

The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

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Editor - Rev. B. C. Cochrane

Associate Editor and Business Manager

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Contributing Editors: Revs. F. Dunlop, C. E. Stairs
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Other members of Committee: Revs. W. L. Fernley,
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— Editorials —

THE BETHANY MESSAGE

The biblical word Bethany betokens much that is sacred and significant. It creates an atmosphere of blessing, inspiration, and challenge.

It was in this quiet community that Christ sought and found brief respite from wearisome travel and demanding service, in the home of Martha and Mary. It was in the burial ground of this little settlement that Jesus performed his notable miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead (the name which the modern-day village of Bethany's original site, El Azariyeh, means "the city of Lazarus"). And it was from this same little town that the "triumphal entry" of Christ into Jerusalem began.

Forty days after our Lord arose from the dead, He led his little band of disciples "out as far as Bethany", and there "He lifted up His hands, and blessed them". "And it came to pass, while He blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven".

Just previous to Christ's ascension, and immediately following His being hidden from the view of His followers who "looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up", very important words were spoken. Before He left them Jesus spoke, after the cloud received Him, the angels. Blend the statements given, and we have the Bethany message.

The word of Jesus to His disciples, was: "... wait for the promise of the Father ... ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me". The word of the angels: "... this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go". Two great truths are here emphasized: the provision of God for spiritual life and service; and the prospect of Christ's return to receive and reward those who are faithful in living and working for Him.

Christ did not go away until He had given promise of grace and power for effective spiritual service. And He will not stay away after the work of the Church is done.

There is truth here to hearten the workmen of God.

The power of the Spirit is the answer to our problem of spiritual impotence and insufficiency: "Ye shall receive ... and ye shall be" is the word given. All the resources

of the Spirit that have been available since Pentecost are available still. And they are as readily given to us as they were to Peter and Paul, Stephen and Cornelius. Our need may be for a new and mighty endowment of the power of the Holy Ghost. If so, God waits to bestow it upon us.

The promise of Christ's return is the "blessed hope" for days like these. The strongest urge to faithfulness in Christian living and Christian service, is the desire to be found faithful at the Master's appearing. The supreme reward in prospect for those who labour on in the face of difficult and discouraging circumstances, is the Saviour's word "well done". The joy for which we are willing to bear the cross and shame, is that of leading some soul to Christ and standing with them in His presence in the day of His appearing. I Thes. 2:19.

The Bethany message is the message for to-day.

THE ENDURANCE TEST

"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint", said Jesus. "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not", admonishes the apostle Paul.

A weakness of many a Christian minister and layman who is anxious for success in the work of God, is that of expecting results too quickly. We want to sow to-day, and reap to-morrow. We wish to go forth weeping this week, and come rejoicing next week. And when the days of labour multiply and the weeks of weeping add up to months and years, we are prone to lose hope and grow discouraged.

Success in Christian service does not come quickly nor easily. Time and labour are essential to the gaining of objectives we set for ourselves.

"Let us pray for revival", the preacher urges, "for our God is able and willing to give us the victory".

"Let us seek men for Christ, for the Holy Spirit will bless us in this good work", is the challenge given.

"If we pray to-gether and work to-gether, we shall see our borders enlarged, and our numbers increased" is the fervent claim of a believer with a vision. And such exhortations may be born of a wholesome fervency and faith. God is able and willing to give us victory. He will bless our efforts to bring men to the Lord Jesus. And enlargement and increase in the work of God are goals that we should set for ourselves.

But this we must learn: Revival may tarry; souls may respond slowly to our efforts to bring them to the Lord; progress in the work of God, at home or on the mission field, will likely follow long and weary days of toil.

I have observed that fruitfulness in the work of the Lord usually comes to those who bear up under severe tests to discouragement before the time of ingathering. "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it ... be ye also patient".

Brother pastor, dear missionary, beloved burden bearers in the service of the Lord, "faint not, neither grow weary". The promises of God are sure and steadfast. Faithful labour will have its reward. Earnest prayer will find its answer.

Do not "falter on the brink" of success and victory. It may be near, very near. But whether near or far, it will eventually come to those with fixed purpose to be "faithful unto death".

Nothing reveals character more than self-sacrifice. So the highest knowledge we can have of God is through the gift of His Son.

—William Harris