



**A**ND went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. (Luke 10:34-35)

The Church is the Bride of Christ, and the Bridegroom, according to the marriage customs of the time of His sacrifice, has gone to prepare a place for His Bride under the direct supervision of the Father. *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.* (John 14:1-3) So, the Church is like an Inn to which the pilgrim retires on his journey through this world. It is a place where he can be cared for and lodge until the appointed time of either his continued pilgrimage, or the long-awaited call to *Come up here!* (see Revelation 11:12) Every Christian should realize that this world is not their eternal home, and that we are only sojourners seeking that Heavenly Home *not made with hands*.

The Christian, by faith, is a child of Abraham whose great faith looked forward to the coming Redeemer with a measure above that of those who look back on the historically completed event. <sup>8</sup> *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.* <sup>9</sup> *By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:* <sup>10</sup> *For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* (Hebrews 11:8-10) The Tabernacles of old were temporary places of worship until the permanent Temple of Solomon in the Land of Promise. Our Church is like that Tabernacle of the Wilderness as it is designed to provide us a resting place from the Wilderness of sin in this World, but looking forward to that Temple of God in the Promised Land beyond the Gates of Splendor.

In the meantime, since we are pilgrims, we travel lightly with our minimal possessions of worldly goods – not doting on the vain things of this world, but those treasures above. The Old Testament Church of the Wilderness (Acts 7:38) was

comprised of those of faith who believed the Promise made to Abraham. Not all Israel believed such as the Scribes and Pharisees of our Lord's day. But those who believed were accounted children of Abraham – and it is just so today! It is altogether a matter of faith! *13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.* (Hebrews 11:13-16)

Our Spiritual Inn, like any other inn, is provided with a host to oversee the regular and mundane needs of the guests. Our churches, too, have ministers and clerical staff to oversee the affairs of the Church. They guard the entrance way against false prophets and false doctrine. In our Church, we call these ministers and clerics Deacons, Priests, and Bishops - men in Holy Orders.

An earthly inn provides food and refreshments for its guests. So does the Church. The family of God has a place of repose to consume the Common Table of the Lord in observance of that Last Supper of the Lord in which He taught us to partake of that same cup of His sacrifice; and to partake of the Bread of Heaven symbolized in the unleavened bread of Communion. He has promised to be with us at His Table and His Presence is a Real, Spiritual Presence thereby.

When traveling the dusty, brigand-inhabited roads of this life, the travelers look eagerly forward to the place of rest at the inn. So does the Christian travelling the wilderness of this ungodly world look forward to the refreshing hours of worship and rest with those of like faith. Fellowship is genuine and not contrived. The weary traveler on the worldly road may find that there is no room for him in the inn – just as weary Joseph and Mary discovered on that first Christmas Eve in Bethlehem. The inns of the world are often crowded to capacity, but God's Inn of the Church is never overcrowded – it can accept all comers with commodious features. However, there is one comparison that is sadly identical. We need to have made our reservations sure for the Inn of Heaven.

We cannot come late or our reservation will be cancelled. As our Lord told Martha outside the Tomb of Lazarus: *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?* (John 11:25-26) The dead who died in faith have died to this world in Christ, but also risen in Christ on the far side of the Veil. Those who have made their election sure in Christ while living in this life will never truly die, but simply changed in the twinkling of an eye to a new life in an incorruptible body. But the matter must be settled in the green years of life. There is no salvation in Hell, despite the yellow novels claiming so.

Another difference in a worldly inn and the Heavenly Inn is this: In this world a traveler stops at an inn and finds himself generally among strangers whose fates and circumstances are wholly different; but in the Church Inn, all are related by that strong bond of love made possible by the Blood of Christ. All will enjoy the same hopes and aspirations, and the same continuation to the final destiny of their journey.

At bottom line, the Church Inn is no place to abide more than for a rest. Each day is a new journey. The Christian works during the time of Light for *the night cometh when no man can work. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.* (John 9:4)

It may happen that the traveler has no money to cover the cost of our lodging; but in the Church Inn, our Good Samaritan – the Lord Jesus Christ – has paid in advance for our care and lodging. The poor are just as welcome, and more likely to come oftentimes, than the wealthy who are lifted up in pride.

It is my sincere desire that some traveler who has lost his way on the road of life will read this devotion and seek to refer to that Compass of the Spirit (which is Holy) and rely upon the Good Samaritan of every Road to restore his hope and vision which he may have abandoned long ago. There is yet a Balm in Gilead!