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THE KING'S HIGHWAY

MISSONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Thomas Morgan

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."

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EFFICIENCY... IN THE THINGS OF CHRIST

By C. W. Butler

We are in an age of great advance in many of the conditions and methods of our living. This is an age of efficiency. Mechanical perfection is in evidence on every hand. We "step on the gas" and make sixty miles an hour smoothly and easily. We touch a button, and light, heat, and power are instantly at our service. In the business world there are high standards of efficiency both demanded and realized in all departments of activity. Compare the present service which is ours with that of a few years ago, in the matter of speed and comfort in transportation. The story of advance is too well known to need telling. Our telephone, mail, and express service brings to us a degree of efficiency which, instead of testing our patience, as a rule affords us occasion for thanksgiving. Perfection seems to be the goal toward which men are pressing in all material matters. The bookkeeper will toil for days to correct one slight mistake and present a perfectly balanced report. I happen to know that in the office of the public accountants, Ernst & Ernst, who function in the great cities of the United States, an absolutely perfect sheet is demanded in all of their reports. If a typist misses one figure or one letter of one word on the last line of a great sheet of paper representing much labor, that figure cannot be erased or corrected. The entire sheet must be scrapped, and all the work done over. They must have an absolutely perfect page. Architecture, and the interior decorating of homes, trains, and public places have become works of art in these days. The demand for perfection is recognized in all our world activities and relationships. It ought so to be. Why tolerate inefficiency, when the best may be realized? It is both reasonable and right to look for the best in every realm.

A practical definition of the adjective "efficient" is, genuineness and effectiveness. I am going to ask a question which, I think, carries its own answer: Ought we to follow this principle of seeking efficiency in all of the lesser values of life and then drop immediately to a lower level when we consider the highest interests of life? We want our machines to work successfully. We demand efficiency in every department of life's activities. Shall we not look for and expect the same in the realm of our religion? To tolerate defeat and uncertainty in the realm of man's relation to God and his moral and spiritual interests is indeed a tragedy.

More than two hundred years ago there was born a religious movement based upon this

fundamental principle — the best in religion. Two young men of the Anglican Church, while pursuing their training for the ministry, saw there were demands in the realm of Bible Christianity which could never be met by the strictest observance of forms, nor by the use of Christian sacraments, nor yet by the route of Christian service or activity. They saw that in the realm of personal salvation there were possibilities to be realized which would condition and empower one in his moral and spiritual nature to become efficient in Christianity. This principle represents true integration of the individual, religiously. The standard of Christianity is Christ.

To be Christlike, to be pure as He was pure, to possess moral courage and moral power as manifested by Him—in a word, to re-present Jesus, so that the individual Christian stands out different from the non-Christian in such facts or inwrought experience and in such victory of outward living as would present Jesus to the world in His true light as an Almighty Savior—this is efficient Christianity.

These young men formed a club, spent time in study, meditation, and prayer. They were in earnest pursuit of the best. They gave constant, earnest and intelligent attention to their spiritual condition. These young men in their vision of revealed truth, saw that without holiness no man should see the Lord. In their pursuit for this moral goal, they discovered the divine method in the application of salvation's benefits. They found that men are first justified, and that subsequent to that first experience in grace they are sanctified wholly as a definite second divine epoch. They saw saving truth as a sphere. They then discovered this sphere to be made up of two hemispheres.

In the first hemisphere of saving truth, they found the gracious experience of justification by faith, involving the new birth and the witness of the Holy Spirit thereto. They advanced in witnessing to the reality of religion from the level of form and service, accompanied by a hope of being saved, into the realm of joyful certainty, and began to sing:

"Oh, how happy are they
Who their Savior obey,
And have laid up their treasures above:
Tongues can never express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

They advocated the doctrine and experience of the witness of the Holy Spirit. They declared that we may know we are right with God. This truth is expressed in conscious experience in language of confidence such as—
"My God is reconciled; His pardoning voice
I hear;

He owns me for His child—I can no longer
fear.

With confidence I now draw nigh,
And 'Father, Abba, Father,' cry."

Again, the soul consciously lifted to right relationship with God, with sins cancelled and sin's burden lifted, with a conscious realization of the favor and presence of Christ, declares:

"Blessed assurance! Jesus is mine!

Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!"

While this attainment was indeed a marked advance over the average religious life of their day, they were still in pursuit; they were after God's best. They sought the content of that second hemisphere of salvation which involves the instantaneous cleansing of the heart from all sin, the perfecting in divine love and the full indwelling possession of the Holy Spirit. This gracious grace which constitutes efficient Christianity is not an attainment; it is rather an obtainment.

I used to have in my office a notice which read, "The elevator to success is not running. Take the stairs." This is certainly a perfect principle in relation to all the phases of success in every realm of life except religion. There is a sense, of course, in which the full maturing of Christian character and winning the eternal reward set before us, applies to the Christian life; but it is the glory of revealed Christianity that in the matter of personal salvation the great epochs which represent a divine undertaking for the human, are obtained instantaneously through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. As regards the epochs which are transforming, renewing, and empowering in our lives, the elevator is running. We can meet the conditions of separation unto God and step out on the promise which by faith connects us with the Power that immediately lifts to a new level, and opens up to us new possibilities for new tomorrows in living our lives and building our characters. There is no place for discouragement or faltering anywhere in human experience. Whatever of defeat your yesterdays may hold, or whatever of failure and weakness you may sense in the present, revealed religion opens to you the door of hope, which if you enter, may find an immediate change which shall turn defeat into victory and displace weakness in the past, conditioned to live as you have not lived in your yesterdays.

This glorious faith gives every man a new chance—a chance which in its newness involves not only the present time, but our immortal and eternal welfare. It is thus that our Gospel, instead of saying "Go and do," invites us first to "Come and receive," and to "Tarry

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