." He is the Teacher. He is the Truth. He is the lesson. "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." "As the truth is in Jesus," and for its application we must finish the verse, "that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man which is corrupt, and put on the new man."

I want to say, friends, that Jesus Christ put emphasis where it belonged. There are a lot of things not mentioned in His teaching, because they are included in other things. They had that blessed association with the Master under trial that gave them qualification for the trials that afterward would come in their lives. When a minister has gone through the mill, the mill of trial, he can help others. They would see the Spirit the Master exhibited in temptation and misrepresentation. They would receive of Him, and be thus qualified to exhibit the same spirit under similar circumstances.

They thus received an education that could not be received in any other way.

Beloved ministry, we have to be with Him before we can go out to talk about Him. We have to hear His words, see His doings, and feel His touch. It is an alarming fact that there are scores of young men going out into