

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

By W. Edmund Smith

What is success? What will your answer be? Will it accord with the standard Jesus set when he propounded the question, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or will it be on the low level of material values and popular appraisal?"

One may say, "Success is to achieve your ambition, to reach your goal, to be reckoned among the world's Who is Who." I heard a young man speaking to a large group of holiness young people, give amongst his many notable examples of success, Joe Louis, who he said made more than a million dollars before he had reached the age of thirty years. He might have told of a man who made half a million at Monte Carli in one night, and of another who from being a bootlegger has made a fortune in booze.

Yes, these are examples of success on the low level of material values, without regard to the character of the man or the service, good or ill, that he has rendered to society. Dives, reckoned by this standard, was a great success. He reached the top, the envy of a multitude who saw in his palatial home, his splendid equipage, his business success and the proud circle in which he moved, the ne plus ultra of a happy and a successful life. How the carnal heart is captivated by the show, the glamor and the popular applause which material things bring! For to them "a man, life does consist in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." If this estimate be true, then all the teachings of Jesus are null and void; He was a miserable failure for he had not where to lay His head, and was buried in a borrowed tomb.

Some, in preaching, seem to suggest that those who take the low way that leads to drunkenness, debauchery and physical bankruptcy are the only ones that take the wrong road. Alas! there is a road which seems to lead upward in the estimation of the world, but which, in reality, leads down to spiritual death. While there is a way which in the eyes of the world leads downward, but in the estimation of God leads upward to heaven and glory and true success.

I had a vision with my eyes wide open. I saw two sisters, only two years difference in age, brought up in a holiness home, and professing faith in Christ, members of a holiness church. Betty, the elder, was the more brilliant of the two and less inclined to be spiritually minded. Both these girls after graduating from High, went to a holiness college and both gave lip service at least, to the experience of holiness; they would stand on the test and as they had been brought up in a home where the parents both professed the blessing, and attended a church where it was preached, and now that they were attending a holiness college, it was easy for them to think they had "the blessing" by hereditary right. But they knew nothing of entire sanctification by the death rout and they had heard too little preaching along this line.

But, there came to the college a preacher who was different; he was on fire; he showed up carnality, not only that of the grosser kind, but refined carnality so proud and self-sufficient—that old carnal self not crucified. Great conviction came upon the student group, and many went to the altar confessing their needs, amongst them Betty and Mary, the two sisters. Betty soon got through—that is as far as she

was willing to go. Oh yes, she was a Christian and meant to go forward.

But Mary did not get through so quickly; she was going deeper. She saw how she had been deceiving herself as to her spiritual experience. She saw depravity of her own heart and cried out for deliverance. She saw that she must go the way not so many were travelling. But she paid the price and after two hours of struggle she at last cried, "I'll take the way of the Cross, dear Lord!" The fire fell. When she came to her room, Betty was asleep but she was soon aroused by the praise that came from the lips of her newly sanctified sister.

"Oh, Betty, wake up," she cried. "He has come. The blessed Holy Ghost has come. I never knew that holiness could be like this." "Well," sarcastically replied Betty, "I don't see why you should wake everybody up over it. Can't you keep quiet?" "Oh, glory," shouted Mary, "I can't keep quiet. Oh, Betty, don't you want the blessing?" "Not if it makes me take on like that," was the reply.

Mary did get the blessing and held true. A year after her graduation, a band of people stood on a pier from which a steamer was sailing for Africa. Mary was among the number sailing as missionaries to the Dark Continent. There she labored for seven years with success and great joy.

But where is Betty now? After her graduation she took a course in business administration and was soon employed at a good salary, with a most prosperous firm. She, by her attractive personality and winsome ways, attracted the attention of a rising young executive. They were soon married, and occupied a beautiful house in a splendid residential section of the city.

Betty was proud of her husband, who soon became a partner in the firm with a very large income. But what had become of Betty's early principles? Alas, they had evaporated. She was soon a woman of the world. A cigarette was not distasteful to her. Oh, yes, she attended a church. The preacher was a man of culture, but declared that Jesus was only the best man that ever lived. The people were of the cultured sort and Betty by her education and natural charms shone amongst them. She was in fact called one of the most brilliant women of the church. She had one child; just one; no more; one only. She did not want to be embarrassed by too many children. Her daughter was brought up in the ways of refined society—to dance, play cards and take the entire round of refined social enjoyments.

She seldom went to see her aging parents, but soothed her conscience by sending them a good check twice a year. She seldom wrote to Mary on the missionary field, and she actually hated to get a letter from her; it was so full of praise and thanksgiving to God for all his blessings. But she sent Mary some money and that soothed her conscience.

Time marches on! Mary had been home on furlough holding meetings in the different churches but Betty gave her little attention. Back to the field Mary returned with abounding joy. The second year of this term found her a victim of a tropical disease. Death came quite speedily, but not before she had written a farewell message to her parents and sister. In it there was no word of complaint. She could make the swan song of Paul her own. She urged Betty to repent and seek the higher things that alone can give good success.

But Betty's heart had become hard and unresponsive to all real spiritual appeal. Like

this she lived; like this she died. A holiness preacher gained access to her bedside, and recalled to her mind the former days. But she could only laugh at him. "Why dying is just as natural as being born," she said. I have lost all those old fogie ideas of hell and future punishment. I never did anything very bad. I have given a good deal to my parents and to Mary, when she was alive and in Africa. I'm not afraid to die."

Well did the Psalmist say: "Their eyes stand out with fatness, they have more than heart can wish. In death their strength is firm; there are no bands in their death."

As we look upon that little grave with a plain slab in far-off Africa, that marks the last resting place of Mary, and then look at the costly monument erected to the memory of Betty, and on which are inscribed her virtues and her success, we see how different are the appraisals of God and of man. But in my soul I cry, "Let me live the life of the righteous and then my last end will be like his."

THE PASTOR, THE CHURCH AND THE YOUNG PEOPLE

(Written by Rev. A. D. Cann, pastor of the Hartland, N. B., circuit of churches, at the request of the denominational Y. P. committee in the interest of Children's work. He has shown his interest in the children of his churches and has worked out successfully the method which he mentions).

In too many cases the pastor's only contact with the boys and girls of his congregation is in the Sunday School. In some cases he is not privileged to be in the Sunday School and so unfortunately he has no regular contact even there. In churches where the pastor is able to be with the boys and girls of the Sunday School it is scarcely enough. The pastor may mingle with the boys and girls by taking them on hikes in the woods, fishing trips; they may be invited to the home; there may be Mission Band Meetings or Good News Meetings weekly; Daily Vacation Bible School in summer, and other things of like character; but I feel there is something further to be done to win and hold the boys and girls for Christ. More than one pastor has been faced with the problem: "How can I keep the boys and girls in church after Sunday School? Or "What can I do to get the boys and girls to attend Sunday evening service?" Attendance at the church services will not save them, but at least it will bring them under the influence of the Gospel. This would be no problem if all parents were Christians. Since such is not the case we are presented with a grave situation. Some pastors have accepted leadership in the Boy Scouts, etc., and thus have contacts. Since these movements are not essentially spiritual or evangelistic they generally fail to lead to conversion.

What then shall we do? May I make a suggestion that has sometimes proved a blessing? It will not solve all problems, and will not substitute for work in other branches of the church, but if prayerfully and faithfully practised will doubtless be a help. In the opening of preaching service, give ten minutes entirely to the children of the church. Let this time be given to an object lesson on some article that is familiar to them all. For variety, tell a missionary story that has adventure in it or a true story concerning boys and girls that has an evangelistic emphasis. Some pastors may feel

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