

## KEEPING THE CROSS IN SIGHT

Travellers have for ages found their direction by keeping the stars in sight, particularly the north star, which for several reasons serves well the purpose of being a guide. Or if journeying by day a prominent landmark will do, a mountain, or some distinguishing mark of the landscape. We once drove a horse across the plains toward the Rocky Mountains, making our way to a camp meeting at Bolder, Colorado. Long's Peak was in the direction of our destination, and day after day we simply looked up at the snow covered mountain to get our direction.

In similar manner we find safety in keeping the cross of Christ in sight on life's journey. It stands unmoved through the centuries as the place where the love of God was revealed in the supreme sacrifice. This helps us to direct our way. Life in the service of Christ calls for many a labor of love, and at times this labor is tiresome, more or less humble in its character, is often done without reward and at times is even criticised and misunderstood. When the labors of love become somewhat irksome then it is time to take a new look at the cross, for inspiration if not for direction, and keep on.

The cross is a standing rebuke to religious deception and the evils that creep into the religious life. If at any time you are tempted to win some advantage at the price of a good conscience, it is time to once again look at the cross of Christ. On the part of His enemies it was pride, and love of sin, and jealousy in the name of religion that sent the Saviour there.

The cross is a testimony that love wins when nothing else can. The cross is an essential part of the plan by which God proposes to prepare His people for an eternity with Himself. It is central in the atonement, without which we could not hope to enter heaven. At the cross we enlist as God's servants, to be subject to His will in the making of character, and by the work of the Spirit we are brought on finally to join the hosts that are at home with God and who love His presence.—Wesleyan Methodist.

## "NOW ARE WE THE SONS OF GOD?"

It is Saint John whose inspired statement declares: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but when He shall appear we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:2). It is clear that the first emphasis goes to the word "now," and the blessedness assured in the present is that we "are sons of God." Think of it! Children of God here and in this life; Then, lest we should be inclined to limit God's plans to the present, however good these plans may be, the apostle immediately proceeds to write of the eternal state, and says, "And it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when He shall see Him as He is." Sons of God here in this life; with a future life so glorious that even an apostle who wrote by inspiration did not attempt too exactly the description—such is the greatness of God's grace to usward.

When we reflect that saintliness of character is an essential of heaven, and this life is the only time of probation that we have, we see that anything short of the divine sonship would fail of the purposes of God. The people to whom we minister really need the deepest,

greatest, strongest measure of the grace of God that is to be found. Let us not fail to enjoy these blessings and to share them that God's work may go forward.—Sel.

## HELPING THE NEW PASTOR

By Rev. George H. Smith

We were once in the first service when the new preacher had come. There was in the congregation a resident preacher who opened the service, introduced the new pastor, and spoke a few appropriate words which made the contact of pastor and congregation much easier. This arrangement was helpful and encouraging.

In some cases the new pastor is welcomed by a reception given by the flock he is to serve. Sometimes they bring along some of the things so necessary in getting started in the new home. By this kindness the preacher is encouraged to believe he has found the right place.

We learned once of a few in a congregation who refused to accept the new pastor. Though he was there for two years they were never reconciled nor gave their support. The pastor was grieved in soul; his health failed, and he has never recovered from the experience of those two years!

It was noted once at a conference that the outgoing pastor took the new appointee around and introduced him to such of his new members who were on the camp ground. What a helpful step to a stranger! The new pastor must have greatly appreciated this.

In our modified episcopal form of government it seems very inconsistent not to accept the work of the stationing committee. We place the heavy responsibility of manning the work for the coming year in the hands of this committee. Let us gladly accept their will as the will of the Lord.

None of the above-mentioned items is absolutely necessary. There is a little word in the Scriptures which finds so many places of application in the itinerant work. It reads, "Be courteous." It goes a long way with most folk.

If we read John 17 carefully we shall find there three outstanding desires: One is that we may be sanctified. That is the great heart cry of the Lord. How earnestly He prayed that not only His disciples be sanctified, but all of us who believe on Him through their word of ministry. Second, why be sanctified. "That they all may be one." So essential did He regard that that He prayed five times in this one prayer that it might be so. Third, and why be one? "That the world may believe that thou has sent me." Things mentioned above may not be absolutely essential, but these last three conditions are essential.—Sel.

## TOO CHEAP?

David would make a sacrifice to the Lord at the threshing floor of Araunah. Gladly Araunah offered the land and all necessary equipment to the king at no cost. But David refused. He said, "I will surely buy it of thee at a price; neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing."

Most people are not like this. That which costs nothing is exactly what they wish to give unto the Lord. But someone has said, "A religion which costs nothing is good for nothing." We can be too cheap in our dealings with God.—Sel.

## HE STOPPED PRAYING

A mutual friend tells of a preacher who said, "Whenever I drive more than forty miles an hour I stop praying." It seems that this man has the idea that to be consistent he should pray for God's protection only while he is co-operating by his own carefulness.

This principle is correct. God has given to us intelligence. He expects us to use this. We are responsible for the use of the resources we have. We should avoid disease, fix the broken step-ladder or keep off it, fertilize the land, plant the corn in the spring, keep our credit good at the bank, have family prayers, help the children to attend a Christian college, speak what should be spoken, and keep still rather than tell all we know when telling might do harm.

By such negative and positive behaviour we are working with God for our protection, general welfare, usefulness and the other great and good ends that we have in mind. There is a saying that God takes care of children and fools. Perhaps so. But if so, and if we are neither, it is then a good thing to avoid presumption. Even Christ did not throw Himself from the pinnacle of the temple upon the devil's dare. He said, "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."—Free Methodist.

## INGRATITUDE

By Carrie B. Gauzens

We have health, the choicest wealth,  
Still we complain.

Shame on us.

With free air we cry despair,  
How can we sigh?

Shame on us.

Bird's sweet song heard all day long  
Gives no comfort.

Shame on us.

Angels sing the glad tidings,  
There is no smile.

Shame on us.

He has told in language bold;  
Our ears hear not.

Shame on us.

His death cry was heard on high,  
We do not weep.

Shame on us.

We can voice our heav'nly choice,  
Yet we delay.

Shame on us.

"Lest we sin. 'These things write I unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.'—I. John 2:1.

There is no allowance for sin—no need to sin, no right to sin, but a provision in case we do sin. On board ship the provision of life belts is not associated with any intention to have a shipwreck, but is in case of need. When it is said here, 'If any man sin we have an Advocate,' it is simply the provision in case of need. As you know, there are two Advocates. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Advocate with the Father. And the same word is used of the Holy Spirit in St. John—He is the Advocate within. There is Christ's perfect provision IN us."—Dr. Griffith Thomas.