

longed for while away seemed to have lost their sweetness. Perhaps then he began to realize what he had done—he had failed his God!

Peace With God

It perhaps was one night when the Lord's Supper was being observed when he sat there and listened to those familiar words being spoken again; when he remembered that this wine represented the shed blood of Jesus Christ, and this bread represented His broken body. Here was one who had been willing to make the supreme sacrifice for John Mark, and all the other John Marks in the world who are lost, sick, deserters, cowards, whatever they may be, and the young man could not stand it another moment.

He arose quickly from the bench, bolted to the door and out into the night where out yonder under some gnarled olive tree, on the side of a rocky hill he made peace with his God. And then taking up the burden and responsibilities which he had ac-

cepted and laid aside, he picked up where he had left off and started over with renewed vigor and he lived a life that became of such great service to God in the years to come that he was chosen to write the gospel according to Mark.

That's a success story if I ever heard one. It's a story of a boy who started to follow, who faltered, who failed and then who FOUND, and then who came back. Hearing this story, one could sing, "Oh! for a faith that will not shrink, though set by every foe, that will not tremble on the brink of any earthly woe."

And so John Mark sang and prayed and went on to literally give his life in the service of the living God. He became profitable to the ministry. For as I read to you, it was not long before he joined his uncle Barnabas again and they went out to preach the blessed gospel of Christ. It was several years later when Paul wrote those famous words, "Bring John Mark with you. He's profitable to me for the ministry."

From Riches To Rags

August 8, 1954

All of us are familiar with the success story which is often described with the words, "from rags to riches." I want to turn the phrase around, and with the leadership of the Holy Spirit, speak to you on the subject, "From Riches to Rags." The Scripture is found in Matthew 21:10. In this verse we have the story of the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem.

The words "triumphal entry" are not quite as descriptive as they could be, for had you been there that day, I'm afraid you might have missed the whole point, and I'm afraid you would never have described it as a triumphal entry. For they brought a colt, and they laid their garments on its back, then Christ sat on the lowly animal.

In trying to picture this scene, what seems to be the most striking thing about it to you? Is it possible that the impressiveness of the scene has struck your attention? Is it possible that you have been impressed by the tremendous majesty of it all? No, I'm afraid that couldn't be true.

I wish you might read a description of the triumphal entry of Phillip of Macedon when he conquered some of the cities of Asia. I wish you could

read about the entry of Pompei into Rome in September of 61 B.C. where the parade was two days long. I wish you could have been present when Domitian came back into Rome, who required before this great occasion of his victorious return, a new road constructed and that it be completely carpeted before he should ride in upon his white steed. No, in light of this and other triumphal entries described to us in the books of history, I'm afraid this triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem would never match up.

Who Was There?

Secondly, I'm wondering if you're impressed with the immense crowd that was there—the multitude of it. I realize the Scripture says a very great multitude was there, but I also realize that it was early in the morning—and I realize that there were many children in the crowd. I doubt whether the crowd would measure up to what you and I would call a multitude in this day and age. No, it isn't either one of those things that strikes me when I read about it.

Instead, the stark poverty of the scene is the thing that catches my at-

tion. Here is a man who comes riding into the city on a borrowed donkey. He has for his crowd some gawking merchants and beggars as well as children, and they on either hand are not saying, "Long live the King!" Instead, behind their hands they're saying to one another, "Who is this?" "Who is this?" Well, let's answer their question, let's answer the question of the world, "Who is this?"

Look at II Corinthians 8:9 and read a description of this man. It was said of him, "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes, he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich."

And then in Philippians 2:5 we read: "Have this mind in you which was in Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God counted not the being on equality with God a thing to be grasped, but he emptied himself and took upon himself the form of a servant."

Christ's Riches

In order to describe the riches that this man who rides upon a donkey's back possessed, your vocabulary would be completely drained. He was rich in his possessions, for Colossians 1:16 says, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, both visible and invisible."

He was rich in person for John said, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word WAS God." The Hebrew writer describing Him said, "Who being the fulfillment of His glory and the very image of his substance." And it remained for Paul to say, "For it was the pleasure of the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell." He was God incarnate. He was the only one who could ever say, "If you have seen me you have seen the Father." He was rich in His relationship with the Father. (God) In Philippians we read of His equality with God, that He shared the glory of the father, that the Father had shed upon Him great, great love and that the angels bowed down in submission to His great word. You may be stirred by the wealth of the Rockefellers, the Fords or the oriental potentates, but wonder stirs the heart of men when they think of the riches of the Lord Jesus Christ.

His Poverty

And then, to see the voluntary poverty which He takes upon himself shocks the heart. He became poor, the

scripture says. He became poor of His own choice. How many of us would turn down such riches? Is there a man in the world that would do so? He was not poor in purity, he was not poor in sinlessness, he was not poor in disobedience, but He became poor where He had been rich.

For in his possessions He became so poor that He would say, "the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have their nest, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." He became so poor that a borrowed donkey was used for Him to ride into the city, and a borrowed room for Him to observe His last supper, and a borrowed boat in which He was to preach one of his sermons, and a borrowed tomb into which He was placed after He had died. And stripped down to only the robes that were on His back—this one who had been so rich, became so poor.

Paul, his own apostle, later was able to escape the same treatment when he cried out, "I am a Roman citizen," and men stepped back from him with their whips thrown to the ground—but not the Son of God. He did not have enough influence to be spared that infamous scourging. He became poor in position. He who had been the ruler of heaven became a carpenter in Nazareth. He who was Prince of Glory became a servant in earth. He who had been ministered to by the angels now washed men's dusty feet.

He who had created the glory of eternity now rides on the back of a donkey. He who had received the prayers of the world now prays for strength. The hand that held the scepter now held the reed, and the one who had worn the diadem upon His head now wore a crown of thorns. He went from the throne of heaven to the cross of Calvary. He knew the fellowship of the angels and now he died between two common thieves. Having been loved by God, he is now despised by men. How poor he became! But He became poor in power, too, for the scripture says "He emptied himself." He was helpless as a baby in a girl mother's arms; subjected to every temptation that men are subjected to.

He was baptized by a crude, wilderness preacher, and He became the hungry man of the wilderness, the tired man of Samaria, the heartbroken man of Nazareth, the weeping man of Bethany, the agonizing man of Gethsemane,

the helpless man on Calvary, the forsaken man on the Cross. Why? Who is this? Why does this King of Kings ride on a donkey? Now we see Him in a new light, don't we?

The Answer

Now we search for an answer and we find that through His poverty YOU may become rich. He became poor so that you might become rich.

It was for ME the Saviour died. That's the Answer. And wherein may we be rich? In silver? In gold? No, we become rich in the riches of salvation. Many things are infinitely worth more than gold. If you don't believe it, try to buy a Christian's hope, or a believer's hope that he will one day rise to be with God. Why this plan of salvation is the pearl of great price and it's free. "The free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." "Whosoever will let him come." We have many things in this life that remind us of money and wealth and power, but when you read of John's

description of Heaven, and all that God has prepared for those that are His, then all the things of this world fall into insignificance and are forgotten.

Listen! Today, wherever you are, He became poor that you might become rich. If you're wandering the streets of America, if you're walking the streets of the world today poor and needy, it's not God's fault. It isn't the fault of His precious Son, it's your fault. You're living on scraps and crusts of bread because you want to, because you've been deceived and lied to by Satan. It isn't God's will for you, because He who loves you gave himself for you. He emptied himself and became the sacrifice for Sin in order that you might become rich. Dear friend, the ragged robes of self-righteousness clutch to your bosom today; cast them aside as worthless and take instead the royal riches of the Son of God and let Him clothe you in His robe that's been washed white in His red blood.

Why We Preach Christ

August 15, 1954

"For the love of Christ constraineth us! because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again." (II Corinthians 5:14-15.)

Paul, who wrote these words, was often accused of being crazy. You know that's the devil's favorite tool to use to keep men from serving God faithfully. Many a man has turned back because someone threw the term, "fanatic," at him. Paul had it from every hand, and Paul was able to answer them by saying: "I am what I am because the love of Christ has taken hold of me."

I've seen men lose their family and their health in the business world. Literally work from daylight till dark and then far into the night over their books, until finally, having not yet reached middle age, their health is shattered and they have left their family behind. And you know what the world calls that man, with his stocks and his bonds and his position in the world? He's called a success.

I have seen men who forget the world and live among books, who hide

away in some library or become a recluse in some far-away spot and spend their entire life pouring over the great books of the ages and the world calls them scholars. I've seen some men whose lives were unconventional, whose actions failed to comply with any of the social standards, who dress carelessly, whose habits are irregular and abnormal, and the world calls them geniuses. But you let a man give up the world and separate himself to the will of God and immediately someone says he's a fanatic.

Only Important Thing

And I tell you, friend, there's just one thing in this world worth getting enthusiastic about and that one thing is the religion of our blessed Lord. There's only one institution that's permanent, and that's the CHURCH. Ever since my football playing days, I've liked to be on the winning side. I believe that the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, the living body of our Lord, His bride, will be here when He comes and I know of no other institution in the world that can make that claim.

Paul believed and practiced what I like to call the dimension of intensity.