

No Miracles

by Charles E. Cowman

The pathway of faith is not always easy, but it is through trials and everyday experience that faith is perfected.

Scripture: Acts 27:44, 2 Corinthians 11:23, Hebrews 11:36, James 1:2, 1 Peter 4:12

Topics: "Faith And Trials", "Gods Providence"

Description

Charles E. Cowman preaches about the trials and triumphs of faith using the story of Paul's voyage to Rome as an example. He emphasizes that the pathway of faith is often filled with hardships and challenges, despite God's extraordinary interventions. Through Paul's sufferings and endurance, we see that God's promises and providences do not exempt us from common trials but rather perfect our faith in practical ways, interweaving His love into our everyday experiences.

Transcript

"And the rest, some on boards, some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land" (Acts 27:44).

The marvelous story of Paul's voyage to Rome, with its trials and triumphs, is a fine pattern of the lights and shades of the way of faith all through the story of human life. The remarkable feature of it is the hard and narrow places which we find intermingled with God's most extraordinary interpositions and providences.

It is the common idea that the pathway of faith is strewn with flowers, and that when God interposes in the life of His people, He does it on a scale so grand that He lifts us quite out of the plane of difficulties. The actual fact, however, is that the real experience is quite contrary. The story of the Bible is one of alternate trial and triumph in the case of everyone of the cloud of witnesses from Abel down to the latest martyr.

Paul, more than anyone else, was an example of how much a child of God can suffer without being crushed or broken in spirit. On account of his testifying in Damascus, he was hunted down by persecutors and obliged to fly for his life. but we behold no heavenly chariot transporting the holy apostle amid thunderbolts of flame from the reach of his foes, but "through a window in a basket," was he let down over the walls of Damascus and so escaped their hands. In an old clothes basket, like a bundle of laundry, or groceries, the servant of Jesus Christ was dropped from the window and ignominiously fled from the hate of his foes.

Again we find him left for months in the lonely dungeons; we find him telling of his watchings, his fastings, and his desertion by friends, of his brutal and shameful beatings, and here even after God has promised to deliver him, we see him for days left to toss upon a stormy sea, obliged to stand guard over the treacherous seaman, and at last when the deliverance comes, there is no heavenly galley sailing from the skies to take off the noble prisoner; there is no angel form walking along the waters and stilling the raging breakers; there is no supernatural sign of the transcendent miracle that is being wrought; but one is compelled to seize a spar, another a floating plank, another to climb on a fragment of the wreck, another to strike out and swim for his life.

Here is God's pattern for our own lives. Here is a Gospel of help for people that have to live in this every day world with real and ordinary surroundings, and a thousand practical conditions which have to be met in a thoroughly practical way.

God's promises and God's providences do not lift us out of the plane of common sense and commonplace trial, but it is through these very things that faith is perfected, and that God loves to interweave the golden threads of His love along the warp and woof of our every day experience.--Hard Places in the Way of Faith

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