

THE CELESTIAL RAILROAD

The Celestial Railroad – February 3rd, 2019

Part 4

The Pilgrims on the Old Footpath is the section that the Message is about today. It's on page 4. [Please click here to read the script](#). Here is the link to [Pilgrim's Progress](#) which we'll be referencing, if you'd like to read it.

As the train is chugging along, the passengers see two Christian pilgrims who are on the straight and narrow road. They still have the burdens on their backs and the parchments in hand to help as they're on the pilgrimage to The Celestial City. It's a tough road to walk and they appear to be hard-pressed.

In the story we read; "The passengers being all comfortably seated, we now rattled away merrily, accomplishing a greater distance in ten minutes than Christian probably trudged over in a day. It was laughable while we glanced along, to observe two dusty foot-travelers in the old pilgrim guise, with their staffs, and their mystic rolls of parchment in their hands, and their intolerable burdens on their backs. The preposterous obstinacy of these honest people in persisting to groan and stumble along the difficult pathway, rather than take advantage of modern improvements, excited great mirth among our wiser brotherhood."

As they joked and chided about these two pilgrims, the questions probably arose as to why these two didn't want to take the easy, burdenless train ride having their burden of sin stowed away in the baggage car, out of sight and out of mind. What a dichotomy of them to say, 'preposterous obstinacy of these honest people'. This stirred the passengers to great amusement, laughter and mockery of these servants of the Lord.

In Mark 10:29-30 Jesus says the following; "So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life."

According to this, Jesus says that He'll look after you in every area when you're serving Him...but it will come with persecution. Jesus doesn't withhold anything from those who serve and follow Him, you'll still have family – albeit His family – and lands, etc. You may give up family, for another family that He'll provide. You may give up something of value in exchange for something of more value from Him, and all this leads to eternal life.

1 Corinthians 1:26-28 says; "For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are."

Maybe you're feeling mocked today by someone because of your firm decision to follow Jesus, but remember, the Lord has the final say and He's not mocked.

The believers riding on The Celestial Railroad Religious Train view the two Christian Pilgrims as the foolish things of this world, and are quite vocal about it with no shame. The difference between being a born again Christian and a believer are seen very clearly here, in that the born again Christian does not accept cheap grace, where as the believer is deceived into believing grace is their privilege and will cost them nothing.

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I'd like to quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book, *The Cost of Discipleship*. He says; "Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate."

This is what those who ride The Celestial Railroad have, cheap grace. No confession of sin, no cross to go to, and no going through the wicket gate who is Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4:7-11; "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh."

This maybe you in your Christian pilgrimage today. You may be facing incredible opposition from the 'I believe' crowd who ride the privileged religious train, but only live in cheap grace. But be encouraged, God is not mocked and He will see you through to the end of your journey.

In the story we read; "We greeted the two pilgrims with many pleasant gibes and a roar of laughter; whereupon they gazed at us with such woeful and absurdly compassionate visages, that our merriment grew ten-fold more obstreperous. Apollyon, also, entered heartily into the fun, and contrived to blow the smoke and flame of the engine, or of his own breath, into their faces, and envelop them in an atmosphere of scalding steam. These little practical jokes amused us mightily, and doubtless afforded the pilgrims the gratification of considering themselves martyrs."

Can you see the mockery here, being unruly, rowdy and hostile to these two pilgrims? These who are on the fast train to heaven, elitists, privileged, cheap grace ones...mocked the children of God. You know, it's interesting isn't it, that you may get persecution from unbelievers, but the worst persecution is from those who are religious believers and mock your straight and narrow commitment to Jesus. Persecution from those who are zealous in their religious pride, just like the Pharisees of Jesus day.

The Apostle Paul before his conversion was one of these. He zealously persecuted and chided the early Christians until he had a face to face encounter with Jesus where his life was forever transformed. So when he says the following in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, he has first hand experience of now being the persecuted one. He says; "Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

As it was for the two pilgrims who were being scoffed and laughed at, this scripture should encourage all who are suffering for Christ. Is the straight and narrow road hard? Yes, and at times, challenging to walk and stay on.

This scene almost looks like a freak show at a carnival, only in this case in the minds of the 'Bible believers on the train', the pilgrims are Jesus freaks. Every born again Christian is surrounded by "Bible believers", either co-workers, family, classmates etc., who view them as Jesus freaks, and are treated as such. That's the

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difference between being born again and simply believing in the Bible; the one is operating in costly grace which costs them everything, the other is operating in cheap grace which costs them nothing.

Here is another quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer; “Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble; it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him.”

In John 16:1-3 Jesus says; “These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.”

Are you a Bible believer that is not born -again? I’m sure you could pull up a half dozen or more born again believers that you’ve treated as Jesus freaks in one way or another. Unless you’re born again, you’re in the kingdom of darkness, and are going to behave like your father the devil, regardless of your religious Bible belief tradition.

You and your burden of sin need to get off the fast track to hell that you’re on, repent of your sins and ask Jesus to forgive you of your sins and receive the Holy Spirit into your body which will become the temple of the Holy Spirit, which makes you born again of His Spirit.

The two Christian Pilgrims on the footpath with burdens of sin on their backs understand costly grace, where as the Bible believers on the Celestial Railway only understand cheap grace, which costs them nothing. But at the end of their supposed fast track pilgrimage to The Celestial City, it will cost them everything, including their soul.

The devil is mocking them, because when two or three come together in the name of the Lord, Jesus is in the midst of them. That’s where the power is.

Another quote from Mr. Bonhoeffer says this; “Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock. Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son: "ye were bought at a price," and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon his Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered him up for us. Costly grace is the Incarnation of God.”

Hebrews 10:26-31 says the following; “For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. And again, “The Lord will judge His people.” It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

That’s the theme of the message today, where it says in Galatians 6:7; “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.” God does get the last word. The passengers mocking the

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pilgrims will reap what they sowed. The same is true in your life. Those who mock you, mock the pastors, the preachers and ministries, based on their 'belief in God and the Bible', but rejecting the born again experience, will get their just judgement from God.

Hebrews 9:27 confirms this; "And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment."

Guaranteed, all those riding The Celestial Railroad who trust in their 'belief' system but mock those on the straight and narrow, will be judged.

Some of you Christians have had 'Bible believing' family members, friends, co-workers, etc., die who were never born again, and you've continued to believe they're in heaven. Maybe they died peacefully, or you've thought that only the Lord knew what was in their heart when they died. That is very true because God knows everything. But you can't determine what a person physically looks like when they die as to their eternal destination. I can guarantee you though, that if they died without having been born again, they are not in Heaven. Why? Because that is what the Bible says. Jesus said that you **MUST BE BORN AGAIN**. All the more reason for you to stay on a straight and narrow road and share the born again salvation scriptures with those that are still alive and have a chance to repent and give their lives to Jesus before it's too late.

The difference between Costly Grace and Cheap Grace is a straight and narrow road to Heaven or a broad and wide fast track to hell. Get off The Celestial Railway before it's too late!