



TOWARD THE MARK

***“I PRESS TOWARD THE MARK FOR THE PRIZE
OF THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.”
PHILIPPIANS 3:14***

*A MAGAZINE FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS
OF ALL AGES*

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Dear Reader,

“Wherein thy great strength lieth?” (Judges 16:6)

No one could deny that truly things everywhere are spiritually weak, and **I wonder if the reason for this is lack of heart-occupation with Christ and the lack of devotion to Him. We need to learn afresh the lesson that true power lies in devotion to Christ, His Name, and His Word.** It was clear that when the chief thought in every man’s mind in the valley of Elah was to save his own skin, that the devotion in the heart of the young man David made him stand for the Name of the Lord against Goliath: **it proved the power of the Lord, and as it was then so it will be now.**

It was that devotion that made Paul declare, “what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ...that I may win Christ.” **When our heart is devoted to Christ, we need to fear nothing except those things that will turn us from Him.** Let us exercise ourselves as to this. For by it we shall be in living contact with the One in whom is all power and our strength and then our weakness will matter nothing at all. Heart occupation with Him is the need of this day and so much more as the day of His coming approaches. **Let us remember that any young person, who is devoted to know Christ the best, will love Him the most and will labor for Him more than all others. May He be the object bright and fair that fills and satisfies the heart.**

May the Lord use this issue of Toward the Mark to help you to grow and be established as you read it during the summer months.

Thank you for your e-mails and notes of encouragement.

Please keep praying for the Lord’s blessing on Toward the Mark.

Yours in our soon-coming Lord,
Emil S. Nashed

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I have the pleasure to inform you that a mailing list has been set up for Toward the Mark. If you would like to receive an electronic version simply send an e-mail to toward.the.mark@gmail.com or visit www.towardthemark.org to be added to the mailing list. If you also want a copy of older issues, please mention it in your e-mail.

Quotations from Scripture are generally taken either from the King James translation or the J. N. Darby translation.

MILK

"The truth shall make you free"

HEALING OF THE LEPER

Touched and Healed (Mk. 1:40-43)

It is fascinating to observe the Lord Jesus as He is described in the Gospels. Mark shows Him as God's model servant. Every characteristic of a good servant could be seen in Him. Zeal and compassion, dependence, obedience and energy – all of these things were present, and in perfect harmony.

Just observe Him, and you will admire Him. It will lead you to worship. In His zeal and energy He had been very busy all day long (Mk. 1:21-34 describes a single working day). After this long working day, in the evening many came to Him for help so that finally "all the city were gathered together at the door" (v. 33). But next day, very early in the morning, when others were still sleeping, He went to pray. He had His 'ear opened' (Is. 50:4). When the disciples told him that lots of people were looking for Him, He was not tempted by the prospect of sudden popularity. Instead, He replied: "Let us go into the next towns that I may preach there also: *for therefore came I forth* (Mk. 1:38)." This was His dependence.

But then He also had compassion. This is demonstrated in a beautiful way in the case of the leper.

Leprosy is an appalling disease. Even today, there are 10 million lepers, and about 700,000 people are infected with leprosy every year. If you want to get an idea of how this disease works, listen to the words of Aaron, when his sister contracted leprosy (in her case, a direct judgment from God). He said: "Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half

consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb" (Nu. 12:12). How would the Lord react to such a man presenting himself?

Before we answer this question, let's look at some of the symptoms of leprosy. Here's a list of some of the features of this gruesome sickness. You will find that each and every one of them gives an illustration of what sin is like:

1. **It starts in a very small way:** it could be, for instance, just a small 'bright spot' in the skin (see Le. 13:2)*
2. **It is a problem 'underneath the skin':** this was one of the tests to help the priest find out, whether a problem in the skin stemmed from leprosy or not: if it was 'deeper than the skin' then this was a sign of leprosy.
3. **It spreads:** in some of the more difficult cases, the person concerned had to be locked in for some days. After this period, the big question was whether the problem had spread. We read: "*if* the priest see that, behold, the scab spreadeth in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it *is* a leprosy" (Le. 13:8). Unforgiven sin will always lead to more, and worse, sin.
4. **It is contagious** (Le. 13:46). Just as anyone who came too close to a leper would contract the disease, sin has a defiling influence on others (1 Co. 15: 3).
5. **It disqualifies/shuts out from the presence of God** (Le. 13:46 and Nu. 5:2). As a consequence of sin, man 'comes short of the glory of God' (Ro. 3:23).
6. **It isolates** (Le. 13:46 and Nu. 5:2). A leper had no place among God's people. Sin also will lead you away from

* Leviticus 13 illustrates the case of a believer who has fallen into sin. The incident in Mark 1 illustrates the condition of a sinner before his conversion. However, we can still learn a lot from Lev. 13 about the characteristics of sin as such.

God's people. It will stop you enjoying fellowship with them.

7. **It involves progressive corruption and leads to death** (see Nu. 12:12 and 2 Ki. 5:7). Again, this well-known fact illustrates sin: "The wages of sin is death" (Ro. 6:23).
8. **It can be healed by God only:** The king of Israel knew this well. When asked to arrange for Naaman to be healed from leprosy, he said: "*Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?*" (2 Ki. 5:7). Only God can forgive sins (Mk. 2:7).

You may find other marks of leprosy that illustrate sin, for instance, the fact that it makes its victim increasingly insensitive.

Such a person came to the Lord. He was in a dreadful state. One day, it had started as a small spot in the skin. Meanwhile, he had become 'full of leprosy,' as we know from Luke 5:12. What a pitiful appearance it must have been. And yet, he did the only right thing and came 'to Him.' There is no other hope for a sinner than coming to Jesus, personally.

Then, kneeling down, he utters these few but telling words: "if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." He had no doubts whatsoever about the Lord's power. He knew that he was kneeling in front of the omnipotent One. But how about these words 'if thou wilt?' The poor leper will not have experienced much love recently. He also might have looked at himself, the awful condition he was in, and might have concluded that nobody would want to help him. But if a man looks at himself, this will not help him to appreciate the Lord's love.

But the Lord answers by doing three things, and he does them in a way dispels all doubt. First, He "put forth *his* hand."

This was the first visible sign that the Lord would take an interest in him and that He would not shy away from his terrible state. Second, He "touched him." This must have been the last thing the leper would have expected. Nobody would have wanted to touch him. But the Lord could do so. He was holy and would not be affected by leprosy. Thirdly, He speaks these wonderful words: "I will; be thou clean." The 'I will' shows His love, and the 'be thou clean' shows His power.

The stretching out of the hand and the touching of the leper are a beautiful picture of the cross: the Lord came to earth and died on the cross, for poor and miserable sinners. Have you felt His healing touch as yet?

Only Mark tells us about the Lord's inner feelings when stretching out His hands: He was 'moved with compassion.' In chapter 6:14 and 8:2, the Lord was moved with compassion on behalf of great multitudes. Here, we see Him moved with compassion on behalf of an individual, and one in a deplorable state.

The result was complete and immediate: "And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed." Again, this reminds us of Golgotha. The Lord's work is perfect. And those who believe in Him are cleansed – fully and immediately: He '*has* washed us' (Re. 1:5), we *have been* – not will be – 'made fit' for the inheritance (Co. 1:12), and "he *has made* us accepted in the beloved" (Ep. 1:5). When a man or a woman, a boy or a girl, comes to the Lord Jesus in faith, then he or she is 'perfected for ever' (He. 10:14). Don't believe any who claim that this is the starting point of a road to ever increasing holiness. It is true that a Christian should keep growing (2 Pe. 3:18), but the Lord's work is so great and absolutely perfect that, before God, we are made completely acceptable in the Lord Jesus.

What a wonderful experience the leper has made! And yet, he makes a mistake early on in his new career. The Lord had strictly forbidden him to speak about what had happened. The leper may not have understood why, but the Lord had His reasons for saying what He said. Instead of obeying, the cleansed leper does the opposite of what he should have done. He publicises the news everywhere. As a result of the leper's disobedience, the Lord could no longer go into the city, but had to hide himself. How sad to see that – though meaning well – the man who had just made this great experience of being healed from an incurable disease becomes a hindrance for the Lord and for His service.

This is where every Christian can draw a practical lesson. Ideally, we should obey and understand why the Lord wants us to do certain things and not to do others. But in some cases, a Christian – especially a new convert – may not understand exactly why certain instructions are given. In this case, we can serve the Lord best by simply obeying, even if we do not understand everything.

In this way we can show our appreciation of the One who 'stretched forth' His hand to reach out to us, who 'touched us' and who cleansed us from our leprosy of sin.

Michael Hardt

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!

- 1. Who was the first man to build a city?**
- 2. What was Barnabas's original name?**
- 3. Which of the apostles were fishermen?**

MEAT

"Sanctify them by the truth"

THE TWO HEADSHIPS

1 Co. 15:45-49

First of all I want to ask, do you know that there are two races in the world? – two people of quite distinct origin, having quite different ways. That great fact lies clearly on the face of these verses. There is a first Adam, and there is a last Adam; there is a first man, and there is a second Man.

Adam is the man who was the great progenitor of our race; mankind springs from him; he is the source and fountainhead, and upon the race his impress is clearly seen. Through the ages Adam has been simply disclosing himself, unrolling himself in the history of his descendants in detail. So when we think of Adam, we think of him as the great head, the head that dominates this poor fallen race, and to which everyone of us by nature belongs. And when we think of Jesus, we think of the last Adam, last mark you, for there is not a third. I am very glad it says last, because evidently that infers that in the second Man who is the last Adam, God has reached finality. He is the last, no successor, no need for a successor. First came the natural, then came the spiritual, and we may extract a little remark from its setting in the 10th chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, "He taketh away the first that He may establish the second."

If you have a fairly general knowledge of the contents of the Old Testament, you will note on reflection that God gave indication of this by again and again choosing not the first but the second, not Cain but Abel, not Ishmael but Isaac, not Esau but Jacob, not Aaron so much as Moses, not Manasseh but Ephraim. I have only just given to you a few cases that instantly

come to mind, and probably you could add some more. Again and again God makes it manifest that His thought was first the natural, and then the spiritual, and that the second is what God had before Him. And so the Lord Jesus Christ is the last Adam, the great Head of a new race, humanity truly, but new and altogether according to God. So perfect is He that never to all eternity will there need to be a third, the second is the last. Cain was only Adam reproduced in the first generation. You and I are Adam's representatives, perhaps, somewhere about the 150th generation. You travel down the stream of time, and you never meet "the second man" until you come to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now here lies the great importance of that truth which was previously alluded to in these meetings, the truth of the Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. People sometimes say unthinkingly, "Well, what does it matter whether we accept this or not? Have we indeed to enshrine this as a great cardinal fact of the Christian faith?" My answer is, indeed you have; let go this, and you let go everything.

To make my meaning clear, turn to the first of Genesis one moment, will you? I am not at all surprised that the infidel leaders now-a-days, the religious infidels in particular, are very keen against the 1st of Genesis, for it gives the lie direct to four of the most popular heresies of the present day. First of all it gives the lie direct to UNITARIANISM, inasmuch as the word used for God throughout the chapter – Elohim – is in the plural, Now Hebrew, unlike English, has not only a singular, but a dual, and then also a plural. That is, we find its nouns in three forms; a singular form to indicate one, a dual to indicate two, and a plural to indicate three or more. The Spirit of God has not used the singular, He has not used the dual, He has used the plural thirty-two times in the 1st chapter of Genesis concerning God. There is also what we would consider a grammatical error in the first verse of the chapter. We have God in the plural, and then the word 'created' in the singular. How do we explain that?

Quite simply. **There we have the Trinity in unity – one God – therefore the verb may be indeed in the singular. Yet the very name of God is in the plural, signifying at least three,** so that Unitarianism is clearly negated.

Another thing that is negated is the very popular idea of PANTHEISM, that God is not to be thought of as outside nature and above it, but as only dwelling in nature, somewhat as the electrical fluid dwells in insulated cables, God is immanent – that is the word they use – and they do not believe in a transcendent God, a God that stands outside of and distinct from nature. You must merely think of Him as a Supreme Mind, a Sense dwelling in all things; that is the 'New Theology.' This Pantheistic idea is plainly denied. You have God before creation and God outside of nature. The 1st of Genesis clearly presents Him not as an immanent God, but as a transcendent God, One that stands outside of and distinct from creation.

Another thing; you have the root idea of CHRISTIAN SCIENCE denied in the 1st chapter of Genesis. That idea is that matter is evil. Spirit is good, and matter, according to that false religion, is but an illusion. Why, again and again in the 1st chapter of Genesis we read of material things, and "God saw that it was good" – the lie direct to Christian Science.

And lastly I particularly want you to note that it gives the lie direct to that great idea that has done so much mischief, even in the minds of Christians – EVOLUTION. Over and over again, as a matter of fact, ten times over, in the 1st of Genesis we have the immutable law of God's creation that all things reproduce themselves "after his kind." Ten times over it says "after his kind," and there is not one fact known that denies it.

Now I want you to fix your mind on that for a moment. It is the immutable law of God's creation that everything reproduces

itself after its kind, and when Adam became a fallen sinner that law worked with deadly operation in all his descendants. We may be, as I said, the 150th generation from Adam, but we are just simply: after his kind,” and we might go on reproducing ourselves, and thus project the first man and his race indefinitely into eternity, we should still only have fallen man. When the fifteen hundredth or the one hundred and fifty thousandth generation was reached it would still be “after his kind.” You see – I think – what I am driving at. The awful entail of sin and death connected with the first man has ruined everything it touched with his blighting hand; and there never was a real and original second man until Jesus was born, and then the entail of sin and death was broken. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost’s power. Discard the Virgin birth, and you have lost this great foundation truth of the Gospel.

Another, then, has appeared – the second Man is the Lord from heaven – and He appeared here truly a Man, but a Man of another order, a Man of a heavenly order, a Man not after Adam’s kind, but perfect, spotless and undefiled. He stepped into the scene, and in Him, thank God; there is salvation for such as ourselves. He is the Founder of a new race, and I want you all to get hold of this, and thus learn to regard the Lord Jesus Christ in this light.

You may ask how do we come to be of His race? Well, we are told in the very verses that I read, “The first man Adam was made a living soul.” As a matter of fact he had a spirit by the breath of the Divine nostrils, as we read in the 2nd chapter of Genesis; but what characterized him was that he was a living soul, though possessing spirit, whereby he was put into intelligent and personal relationship with God. When we turn to the last Adam, we read not that He is a living soul, but that He is a quickening or life-giving Spirit. The Lord Jesus steps into the scene, a life-giving Spirit, and if you and I are brought into contact with Him, thank God we have been quickened by Him.

We have been made to live by Himself and in Himself as the one who has suffered and died and risen again. In resurrection **He has become the life-giving Head of a new race. Oh to realize this actually as a fact! We are not taking flights into dreamland; we are talking about things which have actually come to pass on the basis of the death and resurrection of Christ, and by the energy of the Spirit of God. How little we know their transporting power in our souls!**

You and I, then, who have come to Him as the Savior, have come under the life-giving power of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the last Adam, and we live now in Him and we belong to His race, and to His order. True it does not yet appear on the surface. No halo of glory surrounds your head, nor does it surround mine. We go through the streets of Edinburgh with nothing distinctive about us to manifest at the present moment that we are the children of God. The apostle John himself tells us that now are we children of God, but what we are going to be does not yet appear. We are like the caterpillar crawling on the edge of the leaf and eating it. There comes a dainty butterfly and perches beside the caterpillar. Could she pour into the caterpillar’s ear how she too was once creeping on a green leaf, the caterpillar would hardly believe it, but it is true. There you have the caterpillar, and there you have the butterfly. We may be in the caterpillar stage, but we have got the life that is coming out in butterfly colors in a day that is coming. It is not yet manifest what we are going to be; what we do know is that we are going to see Him as He is, and then we shall be like Him. We have got the life of Christ who is the first Adam, and so we are told in these verses that ultimately we are going to bear the image of the heavenly.

In verse 47 we get the first man and his character – he is of the earth ‘earthy’ or ‘made of dust.’ Then he says, as is the earthy such are they also that are earthy. We partake of Adam’s life and fallen condition. The ugly features that are latent in the

Adamic nature come out more powerfully in some than others, but all of them lie dormant, to be developed into one set of ugly features in one person and another set in other persons; but we all possess that condemned life, and its condemned nature. But it then says, "The second Man is the Lord from heaven," and it adds that, "as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." Those who are of the heavenly race partake of the character of their great Head. Then there is further added that "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." The infinite grace of God has given us a place and portion in the heavenly Man. A day is coming when we shall come out in our true character, when we shall leave behind us this caterpillar stage, and we shall be the butterfly with all its glorious colors. The grub is essentially an earthy creature; it belongs to the earth; it crawls on the earth; it eats the leaves, and it probably buries itself in the earth, but it comes forth as the perfect insect and the air is its sphere. That is only a rough illustration, mind you; you must not attempt to make it run on all fours; but here we have the great fact that we Christians who know His love, and who have had all our sins put away have also got His life; we stand in His risen life; He is our glorious and exalted Head.

If you want to see what the Christian is going to be, look at Christ, raised, exalted, and already glorified as the heavenly Man. As we have borne the image of the earthy, so are we also going to bear the image of the heavenly. We should bear the impress of His character now. We shall perfectly bear it then, even as to our bodies. In this, as in all beside, Christ is everything.

F.B. Hole

Exercise

"Exercise thyself unto piety"

SEVEN INDISPENSABLE PRAYERS

All who have studied the Psalms must have noticed many prayers therein which God's children would do well to make their own for perpetual personal use. From these I select seven as being vitally important for every believer.

1. "Hold up my goings in Thy paths that my footsteps slip not" (Psalm. 17:5).

Beset with snares and pitfalls, how easily does the foot slip. How quickly do our "goings" stray from "His paths" when one leaves the protecting atmosphere of private prayer! Let us set these words in order before our mind's eye, having them ever ready at hand. For only as His Word abideth in us shall we be able to stand in this evil day. "Lord, keep me in Thy paths."

2. "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer." (Psalm 19:14)

The last verse of Psalm 19 provides this second petition, which centers around our "words" and "meditations," and voices the desire of those to whom Christ is precious. What we say being largely the fruit of what we think, how necessary that the "inner self" should be pleasing to Him. Only thus will the outward expression (speech) be worthy of those called to be saints of the living God.

3. **“Show me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths” (Psalm. 25:4).**

Though knowing something of God’s thoughts about things, we are very apt to turn to our own point of view. We must come back to be shown “His ways” – how He is acting and will act in regard to all the perplexing problems around – and taught afresh “His paths,” so that grasping his purpose, seeing clearly the ultimate issue, we may walk steadily and confidently on in “the good way” He would have us tread.

4. **“O, Lord, open Thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise” (Psalm. 51:15).**

Not only on public occasions, but in private life, this is essential – lips opened by the Lord. If He but touch the lips they shall move to speak His praise, and tell of all His wondrous works.

5. **“Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law” (Psalm. 119:18).**

Every time we read the Bible, whenever we ponder its precious page, we need the Holy Spirit (the Divine Author) to give us a vision of Christ, taking of His things and showing them unto us.

6. **“Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken Thou me in Thy way” (Psalm. 119:37).**

Met at every turn by this world’s glitter and glamour, how necessary to have our gaze taken from things seen (temporal and transient) and fastened more firmly upon the (at present) unseen and eternal.

7. **“Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.”**

The seventh in Psalm 141:3 is perhaps the most needed prayer of all. The hasty word, the unguarded utterance, the foolish expression – how easily spoken! If one so meek as

Moses spoke unadvisedly with his lips, how necessary is it for every Christian to exercise greater watchfulness in this direction! Daily, hourly, should the words be taken up and used, or the tongue (that small but unruly member) will certainly cause us to stumble.

Let us go over these seven petitions again. They all have to do with the everyday of life: we cannot dispense with one. Let us frequently utter them not only when the need is apparent and pressing, but even before the first sign of danger. “Calm seas have their danger” is a truth often overlooked, and the only safe course is to cultivate the habit of “praying always.”

H.A. Woolley

ANSWERS TO SCRIPTURES SEARCH!

1. Cain (Genesis 4:17).
2. Joseph (Acts 4:36)
3. Peter, Andrew, James, and John

Rest

"Shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?"

FAITH! WHAT IS FAITH?

There are many who can sing the Doxology when all things go well with them in this world. They very readily say, "Thank God," if they are delivered from trouble. And if they have bread in the pantry, and health in their bodies, and peace in their homes, and perhaps a balance at the bank – they can praise the Lord with cheerful voice, and say He has always been so good to me I'll never doubt Him. Now that may be gratitude, but it is not faith. We would not despise any of God's mercies, and would indeed be grateful for all that He gives us richly to enjoy, but if I thank Him when the sun shines upon me, while it may be gratitude, it may also be sheer selfishness; a selfishness that rejoices in one's own freedom from trouble, and has scarcely a thought for the difficulties of others.

But faith is different; it says, "though the fig tree should not blossom," which means, not that there will be a poor harvest, or a late harvest, but no harvest at all. "Though my hands are empty, and every earthly resource has failed, and every human prop has been removed, and the whole world is a wilderness, yet will I confidently rest in the Lord." Faith can pass quietly through the storm; it does not look to any circumstance for help, but it takes hold upon God and finds Him to be greater than every circumstance. **Faith can wait, and wait until God moves. It is distrust that is impatient and restless, and would take things out of God's hands, and seize upon the desired object prematurely.** Look at Abraham and Sarah, distrustful and impatient, making a sad mess of things in the matter of Hagar; they could not wait for God. Look at Jacob and Rebecca, scheming, shamming, lying, deceiving; they could not wait for God. Look at Moses smiting the rock and speaking

unadvisedly with his lips; he could not wait for God. Look at every man, good and bad, whose history God has given us. Most, if not all of them, broke down just here; Satan stampeded them at least once into action when faith would have been quiet and waited for God.

Look now at the lowly Man of Nazareth; hear Him when hungry in the wilderness, disclaiming all resources but God, in the face of the Tempter who had grown bold with 4000 years of success. Hear Him say, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." And trace His way from thence through every circumstance of trial and sorrow, right on, until at last He lay in a sealed tomb. He never moved on His own behalf. His only concern was the glory of God. How astonished His disciples were that He did not save Himself. When Peter drew his sword and smote the high priest's slave, was there not impatience with the meekness of His Master in that action as well as indignation at His foes? But where is Jesus now? Crowned with glory and honor in the Father's throne. He committed His way to God, and God heard His prayer, and exalted him when the time came. He is the beginner and the finisher of faith, and in Him was no failure, no impatience, no haste, no discontent, but always perfect peace, because always perfect trust. And He is our pattern; not Abraham, nor Moses, but Jesus. And His peace He gives to us as we follow in His steps and rely wholly upon the Father's love that can never make a mistake.

Then the time comes when faith sings; the circumstances that have tested and tried it have only served to tighten the strings, and give it tone and tune, then it breaks forth into melody and cries triumphantly; "I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord is my strength, and He will make my feet like hind's feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high places." This is faith, "and without faith it is impossible to please God."

J.T. Mawson

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q. The Crown of Righteousness (2 Ti. 4:8), the Crown of Glory (1 Pe. 5:4), and the Crown of Life (Re. 2:10): would you please give a little explanation since there was not enough time to cover it at the recent Young Peoples Conference in Wayne, NJ? Joe Y.

A. Dear Joe:

The crowns in the references above and in 1 Co. 9:25, Ph. 4:1 and Ja. 1:12, all refer to the crown (or laurel wreath) of a victor, one who has overcome in a race or in combat; it is different from the crown of a king or ruler - a diadem (see Re. 19:12, the Lord Jesus crowned with many crowns, King of Kings).

The **crown of righteousness** is awarded by the Judge (umpire), who alone can righteously evaluate the contestant in the fight against the powers of evil, who has fought strenuously to display a beauty of skill and spiritual strength that will glorify the Lord Jesus. The award for faithfulness will be given for the day of display, in the world to come, at the appearing of our blessed Lord and Saviour.

The **crown of glory** is the reward for faithfulness in the time of suffering. Identification with the One who, as the Christ of God when here on earth, was despised and rejected will result in suffering. However, just as the Lord Jesus will be displayed on this earth in glory, we too, who endure suffering for Him faithfully, will also receive the crown of glory with Him.

In Revelation 2, the victors' **crown of life**, relates to assurance of eternal life for those martyred for the faith. (The name of Stephen, the first recorded Christian martyr, is derived from the word for crown). In James 1, where the crown of life is also recorded, it is given in recognition of the believers' victory over sin in the tests of life. The victory is gained by the use of the energy of eternal life which the believer has in Christ Jesus.

May we all be encouraged to contend strongly for the faith once delivered, in view of the day when the crowns will be awarded by the Lord, who alone gives us the will and the power to earn them, that they may be cast at His feet, who only is worthy (Re. 4:10).

JAP

SONS

PART 1

Father, Thy name our souls would bless
As children taught by grace,
Lift up our hearts in righteousness
And joy before Thy face.

Sweet is the confidence Thou giv'st,
Though high above our praise;
Our hearts resort to where Thou liv'st
In heaven's unclouded rays.

There in the purpose of Thy love
Our place is now prepared,
As sons with Him who is above,
Who all our sorrows shared.

Eternal ages shall declare
The riches of Thy grace,
To those who with Thy Son shall share
A son's eternal place.

Absent as yet, we rest in hope,
Treading the desert path,
Waiting for Him who takes us up
Beyond the power of death.

J. N. Darby

IT WAS ONLY A DOLLAR

“Ye are our letter, . . . known and read of all men,”(2Cor3:2)

Several Years ago, a preacher from New York accepted a call to preach in Houston, Texas. Some weeks after he arrived, he had an occasion to ride the bus from his home to the downtown area. When he sat down, he discovered that the driver had accidentally given him a dollar too much change. As he considered what to do, he thought to himself, “You’d better give the dollar back. It would be wrong to keep it.” Then he thought, “Oh, forget it, it’s only a dollar. Who would worry about this little amount? Anyway, the bus company gets too much fare, they will never miss it. Accept it as a ‘gift from God’ and keep quiet.”

When his stop came, he paused momentarily at the door, then he handed the dollar to the driver and said, “Here, you gave me too much change.”

The driver, with a smile, replied, “Aren’t you the new preacher in town? I have been thinking a lot lately about going somewhere to worship. I just wanted to see what you would do if I gave you too much change. I’ll see you Sunday.”

When the preacher stepped off the bus, he literally grabbed the nearest light pole, held on, and said,

“Oh God, I almost sold your Son for a dollar.”

Our lives are the only Bible some people will ever read. This is a really scary example of how much people watch us as Christians and will put us to the test! Always be on guard and remember that you carry the name of Christ on your shoulders when you call yourself “Christian.”

Watch your thoughts; they become words.

Watch your words; they become actions.

Watch your actions; they become habits.

Watch your habits; they become character.

Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.

“So if any one be in Christ, there is a new creation ;”(2Cor.5:17)