

GRACE ABOUNDING

(Concluded from last issue.)

Thirdly, in optimistic resignation. The sufficiency of grace is manifested in optimistic resignation. I put that word "optimistic" there to express what I felt in my own heart. There is a difference between being resigned to a situation and saying, "I have to bear it, I've suffered losses, I suppose I'll have to bear it," "grin and bear it," as the world would say. There is a difference between that, and real apostolic optimism. Not a matter of bearing it, or enduring it, being resigned to fate; but a matter of reaching up to God and taking His hand, and saying: "Thy will be done," and "the gates of Hell shall not prevail." There's no reward given for service if it's in a spirit of mere resignation. But when your faith reaches out and you can believe God that out of that circumstance can come real glory, God's glory,—that is real Christian optimism. Joseph went down to the pit, down to Egypt, down to prison, down to the dungeon, with his feet in the stocks, suffered in the way that he suffered the consequences of a sin that he inwardly fled from. He knew that truth in the prison would reach the throne, while a lie on the throne would land in Hell, and so he practiced Christian faith and optimism. God brought him up, and he has given us the most pathetic, yet Christian heroic story of the Old Testament.

Paul and Silas went to Philippi. The devil started a row, and they landed in jail with their feet in stocks. Well, Paul might have said, "We came to start a church, but this doesn't look much like succeeding. My back is sore and bleeding, and this cold dungeon! It doesn't look much like starting a church." No!—you can't find an intimation that they were having it even a little hard. They sang praises to God. Blood running down their backs, skin torn, no outlook; they started a prayer meeting; started a revival; and we have the Church at Philippi organized in the jail. Christian optimism! Had a prayer meeting, praise meeting, and God did the rest. Paul afterwards in jail wrote an epistle to that same church, and the keynote was "Rejoice".

Blindness! Groping through life! Suffering that terrible affliction, and then to suffer the keen disappointment of being dropped by someone whom he loved, but out of it, wrote:

"Oh, love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee.
I give Thee back the life I owe
That in Thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller, be."

If I ever meet George Mathewson in Heaven, I'll thank Him for writing that hymn. And I'll not be alone; the Christian Church ought to thank Him, for we'll never get over it. Mere resignation? More! Resignation, and Christian optimism.

The grace of God is the strangest thing in the world! People have been tortured, persecuted, and every means of inflicting pain has been used to crush out grace, but the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church!

One martyr said, "I go to my death as sweetly as I go to my bed. Glory be to God!"

An old man in the jail at Florence, waiting his turn at the executioner's block, the next morning. The jailer looked in and saw Heaven in his face and asked the reason for the Heavenly expression. He answered: "I thought I heard the dropping of the chains from my wrists and ankles, and their very falling on the pavement was music in my ears." The martyr felt it a privilege to die for Christ!

You cannot die for Him until you have

grace to live for Him. Dying grace is living grace. Living grace is dying grace.

May God give us His grace.
Let us pray!

QUARTERLY MEETING

The quarterly meeting of District No. 3 convened with the church at Wood Island, N. B., May 30th to June 3rd.

On Wednesday evening Lic. H. S. Wilson brought a soul stirring message from Acts 27.

Thursday evening Rev. Hollis Kimball spoke from Philip 2:10, 11, taking as his theme, "The Lord Jesus Christ." This was a deep spiritual message.

Friday evening Lic. F. A. Anderson brought the message from Rom. 3:23, using for his subject "The Unregenerated Heart."

Saturday at 2.30 p.m. the business session of the quarterly was held. The meeting was called to order by the president, Lic. H. S. Wilson. Scripture reading Psalm 91st, followed by prayer.

Roll call found the following ministers present. Rev. Mrs. H. C. Sanders, Rev. F. A. Dunlop, Lic. F. A. Anderson, Lic. H. S. Wilson, Rev. Hollis Kimball, Lic. Bennett Cochrane.

Delegates—Jonesport: Mrs. N. Beal; North Head: Bernard Tatton, Mr. A. Babcock; Seal Cove: Mrs. C. Wilcox; Wood Island: Mrs. W. Anderson, Lila Shepherd.

Visiting brothers and sisters were voted a welcome and privilege to take part in deliberations.

Election of officers—President, Rev. F. A. Dunlop; Vice-President, Rev. Mrs. H. C. Sanders; Secretary, Mrs. F. A. Anderson; Treasurer, Mr. E. Wilcox; Highway Agent, Rev. H. Kimball; Devotional Committee, Mrs. W. Anderson, Mrs. N. Beal, Mrs. C. Wilcox, Lila Shepherd, Bernard Tatton.

Encouraging reports from the following churches were read: North Head, Black's Harbor, Jonesport, Beals, Seal Cove, Calais, Wood Island.

A vote of thanks was extended to Wood Island Church for entertainment.

Arrangements for next quarterly were left to the officers.

A vote of appreciation was extended to Bro. and Sister Archer for their faithful labour in this District.

Moved and adopted that resolution concerning extension work and home mission be presented to Alliance.

Motion to adjourn.

Saturday evening Rev. Mrs. H. C. Sanders brought a wonderful message from Deut. 11:26.

The Sunday morning Love Feast was led by Mr. S. H. Bradley, basing his remarks on II Chron. 14:11. Preaching service followed. Rev. E. R. Bradley brought a very helpful message from Psalms 119:165.

Sunday at 2.30 p.m. Lic. Bennett Cochrane, President of R. B. Y. P. S., brought a very inspiring message from I Tim. 4:12.

Sunday evening the closing message of the quarterly was brought by Lic. H. S. Wilson from the text found in I Kings 20:32. This was a wonderful message in which our brother urged the Christians to make sure the Old Man is crucified.

This quarterly proved to be a time when God's blessings were graciously outpoured upon His people.

MRS. F. A. ANDERSON,

Secretary.

Black's Harbor, N. B.,

June 11th, 1934.

ARTICLE ON S. S. LESSON

25 Russell Street,

W. Somerville, Mass.

Dear Bro. Dow:

Our Sunday School Lessons for this six months' study on "The Kingdom of Heaven" are wonderful, heart-searching lessons. The lessons of April 22 and 29, "Our All for the Kingdom" and "Christ's Standard of Greatness," impressed me very much, and the truths contained in them came to us from a different angle than ever before. Some thoughts brought out in the study of them you may pass on to The Highway readers if you think them worthwhile.

Every nation or kingdom, and all other organized bodies set up certain standards, and demand compliance with them, for those who would seek citizenship or membership in such nation or organization. If citizens of any land should come to the United States and seek citizenship therein they would be required to surrender all allegiance to their native land and swear allegiance to the land of their adoption. And if they would be loyal citizens in every sense of the word, they would wish to inform themselves as to the government of the land and the standards it had set up. So if we should desire to become a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven, we must comply with the required conditions and surrender all that we hold dear to the Ruler of that Kingdom. "Come out from among them (the world) and be separate saith the Lord."

This is what many think unjust. They think they should have the privilege of their worldly associations in connection with their new citizenship, but this cannot be. But why should they object? No honest person would want to hold divided citizenship in two countries, and no country would countenance such a thing.

The Bible sets the standard. Here are a few quotations: I John 2:15, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him." James 1:27, "... to keep himself unspotted from the world." James 4:4, "... the friendship of the world is enmity with God, whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." And Jesus said in John 17:16, speaking of His disciples, "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world."

So if one would desire to become a citizen of the Kingdom he must meet the conditions laid down in the Bible, which is the only authority we have for our guidance. Enter by the door of faith in the atoning blood, and all that belongs to the kingdom of the world must be left on the outside.

But this is but the initial step. One must become established, and to this end he must inform himself as to the standards and requirements of the Kingdom. This information can only be found in the Bible and so the need of close study of the word.

Not early realising the importance of such study is probable cause of many failures in the Christian life. The joy of sins forgiven will sustain one for a short time, but to meet the assaults of the evil one we need to study well the word.

No doubt many of us can see where we would have been better off if we had learned this lesson earlier in our Christian experience.

While we can never make up for the lost ground of our yesterday, we can begin with our today and faithfully study the word. This, with daily prayer, are necessary if we would grow in grace, and growth is essential if we would maintain our experience in grace.

S. B. CHARLTON.