

LOSTNESS

Dante's highly praised but seldom read DIVINE COMEDY begins with the words, "In the middle of the journey of this life, I came to myself in a dark wood, where the direct way was lost."
1. A lost world is floundering in a darker wood today.

Jeremiah's plea to Northern Israel (Jeremiah 31:21)

"Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps; set thine heart toward the highway, even the way which wentest: turn again, O virgin Israel. turn again to these thy cities."

2 Cor. 4:3, 4

1. At this time the tribes of northern Israel are passing into cruel captivity. Thoughts:
 1. "Set waymarks....Make yourselves guideposts."
 2. The importance of road-signs to road-safety is evidently no modern discovery.
 3. God wanted Israel to return and through Jeremiah warned them to put signs by which they might.
2. Removal of landmarks and guideposts has been a characteristic of the 20th-century and especially in this past ten years.
 1. Moral road-warnings of all kinds have been obscured or completely destroyed with cheerful zeal
 2. The result:
 1. Men unaided by God's guideposts missing the way completely.
 2. Men seem to revel in the dangerous delight of getting lost. (We sometimes say, "Get lost.")
3. A host of influences have contributed to man's lost condition. Some of them are:
 1. The rise of the ideal and teaching that all opinions are equally valid and that truth can only be known by its popularity.
 2. The educational field has done much to destroy parental authority and undermine home restraints
 3. All authority is out. Parental and otherwise.
 4. The moral shattering of two world wars along with a number of minor conflicts have left us with a most serious list of casualties. They are:
 1. TRUTH. John 8:31-32
 2. Justice. Just dealing among men is almost a thing of the past. The world needs to return to the principle of rectitude and just dealing among men. Psalms 89:14; "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: Mercy and truth shall go before thy face."

3. KINDNESS. In Proverbs 31:26 I read of the good woman of whom it is said, "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness."

In 2 Peter 1:7 I read that "KINDNESS" is one of the great Christian virtues that Peter said one should supply in one's faith.

4. COMPASSION. May be sympathy, mercy or pity. Sorrow or pity excited by the distress or misfortunes of another. Examples:

1. The Samaritan had compassion. Luke 10:33
2. The father had compassion and ran. LK. 15:20

5. FAITH. Examples of faith: Noah, Abraham, Moses

1. The abandonment of these things left behind an intense confusion at every point with many.

4. With the shattering of these necessary, basic things to the Christian life such as: Truth, JUSTICE, KINDNESS, COMPASSION and FAITH:

1. The theory of evolution gained a stronger hold to become a greater challenge to long accepted principles of human dignity and conduct.

1. Teach a man that he is no more than a remodeled ape and that is the way he is apt to act.

2. The attack of science so called coupled with liberalism concerning Bible truths. These combined have produced:

1. Rebelliousness and experimentation in conduct: A DISTRUST OF ALL AUTHORITY AND LAW.
2. A contempt for all conventions, until no absolute remains.
3. Finally, all this has produced the ultimate error of humanity. WHAT IS THAT ERROR?

1. That nothing is good or bad but thinking makes it so.

5. Under such thinking:

1. The ancient landmarks that insured man's safety are gone.
2. The guideposts are buried beneath the barren sand of denials and scepticism.
3. The new generation flounders, undirected and unled, because it will not be led.
3. Men are lost in the babble of contradictory voices, in a wilderness of uncharted by enticing paths

LOSTNESS, Continued:

4. And that my friend is being lost, and none is lost as the one who does not know that he is lost.

6. In contrast to all this "lostness" there stands the unshakable conviction of the Christian concerning the things he most surely believes. THOUGHTS:

1. The Christian knows that God is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, for he has found it so. Heb. 11:6

2. The Christian knows that the Bible, the word of God, holds the key to all ultimate questions such as:

1. The origin of man. Gen. 1:26, 27

2. Man's duty and man's destiny:

1. The duty of man in Ecclesiastes 11:13, 14

2. Destiny of man in Ecclesiastes 11:7 and Hebrews 9:27.

3. The Christian's faith has not left him pathless and lost but opens the vista where he may clearly behold the waymarks of that path paved with love, mercy and the goodness of God.