

Trial and Triumph

Lesson for April 3, 1949

IF YOU HAD BEEN on the top of the city wall on that first Palm Sunday, watching the crowds roaring into Jerusalem, and some one had told you that all the shouting was for Jesus of Nazareth, you would certainly have thought that his success was assured. Here, surely, was a King who had arrived! But before the week was out you would have seen this same Jesus on trial for his life, and not a voice raised in his defense. The same dusty-throated mob on that Sunday shouted "Hosanna! Blessed is He!" was shrieking on Friday morning "Crucify him!"

Flowery Beds or Bloody Seas?

There is a popular notion floating around to the effect that God gives good people an easy time. It is not always just that way. But when a man who has been good (or thinks he has, or has tried to be), runs into trouble, he asks right away, "Why must this happen to me?" The truth of the matter is better expressed in the lines of an old hymn:

"Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
Or sailed through bloody seas?"

Jesus was incomparably the best who ever lived; yet his moments of popularity were short, and he was finally tortured and killed by the leaders of church and state, amid the jeering approval of masses of the people.

He himself said that any follower of his must be willing to take up his own cross. "In the world you will have tribulation," he said to his disciples.

All Tyrants Hate the Church

THE MORE GENUINELY Christian the church is, the more it is likely to run into opposition. There are several reasons for this. For one thing, the church stands for love, and the generosity and unselfishness, the sympathy and even the sacrifice that go with love and are produced by it. But "what makes the world go 'round,'"—the world of the politician, the money-maker, the social climber, the war-maker, the world of the power-thirsty in every sphere—what makes that world go 'round is pride, selfishness, shoving ahead, Me-firstness. The selfish and the proud do not take kindly to love of the Christian sort, indeed they despise it as a weakness.

But the church, when it is a true church, stands up for humanity even when it has to stand against profits; and the man for whom profits is the first law of life never understands the attitude of the church. Then the church (when it is a real one) always stands for the people against the Tyrant, whoever and wherever he may be, even when he is in some church himself.

And consequently all tyrants hate the church. The Roman emperors hated it and persecuted it till they found they could use it (which, by the way, was a bad day for the church). Mohammed, a tyrant of sorts, hated the Christian church and would have totally destroyed it if he could.

Victory—When?

"IF WE SUFFER with him we shall also reign with him," said St. Paul. But when and how? The end of the church's struggles could come in either of two ways. One way would be for the church to give up struggling against the world. Let the church become a club for the sociable, let the church raise no voice of protest against injustice in society, against untruth, violence and greed; let the church give in to the world, in short, and she will have no further trouble from the world.

But in that case she would be dead. Another way is for the church finally to overcome the world. The triumph of the true church is the same as the triumph of divine love.

That is the future to which the Bible bids us look. When? We do not know. But the Kingdom comes "one heart at a time," and with every soul the church wins from the world-way to the Christ-way, the victory of Love draws nearer.

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Rural Churches

Calvary E. U. S.
Albert M. Straley, pastor
Palm Sunday services will feature the visit of Marvin Peterson from the Evangelical Theological Seminary, Naperville, Ill. He is an accomplished musician as well as a student in theology. He will play several numbers at the piano as well as bring the message of the evening.

Sunday School will meet in regular session at 9:30 Sunday morning. The lesson is entitled, "The Church Suffering and Triumphant." Lloyd Lichtenberger is Superintendent.

St. Paul and Winchester U.S. Circuit
Dale Osborn, pastor.
St. Paul: Worship 9:15 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Prayer meeting, Wednesday 7:30 p.m.

Old Fashioned Revival

STARTS
Sunday, April 2

to
Sunday, April 9
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Prof. Elmer Neuenchwander

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will be the speaker
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fort to be in these services and invite others to come with you. Pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit in every member and for the salvation of every unsaved person we may reach.

CHURCH NEWS

Zion Reformed

The sound motion picture, "Golgotha," will be shown at the Zion Evangelical and Reformed church Sunday evening at 7:30 o'clock. This 35-minute film, with a cast of thousands, tells with reverence, power and beauty the inspiring story of the last days on earth of Jesus of Nazareth—His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the driving of the merchants from the Temple, the tears and plots of the Sanhedrin, the betrayal by Judas Iscariot, the Last Supper, His final hours in the Garden of Gethsemane, the trials before the high priests and before Pilate and Herod, the scourging by the Roman soldiers, the march to Calvary, and the Crucifixion—and then His last messages to His disciples after the Resurrection.

All members and friends of the church are invited to attend. There will be no admission charge, but a free-will offering will be received.

Nuttman Ave. U.S.

A special afternoon service will be conducted at the Nuttman Ave. United Brethren church Sunday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock. The theme of this service will be "A Greater zeal for home and foreign missions." The Rev. Thaine Ford, who has been the evangelist for the special services, will be the speaker. A special invitation is extended to other groups to join in this afternoon service.

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