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Chapter XXIII

ABOUT GROWING WEARY

II

Comrades and Friends, — My Message last week was based upon Paul's words in the 6th chapter of Galatians, 9th verse, in which he says, 'Let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.'

You will remember that I noticed some of the forms of weariness which are constantly occurring around us, and also pointed out some of the evil consequences which follow this course of conduct.

I want today to look at some of the things that lead up to this weariness, although I do not propose to describe them in detail. They are only too well known by all of us; and it might, perhaps, be thought that I was too personal if I should describe them very particularly.

Some of these weary people married a wife, or found a husband, or prospered in the world, or improved their circumstances, and that in many cases through the Salvation which they are now in danger of leaving behind; and for this or for some other reason they have lost the old love for Christ and souls, and so grown weary in well-doing. In them, alas! We have only the repetition of the experience of the Laodiceans described by the Apostle John, when he wrote: 'These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy words, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of My mouth.'

Once these tired Soldiers were hot and earnest; now they have grown lukewarm, and, being lukewarm, they are consequently inefficient, worldly, and indisposed to deny themselves and to bear the Cross. In other words, they have neglected their duty; until they have lost all heart, and are carried away with the delusion that they can keep Salvation without the self-sacrifice which must ever accompany it.



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Now, is it not a pity that Soldiers once so bright and active and promising should have fallen? Is it not a grievous thing both to God and man that they should degrade themselves, disgrace The Army, and be lost to the fight?

Yes, it is a great and grievous pity. It is more than a pity. It is a burning shame: a cruel wrong. Do you ask me why? I answer:

1. It is a pity to grow weary in well-doing, because they cannot be untrue to their trust, and leave their posts without risking their own Salvation.

It is a solemn and serious truth, that they cannot trifle with God's work, or throw up any position of influence and opportunity with which He has entrusted them, without danger to themselves. He has said: 'Them that honour Me, I will honour; and they that despise Me will be lightly esteemed.

To cease making God's business first, for any reason whatever, or to desert it because of the trial and loss it brings, is to court backsliding, and to tempt the anger of the Almighty. And so I say, that it is a pity to grow weary because of the personal danger it involves.

2. Its is a pity to grow weary in well-doing, because of the evil influence such conduct exerts in others.

We are all closely bound together. The husband lifts up or drags down the wife to his own level, and the wife does the same with the husband. The children follow the example of the parents, and families rise or fall together.

A Soldier seldom falls out of the ranks, or deserts his post, whether in the Band, or among the Juniors, or elsewhere, however good an excuse he may fancy he has for doing so, without dragging some one else from the War and from the Cross.

3. It is a pity for Soldiers to grow weary in well-doing, because of the discouragement such a course is sure to bring to their Comrades.



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I think no words of Jesus Christ affect my heart more closely than does the plaintive appeal He made to His Apostles when on the desertion of so many of His followers He said: 'Will ye also go away?' He felt that desertion intensely. It wounded His spirit, and added bitterness to the bitter cup He was called upon to drink.

You know why they deserted Him. It was because He plainly told them that, instead of ascending immediately to a throne of power and glory, as they had reckoned upon, He was on His lonely way to be rejected by the nation and nailed to the tree. They forsook Him before His hour had come, and left Him to His fate – to die on the cross.

I know what that means myself, and many of my dear people have occasion to know it the world over all the time. When those we trust and love, and who have promised to be true, leave us, it makes our hearts bleed, tests our determination, darkens our prospects, and tries our faith. So, my Comrades, it does seem to be a pity for Soldiers to grow weary in the work to which they have pledged themselves, seeing that it involves such a heart-breaking discouragement for their Comrades.

4. And lastly, it does seem to be a pity to grow weary in well-doing, when in every case victory is so nigh at hand, and when a little perseverance will make it sure.

When peace has been concluded between two nations who have been contending with each other, it is generally discovered that if the defeated army could have held out only a little longer it would have been victorious. Ah! How often this has proved to be the case with those who have lost the battle through growing weary in well-doing.

So we will finish up where we began last week with the old chorus:

Don't get weary,
Don't get weary,
Fighting for your Lord.



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Don't, for if you will only stick to your post, and fight for the Lord, and carry your cross, whether light or heavy, just a little while longer, you shall reap a glorious harvest, and here and hereafter win a grand reward, 'for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.'

So we won't be weary!

Your affectionate General,
William Booth.