

# THE KING'S HIGHWAY

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

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## SPECIAL NOTICE

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## EDITORIAL

### SOME EVIDENCES OF A DIVINE CALL TO THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL

Let us note first that a call to preach the gospel is from God. No mere man is qualified to tell another that he should become a preacher. A call to the gospel ministry is of such importance that God does not leave it to men to choose such a calling for us: but He speaks directly to the heart of that one whom he calls. Men may be good men and very earnest workers in the church. They may have a strong desire to see others saved. They may have some qualifications such as a preacher should have, such as the ability to speak in public, and exhort others to get saved, and yet not be called of God to give themselves wholly to the gospel ministry. Any man makes a great mistake when he usurps the authority of the Holy Ghost, and encourages a young man to enter the gospel ministry unless that young man has first had an unmistakable call from God.

Men have been spoiled for a life of usefulness in the church as a layman because someone else who had more zeal than knowledge told them that they ought to preach. Sometimes it may be the mother or parents who make this mistake because they think it would be an honor for their son to be a preacher. Sometimes it is some other would-be preacher, who is trying to preach himself without a divine call, who thinks that he is endowed with a superior knowledge which qualifies him to work in the place of the Holy Spirit. I do not say that we should never encourage young men to be preachers, for we should, but it is time enough for us to do that after God has called them. Then we should do our best to encourage and help them. As we have already intimated a call to preach begins with a conviction wrought in the heart of the individual by the Holy Spirit that God has chosen his life's work for him. This conviction is more than a desire to do good, and will increase if he keeps in an obedient attitude of heart until he is persuaded that the gospel ministry is God's choice for him. Then if he hesitates and does not declare publicly his call that conviction will ripen into a positive knowledge that "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." Or if he would keep God's smile of approval on him he must preach. It is told that a young man came to John Wesley and asked Mr. Wesley if he thought that he ought to be a preacher. Mr. Wesley in turn asked the young man if he thought that he could do anything else and keep saved. The young man replied: "Oh, yes, I can! But I have a desire to do good and to see others get saved." Then Mr. Wesley's advice was: "You would

better not try to preach, but do something else."

As a rule, the men whom God calls to the ministry are not anxious to go because God shows them the responsibility involved, which makes them feel that they are not able or qualified to assume such responsibility. Note the cases of the prophets and leaders of God's people of old, Moses, Gideon, King Saul, Isaiah, Jeremiah and others, whom God called and had to press into service. And here we think of the words of Jesus when He said, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he will not only call, but thrust out laborers into the harvest field."

Of course when men see the responsibility attached to the preaching of the gospel and they do respond to God's call and go, they will in a very special way feel their dependence on God, and will look to Him, and trust Him for help, which is necessary if they would be successful in His work. Another evidence that a man's call is from God is, that he can preach. Not only lecture, exhort or talk, shout, scream or ramble and rant, but the word of God with its hid treasures will open to him for he will have the unction and discernment of spirit of a prophet on him when he officiates in the sacred office. And last if God calls him He will have a place for him to work in God's vineyard at his divinely called profession. Our God makes no mistakes; He calls men because He has a place and work for them to do.

If you think He has called you and you are willing to take any small place, and there is no place opened to you, and no one is calling for your services, you have reason I think to believe that you have made a mistake about your call. I would advise you to just settle down and be a good helpful layman and worker in the church, which is a very important work indeed, and necessary to the success of God's work and building of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Don't let anyone make you think, my brother, that there is nothing of importance to do in the church but preach: For God wants those who will be pillars in the temple of God, and if He had more pillars He could build larger and stronger. It is too bad to spoil a good layman by trying to make a preacher of him. May God bless every young person who has a desire to work in the kingdom of God, and help them to find their God appointed place, and make them a blessing. H. S. D.

### WHEN THE SON OF MAN COMETH SHALL HE FIND FAITH?

With these words Jesus concluded the parable of the unjust judge and the importunate widow, as recorded in Luke's Gospel in the eighteenth chapter. The parable is plainly a lesson in prayer that wins the victory over great difficulty. Matthew Henry refers to the opening statement when he says, "This parable has its key hanging at the door;" the front door, we would say; and another key hanging at the back door in the form of the question quoted above.

Writers who deal with the Orient tell us that widows, of all classes of society, are the most defenseless and oppressed. The widow here represents God's cause and God's people as they become identified with its burdens and anxieties. Some great loss was threatening to take from her what she had left of her estate.

Sometimes government and courts and officers of the law are not what they ought to be, for it was so in her case. The judge in her country was notoriously wicked. A good name meant nothing to him. The fear of God and the judgment bar of God meant nothing to

him. The justice of her case meant everything to her but nothing to him. (It should be said that the word "avenge" is not equivalent to "revenge," as the reading almost intimates. Her plea was for justice, not revenge). But with undaunted courage and perseverance she pressed her cause—and won. Let us take to heart the lesson Jesus intended and never never surrender His cause, however unworthy of confidence the rulers of the world or of our country may come to be.

One would miss a real point of this parable if one should fail to see the striking contrast of character between the judge to whom she appealed and God, to whom we pray.

This judge was unjust, but our God is infinitely righteous and just and good. He had no regard for a good name among men, but God defends His good name. The widow's coming was unwelcomed, but God invites us to come to Him. She had no lawyer to plead her cause, but we have an Advocate, Jesus Christ. She went before him in loneliness and fear, but our prayers rise to God in the symphony of the united pleadings of thousands of His people. She could appear only at stated hours, in his court, but we may go to God at any hour of the day or night. Truly, as Tennyson says, "More is accomplished through prayer than the world dreams of."

Martin Luther and the reformers of his time were men of much prayer. Their mighty pleadings with God broke the spell of ages and brought nations to the Saviour.

Richard Baxter stained his study walls with praying breath, and after he received the baptism of the Holy Ghost a stream of salvation poured over his parish and beyond that brought hundreds of his fellow men to God.

John Wesley used to begin the day with an hour of Bible reading, meditation and prayer, and no small part of his eminent usefulness was due to the personal piety that marked his life. At the time of his death in 1791 the little Methodist societies that he formed out of people converted in this great movement contained 76,000 members, with 300 preachers. Indeed "men ought always to pray and not to faint." By example and precept Jesus assured His people that there are resources here that are full of blessing and power. He asks, "And shall not God avenge his own elect which cry every day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" and answers by saying: "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily." Blessed assurance! What a great promise this is for God's praying people everywhere!

Many of us would have closed this lesson on prayer here, but Jesus did not. He added to it one of the most searching questions on faith found in the Bible, a question both personal and epochal.

It is a personal question. We may well ask, "Have I such faith as this widow had—**courageous, persevering, supplicating, undaunted?** See her coming again and again into the presence of the judge, there to be rebuffed and scorned and criticised. Does faith cause us to wrap our Christian affections around the sinful and needy and plead their cause until we win the case? God help us so to do!

And this is a question with which the Church should challenge every epoch of history, and ask: "Are we preserving faith and such faith as is victorious in the face of every evil and of all unbelief?" The question, supported by the illustrative light of the parable, puts religion under a searching test. The