

The Normal Christian Life

The Path of Progress: Bearing the Cross

The Basis of All True Ministry

- No one can be a true servant of God without knowing the **principle of death** and the **principle of resurrection**.
 - Before the Lord's public ministry began, He was **baptized** not because so that He was on the **ground of death and resurrection**.
 - After He had been baptized, the **Holy Spirit came upon Him**, and then He ministered.
- Being a perfect Man our Lord had a soul, and of course a body, just as you and I have a soul and a body, and it was possible for Him to act **from the soul**—that is, from Himself.
- When Satan **tempted** the Lord after His baptism, his subtle object was to get the Lord to **act for Himself**—that is, from the soul.
 - **In Adam**, man had acted from himself **apart from God**.
 - The Lord's total **denial of the soul-life** was to govern all His ministry.
- The Holy Spirit is the **Vessel** in whom all the **values of the death, resurrection and exaltation** of the Lord are deposited, that they may be **brought to us**.
- In the Old Testament we see the ground of death and resurrection in the matter of **Aaron's ministry and the budding rod**.

The Subjective Working of the Cross

- In **Matt. 10:34-39; Mark 8:32-35; Luke 17:32-34; and John 12:24-26**
 - In each we have the Lord Himself speaking to us concerning the **soul-activity of man**.
 - In each, a different aspect or manifestation of the soul-life is touched upon.
 - In these verses He makes it very plain that the **soul of man** can be **dealt with in one way** only—our **bearing the cross daily** and **following Him**.
- In respect of our **old man**, God has **once for all crucified** us with Christ on the Cross.
- There is a further aspect of the Cross implied in the expression “bearing His cross daily”.
 - This bearing of the Cross is the **subjective** working of the Cross.
 - This is a **daily process**; a step by step following after Him.

- We do not have the “crucifixion” of the soul itself in the sense that it is to be put away altogether.
- The **Cross** is brought to **bear upon the soul** to bring the natural endowments **into death** and thereafter, as God may please, to give them **back to us in resurrection**.
- Although there is nothing deliberately sinful about the soul, the danger lies in the **subtle working of the affections** to turn us away from the pathway of God.
- There is also the subtle working of the soul which desires **self-preservation**.
 - We need to let the Cross come in to silence that appeal for self-preservation.
- **Luke 17** tells of our reaction to the rapture call.
 - In that moment we shall discover **our heart’s real treasure**.
 - If it is the **Lord Himself**, then there will be no backward look.
 - This is dictated by our living by the soul or by the spirit.
- The cross has to work in us a true **spiritual detachment** from anything and anyone outside of the Lord Himself.

(The Normal Christian Life – Chapter 13)