

8 - The Only Way

Evan. "What dost thou here, CHRISTIAN?" said he. At which words CHRISTIAN knew not what to answer; wherefore at present he stood speechless before him. Then said EVANGELIST further, "Art not thou the man that I found crying outside the walls of the city of Destruction?"

Chr. Yes, dear sir, I am the man.

Evan. Did not I direct thee the way to the little Wicket gate?

Chr. "Yes, dear sir," said CHRISTIAN.

Evan. How is it, then, that thou art so quickly turned aside? for thou art now out of the way.

Chr. I met with a gentleman, so soon as I had got over the Slough of Despond, who persuaded me that I might, in the village before me, find a man that could take off my burden.

Evan. What was he?

Chr. He looked like a gentleman, and talked much to me, and got me at last to yield; so I came hither: but when I beheld this hill, and how it hangs over the way, I suddenly made a stand, lest it should fall on my head.

Evan. What said that gentleman to you?

Chr. Why, he asked me whither I was going; and I told him.

Evan. And what said he then?

Chr. He asked me if I had a family; and I told him. But, said I, I am so loaded with the burden that is on my back, that I cannot take pleasure in them as formerly.

Evan. And what said he then?

Chr. He bade me with speed get rid of my burden; and I told him it was ease that I sought. And, said I, I am therefore going to yonder gate to receive further direction how I may get to the place of deliverance. So he said that he would show me a better way, and short, not so attended with difficulties as the way, sir, that you set me in; this short way, said he, will direct you to a gentleman's house that has skill to take off these burdens. So I believed him, and turned out of that way into this, if haply I might be soon eased of my burden. But when I came to this place, and beheld things as they are, I stopped for fear, as I said, of danger. But I now know not what to do.

Evan. Then said EVANGELIST, "Stand still a little, that I may show thee the words of God." So he stood trembling. Then said EVANGELIST, "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall we not escape, if we turn away from him that speaks from heaven" (#Heb 12:25). He said, moreover, "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him" (#Heb 10:38). He also did thus apply them:

"Thou art the man that art running into this misery; thou hast begun to reject the counsel of the Most High, and to draw back thy foot from the way of peace, even almost to the hazarding of thy perdition."

Then CHRISTIAN fell down at his foot as dead, crying, "Woe is me, for I am undone!" At the sight of which, EVANGELIST caught him by the right hand, saying, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: be not faithless, but believing" (#Mt 12:31 Joh 20:27). Then did CHRISTIAN again a little revive, and stood up trembling, as at first, before EVANGELIST.

Then EVANGELIST proceeded, saying, "Give more earnest heed to the things that I shall tell thee of. I will now show thee who it was that deluded thee, and who it was also to whom he sent thee. The man that met thee is one WORLDLY WISEMAN: and rightly is he so called; partly because he savours only the doctrine of this world (#1Jo 4:5) (therefore he always goes to the town of Morality to Church) and partly because he loves that doctrine best, for it saves him from the cross (#Ga 6:12); and because he is of this carnal temper, therefore he seeks to pervert my ways, though right. Now there are three things in this man's counsel that thou must utterly abhor:

"1. His turning thee out of the way. "2. His labouring to render the cross odious to thee. "3. And his setting thy feet in that way that leads unto the administration of death.

"First, thou, must abhor turning thee out of the Way— yea, and thine own consenting thereto; because this is to reject the counsel of God for the sake of the counsel of a Worldly Wiseman. The Lord says, 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate' (#Lu 13:24), —the gate to which I sent thee; 'for strait is the gate that leads unto life, and few there be that find it' (#Mt 7:13,14). From this little Wicket gate, and from the way thereto, hath this wicked man turned thee, to the bringing of thee almost to destruction. Hate, therefore, his turning thee out of the way; and abhor thyself for hearkening to him.

"Secondly, thou must abhor his labouring to render the cross odious unto thee; for thou art to prefer it before the treasures in Egypt (#Heb 11:26). Besides, the King of Glory hath told thee, that he that will save his life shall lose it; and, he that comes after him, and hates not his father, and mother, and wife and children, his brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be his disciple (#Mt 10:39 Mr 8:35 Lu 14:26 Joh 12:25). I say, therefore, for man to labour to persuade thee that that shall be thy death, without which, the Truth hath said, thou canst not have eternal life— this doctrine thou must abhor.

"Thirdly, thou must hate his setting of thy feet in the way that leadeth to the ministration of death. And for this thou must consider to whom he sent thee; and also how unable that person was to deliver thee from thy burden.

"He to whom thou wast sent for ease, being by name LEGALITY is the son of the bondwoman who now is, and is in bondage with her children (#Ga 4:22-27); and is, in a mystery, this Mount Sinai which thou hast feared will fall on thy head. Now if she with her children are in bondage, how canst thou expect by them to be made free? This LEGALITY, therefore, is not able to set thee free from thy burden. No man was as yet ever rid of his burden by him; no, nor ever is like to be. Ye cannot be justified by the works of the law; for by the deeds of the law no man living can be rid of his burden. Therefore Mr. WORLDLY WISEMAN is an alien, and Mr. LEGALITY is a cheat; and for his son CIVILITY, notwithstanding his simpering looks, he is but a hypocrite, and cannot help thee. Believe me, there is nothing in all his noise that thou hast heard of these sottish men, but at design to beguile

thee of thy salvation, by turning thee from the way in which I had set thee." After this, EVANGELIST called aloud to the heavens for confirmation of what he had said; and with that there came words and fire out of the mountain under which poor CHRISTIAN stood, that made the hair of his flesh stand up. The words were thus pronounced: "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (#Ga 3:10).

Now CHRISTIAN looked for nothing but death, and began to cry out lamentably; even cursing the time in which he met with Mr. WORLDLY WISEMAN, still calling himself a thousand fools for hearkening to his counsel. He also was greatly ashamed to think that this gentleman's arguments, flowing only from the flesh, should have that prevalency with him as to cause him to forsake the right way. This done, he applied himself again to EVANGELIST in words and sense as follows:

Chr. Sir, what think you?—Is there any hope? May I now go back, and go up to the Wicket gate? Shall I not be abandoned for this, and sent back from thence ashamed? I am sorry I have hearkened to this man's counsel; but may my sin be forgiven.

Evan. Then said EVANGELIST to him, "Thy sin is very great; for by it thou hast committed two evils: thou hast forsaken the way that is good, to tread in forbidden paths; yet will the man at the gate receive thee, for he has good will for men; only," said he, "take heed that thou turn not aside again, lest thou perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little" (#Ps 2:12). Then did CHRISTIAN address himself to go back; and EVANGELIST, after he had kissed him, gave him one smile, and bade him Godspeed.

Heb 12:25, Heb 10:38, Mt 12:31 Joh 20:27, 1Jo 4:5, Ga 6:12, Lu 13:24, Mt 7:13,14, Heb 11:26, Mt 10:39 Mr 8:35 Lu 14:26 Joh 12:25, Ga 4:22-27, Ga 3:10, Ps 2:12

“See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more *shall we not escape* if we turn away from Him who *speaks* from heaven,” (Heb 12:25 NKJV)

“Now the just shall live by faith; But if *anyone* draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.” (Heb 10:38 NKJV)

““Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy *against* the Spirit will not be forgiven men.” (Mt 12:31 NKJV)

“Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand *here*, and put *it* into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.” (Joh 20:27 NKJV)

“They are of the world. Therefore they speak *as* of the world, and the world hears them.” (1Jo 4:5 NKJV)

“As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these *would* compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.” (Ga 6:12 NKJV)

““Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.” (Lu 13:24 NKJV)

“¹³ "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. ¹⁴ "Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” (Mt 7:13-14 NKJV)

“esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.” (Heb 11:26 NKJV)

““He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.” (Mt 10:39 NKJV)

““For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it.” (Mr 8:35 NKJV)

““If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.” (Lu 14:26 NKJV)

““He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.” (Joh 12:25 NKJV)

“²² For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. ²³ But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, ²⁴ which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar— ²⁵ for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children— ²⁶ but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. ²⁷ For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren, *You* who do not bear! Break forth and shout, *You* who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children Than she who has a husband."” (Ga 4:22-27 NKJV)

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."” (Ga 3:10 NKJV)

“Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish *in* the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all those who put their trust in Him.” (Ps 2:12 NKJV)