



The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

"And an highway shall be there and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness."

VOL. XXXVIII.

MONCTON, N. B., FEBRUARY 28TH, 1946

No. 148

THE HIDDEN LIFE

By C. W. Butler

In Colossians 3: 3 we read "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. This Scripture suggests the title of this meditation. We might further use the title of Hannah Whitehall Smith's great book, "The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life."

There is for believers a life hidden with Christ in God. The experience of such a spiritual secret becomes ours by the route of an utter commitment and abandonment of ourselves and of our all to the will of God. A further description of this secret of Christian victory is found in Philippians 4:6, 7, R. V. "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

The first clause of this reading exhorts us "in nothing be anxious." The second clause enjoins upon us the route by which this freedom from anxious care, yea, this secret of the life hidden with Christ in God may be realized—"in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

The suggestions made thus far in this meditation constitute a recipe for high living. The highest standard of experience in our Christian faith is the surest way to relieve all strain and take all friction out of our practical everyday living. Instead of the high standard being hard to live, it is, by the route of God's grace in our hearts, the way to victorious and easy living. Life is exceedingly complex. Many little but real annoyances have to be met and dealt with. These little annoyances may either become the occasion of our building strongly in victory, or they may become the occasion of *breaking us utterly*. The wise man of Israel gave expression to a thought which may apply here in the following language. "Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes."

Anxious care wears the machinery of life until, if indulged in, we will soon have squeaks and finally a breakdown. Thank God there is a life "hidden with Christ in God," a life of utter and constant commitment of our all to Him in humble trust which excludes anxious care, and is a sure cure for worry. There is a trust which oils the machinery of our total living.

In the midst of that great Sermon on the Mount recorded in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus strikes at the heart of this high level when, in Chapter 6:25-34, He instructs us: "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what

ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Many years ago in the early part of my evangelistic labors I was holding a meeting in a rural community in Michigan where a large number of men and women in middle life had been preciousely saved and brought into the church. This group was earnestly seeking God's best, and were considering all of the practical implications of a completely dedicated life unto God. They were embracing the grace of God's sanctifying power and seeking to adjust every relationship of life to harmonize with the truth and experience which they had come to possess. I shall never forget how some of them were tempted to go to extremes in their view of some of the practical facts of our living. In the midst of my meeting I permitted a question box hour. The questions asked covered about every phase of our ethical conduct in home, social, and business life. One of the delicate questions with which they were honestly grappling was whether or not carrying insurance was in harmony with the paragraph quoted above. There was a tendency to be radical, if not rabid, on the part of some. They gave me this Scripture "Take no thought . . ." and wanted an explanation. I had not at that time faced a question like this so strongly and it sent me to my knees. I had no opportunity of even comparing the revised version of this paragraph when I dealt with the question. As is my custom in question box meetings, I answered them impromptu after simply looking them over and committing myself to God for illumination and guidance. I was sure

of this that the statement. "Take no thought for the morrow" could not mean that we were to close up the affairs of our total living each day so that no result of the day would carry over into the tomorrow. I showed them, by a line of careful reasoning, that when we do our best today, it will involve the highest preparation for the tomorrow, and further, there will carry over into the tomorrow the result of our today and of our yesterdays. I therefore was led to interpret this statement, as I later found it to be translated in the revised version and as it appears in Weymouth's translation, namely, "Be not anxious about the things of tomorrow." The whole paragraph opened to me in a splendid way by the illumination of the Holy Spirit and I taught them that the real thought of Christ was freedom from worry and anxious care about the future but that it did not prohibit nor discourage but rather encouraged our most intelligent type of preparation for the future by living free from anxious care and thus free from friction in our today. My explanation satisfied their thinking very largely and when I put the question of purchasing an insurance policy as a pure business transaction, disassociated from all such things as lodges but purely on a business basis the same as a man would buy a piece of land and pay for it gradually to have a home, they saw the matter in a light which steadied them and I am sure helped them to solve their problems in a manner pleasing to God.

It is indeed the secret of a happy Christian life to not only know the great epochal experience of God's sanctifying grace but to learn how to practice complete commitment of all that comes to us every day and every hour unto God: a commitment with a trust that takes out anxious care, removes fear, and leaves no place for fret and worry.

In living out the life of Christian holiness, there is much to be learned by actual experience. Having trusted God in the face of dark and forbidding circumstances on one occasion and finding that He has a way of leading out and giving deliverance strengthens one's faith and confidence to face harder things as the days go by. We do not grow sin out of our heart, but we do grow in the grace of Christian holiness after sin is out, and we are in possession of Christian holiness.

Paul instructs us further how to face the perplexing problems of life in the Roman letter at chapter 5, verses 3-5, "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed

(Continued on Page 5)