

“In Sickness and in Health”

Author and business leader Fred Smith writes: “One of my treasured memories comes from a doughnut shop in Grand Saline, Texas. There was a young farm couple sitting at the table next to mine. He was wearing overalls and she a gingham dress. After finishing their doughnuts, he got up to pay the bill, and I noticed she didn't get up to follow him. But then he came back and stood in front of her. She put her arms around his neck, and he lifted her up, revealing that she was wearing a full-body brace. He lifted her out of her chair and backed out the front door to the pickup truck, with her hanging from his neck. As he gently put her into the truck, everyone in the shop watched. No one said anything until a waitress remarked, almost reverently, ‘He took his vows seriously.’” Let us likewise take our marriage vows seriously. “Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband” (Eph. 5:33).

A Gentleman

A middle-aged business executive approached the front entrance of the office building in which he worked. A young feminist came up at the same moment, so he stepped back and held the door open for her to pass on through. She looked at him and said with annoyance, "Don't hold the door for me just because I'm a lady." To her surprise, he looked right back and replied, "Of course not. I'm holding it open because I'm a gentleman."

Likewise, we as Christians must always act toward others on the basis of what we are in Christ Jesus, and not on the basis of what they may or may not be. "Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing" (1Peter 3:8-9).

The Way of the Cross

Officer Peter O'Hanlon was patrolling on night duty in northern England some years ago when he heard a quivering sob. Turning in the direction that it came from, he saw in the shadows a little boy sitting on a doorstep. With tears rolling down his cheeks, the child whimpered, "I'm lost. Take me home." The policeman began naming street after street, trying to help him remember where he lived. When that failed, he repeated the names of the shops and hotels in the area, but all without success. Then he remembered that in the center of the city was a well-known church with a large white cross towering high above the surrounding landscape. He pointed to it and said, "Do you live anywhere near that?" The boy's face immediately brightened. "Yes, take me to the cross. I can find my way home from there!"

Indeed, the way of the cross leads home. "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1Cor. 1:18).

Just Flexing His Muscles

Some years back, on the "The Merv Griffin Show," the guest was a body builder. During the interview, Merv asked, "Why do you develop those particular muscles?" The body builder simply stepped forward and flexed a series of well-defined muscles from chest to calf. The audience applauded. "What do you use all those muscles for?" Merv asked. Again, the muscular specimen flexed, and biceps and triceps sprouted to impressive proportions. "But what do you use those muscles for?" Merv persisted. The body builder was bewildered. He didn't have an answer other than to display his well-developed frame.

I was reminded that our spiritual exercises -- Bible study, prayer, reading religious books and magazines, listening to religious radio and music -- are also for a purpose. They're meant to strengthen our ability to build God's kingdom, not simply to improve our pose before an admiring audience. "For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come" (1Tim. 4:8).

His Purpose

By H. Blake

I am finally understanding
What I should have all along
His plan
His wisdom
His purpose for my life--
He gave me weakness
So I would lean on His strength
He gave me weariness
So I would long for a place of rest
He gave me trials
So I would ask for His help
He gave me loss
So I would know what He lost for me
He gave me pain
So I would not cause others harm
He gave me knowledge of death
So I would learn how to live
I thank my God for these
increase them more and more--
Weaken and weary my body
 Thou art my strength and rest
Increase my trials and losses
 In Thee art all fullness and blessing
 And Thy will all exceeding
In pain and death end my life
 So my life in Thee may begin.

Salvage

By Stephen Auman

I saw that on the roadside, set out with the trash,
There was a bookcase and a brass lamp.
And I stopped my car and went to look at them.
And the bookcase had beautiful inlays on the front,
And doors with glass, and sturdy shelves.
But the glass was broken, and one hinge was very loose.
And the brass lamp was shaped like a griffin,
But it needed polishing, and the cord was badly frayed.
And I became angry.
And then it hurt to think that no one cared
That they had come to this.
And I heard myself say, "Why can't they be salvaged?"

And then from the road, someone threw trash
And it just missed me, and someone yelled,
“Here, Trash-picker!” and I turned to look at them.
As they sped by, I saw that it was a young man and woman.
And they laughed derisively to each other.
I could see by their clothes and their faces
That this was probably their general attitude
Toward anyone but themselves.
And I became angry.
But then it hurt to think that no one cared
That they had come to this.
And I heard a voice say, “Why can't they be salvaged?”

A Moments Wisdom

- There are only war veterans in Heaven, who have fought the good fight for the Kingdom of God.
- When God measures man, He puts the tape around his heart – not his head.
- Faith is more than intellectual acceptance of the revelation in Jesus Christ; it is whole-hearted trust in God and His promises, and committal of ourselves to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
- To declare a thing shall come to be, long before it is in being and then to bring about that very thing according to the same declaration – this or nothing, is the work of God
- True humility never makes a show of herself, nor uses many humble words.
- Everyone knows how to be resigned amid the joys and happiness of prosperity, but to be so amid storms and tempests is peculiar to the children of God.
- There is no Christian truth so clearly revealed as this, that the spirit of every Christian must be a spirit of sacrifice.