

# The King's Highway

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### Earnest Christianity

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The words of our title strike some chord in our inner nature and thrill us, so that we wish the kingdoms were all ablaze with earnest Christianity.

Although the wise man has written, "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these?" there is a temptation, nevertheless, to ask this very question. It is easy to see that man has laid his hand upon nature, and has made its powers, more than in any former days, subserve his interests. Christianity, to say the least, has kept abreast with the mechanical, intellectual, and political advances of the race. She is still marching onward in her glorious mission, and God's great army is planting standards of the Cross among the nations. And looking only on the bright side of the picture, we sing of the "Old, old story":

"More and more it spreads and grows,  
Ever mighty to prevail;  
Sin's strongholds it now o'erthrows,  
Shakes the trembling gates of hell."

We are almost ready to take up the language of the "great voices in heaven," which John heard, and say, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ."

But along with these bright prospects there are dark shadings. All that take shelter under the great covenant of grace do not stand forth as moral lights to scatter the darkness of sin that surrounds them. The enemies of Christianity are, in great force, still upon the field. Sin abounds still; if earnest Christianity, in the days of the Apostles, of Luther, or of Wesley, was necessary, it is so still. Our work may differ somewhat from that in former days; but the foe is the same, and, like our noble fathers, we are not only to defend the truth, but to conquer as we go.

The success of the churches does not equal the agencies. In point of numbers, sanctuaries, and other handmaids, we never before stood on such vantage-ground. But, somehow, our reasonable expectations are not realized. Why is this? Has God changed? Is Christ unequal to what the times demand? Is the Holy Spirit less willing, than long ago, to fire our hearts and fill us with the old-time power? To all these questions relating to the Persons of the "Ever-blessed Trinity" there is only one answer, and that is, without any qualification, in the negative. The reason for this lack of success lies at our own doors.

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We are told that Dr. Carey's great sermon on Isaiah 54:2-3, had two divisions, "Expect great things from God," and "Attempt great things for God." I don't think we do too much of the latter, and I fear we are verily guilty with reference to the former. The spirit of expectation in our ordinary worship is not fostered at it should be. Self-denial is in very many below the true standard. The meekness and gentleness of the Christian spirit should be more fully expressed in the outward appearance than they are. Greater boldness as witnesses for Jesus would be better than so much fear of, and conformity to the world.

Earnest Christianity is a felt want in the churches. O ye who are in earnest, flag not in your zeal! God will not forsake such, and He will use you to inspire the halting and quicken the dead.

This earnest Christianity is realized when we open our hearts by faith to be filled with the Spirit. We must place our own body, soul, and life, before God, and ask for the "refining fire." Along with this consecration and prayer we must trust in Christ for a full salvation—not merely trust that He saves, but that He saves to the uttermost. Just here, according unto our faith, it is done unto us. "What things so ever ye desire, when ye pray, believe ye receive them, and ye shall have them." It may not be amiss to point out the way to earnest Christian life; but I fancy that more fall short through a want of earnest personal effort, than through a want of knowledge.

The earnest Christianity needed is that which is constant rather than occasional. And, thanks be to God, we may be "Steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." And "God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."

How much our power and influence for good is multiplied if we live earnest Christian lives, until called up to the church above! An earnest Christian life speaks for Jesus everywhere. It is a recognized power in the prayer-meeting, class-meeting, and everyday life.

When the inhabitants of Zion shake themselves from the dust, and keep their garments always white; when, in a word, Christianity everywhere shall be earnest Christianity, then Christ soon "shall have dominion from sea to sea and from the rivers unto the end of the earth. They of the wilderness shall bow before Him; and His enemies shall lick the dust."—Heart and Life.

"Patience; kindness; generosity; humility; courtesy; unselfishness; good temper; guilelessness; sincerity—these make up the supreme gift, the stature of the perfect man."

### God's Cure

Samuel Chadwick

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me" (John 14:1).

That man is born to trouble is an ancient discovery. In all ages men have carried troubled hearts. And still trouble continues, and every man finds himself heir to the common lot of anguish and grief. We come into life through the gateway of pain and are ushered into a world which is full of trouble.

It is not necessary to enumerate our woes, for we all graduate in the school of disappointment and trouble. The Christian is not exempt. Indeed, his religion exposes him to a new set of troubles in addition to those common to his race. Jesus took care to make it plain that to follow Him meant a cross, the emblem of crucifixion, reproach, and shame. Whatever cure He may have for trouble, He does not remedy it by exemption.

Trouble centers in the heart. It is the distress of mind which comes from loss of certainty and balance. Sorrow is grief over something lost, but trouble is loss of equilibrium; it is the anguish of uncertainty and bewilderment.

There may be sorrow without trouble. Jesus was the Man of Sorrows, but it would be wrong to speak of Him as full of trouble. We may be sorrowful and not troubled, but we cannot be troubled without sorrow.

Christ's remedy is directed against trouble, and the discovery that its seat is in the heart goes far in the suggestion of the cure. The secret of Christ's peace is an assured resting place for faith, an assurance for the heart in every possible circumstance of trouble.

"Believe in God." That is the first thing. The verb is imperative and should be rendered as a command as in the sentence which follows. How does the troubled heart find peace by faith in God? By receiving through faith the assurance that God is God and that God is Father. That He is God assures the heart of infinite wisdom and power, and that the infinite God is Father assures us of infinite love. That covers an area from which spring all the troubles concerning existence and providence.

If God is Creator, Director, Upholder, and Controller of my life and of all life, then, however perplexing the apparent contradictions and embarrassments of life, faith can rest quietly in the assurance that infinite wisdom, infinite power, and infinite love is over all and in all. I may not see either the wisdom or the goodness, but I can trust and wait patient—

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