



the King's highway

GUEST EDITORIAL

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THINGS THE MASTER TAKES

We Christians have thought much and spoken often about the things that Christ **gives**. We have thought too little and spoken too seldom about the things that He **takes**.

Consider some of the "takings" of our Lord as we have them described for us in the Gospels.

I.

We read, for example, that "Jesus . . . took a child" (Luke 9:47).

Thereby He taught the **virtue of simplicity**. In a parallel account in the 18th chapter of Matthew we learn that the disciples were engaged in jealous controversy over the question. "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Here is the pride that both complicates and contaminates life. It is the root of jealousy. It is the fountain of greed. It is the headwaters of strife and bitterness.

What did the Master do in response to the petty query of the disciples? Did He give them a wordy lecture on the folly of selfish ambition? No! He simply took a child and set him in the midst! Then quietly He said, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

II.

Or again, take Luke 9:16, where we are told that Jesus "took the five loaves and two fishes." The lesson for us here is that of the **vastness of supply**.

The huge crowd, having listened for hours to the teaching of Jesus, was made up of people who were hungry. Yet the desert situation in which they found themselves held out no promise of food. A search

revealed that the maximum supply of the larder consisted of "five loaves and two fishes."

Whereupon, says Luke, Jesus "took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven He blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude."

Calmly, factually, Luke reports the outcome: "And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragment that remained to them twelve baskets."

That little lad with his loaves and fishes did not have much to offer the Master, but what little he had he willingly placed at the Master's disposal. Always, that is what Christ is asking.

So many of us are forever running into situations in life in which we are frankly not equal to what life demands of us. Why? Let the answer come in a figure. It is because we are like self-contained pools. We have so much strength and no more. We exhaust the supply and we are at the end of ourselves—literally.

But here and there in this dangerous and demanding world are souls that are never beaten. Life hurls its biggest blows at them, or makes its hugest drafts upon them: still they come through. Why? Because somewhere they passed through a change. They gave up the old idea that they were a pool of so much energy and they caught on to the infinitely bigger idea that they were

to be a channel—not so much a source as a medium of supply. They found that Christ is that source and that they, by keeping the channel open, can draw perpetually and adequately upon the exhaustless energies of the living God.

III.

Or, once more, we learn in John 13:4 that "Jesus . . . took a towel."

Thereby our Lord taught the **value of service**.

It is an immensely salutary thing to gaze with awe into the supper room in Jerusalem where Jesus and His apostles were gathered. From the dusty roads they had come in for a season of quiet fellowship before the storm broke upon the head of the Savior.

Custom and courtesy require the washing of the trail-soiled feet. There being no proper host, these men should have washed one another's feet, and especially the feet of their Lord. Yet, for such a menial task they were in no mood. Incredibly, they have been bickering about their own importance.

Then comes a moment that was destined to live in the memory of these rivalry-bitten men to the end of their days. John's account of it is drawn in such a way as to bring out powerfully the intended lesson and rebuke of the Master. Jesus, he tells us, "riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to

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