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An Enviably Tribute

By F. A. Dunlop

"Salute Apelles Approved in Christ"
(Romans 16:10)

The important word here is that word "approved." Made important by its associations—"Approved in Christ." Associations do make a difference. Scholastically, I get along very well in some circles, but when I meet up with a group of University graduates I would prefer not to be called upon to express myself on any subject. Generally speaking, my clothes feel quite well on me until I get some place where men are really dressed, then I wish I had a new suit. This only means that there is a "law of fitness" in life. Propriety, congruity, belongs everywhere, and to be a misfit is very disconcerting, providing one is conscious of the fact.

In the light of these things, you can readily see that the man of our text is placed under severe test. His surroundings call for the highest qualifications in everything high and holy. Under different circumstances a lesser man might have stood approved, but in the presence of Christ the man who stands approved must of necessity be a choice soul. Paul's words suggest that Apelles was such a man. His relationship to Christ cast no shadow on the Saviour. Here was a genuine diamond cast in a platinum setting.

As we study the subject of our text we are forced to the conclusion that the greatness of the man rested in moral qualities rather than in official or ecclesiastical accoutrements. These last mentioned things do make a difference in some circles but Apelles knew none of them. I sought to discover what Dr. Strong had to say of this man and found the following: "A christian, saluted by the Apostle Paul in Romans 16:10." That is all, hence the man had nothing to fall back upon but the radiance of a Christian life.

Paul's standard in this regard was very high. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." He speaks of being found in Christ, having "the righteousness which is of God through faith." He speaks of "standing fast in the Lord," of being "strong in the Lord," and of "rejoicing in the Lord." Yet this man Apelles measures up to all of this so perfectly that he speaks of his being "approved in Christ."

What a challenge to believers today! What a privilege to thus live until our living fits into the wondrous scheme. On the other hand the most bitter memories that some of us know are of those times when we failed

to demonstrate the type of character commensurate with so great a privilege. No less than a holy life will stand the test of this relationship. The holiness of Christ must be met with the highest effort to which the grace of God can raise us if we are to stand "approved in Him." "Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord, forever," is the ever present standard of moral fitness.

It is a sobering thought that in every circumstance our lives are being tried by this standard and we are proving ourselves fits, or mis-fits, by the sum total of our living. One can scarcely think of Apelles arising to such an honour by a few days of religious devotion; rather we think of one who has proven his worth by years of steady, consistent, service for his Master embellishing his every act with a beauty adding to, rather than detracting from, the loveliness of Christ. If our lives are to be approved, we too must build up a quality of saintliness that comes from daily devotion and careful adherence to righteous principles.

"Though thy name be spread abroad,
Like winged seed, from shore to shore,
What thou art before thy God,
That thou art and nothing more."

LIVE IN THE "NOW"

Dr. W. E. Sangster asked his congregation recently, "How many of you folk are living now?" After all except the skeptical few had raised their hands, he proceeded to illustrate what he meant. During the preceding week, he had conducted the funeral of a middle-aged lady. The bereaved husband said, "Mr. Sangster, my life has been an utter failure." Feeling he was just overcome with grief, Mr. Sangster tried to console him. He mentioned the fact of his church membership, his interest in the work and service of the church, his good reputation and character. But he said, "No, my life has been a failure. When I was a boy, I looked forward to being a man; when in grade school I wanted to be in high school; when in high school I longed for the time when I would be in college; when in college I wanted to be in business; when our children were young, we wanted them older, then we wanted them through school, through college, married. We had a nice home but it never satisfied us. I lived for the time when I would retire and we would have a little cottage by the sea. Mr. Sangster, next week we were to have moved into that little cottage, but my wife is gone. I have nothing to which I can look forward. My life has been a failure, for I have always looked forward to the future and never found any joy or satisfaction in the NOW." Are you living NOW?—M. C. Miller.

Lincicome Says

By F. Lincicome

Holiness will not save us from emotional ups and downs. Life is not built on a level so that we can maintain a constant elevation. Life is made up of mountains and valleys and emotional ups and downs. Fluctuation of emotions obtain with all temperaments. The holiest people have the mountain and valley experience. There are some very warm temperatures in the sanctified zone but there are some very chilly places also. Some people make feelings their standard—if they feel as happy as they did the time they were converted then they have a lot of religion. They keep their fingers on the pulse of their emotional nature much of the time and judge their standing before God by how overjoyed they feel. "Numerous backslidings are due to an inane if not an almost insane reliance on certain frames of feelings." If I judged how much religion I had at times by how I felt, there would have been times when I would have had to say I don't have much. There are times when the devil succeeds in pulling his old black wing down over my eyes and makes it look dark all around me, but if at such times I know I have not taken anything off the altar that I put there when sanctified, if I know I am not committing any known sin, if I know I have not rejected any light, instead of throwing away my confidence I look up and say, with faith, "The Blood does cleanse me; the Blood does cleanse," then the first thing I know, I have the Presence and Joy of the Lord.

As to how you feel depends largely upon which way you look. There are three ways you can look that will make you feel one way or the other. You can get your eyes off God and get them on the faults of your brothers and sisters and you will almost become an infidel. (If you can't see their faults the devil will loan you his magnifying glass so you can see them), but I fancy you won't have any trouble seeing them for the simple reason that they resemble yours so much. Then you can change your feelings by looking at yourself, at your own infirmities and shortcomings—and God knows we all have infirmities. If some of you want to know how many you have, ask someone that doesn't like you very well. (But I advise you to have a good big stock of grace on hand before you ask them). You may think you are just about "it," but if you could see yourself at times as others see you you would crawl in a hole and pull the hole in after you!

(Turn to Page 4, Col. 3)