

Flying, Running, Walking

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"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31).

The promise which God gives to His people in these familiar words is the promise of renewed strength; and the assurance of the promise is that, in that divinely given strength, they shall be enabled to mount up as on eagle's wings into the presence of God, and run with tireless feet in the way of His service, and walk in the ordered path of daily duty without fainting or faltering.

Such is the divine promise. But attached to it is a human condition, represented by the words, "They that wait upon the Lord." What does that mean? Surely the answer is not difficult to find. To wait on the Lord means, in Old Testament phraseology, to "rest in the Lord"; or in the dialect of the New Testament, to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." In other words it describes the attitude of faith, dependence, reliance. This is then, in the most literal sense, a promise for the believer; and it indicates what will be the result of his faith in three directions: as regards his worship, his work, and his walk.

The Worship of Faith

"They that wait upon the Lord . . . shall mount up with wings as eagles." Yes, faith will express itself first and foremost in adoring worship which soars aloft to the very throne of heaven. True worship is, indeed, faith taking to itself wings and rising above the noise and dust of the world, penetrating the clouds of sense and sight, and basking in the pure sunlight of God's presence.

If our worship does not take that form and bring us into living communion with God, then there is something wanting in our faith. Where faith is unreal, worship will be unreal too. Living worship demands living faith. This is the reason why, to the merely nominal Christian, worship is always a rather drab and dull affair. Unspiritually minded people not infrequently complain that the services they attend are "uninspiring." The fact is that, in the majority of cases, the lack of inspiration is not so much in the worship as in the worshipper. It is "they that wait upon the Lord" who "mount up with wings as eagles" and who know what it is to worship God in spirit and in truth.

God grant us the faith that soars and sings: the faith that lifts us out of ourselves in rapturous worship, and enables us to enter into the holiest of all through the blood of Jesus!

The Work of Faith

"They that wait upon the Lord . . . shall run, and not be weary." Here is another direction in which true faith will express itself. To run speaks of activity for God in the service of men. Faith must be active. Faith without works is dead, as St. James reminds us. And St. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, gives thanks to God for their "work of faith"—that is, for the work which their faith inspired. A non-working believer is really a contradiction in terms. To profess faith in Christ and to do nothing for others in His name is to reduce religion to a farce.

Do we know what it is to "run" in God's service? Are we constantly on the move for Him? The late Dr. F. B. Meyer delighted to

refer to himself as "God's errand boy." It was his greatest joy to be going here and there, doing the Lord's work and delivering the Lord's word to others. So should it be with each one of us:

Mine are the hands to do the work,
My feet shall run for Thee;
My lips shall sound the glorious news:
Lord, here am I: send me!

Thus to "run" for God is an exacting task, and to attempt to do it in our own strength would make it a thoroughly exhausting task as well; but the promise that "they that wait upon the Lord . . . shall run, and not be weary." The strength for the work is given by God and appropriated by faith. Without resting upon Him the Christian servant will often find his service a burdensome business—much more of a duty than a delight. But faith transforms all that. There is grace for service as well as for salvation (I Cor. 15:10), and those who learn to work with the Lord and not simply for the Lord will find that they are enabled by His grace to run with unwearied feet along the path to which He calls them.

The Walk of Faith

"They that wait upon the Lord . . . shall walk, and not faint." The last part of the promise brings us down to earth with a vengeance; for the "walk" here refers to the ordinary everyday duties of our lives—"the trivial round, the common task." This is neither flying nor running, but just steady, persistent plodding along the road of daily duty; and in many respects this is the hardest thing of all. Many a Christian fails most easily at this very point; not so much in the quality of his worship or in the character of his work, but in the manner of his walk—that is, in the consistency of his behaviour as he journeys along life's common ways.

Yet the promise is that those who trust in the Lord "shall walk, and not faint." And what it comes to mean is this, that as we face each day in reliance upon the Lord, and go through the day with our eyes fixed upon Him, then we shall have strength to walk in newness of life, with steadfast purpose and cheerful courage and undaunted spirit.

God grant us such a living faith that in our worship of Him, and our walk with Him, we may magnify His grace and glorify His Name!—Living Waters.

RECEIVING THEN DOING

Life that is without an altar of sacrifice; orthodox faith without out-flowing love; faith that is vocal but not vital; prayer without purpose—all this is only partially Christian. Belief without blaze; piety without passion; right views about God and wrong relationships with men are only partially Christian. As such they are a dishonour to God.—Dr. Stuart Holden.

state of grace, he is not nearly so likely to. One is "rooted and grounded in love," and this kind of soil will hold in the severest storms. Says the apostle, "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, to the end he may ESTABLISH your hearts unblameable in HOLINESS." Here then is a panacea for weak-kneed Christians.—Heart and Life.

A Love-Controlled Life

"What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy 10:12).

It is somewhat difficult to always keep in mind that love is the greatest thing in the world. We get so full of ambition to do sensational things, to live in an experience of wonders, to be known as people of great faith, and the like. But love is greater than wisdom, learning, talents or great deeds.

Love is the essence of the divine nature. God has many attributes—omniscience, omnipresence, and the like, but only one nature—"God is love."

Love fulfills the law. It pieces out; it supplements what our meek judgments fail to come up to. God accepts our love to offset our failure to render a perfect service.

Love is the sum and substance of true religion. There is nothing higher than pure love to God.

Love is the most winsome thing in the world. Men who can be driven are not worth driving. If we cannot love an enemy to death then he will always be an enemy.

With such excellencies a love controlled life is the only kind worth living.

The heart is the center of the man, and out of the heart are the issues of life. If the life is to be controlled by love, the heart must be filled with love; and no heart is completely filled with love until it is cleansed from all sin and filled with the Holy Spirit. "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." This means that God has complete control of the whole man.

Regeneration with all of its abundant supply of grace does not free the soul from the pollution of sin. "The regenerate know full well that sin is in their heart." This being true, the love of God deposited in the regenerated is mixed with that which is the opposite of love; so that in order to have a love-controlled life, the heart must be cleansed and filled with perfect love. This is ONLY wrought in the regenerate by the work of the Holy Spirit when the heart is sanctified wholly as a second work of grace subsequent to regeneration.

1. A love-controlled life is free from fear, fear of faces, fear of what people say about you, fear of death: "For perfect love casteth out fear." This does not mean altogether natural fear necessary in every one for self-preservation; but slavish fear that hinders our Christian usefulness. The fear that keeps one from the ready conversation about Christ, prompt testimony, the natural tone of voice in prayer. Perfect love will make one natural in the discharge of his duties as a Christian. Life is not endured, but enjoyed.

2. Perfect love will give courage. Fear of any kind is a species of cowardice. A cowardly Christian is an exceptionally weak Christian, and of little help in advancing the kingdom of God. Cowardice in military practice is punishable by death. Christ had His eye on the religious cowards, when He said, 'Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and my words . . . of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.'

3. Perfect love means establishment. While one can and may apostatize from this high

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