

# Sisters All!

Dear Martha,

We were more than glad to hear about Steve's promotion. Congratulations, both to him and to you! It will mean new and increased responsibilities, to be a district manager of such a big company, and no doubt there will be problems as well as satisfactions.

That seems to be the way with any step forward. There is an inner drive to move on, and a corresponding drawing back. It's a little like Hamlet's well-known dilemma, "To be, or not to be . . ." It could be paraphrased, "To try, or not to try," or "To grow, or not to grow." It seems that any forward motion, however small, is a venture into the unknown, and therefore a challenge to one's courage. The baby wants to be born, yet cries at the shock of it. The toddler wants to walk, yet fears he will fall. The six-year old is eager to go to school, yet a bit fearful at the thought of new ways and strange people.

The same dilemma confronts us in both the small and the larger issues of life. We want to write a letter, yet somehow we keep postponing it. We want to get married, yet, as the big day approaches, we suffer a few misgivings even though we may feel very sure of our choice. We want desperately to declare our allegiance to Christ, yet we somehow hold back from committing ourselves.

I am not thinking of good and evil here, or a tendency to sin versus a desire to do right. I am talking about an inherent urge in us all to move forward and upward—against a dragging, human inertia—to grow, to do better, to create, to make progress. How much easier to relax and not try! Why undertake long years of study to become a teacher, or a doctor? Why struggle to write a book, or do volunteer work in church or community? Such things take so much time, and the busy schedule of modern life leaves one little energy for outside activities.

Right here is the main difference between those who are noted for performance and the majority of the rest of us, who are not. The secret of unusual even great accomplishment is in one's willingness to keep pushing on, allowing no obstacles to turn one aside from dedicated purpose. It is that absolute refusal to be defeated, no matter what the circumstances. Hindrances and handicaps are interpreted by one person as indications that he has done enough, and so he stops. To another, with that inner compulsion to move on, the hardest problems are merely stumbling blocks, not barriers.

What is that psychic force within that impels one forward in spite of endless discouragements? Is it perhaps a kind of faith, a conviction that this purpose is valid and nothing must stand in the way? With such a faith we are willing, even eager, to try the impossible. We will launch out in a building program to expand our overcrowded church. We will walk in new paths of service, perhaps traveling half way around the world to take men the gospel by word and deed. Even in the daily obstacle race — where the insignificant events of life add up to its final achievements—event there, by faith we can "run and not be weary . . . walk and not faint."

When the big opportunities come and you yearn to meet the challenge with the best you have, don't be deterred by the problems and discouragements you are certain to meet along the way. If you are convinced that it is worth doing, then it is worth your best strength, your noblest convictions, and even years of suffering.

"This is the victory that overcometh, even our faith."

Your loving sister, Mary.



God keeps a school here for His children, and one of the best teachers is disappointment."

## MY CHURCH \* MY PEOPLE \* MY GOD

by Judson A. Sanders

This is my Church. This is where I come to worship God. It was built of consecrated materials, that were bought with consecrated money. These are my people. We are united by a common bond, a common love, a common loyalty.

There is a Church visible and a Church invisible. There is a Church organization and a Church organism. There is a Church book for our names. There is a Book of Life in Heaven, the Book of the Lamb, and only those whose names are written therein can enter there. Man knows who are Church members and who are not. God knows who in the Church are alive unto Him, and who are not.

This is my Minister, my Pastor, my Leader, my Friend. I look to him as a man chosen of God to lead and feed the flock of God. A Minister is a man of God chosen out from among men, to stand between man and God, and to minister unto men the things of God. He must have the kind of faith that helps him to see the things that are invisible, even God's Eternal Godhead and power, and the City that hath foundations, eternal in the Heavens, for we are but pilgrims and strangers here below, and we can tarry but a night, and in the dawnlight we must arise and go that way whence we shall not return.

This is my Book, my Bible, my creed, by road map. This is the lamp unto my feet, and this the light unto my path. This is my meat and my drink, my bread of life, and my sustenance. Man cannot live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. This is the written word of God. There is the written word and there is the living word. The written word becomes the living word when illuminated, explained, and made plain by the Holy Spirit of God. Holy men of God wrote these words as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit who inspired the Word of God is its interpreter and teacher. The natural man does not know the things of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

This is my God. I must know Him as my personal friend. This is my Church, my Pastor and my Book, to show me how to find the path that leads to God. Some of this book is written as it were, in invisible ink. I must find that element that will make this invisible ink visible, that I may read it, and know what my Heavenly Father wants me, His child, to know. That Element is the Holy Spirit. He is the Spirit of Truth. He searches out all things, yea, the deep things of God. He makes plain, and reveals these things to us, if we make time and room to receive these things. I, too, am called to see things invisible.

This is my path. There are many paths in the world, down which the worldlings go, and every one of these paths leads downward. But I am called to be in the world, but not of the world. This my path is another path. It leads upward. It begins at the Cross. It ends at the Throne. It is a pilgrim way, and I am a wayfarer, a pilgrim, and this old world is not my home. This is not my rest. This is a weary old world, and it has no peace of mind. But there is peace of mind for those who walk the way that I walk. There is no peace, saith my God, unto the wicked. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you. Let the peace of God rule your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

This is the Cross. This is the threshold of the way that I take. This is not my cross. It is the cross of Christ. But there is a cross for me, and I cannot be His disciple if I do not deny myself, take up my cross daily, and follow Him. There is the reproach of the cross, the glory of the cross, the power of the cross, the wisdom of the cross and the reward of the cross. If I bear my cross, all these shall be mine.

The King's Highway