

THE INNER SPIRIT OF THE CROSS

Rev. G. D. Watson

"I am crucified with Christ." Galatians 2:20.

The act of crucifixion is one thing, but the spirit in which the crucifixion is to be borne is another. In some respects the act may be brief and unfinished, but the inward heart-disposition that should pervade crucifixion is a continuous principle extending through life, even widening its range over a multiplicity of applications, and growing in intensity to the end. This divinely beautiful spirit of self-immolation cannot be defined. It can only be faintly described. It is a heart quality, a soul essence too fluid to be held by mere words.

If we could get a vision of the soul of Jesus from the Last Supper to His death on the cross and have a clear spiritual discernment of all the thoughts, feelings, affections, sympathies, and every quality of disposition that was in His nature during those long hours, in such a spiritual vision we would see the full sized mind appropriate to crucifixion. Thousands have had in greater or lesser degree such a revelation, but it can be given only by the Holy Ghost, for it is infinitely beyond the natural reason and comprehension.

In the same proportion that we discern the inward spirit Christ had during those hours, in that proportion we can drink of that spirit, until we can suffer, bleed and die in our measure, with the very same disposition He had.

It is a silent spirit. It suffers without advertising the depth of its suffering. It can be subdued, scolded, criticized, misunderstood, misrepresented, checked and hindered in a thousand ways without a trace of threatening or imprudence. (I Peter 2:23).

It has calmly signed the death warrant of self. It can have a thousand treasures, gifts, pleasant hopes and friendly ties snatched out of its hand, without clutching its fingers to hold onto them. It can obey God and be rushing at full speed on lines of service and duty for Him, and then at the touch of God's providential air-brake, it can be brought to a standstill in an instant without shaking the train to pieces, or a least jostling of the will from its perfect repose in Jesus.

It is a flexible spirit. It can be turned by the finger of God in any direction without a moment's warning. It can walk into a dungeon, or a throne, a hut or a palace with equal ease or freedom. It partakes of the movement of the divine mind, as a cloud partakes of the movement of the air which envelopes it. * * * It looks with a quiet, secret, joyful contempt on all the honors, pleasures and honorable splendors of earth. It inwardly despises what other people are longing to get hold of.

This is because it sees into heaven, and is so fascinated with the magnitude of coming glories, that even the pretty and honorable things of the world look ugly to it. The rugged cross, which frightens so many Christians is embraced by this spirit with a secret joy, because it knows that all suffering will enlarge and sweeten its love. What other Christians shun as hardship, it will gladly accept as an opportunity of sweeter union with God. * * *

It is modest and retiring and loves to get out of God's way, and see Him work. It does not make others wear its sackcloth. It would rather take other people's sufferings on itself than to take their joys.

When the soul enters sanctification, it is the beginning of the spirit which is to spread,

intensify and brighten, until the crucifixion life becomes a beautiful flame of self-abnegation which takes hold of all sorts of woes, troubles, mortifications, pain, poverty and hardships, as a very hot fire takes hold of wet logs and makes them fresh fuel for more self-sacrificing love. It opens the gate of heaven without touching it. This is the spirit that wears out the patience of persecutors, that softens the hearts of stone, that in the long run converts enemies into friends, that touches the hearts of sinners, that wins its way through a thousand obstacles, that outwits the genius of the devil, and that makes the soul that has it as precious to God as the apple of His eye.

THE TEST OF THE HEART

'Tis easy enough to be pleasant,
When life flows by like a song—
But the one worthwhile
Is the one who can smile
When everything goes dead wrong.

For the test of the heart is trouble,
And that always comes with the years,
And the smile that is worth
All the praises of earth
Is the smile that smiles through tears.

—Anonymous

THE CHURCH IN A TIME OF WAR

The Church is at its best when it keeps busy at its mission of salvation, and in keeping with this ideal, we have not attempted to report on the events of the war now engaging the leading nations of the world. The Church as well as all other organizations finds itself confronted with unusual conditions of life, and more than ever we need God's help in meeting them.

The light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ should burn brighter in our churches than ever before. The times call for an advance in our churches, with the best preaching, the most inspiring testimonies, the greatest investments with God and the work of salvation that we have ever had. As conditions of travel become increasingly difficult let us meet the emergency by making our services better and more helpful when the people do get to them. The Word of God is rich in its resources for the messages to the people, that they will need in the midst of our present sorrows and dangers, and in these same difficulties increased many times in the future, as they probably will be. Let our churches everywhere become more serious and more devoted to the religious needs of humanity and to the well-being of the communities where we live and labor.

Millions of the young men of the United States and Canada are now in the armed forces of the Allied Nations, and to these we owe the most helpful service that the Church can render. Let every local church from which men have gone forth into the various arms of the service remember them constantly, not only in the prayers of the church, but in the various ways in which our loyalty and confidence can be expressed.

We are reminded of the historical record of the occasion when George Washington was reading his farewell message as the great national leader and military commander of America. As he deliberately adjusted his spectacles for the reading, he said:

"My eyes have grown dim in the service of my country, but I have never doubted the justice of its cause."

And we do not for a moment doubt the

justice of the cause as represented by the armies of the Allied Nations. We are fighting for survival; that fact should be plain to everybody, and it should need no argument to convince every citizen of the country who cares for his life and future, that it is now necessary to stand up and fight for the things that not only make life worthwhile, but make life possible.

But in addition to a war of survival, the avalanche of attack now let loose upon us would sweep away the most cherished values of human beings in the exercise of the rational liberties of existence. It has always been our understanding that God expects nations that possess the responsibilities of government that they should also take seriously the responsibility of policing their domains, that "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" may be secured to their people. Paul said of the magistrate of the law, that "he beareth not the sword in vain." (Romans 13:4).—Sel.

A WAR-TIME PRAYER

O God of Love, Thine eyes look down
On blood-stained fields and sheltered town;
The widow's tears, the orphan's cry,
The wounded soldier's agony
Are known to Thee. Thy children's woes
Are not forgot—their Father knows.

Great judge of all, defend the right;
Cause right to triumph by Thy might.

Our righteousness we dare not plead,
Yet save us in our utmost need.
Our sins are many in Thy sight—
Forgive us, and defend the right.

For those we love, O Lord, we ask
That Thou wilt help them in their task:
'Tis Thine to save alive or kill;
Bring them safe home if such Thy will.
And may they trust, amid the strife,
In Christ, who gives eternal life.

Lord God of Hosts, whose mighty will
Makes wrath of man to praise Thee still,
By this shed blood, these bitter tears,
Prepare the coming of those years,
O'er hill and valley, sea and plain,
When righteousness and peace shall reign.

Jehovah God, Thy promise stands,
Whate'er the fate of kings or lands.
Before the dawn the night grows dark;
Awake Thy Church on earth to mark,
'Mid lust and hate, 'mid fire and sword,
The nearness of her coming Lord! —Sel.

STATUE OF LIBERTY

The Statue of Liberty was a gift to Americans from France. It was given to remind Americans of the desire of France to live peaceably with us always. It was given by the people of France, not the government, and it cost \$250,000. Sixty men worked on it for more than ten years, and the gift had upon it more than 100,000 signatures. The inscription on the pedestal of this statue was written by a Jewess, Emma Lazarus:

"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses, yearning to break free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shores.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me.

I lift my lamp beside the golden door."
—Religious Telescope