

"THEY WALKED NO MORE WITH HIM."

Those of whom the above words were said, were called disciples of Jesus by John.

The fact that John declares is this, "*Many* of Jesus' disciples went back and walked no more with Him." He did not declare that *all* went back. The assumption is that the "seed to serve Him" remained.

And why did these many go back? And did Jesus not make any "Christian endeavour" to retain them?

A little before this we have John declaring that many of His disciples when they heard, said, "This is a hard saying."

Did Jesus make a "Christian endeavour" to make this "hard saying" easy? We find that He questioned them and said, "Doth this cause you to stumble?" And instead of daubing with untempered mortar, or making the hard saying easy, He proceeded to refer to something harder, viz., His going away. And what was the hard saying that Jesus had uttered?

A verse or two before we have these words, "He that eateth Me shall live because of Me." Was this the hard saying? Did those disciples who were anxious for the setting up of the "temporal kingdom" imagine that Jesus wished them to become cannibals? Did they interpret literally the words "he that eateth Me shall live"? Were they desirous of spiritually discerning the truth He aimed at in them? Were they willing to await the fulfilment of His words, or any explanation of them, that He might have seen fit to give later? It seems not. They murmured. They declared He dealt in hard sayings, and wound up by "walking no more with Him."

In this generation, eighteen centuries after Jesus completed His mission, eighteen centuries after the advent of the Comforter, are there any disciples who murmur, who say this is a hard saying, who walk no more with Him? If so, is this because of their not understanding the word of this Comforter to them or not? Possibly it may be because they are not sure that the Comforter can speak anything but conviction

to the sinner's heart; therefore they murmur and say, Why don't He speak with an audible voice so that we may be sure of His voice?

Possibly it may be they are not able to distinguish the voice of the Comforter from the voice of the stranger; therefore they say it is a hard saying when He says, "My sheep hear My voice, a stranger will they not follow." They murmur. They enquire, grumblingly, Why could He not have made the way clearer by making it easier for "flesh and blood" to understand His sayings? Why need His sayings be spiritually discerned at all?

Or it may be the "disciples" of this generation are not clear in their minds as to the relation that must exist between what Jesus said to these old disciples and what the Holy Ghost says now? Must the guide be the Bible or the Holy Ghost? Their difficulty may be, while they want to believe that Jesus told the truth when he said that the Holy Ghost should be our guide, at the same time they may have already taken the Bible as the man of their counsel and the guide of their future lives?

It may be that the question before them is the interpretation of some utterance of Jesus just as it was with these disciples who walked no more with Him. The Church to which we belong, they may say, teaches through its standards just what the proper interpretation of Scripture is, while the Holy Ghost knocks at the door of the heart *without* with another interpretation.

They conclude, therefore, that it would be in harmony with "reason and common-sense" to walk with the Church and its interpretation of the Bible, and "walk no more with Him."

"Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh," said Paul.

Did he mean that if, in the event of a contest for supremacy between the Church and the Spirit, we walked with the Church, we should fulfil the lusts of the flesh? He speaks with apparent authority when He says the lusts of the flesh are not fulfilled in those who walk after the Spirit.

We believe that right here lies the very essence and kernel of Protestantism.