

DANGERS ON THE PATH

“But one thing is needful,” said Christ to Martha. In those words we find one of the great fundamental truths of life, and though the great majority would not concede that there is but **one thing needful**, many thinking people will agree that while our wants are multitudinous, our needs are few indeed.

Notwithstanding this great fact, the complexity of our present civilized life, so called, is such that the greater portion of humanity is wearing itself out to provide so-called comforts and luxuries, which are only for the body, while the soul is starving. Nor do these so-called comforts and luxuries satisfy, when actually in our possession. Wealthy men, when they have attained, will tell you, if they can be interrogated when in a confidential mood, that their enjoyment of wealth was far more in the anticipation, in the quest of gaining it, than in the actual possession and that money is really a bitter pill in the mouth of its possessor, if he is a thinker. Likewise with social prestige, the society woman who has won her way to the head of the charmed circle, so called, finds that once within, it is all too commonplace, a bore, not worth the effort. Yet there are always those who clamor for riches, for social distinction, who seek those things as eagerly and regardless of cost to the soul, as moths seek the flame. But while there are many dangerous places in civil and social life to beguile the thoughtless moth, there are lures more fatal upon the path of spiritual advancement.

The parable of the sower, like all other parables of which the Christ made use, was apt and applicable to a degree; some grains fell by the wayside, some upon rocky soil, among thorns and thistles, etc., and only a small part fell in good soil, where it bore abundance of fruit. People nowadays run to and fro, all over the world, driven by that inner urge, that unrestful yearning for something they know not what. But though they seek, they are deaf and blind, they cannot see the light within, they do not hear the silent inner call; the lust of the eyes and the pride of life in the outer world are too strong attractions. Like moles we burrow in the darkness of an orphaned existence, far from the light, far from the Father of Light, and yet He is everywhere present. It is truth, literal truth, poetically expressed when the Psalmist says:

*Whither shall I go from thy spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into Heaven thou art there;*

*If I make my bed in the grave, behold thou art there,
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost part of the sea,
Even there shall thy hand lead me,
And thy right hand shall uphold me.*

God is light, says the Apostle John, with mystic insight, and the light is everywhere, only we do not see it in our blindness of heart.

But sometime, in the course of our lives, the **latent light** within each of us is awakened, the divine spark from our invisible **Father Fire** commences to glow, and slowly we awaken to the realization that **we are sons of light**.

That is the grand crisis, the turning point in the pilgrimage of the prodigal; when it realizes its condition, when it sees clearly that all the worldly wealth, the social standing, the power of position are only “husks”; that there is **but one thing needful**, just one thing worth while in all the world, and that is to find again the Father’s bosom.

At that moment of conversion the spirit voices the intense yearning which permeates every fiber of its being in that soul-searing cry: “I will arise and go to my Father.” That is the password to “**The Path**”; at the other end stands the Cross where liberation awaits, and the sanctified spirit soars into the subtler spheres with the soul-stirring shout of triumph “Consummatum est,” it has been accomplished! I am loosed from the fetter of flesh, **a free spirit**, at one with my Father.

But let no one imagine that he is safe who enters the gate of aspiration; many a will-o’-the-wisp lurks by the way, seeking to detract the attention of the seeker from **the true light**, and no snare is more seductive at this time and age than that which plays upon the soul’s ardent desire for **speedy** attainment.

Paul voices that great yearning in the fifth chapter of II Corinthians:

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God not made with hands, age-lasting in the Heavens.

For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from Heaven.

If so be, that being clothed, we shall not be found naked.

*For we that are this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life * * * whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. * * * We are * ** willing rather to be absent from the body to be*

present with the Lord.

Wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him.

Let us note particularly, however, that **Paul recognizes the danger of being found naked**, that he insists he has no desire to be **unclothed**, but to be **clothed upon**, and that therefore **he labors**.

Driven by this insane desire for speedy development, souls are constantly snared by unscrupulous self-constituted pseudo teachers who promise quick results, usually exacting an initiation fee for their services; yet the foolish flock around such pretenders as moths around a flame.

Truly, they do sometimes obtain results by being propelled into the invisible world. But having failed to “labor” in the vineyard, as Paul did in order to earn the “wedding garment” or “house from heaven,” they lack the vital vehicle of consciousness necessary to function intelligently in the higher spheres, and are also unable to find their way back into the dense body which they have left, and it is usually reported that they died of “heart failure.”

They are then “**naked**” indeed and doomed to suffer until they should have passed out in the natural course of events, because they have, as a matter of fact, committed suicide and the archetype of the dense body remains intact, constantly endeavoring to draw to itself physical substance; but as the silver cord is severed, none can be obtained, and a pain, described by suicides as like the gnawing pangs of hunger, or like toothache in which the whole body aches, is experienced, sometimes for many years. “He that entereth not by **the door** is a thief and a robber.” It is possible to steal into the earthly house and escape, but who seeks to outwit God will find that the way of the transgressor is hard when his wings are singed in the flame.

Is it not strange that men who understand the necessity of spending years to learn a certain science, trade, or profession, who will labor day after day, year after year, with unwearying patience and assiduous application in order to obtain the mastery of whatever material science they are studying, can at the same time be so deluded to think that in a short time, a few days, a few weeks or months, at most a year or two, they can master the science of the soul, by simply thinking about it for ten minutes a day or less. They would laugh to scorn anyone who would offer to initiate them into the mysteries of surgery or watchmaking in a few days, but when it comes to the science of the soul, they drop all common sense consideration; their desire for occult powers is so strong that it clouds reason, and as moths

flock to the flame, so will they flock to a teacher who promises them phenomena in a short time.

And, when one has been burned, do the others take warning? Alas, no! For every moth that drops, some one else, or ten more, are ready to take its place. Magic mirrors or magnetized crystals find a ready market, while the truth goes abegging. Fraud and deception by unscrupulous persons, who prey upon this intense soul-hunger of their fellow men, are more numerous than one who is not familiar with the unvoiced longing of thousands can ever conceive. Generally the dupes pocket their financial losses, but occasionally proceedings in the public courts show that otherwise intelligent people have parted with considerable sums at the request of such self-styled teachers and pseudo spirits, and occasionally the grave closes over a too successful seeker, or the sanitarium hides him.

But if the **human moth** were amenable to reason, if it heard the voice of warning, and asked, And how then may I know the true light from the false?, we may confidently turn to the Scriptures for our answer. There is no uncertainty whatever about it, the Christ gave His disciples the powers necessary to aid humanity, and he said to them, **freely give as you have freely received**. Peter also, when he was accosted by Simon, the sorcerer, who desired to buy for money the spiritual powers which the apostle exercised, cursed him. Whenever they gave, they gave without money, without price. Likewise, **the true teacher places no price on his teachings but lives as the apostles lived, by voluntary contributions from those whom they help**. Neither is it necessary for one who does not seek the worldly gold to lure others with promises of phenomenon or powers in record time. It is easy to build a house of any desired size, so long as you have the material. You may enlarge it by adding brick to brick. But neither plant, animal nor man, grow in that manner; **their growth is from within, and each must do it for himself**. We cannot eat another's food and give him the strength derived therefrom; neither can we go through the experiences of another, assimilate them and give to him the soul-growth derived in that manner.

So, flee the flame of false teachers, compose yourself in patience. **Work, Watch and Wait**. In due time the Christ light will glow **within your own soul**, and you will never need to look elsewhere for it.