

Colson Pl.  
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A.M.

"Christian's in a Troubled World."

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Scripture Lesson:- Isaiah 58: 1- 11.

Text:- Isaiah 58: 11. "And the Lord shall guide thee continually."

Introduction:- The prophet Isaiah lived in troublesome times. The people of Israel were greatly unconcerned about their worship; they were laden with iniquities; they had forsaken the Holy One; and they had provoked the Almighty; they had revolted against the Lord.

The morals of the country were in a frightful condition. The prophet Isaiah said: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."

But in the midst of all this corruption and trouble, the Lord gave the prophet a mighty promise: "And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a well watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not."

Here we have gracious guidance promised to the people of God. "And the Lord shall guide thee continually."

The people of God need guidance in these troublesome times. The way of life is covered with many dangers, hinderances and obstacles. There are many winding paths, deep valleys, dense forests

and rugged mountains. We need a guide who knows the way. David said, "I will guide you with mine eye." "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." John said, "He will guide you into all truth." The Lord promised Moses His presence and guidance in all his ways. "My presence shall go with thee."

I. There are several things to remember in being Divinely guided. The first is the Bible; after the Bible there is an inward impulse, and we must not forget providence and common sense. In all true leadings of the Lord these four things stand out in perfect agreement. The prophet assures us that this leadership is constant; "He will guide thee continually." John says, "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." He will lead us out of infantile feebleness into glorious strength, he will lead us out of narrow views into wiser ones.

II We are also promised heart satisfaction. "And satisfieth thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones." The world cannot satisfy the longings and cravings of the human soul; many have tried to find satisfaction in the things of the world, and have utterly failed. Pleasures fail also to satisfy the human soul. Neither riches nor worldly pleasures meet the inner longing of man. True satisfaction is not found in worldly honors nor human accomplishments.

III Yet, the Lord has graciously promised us soul satisfaction. Away back in David's day he declared that men could be satisfied. "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry with goodness." Jesus said, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." The sinful man can be satisfied by having his sins for-

given, and the Christian soul can be cleansed from all unrighteousness. The Lord can satisfy our souls with his providential care and his dealings with us. His grace will enable us to cry out, in utter resignation to his blessed will, "Not my will, but thine be done." There is also an inward cry for immortality, a life beyond the grave. Jesus said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." The soul was not built to stay here, some day it will glide into its natural elements.

The Lord also promises to make the Christian fruitful in a troubled world. "And thou shalt be like a well watered garden." It is normal for fruit trees to bear fruit. Jesus expected fruit from a fig tree, but found none. He is also disappointed when he does not find Christian fruit in our lives.

It is normal for Christians to bear fruit. Fruit bearing glorifies the Father. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."

Then, the Lord, has promised freshness to Christians in a perplexed and baffled world. "And like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." There is a tendency to become stale and dry. Water is refreshing, thirst quenching and is always essential to life itself. Freshness means something new, recent, unfaded, and is not affected by the flight of time. We have an inexhaustible supply of our Lord. The singing springs flow from the everlasting hills of God. Droughts may come and our wells run dry, but these springs flow on forever. Every weary and thirsty soul can drink of these waters and find rest to his soul, freshness.

The Master wants us to get new results out of our praying. A fresh anointing of the Spirit should be ours when we pray.

Then there should be a new freshness in our giving to the cause of the Lord. Paying tithes should not be a cold fact, but it should be filled with divine freshness. The poor widow, who gave her all to the Lord, possessed a true freshness in her giving.

Let us remember the words of the Lord Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Then, there should be a new freshness in our joy. Our Christian experience should never lose the thrill of a "great joy." There should be within us a "joy unspeakable and full of glory." David said "My cup runneth over!" There should be new touches of fire in our souls, new blessings of the Spirit of God. Without this freshness we will become stale, dry, lifeless and dull.

We should also have a new interest in a bleeding and sobbing world. We should be like Dr. Bacchus, the president of Hamilton College. He was very sick. His doctor visited him and said, "You cannot live to exceed an half hour." "Is that so," said the sick man. "Then take me out of bed and place me upon my knees, and let me spend the time calling upon the Lord for the salvation of the world!"

His request was granted, and he died upon his knees like Livingstone of old.

Conclusion:- Let us linger by these waters until our thirsty souls are completely satisfied. Let us trust in our Divine guide. Let us bear fruit like a well watered garden. Let us make these blessed waters of freshness and contentment, in a world