

## CLIMAX AND ANTI-CLIMAX IN PAUL'S LIFE AND EXPERIENCE

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informed of the sad ending of that life."

"O," replied the other, "this is awful! What a wreck and a failure this young man made of his life! What a waste of his splendid talents! His was a most promising career and he spoiled it all." This is the way the world appraises spiritual investment. This is too often the way carnal Christians look at things. To them Paul ought to have become a great Bishop with great dignity and authority. This, Paul renounced for the higher good. He reached a glorious climax of faith and hope and love.

What can be more pathetic than to hear a man who has reached an eminent place in the church, compelled to confess that he has not nearly so sweet an experience of grace as when he was first saved and almost immediately received the complete sanctifying power. I have seen one such climb to the place aimed at by many but attained by few. It indeed looks like a grand climax in service usefulness and dignity. But I heard that same man confess, long before he reached a bishop's chair, that he once knew the blessing of holiness of heart. Today he is high in fraternal, as well as ecclesiastical standing. But I see it an awful anti-climax for such an one to be compelled to confess that he has lost from his heart the sweet abiding presence of the Holy Ghost. What men call success God calls failure. In the light of Calvary, and Paul with his head on the block, defeat means victory, and loss means gain. Sad to see a so-called great man in the hour of death groping back for that intimacy with God he enjoyed when only a farmer lad. Man's climax is often God's anti-climax. "My ways are not your ways saith the Lord."

## THE BIBLE VERSE THAT CAME IN A TIME OF NEED

E. Wayne Stahl

Away over in South Africa Alice Sterritt is a missionary among the black people. To those poor, degraded heathen she tells the story of the love of God; she speaks the "good news" of salvation. It is her greatest joy to show the natives of Zululand the way to the cross of Christ, which is the way to pardon and to peace.

From America she traveled the vast distance to the Black Continent to carry that glorious message. She had heard Jesus say to her own heart, "Come unto me". She came; she found the pardon Jesus gives. Then after hearing Him say, "Come", she also heard Him say to her, "Go". It was the "Go" of the missionary command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel."

Though it meant immense sacrifice to obey that command, Miss Sterritt could say, "The love of Christ constraineth us"; she went with gladness. Leaving home and friends, the comforts and delights of civilization, she sailed the thousands of miles of ocean to the place where the Zulus dwell in their sin and wretchedness and sorrow.

Does she regret that separation from all that is dear and pleasant? By no means. She rejoices in the promise of her Lord, "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal life."

Remembering that Christ left His bright home in heaven, and came as a missionary to this

world she was glad to leave her home for His dear sake and be a missionary to those who had never heard the blessed tidings of Calvary.

For many years she had labored in Africa. Then one day in 1935 she found that her eyes were giving her trouble. She was not seeing as well as she should. In various ways she realized something was wrong. What could it be?

How sorry those Zulus were when they learned of the affliction of their loved and loving friend! She had strained her sight in working so self-denyingly for them; many of them who had become Christians through her teaching doubtless would have been willing to have suffered her pain, if by that their dear missionary lady would have been spared it.

She went to a doctor. She learned that her eyes were in a serious condition, and that, unless there was an operation, she would surely go blind. And even the operation was not always successful in preventing such a calamity.

And she also learned that, in addition to the great expense of the operation, she would, after it had taken place, have to lie on her back perfectly still for six weeks. And for the first part of this period she must have a nurse always with her to see that, whether asleep or awake, she did not move her head the least bit.

For a person who did not know the grace of God such news about one's eyes would have driven one frantic. But Miss Sterritt knew the grace of God. The promises of God were very precious to her in that terrible time of possible blindness. She knew that her heavenly Father would keep His promise to her, when He said, "Fear thou not for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will help thee, I will strengthen thee."

She made preparations for that operation; peace was in her heart, for she felt a rich, sweet, strong confidence that she could not drift beyond God's love and care.

The night before she entered the hospital she prayed to God that He would give her a special promise in the time of trial. She knew there were many "exceeding great and precious promises" in the Bible, but the feeling was hers that there was a certain one that would be particularly for her. She trusted that she would be directed to it.

After praying for such direction she turned to her Bible. She opened it at random. What was the first passage on which her eyes rested, those eyes soon to be under the knife? Had God answered her prayer for "a special promise" so soon?

Yes, He had answered. For that passage to which she had turned, not knowing where she was turning when she opened the divine Word, was the second and third verses of the thirty-second chapter of Isaiah. These verses are prophecy and promise of Christ's help in a time of trouble, which Miss Sterritt greatly needed in her distressing circumstances; they also have a message for those threatened with blindness.

For those verses read thus, "And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim."

And these words were fulfilled for the devoted missionary. She found Jesus a refuge in her time of trial, a shelter in its tempest; He refreshed her from the rivers of His grace; she found that His presence was as the cooling shade of a mighty boulder in a land of weariness.

But you ask, "What about the operation?" It was wonderfully successful; following it Miss

Sterritt found her vision restored. She knew for herself the truth of the prophet's assurance, "And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim."

## FEARLESS PREACHING

Sam Jones went to help Dr. Talmage in a revival in Brooklyn, N. Y. He began his first sermon by saying: "I am afraid there is too much pride in this church for the Lord to do much for us. If you people and Dr. Talmage had as much of the grace of the Lord in your hearts as you have pride, you wouldn't need a little sallow-faced Georgia preacher. I am not going to preach like Dr. Talmage. There is no use preaching like he does. If his preaching would convert you, there wouldn't be any room for mine."

There was a tremendous lot of smiling in the big audience over these words, and then he walked in with sword, spear, cannon and bomb-shell to take the place for his God. And mightily did the Holy Ghost stand by and honor the ministry of his servant from the South.

In one of the largest northern cities, hundreds of ministers heard him in a great hall. They came to see if they could afford to recognize, endorse and work with him. As they sat in dignified silence before the evangelist, it looked like he had read their secret thoughts and at once executed a flank movement which they had not expected, and for which they were not prepared. He said:

"Brethren, I don't ask for your endorsement. If I didn't do any more good than you do, your endorsement would do me no good."

One can well imagine the astonishment, bewilderment, conviction and dry grins which followed this home thrust of a sword that went up to the very hilt in heart and conscience. Before a great audience in another large city, where the congregation was made up mainly of church members, he said: "When you send up your committees to conference to interview the bishop about your next pastor, what do you ask for? Bishop, we want a preacher popular with the young people or, we want a preacher popular with other denominations; or, send us a preacher who is popular with sinners. I never yet heard of a committee that said, 'Bishop, send us a man who is popular with God Almighty.'"—Pentecostal Herald.

## READING HER FATHER'S WILL

A missionary in Brazil was making her usual visits when she came upon a poor, ignorant, ragged woman whose face was radiant, sitting in her little thatched hut with a copy of the Gospels on her laps and an "A, B, C" book by her side. When she saw the missionary she said: "Oh, Senora, I'm an heiress. Just think of all these riches for me." The missionary saw her labor hard to read the words, and asked, "Why do you take so much trouble to read?" The reply came, "It is His will. Just think how ashamed I would be to meet my Lord and have Him ask, 'Did you receive the inheritance? Did you read My will?' And I should have to answer, 'No.' Oh, Senora, I want to learn it by heart, for He left it all for me."—From "The Children's Friend."

Almost every man who has contributed to America anything of which America is proud, has founded his life upon the teaching of the New Testament.—Theodore Roosevelt.