

"THERE CAME ONE RUNNING"

Mar. 29, '87

BE SACRIFICED BUT A SPECIFIC WORD TO A SPECIFIC YOUNG MAN WHO FOUND THAT HIS POSSESSIONS STOOD IN THE WAY OF FINDING WHAT

Sought
THE FIRST IMPRESSION OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS ALWAYS SACRIFIC. JESUS GOES OUT OF HIS WAY TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THERE IS A CROSS IN EVERY LIFE. HE SPEAKS OF THE JOYFUL LIFE BUT NEVER OF LIFE THAT CEAP AND EASY. OFTEN THIS FRIGHTENS US AWAY AS IT DID THE YOUNG MAN. WE ARE LIKELY TO ASK IF IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR US TO MAKE A DEAL WITH HIM. WE ARE WILLING TO GIVE HIM THIS MUCH BUT NOT EVERYTHING. TO THIS, HE MAKES NO ANSWER AND HE WILL NOT BARGAIN. THERE IS NO GIVING PART OF OURSELVES AND WITHHOLDING SOMETHING FOR OUR OWN PURPOSES.

SOMETIMES WE SUGGEST THAT MAYBE WE WILL GO PART WAY WITH HIM. BUT NOT ALL THE WAY. AGAIN, THERE IS NO REPLY. HIS WAY IS EVERYTHING OR NOTHING. IT DEMANDS ALL THAT WE HAVE, OR WE CAN HAVE NONE OF HIS GIFT. AND SO, IF IT IS NOT OUR POSSESSION THEN IT WILL BE SOMETHING ELSE WE WANT TO HOLD ONTO, AND EVEN AFTER WE SEEK HIM OUT, WE MAY STILL TURN AWAY SORROWFUL.

BUT WE HAVE TO BELIEVE THAT WHAT WE WILL RECEIVE IS WELL WORTH ANYTHING THAT IT COST. IF THE YOUNG MAN COULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD HOW JESUS LOVED HIM AND HOW IT WAS OUT OF THIS LOVE THAT HE GAVE HIS COMMAND, HE COULD HAVE BEEN SAVED. IT IS FOR US TO BELIEVE THAT GOD PUTS HIS DEMANDS UPON US NOT BECAUSE HE WANTS TO MAKE US SQUIRM BUT BECAUSE HE WANTS TO HELP US LIVE.

THERE IS AN OLD LEGEND THAT LATER ON THIS YOUNG MAN CAME BACK TO JESUS. HE HAD THOUGHT IT ALL OVER AND DECIDED THAT HE OUGHT TO DO WHAT WAS COMMANDED OF HIM, AND HE DID IT. HE IS THE ONE ACCORDING TO THE LEGEND, WHO BECAME THE BELOVED DISCIPLE I LIKE THAT LEGEND AND I THINK IT MAY BE TRUE. PERHAPS THE STORY HAD A HAPPY ENDING AFTER ALL.

ARTHUR MILLER, ONE OF OUR OUTSTANDING PLAYWRITERS, WAS DISCUSSING THE STAGE AND WHAT MAKES A DRAMA GREAT. HE SAID THAT IN ANY SUCCESSFUL PAAAY THERE MUST BE SOMETHING WHICH MAKES THE AUDIENCE SAY WITHIN THEMSELVES, "MY GOD THAT'S ME. WELL, WERE IS A GREAT DRAMA, AND IF WE LOOK AT THAT YOUNG MAN AND SAY WITHIN OUR HEARTS, "THAT'S ME," IT WILL HAVE DONE ITS WORK. THEN WE WILL KNOW WHAT WE MUST DO TO RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE ~~XXXXXX~~ WHICH HE CAME TO GIVE TO ALL WHO ARE WILLING TO ASK FOR IT AND ABLE TO RECEIVE IT.