



I KNOW both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. ¹³ I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. (Philippians 4:12-13)

WHAT shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? ³² He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? ³³ Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. ³⁴ Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. ³⁷ Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, ³⁹ Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:31-39)

In the building up of our character we should not be hunting for easy things to do or for easy things to be, but seek for the highest and the noblest achievements of human endeavor. There is always a temptation with us to make our life easy at the expense of making it little and narrow. Great things are never easy. You can fell a single tree across a brook and go over on it, but to throw the Brooklyn bridge across the gulf between Manhattan and Long Island is hard ; yet is it not worth the difference?

So, in personal character it is always easier to live a compromising sort of life that bends to the standards of the half-wicked world in which we live, to give way to the unchristian prejudices that prevail in our social set, to fall in with the gossipy, semi-

slandrous tone of conversation, to let greed have its way in business—easier to do as others do than to stand out strong and faithful for the thing that is right, for the standard of Jesus Christ. But the greater life pays, nevertheless, in the long run. Men may sneer at the time, and say that the man with the larger views of honor and righteousness is a fanatic and a crank; but he gets his inning in God's good time.

When "Chinese" Gordon (Maj Gen Charles George Gordon who later courageously was killed in Khartoum ~ *jlo*) led the regular troops of China against the famous Taiping rebels, he won the great admiration and regard of the Chinese government. Toward the end of that war he accepted the swords of four rebel leaders whose lives were promised by Gordon because their surrender doubtless saved many scores or hundreds of loyal Chinese soldiers. After the surrender the government violated the pledge he had given, and against his stern protest executed the rebel leaders. Gordon in disgust tore up his commission, returned his Chinese decorations, sent back a special gift of fifty thousand dollars he had received from the grateful Emperor, and scornfully refused to have further to do with a ruler who did not observe solemn treaties. It would seem that Gordon might have become supreme in China over all except the Emperor, yet he set all aside for the sake of teaching a valuable world-lesson which is quoted in all nations until this hour.

A few years later, Gordon died in his heroic defense of Khartoum in the Sudan – an event memorialized in the movie, *Khartoum*, starring Charlton Heston. To the end, General Charles George Gordon remained the Christian General, a name given him by the British public. He died then, as many fine young soldiers of our own day have died, defending against godless Islamic terrorists.

These thoughts are not appropriate for geniuses only, but for every man and woman among us. It is false to ourselves to seek less than the very holiest, strongest life which we may lead. Only those whose lives are tints and shadows of their Master, the Lord Jesus Christ, can aspire to the higher calling of CHRISTIAN.

We are the sons and daughters of God. We are the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ. We are fellow heirs with men like Abraham, and Joseph, and David, and Elijah, and Daniel, and Isaiah, and Paul. No height of nobility to which men ever climb, no lofty heroism by which men were ever inspired, no beauty of holiness that has ever adorned human character is beyond our reach. All things are possible to us through Jesus Christ our Savior.