

The King's Highway

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— Our Pastors Speak —



COUNSEL FROM CORINTHIANS

SAVED BY FIRE

by Rev. N. E. Trafton

There is no doubt that this portion of chapter 3 is difficult to interpret. Our friends on the other side of the doctrinal fence, give too broad a meaning to this scripture: "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved: yet so as by fire". They suggest that the individual soul is finally saved, even though the life be sinful and unworthy.

First of all, let us consider that Paul pictures the church as God's building, and God's messengers as His workmen. There are certain key words that focus our thinking on the Apostles' argument: "If any man's work shall be burned", not his personal faith and salvation, but his service as a workman. This is the issue that is called into question. "He shall suffer loss", not of his soul, but of the reward of his labour. Paul refers to himself as a wise master-builder, having laid the only foundation, Jesus Christ. On this foundation we must erect the superstructure, the church, its strength and influence. Men have no part in the laying of the foundation, but surely God's workmen are responsible to choose the proper materials, to build up the church which is the body of Christ. One man builds with gold, silver, precious stones: the other with wood, hay and stubble, but remember, the foundation is Jesus Christ. We are now faced with a solemn fact. A church does change in atmosphere and effectiveness according to the ability of the pastor to assemble and present sterling and abiding truths. Have you not noticed? The same church that has been dormant or torn with contention, under a different ministry, becomes alive, growing and going. They retain their initial faith in Christ. The foundation is secure, but the wood, hay and stubble has been replaced by gold, silver and precious stones. Too often the people are exposed to a diet of human ideas, skeletons of other preacher's sermons, or the Saturday night left-overs of a listless and prayerless week.

Gold, silver, and precious stones refer to the great truths that must be dug from the mine, cut, fashioned and polished, then placed on the market for the discriminate buyer. Wood, hay and stubble by comparison can be gathered without much effort, and is of little value. Paul reminds us of the day when every man's work shall be manifest, of what sort it is: for it shall be tried by fire. If his work abide he shall receive wages, if a man's work is burned, he shall suffer loss, but save himself. Like the

man who having escaped the burning building, beholds the possessions of a life time in flames. If we fail to build on the strong meat of the word, and do not labor in the power of the Spirit, our service is in vain. The judgment will reveal what kind of workmen we have been, and the type of material we have put in our spiritual structure.

There is a message in this passage for both preacher and layman. We need more "woe" in the pulpit, and more "go" in the pew. How much of our effort is focused on the building of the church, the strengthening of the weak, the comforting of the cheerless? What are the majors on our key board? Finery, furniture, family, fun, etc., etc. Is that all? A view of things from an eternal standpoint would make room in our schedule for better and nobler things. A wealthy woman embarked on the Titanic with her two beautiful daughters. After the tragedy, the distracted husband in New York received the following telegram: "Saved but alone."

Shall I go and empty handed?

Shall I meet my Saviour so?

Not one soul with which to greet Him?

Shall I empty handed go?

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RIVERSIDE CAMP MEETING

ROBINSON, MAINE

AUGUST 10 - 19

EVANGELISTS AND MUSICIANS

REV. FLETCHER TINK AND FAMILY
OF SKOWHEGAN, MAINE



Rev. Fletcher Tink

PLAN TO ATTEND A GREAT CAMP