

Spirit have been checked, and ever after exhibited a stunted growth. No action of pastor or church can set aside the law of the Spirit as no longer binding on individuals. The fact that churches group individuals in their dealings with them does by no means unite them into groups for combined action. Hence it follows that, even in such cases, concerted action is not necessarily the outcome of walking in the Spirit. Therefore, it may happen, and doubtless often will happen, that one will act, under these circumstances, after one pattern and another after another.

But should they who walk in the Spirit, under the most aggravating circumstances, combine after some human thought, where each one would not be independently led of God Himself, then would the elements of another sect appear, and the further history of the conflict would be that of two sects contending on precisely the same plane of action. That this may be the history of sections of this movement is amongst not only the possibilities but even the probabilities, that the whole movement might have such a finale is as possible as that it might cease to be the movement which it now is, but no more possible than that.

Now, the conclusion of the whole matter is an illustration of apostolic language, "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." For this language implies a condition, viz.: that we can only claim real possession of *all* our surroundings when we have the relationship to Christ that He exhibited towards the Father when in this world. He always did the will of His Father. So we, if like Christ in our individual walk in the Spirit, appropriate all our surroundings, whatever be their character, as an heritage of blessing, and there can be no *mutual* antagonisms, whatever may be the attitude of pastor or church members. But he who ceases thus to imitate Christ immediately may become one of the parties in a quarrel, whose end must be bitterness of soul and widespread disaster.

BEARING THE CROSS.

There is such confusion of thought connected with this subject, that we readily comply with the request of a correspondent to write somewhat lengthily upon it.

For the sake of clearness we will mention, first, the Scriptural ideas connected with the words, as we apprehend them, and then the unscriptural notions which clamor for incorporation with them, thus making the confusion alluded to.

Bearing the cross, as discoursed about in the New Testament, is a very serious matter, indeed, much more serious than the general ideas which prevail concerning it would imply. Jesus, on many occasions referred to the subject, and always made His life and sufferings an example of what it meant. And be it remarked, He never referred to a time when His cross would lose its truthfulness as a description of the pains and penalties connected with His service. Therefore, we maintain that it is still planted at the entrance of the narrow way, and above it, in flaming letters, is read, "*No cross, no crown.*" Crucified to the world still means antagonized bitterly by every worldly tendency, both in Church and State, yea, and in family and friendship circles.

Does not the pulpit and the religious press charge the Church with worldliness? and does not the laity fling back the charge upon the pulpit? Then be assured that every particle of that spirit of the world in pulpit and pew will be a crucifying spirit against him who walks in the footsteps of his crucified Master.

Taking up the cross and following Jesus is not like taking a header into the chill waters of a lake, with the understanding that after the first plunge the chilliness will be a thing of the past, for, as Christ said, the cross is to be taken up *daily*. Hence it is evident that the crucifying spirit is an ever-existent one, and ceases not to drive its torture-producing nails while life lasts; nay, delights to plunge its spear into the body after the vital spark has fled.

What we mean by all this in plain, prosaic language is, that he who accepts Christ as his Saviour, and walks in His