

Hurdles

To Be Faced in the True Christian Race

Part 2

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Part I informed us that the ‘first class’ of the ‘parable of the Sower’ (Luke 8) are those who listened to the lies of the devil to their mind, so they did not accept the ‘Seed of God’s Word, but rather, walked away from it. The second class is where the seed fell on rocky soil, people who received the Word gladly, but had no root in themselves, and, when opposition, temptation, and persecution arose, “because of the Word,” it says they too fell away; (vs.13) *“They on the rock are they, which when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.”* (Jesus said).

The third class were those who, after hearing the word, ‘Satan’ brought to their mind all kinds of ‘pleasures’; (and he shows them in most glowing colors). Then he tries to get those people interested in human or ‘financial success’. Some people become wholly absorbed in it. (14) *“And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.”* (And Jesus said John 15: 6) *“If any one does not continue in me, he is like the unfruitful branch which is at once thrown away and then withers up. Such branches they gather up and throw into the fire and they are burned.”* (He said).

If we meet and do overcome that hurdle, we will then come to the next class who made a success; they are those that received the Word on good soil, hold on to it *“and bring forth fruit thirty, sixty, and one hundredfold.”* (vs.15) *“But that on the good ground are they, which is an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.”* (He said). Bearing fruit means ‘fulness of blessing’ in this life and eternal life. We need to always remember that.

It is in (and part of) a ‘divine life’, to have these hurdles and these oppositions. The reason for it is, the great work that needs to be done in our lives and hearts — a complete emancipation from the power of the devil (that we were born under),

and God uses opposition and every ‘hurdle’ to perfect us, and to perfect our full deliverance.

Regarding the fourth class who heard the Word, there is just one point we need to emphasize, that will make our passing over hurdles successful, and our victories quick and easy; and that point is, when they (the fourth class) heard the Word, ‘they held on to it’. In other words, they started with a firm decision in their hearts, to ‘go through’ (the ‘hurdles’) (and endure in the faith to receive the Crown).

It makes all the difference in the world what kind of a start we make (in the Christian life). We may not be aware of it when we first begin, but we must come to that starting point sooner or later, (the sooner the better), and to where we will settle it, regardless of opposition, hindrances, or hurdles, that we are going to hold steady and go through. If that has been settled, then God will be able to make our Christian life a success, and we will “bring forth fruit thirty, sixty, and one hundredfold.” (as Jesus said) If not, we will go back into darkness, and eventually the lake of fire. There is no neutral ground.

It should be remembered that all kinds of opposition were placed in front of those people in the Bible (who tried to get to Jesus when He was on earth), but anyone who was determined to go through made a perfect success (through faith in Christ). Satan has all kind of ‘opposition and hurdles’, but the soul who is determined to go through, and determined to trust on God and in Him alone, will always succeed.

Let us take the example of the man who was paralyzed (Mark 2:2-12). Surely it was opposition enough for one not to be able to get to a meeting himself, and to have to be carried there by others. There are very few people who would not have been discouraged and said— “I have no way of getting there; I guess I cannot go.” But this man was so determined to get to a meeting where Jesus Christ was preaching the Word, that he got four friends to carry him there.

When they got to that meeting, they were in a worse predicament, as the place was packed with people, so much so that they could not get in the door, nor ‘even round the door’ the Bible says. Every door and window was packed, even on the outside; and the strange part of it all was, that (those people were not even open-minded to the ‘Word of God’), and so, they could not get any good from the meeting (as they even ‘criticized the Lord Jesus’, for saying that a ‘repentant man’s sins were pardoned’), so they never got anything. But that man was so determined that he ignored Satan’s

opposition and actually had them take him up on the roof and lower him through the roof tiles. What opposition from Satan they met and overcame!

After getting him up there, they opened the roof and let him down in front of Jesus! A very strange and unusual thing to do, really a very impolite thing to do (to take the roof off and let a sick man down in front of a Preacher in the midst of his Sermon. That man had to meet difficult hurdles, but he was determined to get to Jesus Christ, in spite of all the opposition that the devil had planned, to (discourage him and take away his faith on God's Son).

Think of how hard Satan must have tried to hold on and discourage him! You can be sure that the devil tried to make his pains and weakness to grow greater as he started out in faith on Christ, (just as Satan will try to tempt us to give up our faith in the face of his 'hurdles' of 'opposition'), but that man had decided to get to Jesus Christ regardless of opposition. That is the only 'principle of Truth' that will make us successful in getting our deliverance of any kind.

We all want to take notice of what that 'principle of Truth' and Trust did for him. Jesus surely noted it; that, that very opposition had perfected his faith. We need to realize and to know, that God uses that opposition to perfect our faith. All hurdles are used to perfect our faith and our knowledge of God. So, by the time he had gotten four men to carry him; by the time he got over and past those hurdles and suggestions from the devil, free from the devil-aggravated symptoms, he had passed and was outside of those hurdles that were meant to keep him from getting down before Jesus. We can be sure his faith was perfected by God, just as Abraham's faith was perfected after he had spent three days going up the mountain to sacrifice his son, Isaac (in order to faithfully believe and obey God's Word)!

As soon as he was let down on the floor Jesus said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee; .." then Jesus said—(Vs.11) *"I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house."* That man was determined to believe the Son of God's Word and got a perfect healing.

(The Bible says), *"And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and they glorified God saying, We never saw it on this fashion."* (Vs.12) 'What a lesson of meeting hurdles right by faith!'

We can then take the case of the blind man in the 18th chapter of Luke. He was sitting by the

roadside when Jesus passed by, and he wanted to know who was going by and why the great crowd of people. The people replied—(Vs.37) *"And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."* Then he called to Jesus (Vs.38), *"And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me."* (Vs.39) The crowd told him to be quiet. *"And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more. Thou son of David, have mercy on me."*

The devil always uses the best agencies he can get, to keep us from getting our deliverances from God, but this blind man was determined to trust and depend on Jesus, the Son of God. The more they told him to keep quiet, the louder he called out. That is the same principle as was involved in the case of the man who came through the roof to lay before Jesus.

There are few people healed of total blindness, and this example shows us that when we are determined to get our deliverance from God, it will enable Him to perfect our faith and bring us to victory through Christ. We are not to start out by not expecting to get victory, like many people do when they go to God for healing of blindness. If they do not expect it down in their heart, they would merely be taking an experimental step. This man, on the other hand, was determined to have his sight restored, and he knew that Jesus was able to do it.

(Vs.40-43) *"And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, Saying, 'What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?' And he said, 'Lord, that I may receive my sight.'" And Jesus said unto him, 'Receive thy sight': "thy faith hath saved thee."* *"And immediately he received his sight and followed him", glorifying God: and "all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God."* (That very opposition (hurdle) he faced, and determination to Believe the Words of Jesus Christ, had perfected his faith.)

'Jesus Christ' has not changed at all. He is just as able and willing to open 'totally or partially' blind eyes today, but if we start out in a happy-go-lucky, 'experimental way', as "perhaps I will, and perhaps I will not (probably sure I will not) —of course, we will not get victory. But, if we start out saying "Jesus bore this blindness for me on the Cross, anything less I will not accept, as it is my privilege to have it". I will not accept 'No' for an answer. I do not care what opposition, what difficulties I have, I must have my healing"—our victory will be just as quickly and completely wrought, as with those in the Bible.

We have another wonderful instance of a 'perfecting of faith via opposition' in the case of the woman of Canaan. She came to Jesus for deliverance of her daughter. (Matt.15:22) *"And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, 'O Lord, thou son of David'; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil."*

When she called to Him, there was no response whatever. He paid her no attention. The disciples said— *"Send her away."* But she kept calling (persisting in faith), and like the blind man she would not give up. (Vs.23-24) *"But He answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, 'Send her away'; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*

It is a solemn question for us. 'How many of us here today, who, if God Himself told us that He did not come to deliver us out of our troubles, would we seek any further? Did we ever consider that? We may listen to the lies of the devil and we 'stop seeking' if we are not careful; but here from the lips of God's own Son, came the words to this woman— *"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel"*, (or) 'I did not come to heal Gentile women's daughters'.(Or) 'Let the children first be fed', is the thought, (or), "Let the children, God's chosen people, first be healed." Beloved, if we can find in this Word, that 'God would only heal people in Bible times', and 'not after the apostles died', 'we would give up in despair'.

The average minister would then have the Bible on their side and have us thoroughly defeated. But the facts are that they have not been able to find any place in the Scriptures where God would not deliver us out of any trouble, any time, any place or any where.

This woman had an inspired Word (as we might call it), that Jesus had not come to heal her daughter, but this did not stop her,(from persisting in her prayer, which we all must do if we do not get our victory the first time we make request), for she came again and said, "Lord, help me." [or, show me where my faith lacks, and show me where the hindrance is, that I did not yet receive my victory.] What a wonderful example, and what encouragement (together with the Blood of Jesus Christ), for each one of us to lean upon for our own victories and blessings! It shows us how we may also receive them, and what attitude we are to take with our faith, as well as the principle of Truth and Trust involved. Then Jesus said something even more pointed—(vs.26) *"But He answered and said,*

It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." (Or), 'it would not be right to take the healing that I brought to Jewish women's daughters and give it to Gentiles (at least not before the Jewish daughters are all healed). It would not be just or right. You need not expect it.' Where would we have been if God had said such things to us? Oh, how this emphasizes the principle in this 'hurdle question', to never allow a 'hurdle', (no matter how big it looks), to affect or discourage us in the least (in our faith on God).

We can say for sure that an opportunity of our holding steadfast will prove to be a wonderful stepping-stone, instead of an impassible barrier. It will be the very 'road to victory' and wonderful blessing. *"And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."* (Vs.27)

(In other words, she was saying) "At least a man would give a strange dog that much, and so you are to give me that much." That opposition (that 'hurdle' she faced to perfect her faith) had perfected her faith. That is what all hurdles are for, just to perfect our faith. It shows the importance of our holding steadfast. (Vs.28) *"Then Jesus answered and said unto her, 'O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.'* And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."

It is the only occasion that He ever used such an expression, (with one exception), and that was the Centurion who came for the healing of his servant. (Matt.8:8) *"The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed."* (And Jesus marveled at that man's profession of real faith)!

But this case was beyond that. This was the pinnacle of faith. There is nothing from Genesis to Revelation like it. *"Oh woman great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt."* (It is no wonder she went home and found her daughter fully delivered.)

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