



The King's Highway

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THE COST AND THE REWARD . . .

By C. W. Butler

"If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" (I. Peter 4:16).

Peter is here reckoning with the experiences of Christianhood in a very thorough manner. First, there is the definite recognition of a great and fundamental change of character in one's becoming a Christian. Referring to the bad yesterdays of some of those to whom he was writing, he declares: "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in . . ." He then enumerates some of the practices of the contrast between the time past and their former practices, and the time now present, when they are walking in new paths of life.

Of the Christian's relation to the world he declares that they of the world think it strange that the Christian has so changed his manner of living as not to run with them in the same old practices. This is a very happy observation and comparison in regard to things which are past and things which are present in the lives of redeemed people. It furnishes the Christian a real weapon against the accusations of Satan, to remind him that when he brings railings accusations against us, that the things to which he refers lie in the time which is past in our life. How glorious our Gospel is in offering us a remedy for bad yesterdays, together with grace for the present, and for new and better tomorrows! Someone has said that there are two ways of treating our failures: one is to make a hitching post of them, thus tying ourselves to them and failing to leave them in the past; the other is to make stepping stones of them, profiting by past experiences, and by the power of God in the Gospel, lifting us above failures, to new conditions of living, forming new habits, and living lives which differ from the past in a way which is gratifying. Peter recognizes this as fundamental in the change from the world to real Christianhood.

He then gives us several very practical exhortations regarding the new life we are to live. He advocates that we live soberly, and in watchfulness unto prayer. To live soberly does not mean to live sadly; but it does mean to live thoughtfully, having due regard for right principles and right conduct, with watchfulness against all approaches of the enemy, and with prayerfulness for both illumination upon our paths and for grace to walk in the truth.

He then presents to us a superlative excellence in Christianhood. "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for

charity shall cover the multitude of sins." There will always be a large place in every life for obedience to this exhortation. To practice charity rather than judgment and censoriousness, will adorn the doctrine of God, our Saviour. It will promote the unity of the Spirit, and defeat the devil of division and strife, and thus bring great honor to Christ through the preservation of harmony and Christian love among them that believe.

He exhorts further to the use of a Christian virtue that is of great value. "Use hospitality one to another, without grudging." Christian hospitality is certainly a commodity which adds greatly to the asset of the Christian in buttressing his testimony and putting value into his personal approaches to men on behalf of their salvation.

He further recognizes that every Christian is the recipient of blessings from God which, in turn, obligates him to minister the same to others. He exhorts us to be good stewards of the manifold grace of God, and to minister in the things we receive according to the ability which God giveth. Peter is true to the method Christ used in winning disciples, in that he does not present a way strewn with flowers, always easy, and free from trial. Jesus said, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." He would thus have men count the cost when forsaking all to follow Him.

Peter says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you . . . but rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." Peter looks forward to the recompense of the reward, and connects the truth we have just stated, thus: "that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy." It is at this point of the opening of the truth that Peter further exhorts: "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed." The sufferings referred to in this particular text seem to center in the thought of persecution. This particular phase of truth had a much more realistic application to the Church in Peter's day than to the Church in our own land in this day. The Bible, however, was not written for one age, or for one people, but for all ages, and for all people. There are those in other lands in our own day whose sufferings are perhaps equal to, if not in excess of, the sufferings of those who were Christians in the days of the Apostles.—Pentecostal Herald.

A BOLD ADVENTURER

Five-year-old Robert Tripp, of Pasadena, California, took a good look at the mountains in the vicinity and was overcome with the

desire to climb one of them.

Robert told his mother, Mrs. Dorothy Tripp, of his determination but she thought it was just a childish whim and did nothing about it until she discovered that Robert and his little red wagon were missing.

Then she informed the police. Two miles away police caught up with the young adventurer and returned him to his home.

In his red wagon were two pillow slips stuffed with extra clothing, a quart of water and a bottle of vitamin pills.

Smile at the bold adventurer, but at the same time credit him with sense enough to provide that which he felt would suffice on such an expedition.

You expect to take a journey some day from Time into Eternity. And, of course, you desire to go to Mount Zion, the city of the living God. What provision have you made for that trip? If none, then allow the little boy's action to rebuke you.

The clothes you need are "the garments of salvation and the robe of righteousness." They are freely offered by God through the Lord Jesus Christ Who accomplished the work of redemption on the cross of Calvary.

There is water too, for He says: "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." (Revelation 21:6). And He Who knows all about calories and vitamins says: "I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger."

If you do not have Christ as your all in your little red wagon—in other words, that heart of yours—you are by no means ready to go. Put your faith in Him, and you will be able to say with Paul: "I am now ready!"

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

Every true soul-winner must be possessed of a spiritual leadership that distinguishes him from other men. Such leadership does not come by seeking great things for ourselves, but rather by sacrificing the things that were gain and counting them but loss that we may win Christ. The great Apostle Paul wrote: "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Phil. 3:7-8).

It is one thing to repeat such words but it is another thing to pay that price and keep it unflinchingly paid. This is the path to spiritual power and leadership.

Paul was a prisoner on shipboard being carried to the judgment hall of Caesar. A great storm swept over the sea. The hearts of men

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