

Weekly Devotional - The Naked Runner 8-17-22

Scripture - A young man was following HIM, wearing [only] a linen sheet over his naked body; and some men seized him. But pulling free of the linen sheet, he escaped [from them] naked. [Mark 14:51-52 AMP]

This event occurred in the Garden of Gethsemane the night JESUS was betrayed and captured. Mark describes a young man who, wearing only a linen cloth, followed JESUS. When he was seized by the Roman soldiers, he escaped capture and ran, leaving the garment behind.

Who was this 'certain young man'? We're not told in the Scriptures who it is and we can't really know for sure. But there is a long-standing tradition that it was none other than the writer of this Gospel, John Mark.

We know later in the Bible about this young man named Mark. In Acts 13, we're told of how Paul and Barnabas, in their first missionary journey, wanted to take Mark along with them. Mark, we're told, was Barnabas' relative, a cousin or a nephew. But trouble came along very quickly in that first missionary journey. The missionaries met up with strong opposition to the preaching of the Gospel. It was a real spiritual battle. And after that first experience of opposition to the Gospel, John Mark quit and went back home. Later on, in Acts 15 when the missionaries wanted to go back to strengthen the churches, Barnabas wanted to take Mark along and give him another chance. But Paul refused. And they had to split up into two different groups.

How was John Mark relating himself to JESUS? Verse 52 tells us that this certain young man "followed" JESUS. In the original language, this is not the usual word for "follow". This is a rather 'qualified' word; one that is best translated as "follow with". Literally, the text says that this young man "had been following with" JESUS. If there was a crowd that was around JESUS, this young man was following along with

them. But it wasn't that he was necessarily following JESUS HIMSELF. It was as if he was very interested in JESUS, but not yet completely committed to HIM in a personal way. He just went along for the ride.

What did Mark cover himself with? It is very significant that we're not just told that he grabbed something to cover himself; but that we are specifically told that it was a linen cloth. Linen is often found in the Bible in association with royalty and honor. It was a luxury item, very fine, and smooth, and light, and clean, and delicate, and comfortable. Kings and princes wore it. It was something that, usually, only well-to-do people had; and that was sometimes used as a highly valued gift. The writer, Mark, is going out of his way to not simply tell us that the young man, who was perhaps himself, had been wrapped in only a cloth to cover up what was a naked body underneath; but even to tell us what kind of cloth it was.

It may be that many of us here today are following JESUS in that kind of a superficial way. It may be that we're only outwardly covered with the 'fine linen' of spirituality, but shamefully naked underneath in the sight of a Holy GOD.

Let's examine ourselves and make sure that we are not committing the mistake of simply following along with those who follow HIM. Let's be sure that we are truly following HIM.

Second, let's examine our commitment to JESUS. Let's make sure it's not a half-hearted commitment; one that we embrace and declare when things are going well; but that we are ready to discard when our commitment to JESUS begins to cost us something. If you have trusted JESUS as your Savior, does that show itself by the fact that you truly follow HIM as your Master, even if following HIM means suffering and hardship? Do you do what HE says even if it costs you? Do you truly take up your cross and follow JESUS?

And third, let's examine our spiritual condition before JESUS. Let's make sure that our life before the MASTER is real.

[Read Hebrews 12:1-3 NIV and Ephesians 6:10-18 NIV]

May we always have a mind through which CHRIST thinks; a heart through which CHRIST loves; a voice through which CHRIST speaks; a hand through which CHRIST helps; and be a vessel through which CHRIST lives!

© Gary Martin {You may copy devotionals with copyright information and share them with others}.

I pray you are being blessed by the ongoing Weekly Devotionals. If so, would you consider sowing into the ministry. You can give at <http://www.truelightchristianministries.org/give.html> or you may mail a check to True Light Christian, P.O. Box 9094, Canton Ohio 44711