The Dark Mile
D. E. Hil - November 29, 1981

The Dark Mile – Living Waters Tabernacle

Father, I know that as we come in Jesus' name there are obstacles in the paths of many of us, don't let us just disbelieve You about it. We may hesitate, we may feel reluctant, there may be almost a rebellion against taking the path You have set before us. But O God help us to know that You are able to make all grace abound toward us that we always in all things will have all sufficiency, and we give You the praise in Jesus' name. 00:48

I'm not a minister that likes to repeat subjects. I like to go over the bible, the bible studies again, and again, and again. But usually on these Sunday morning meetings we have a subject. And I'm going with you on a subject that I've preached at least twice here in the years gone by. But I don't have a text as such, but I'm going to refer to an experience of two preachers that I read about in the Christian Digest some years ago. They had decided to spend the summer in Scotland, and the man who wrote this was Richard Holt, and he said they had gone up into Scotland, and they had traveled through the country by horse and bicycle, and often they had walked. This particular night they came to a small inn up in the Scottish hills, and there in that vicinity were many lakes, and they stayed all night, and they remarked to the innkeeper the next morning about the beauty of the lake, and he said Well, he said the most beautiful of all is Lake Lochy, and he said you ought to see it if you can. 02:25

They asked him how to get to it. He went and got a map, and he pointed out a semicircle to come from the inn to the place where the lake was. And Richard Holt said he asked him isn't there a closer way? He said yes, but no one ever takes it by choice. Well. he said then why don't they take it by choice? Well, he said it is known by the dark mile, and he said it's everything that the name implies. He said you go down into a deep narrow gorge, and he said there will be times that you can hardly make your way for the fallen rock, water dripping there all the time, and it'll almost get dark. He said in fact it will become so dark that if you look up you can see the stars of night in broad daylight. But he said it's gloomy, it drips, and often rocks are falling; you need to be careful. Well, Mr. Holt, or Brother Holt he looked at his companion and they decided they would go. 03:57

And so, they went down, and he said we found it all that the innkeeper had described, and more. And as they were going along almost stumbling in the semi darkness, he said his companion took ahold of his arm and he said look up, and there sure enough they could see the stars. And he went on to say that it was a most harrowing experienced in some respects, but he said after some time we suddenly came into the open, and there before us shimmering like a jewel in the sun in a most ridged setting was cradled the most beautiful lake that we had ever seen. And then he wrote, but I don't think

we would have appreciated what we saw if we hadn't gone by the dark mile. I want to use three things in the narrative of this covenant to point out to you some things you may never come to grips with. 05:20

You're on, I don't care, you're on the journey of life, it's that simple. You started living one day, and it was a journey from life to death. The death would terminate this life, and you would go to heaven. It would terminate this life, and you'd live on in God's eternal penitentiary, but you will go. Every one of you will go, and the difference in where you will go in this life if over is your personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ; that will determine. All religions don't believe in the same thing. There is one door, there's one way, there's one truth, there's one life, there's one Saviour, and this is the Lord Jesus Christ. There isn't another. But then on this road even as a Christian you can get the best that God have for men and women in the eternities to come, or you can miss it. Jesus spoke of a broad way, and a narrow way. I know that most people completely confine that statement going to hell or to heaven, but it has a deeper meaning than that. If you've walked with God, as a Christian you know that there is a broad way, and most Christians follow that, and there is a narrow way, and few Christians follow that today. 07:30

The majority of God's precious people, if some test, or some trial; we'll call it a dark mile is offered to them they refuse it, they get out of it. They cry, and they complain, and they murmur, and they rebel, and they drag their feet, and they say no, I will not go through this. Usually, they end up getting farther and farther from God, than more and more of a fellowship with God. And at the best they miss the sweet, wonderful fellowship they could have had with Him in this life, and they miss all of the unsearchable riches of Christ that they could know now, and for eternity. What a tragic a price it is to pay the pride to live in the lotus land of ease if God offers you something else. And I pray that you'll realize that in that day you're going to have exactly what was coming to you. Behold, I come quickly, My reward is with Me, whatever it may be. Oh, you say well Brother Hill, someone in your place has an opportunity for far more work than I do. Oh no, I don't. The purpose of God is the same to one life as it is the other. You may have a different place as to your activity. 09:21

Don't look on the preacher as someone that has a better opportunity than you, he doesn't. All anyone can do is the will of God, and that widow I point out again. If that widow, she didn't have much, but she glorified God with what she had. And the woman taken in sin came weeping, and washed His feet, and wiped His feet. She didn't have much, but that is an act that will never be forgotten in the ages to come. So, let me say that Jesus did point out two ways for the Christian, and the Christian makes choices of a broad way, or a narrow way. And so, the bible teaches that there is an easy way; that is, it seems to be easy. If you've in it as long as I have, you'll find, and you will have discovered that people who thought they took the easy way didn't turn out to be so easy. 10:32

And so, no one, I want us to note that statement, no one takes it by choice, that is in a sense we do choose, but yet none of us would unless somehow God would enable us to do it, and He would enable all of us to do it, but some refuse to. Now, like Israel was blinded to one side of the prophetic utterances, do you know why Israel would crucify and hate Christ like they did? As they read the prophesies, they only saw the glory side of their Messiah. They didn't realize that this same Messiah must make atonement for their sin, and to do that He had to fulfil all the prophetic utterances concerning His abuse, His crucifixion, and such like. You see, there were two sides to it. Now, the Christian has two sides, we're in this life and it is a life that is joyous and full of glory; that's true, but it has been given us. Paul tells us, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer together with Him. The greater privilege is that. Paul said if children we're heirs, that's reasonable, isn't it? But joint heirs if so be that we suffer together with Him. 12:27

Paul told Timothy, now he said Timothy, I know you're up against it, I know your facing hardship, and suffering, but Timothy, God is leading you in this, God is permitting this; He wants you to go this way. And if you deny Him the right to lead you that way, He'll have to deny you the right to rule and reign with Him; that's what He's actually saying. But Job, there was but one way that God could give him twice as much, and that was for to go by the way of the dark mile. Now, Job didn't want that way, and none of really do when it comes to the showdown. The ministry today, and you know that, but they make you believe that the coming of the Christ means a life of ease, and putty, and never any trouble, and in fact you go into some meetings, and if you're having some trial, they will want to what you're doing that is wrong. They don't know how to really interpret the word of God, and to take hold of the word of God. But the bible teaches if we are to be joint heirs with Him, we will suffer with Him. 14:08

Now all of the great saints travel the dark mile. Think of Abraham so many times, but let's think of it, he was ninety-nine years of age. And when he named that little boy Isaac, his name meant laugh. After all of these years that boy had come. Now, about sixteen years later, and that's a wonderful time for a father to have fellowship with his son and remember God had made Abraham young again if you go back into it, and so he could enjoy things. In one day, God now said Abraham, take thy son, thine only son; He emphasized it, whom thou lovest. Now, Abraham, now I know how you love that boy, but do you love Me more than you love that boy? Now Abraham you take that boy to Mount Moriah, your offspring all alone. I have studied that portion and cried. There they are at the foot of the mountain, Abraham puts his thick hand on that youthful back; there's no one else can go, just me and my boy are going on up there. Only God and His Son can do that, did you know that? 16:01

But anyway, there he was, and they're trudging along and Isaac said father, he said here's the wood, here's the fire, but where is the sacrifice? He said my son, God will provide Himself a sacrifice. You talk about a dark mile. I've watched men and women give their, fathers and mothers give their children up for years and years, and years. I've set at the bedside, I've been with them, I watched them weep and their hearts break as they

went through a mile that was nothing like this, but it was forgiven. We could go on you'd think there's so many dark miles, but one of the questions you'd think that they'd know. There's so many dark miles, but one of the precious times, you remember that tall fellow in the Hebrews, that when he would become of age, he forsook his infinite treasure. It said it was just for a season; they were the pleasures of sin, but he said they're just for a season, and it said he esteemed the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. He saw something else; he saw an eternal day; he saw that time when he would be with Christ forever. 18:13

Listen, if you don't think he turned something down, I saw a few, just a few of the treasures out of the King Tutt's tomb. I saw a gold dagger that would bring millions if you could buy it. Moses could have had it all, he could have been the pharaoh. I don't say that the devil doesn't offer you something that looks good, substantial, a big name, prospects, the devil could give you good prospects, but I want you to know something, they're all sinful and one day they'll be like gravel in your teeth if they come between you and God; just remember that. You think of Joseph, that spoiled brat, and his greed. God gave him a dream that he went out and he told all of his brothers, his mother, his dad; everybody bowing down to him. Now God gave him the dream, but God said Joseph, before I can fulfil it there's a dark mile if he went that way. 19:53

You think of David, in order to be the king over Israel, the next thing God thrust him into the dark mile. He hides in the cave of Adullam, he is hunted as a partridge on the hillsides of Israel. Heartache after heartache, but probably one of the darkest of all miles is when he stumbled down that stairway to meet the messenger from the war, and he said is it alright, and he said why that, boy of yours that would throw you off the throne, and reject you, and bring shame to your name, would that all of your enemies were like Absalom hanging out there by his hair in a tree with the darts of Abner through his heart. Well. I'm going on, I'm laughing, and you remember that cry that gray haired man, oh, he said Absalom my son; my son, would to God I had died for thee. Joab if you want to know (Joab killed Absalom added). And so, would to God I had died for thee. You talk about a dark mile. One after another; one after another. But one day you'll see the delights of what God has brought you through. 21:40

The Apostle Paul again and again, Brother Franklin brought it out the other morning, he said are light afflicted. Like how many of you have been whipped once? How many have been thrown in jail here for Christ? Some of you may have had to give up some of your loved ones, but it seemed that Paul had to give them all up. How many of you have been willing to go out and be counted the defense of the offscouring of all creation? A brilliant man, an educated man, a cultured man; a man if there ever was blue blood in anyone's veins, it was in the blood of this man. Accomplished, capable, able, brilliant man, who could have expressed himself in the Greek, in the Hebrew, and no telling what else. But one day, I know a man I'll boast about that fellow. He said he was caught up into the third heaven on one of them dark miles. He was walking, and suddenly

one of them rocks fell off that top and hit him on the head, and they thought he was dead. He was in that dark mile. But he said while he was in that condition I went into the heavens in the flesh, or out of the flesh; I can't tell, that was one thing I don't know. But I was just up there, and there saw, and heard things there is no language that can begin to tell it of it. 23:50

When we get into the darkest part we can see the sun. Know I am with you always, I'll not leave thee, nor forsake thee. Oh, again and again God has pretty well taught me, I don't say I've learned the lesson, but like dear Brother Hill got up and testified, and I thought He would find the billfold, but I wasn't thinking of the billfold, there was a lor bigger treasure than that thing. How did he spark these thoughts? Did he reply against God? Did He fight against God, did he say God. You don't me wrong? Why have you done this to me? Now don't get excited if you've had you've had those experiences, one day that great godly man Jeremiah, he was in the dark mile, you know what he said? He said would You altogether seem to be as a liar to me? Look Lord, it looks like You told me a lie? 25:31

Well, don't get excited, He knows our way, oh how easily He can take the lambs up into His bosom, and lead gently those that are just young. How tender, oh listen; listen, He can number the hair in your head. No sparrow falls to the ground but what by His eyes He sees it. Are you not worth many sparrows? He knows what He's doing. The goldsmith was looking in, back to where the gold was being cooked, and someone said how would you know when it's done? As He was skimming the impurities out, He said when I can see my image and that's what God said. Jesus Christ will bring many sons to glory. He went out, yes, He went to seek, and to save that which was lost, but when it's over they're going to be sons, but they go to the last one. We would never have appreciated it like we did had we not gone the dark mile. 27:24

Oh, it could have been a bit like this, the disciples you know how they first drifted, how they deserted Him, how Peter actually denied Him? You know how they treated Him at that dark mile that Jesus had to take for you and me? That was one mile He took alone. You can never go into one He won't be with you. I don't care if it's a fiery furnace, a lion's den a penitentiary of blood; why, the apostle Paul out there on that storm driven sea? What a terrible time it was, but in the night the Lord was with him. Tearful Paul don't be. He wrote how men deserted him, but he said how be it the Lord? You learn the sweetness of that, but here they betrayed him in a sense; all of them did. Then suddenly, He's alive. He's alive. Mary, "where have you laid Him, where did you take Him?" Mary, "Robboni" oh, goes running. I won't believe it unless I can put my fingers in the wounds, my hand in the hole. Here He comes, oh my Lord, my God, don't make me do that. 29:40

You could imagine what it would have been. But it's going to be multiplied, multiplied, multiplied times beyond that. We'll not only see Him with a glorified body, we'll see Him in the glory, and we'll have a glory like unto His own glorious body. And we'll be able to take ahold of all of the sweet, sweet meanings to our lives. But here's where you're going to have to start it. Some of you have been in the dark mile. Some of you could have

gone the dark mile, but you refused, you only take it by choice. Do you believe Romans 8:28, or is there a roadblock? 30:48

I was going down through Arkansas one time, and I preached about that. I came to the slowed-up traffic; I didn't know why. I finally got down there, when we went out through a field. I didn't know why, but when I got down there a little closer, they were five cars that had come together and obviously burned right there. I understood. You may not know why, but there's a reason, and it's a good reason. If it's one of His reasons, it's for your good. He makes it all for your good. You say how can He do it? Let me ask you how you can take salt, and sugar, and cream of tartar, and whites of aging Swans Down flour, and a little vanilla and come up with an angel food cake? You see, it's the perfect blending together that does it. God will blend you in the light of eternity, He knows our frame, He knows what we need, and He will not suffer you to be tempted above that you're able to bear it, but with the temptation shall always make the way of escape, and this is it, give grace to bear it. 32:36

Let's pray. . . Thank God. On my left every head is bowed, in the middle here, on my right over here. Father, help men and women to take the step of devotion to You, and by Your grace say no matter what they should get. I'm going to commit my life to Him. He's the only One that can save it, He's the only One that can enrich it, He's the only One that can pour the values of forever into it. In Jesus' name. 34:00