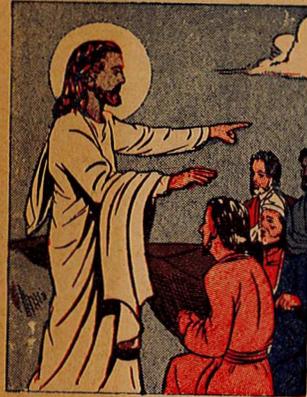


For those who have been Confirmed



**Strengthened
for
Service**

‘Go Forth Into The World’

By

The Right Rev. C. H. MURRAY, M.A., B.LITT
BISHOP OF RIVERINA



An Australian Board of Missions Publication

STRENGTHENED FOR SERVICE



“Go Forth
into
The World”

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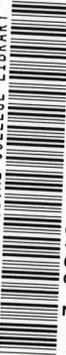
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“My Promises”

In coming to Confirmation you have done something, of your own accord, with your own lips. Your Christian friends and relations have stood by and heard you. They are your witnesses.

What did you do? You accepted, deliberately and open-eyed, the responsibilities of a Christian. Till your confirmation they were responsibilities that other people undertook for you. They taught them to you, and trained you in them. Now they have become your own in a new way.

What are They?

- 1** TO RENOUNCE the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh so that you will not follow or be led by them.
- 2** TO BELIEVE all the Articles of the Christian Faith as contained in the Apostles Creed.
- 3** TO ENDEAVOUR to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of your life.

“My Part”

First your face is set against evil in all its forms. You are pledged to withstand it. There must be no compromise, no divided loyalty.

Second as a Christian you put your trust in God. He is the Father Who made you, the Saviour Who gave Himself for you, the Spirit Who makes you holy. He is trustworthy, and you put Him to the test by your trust.

Third you obey Him. That is the test. Admiration is not enough. Spasmodic enthusiasm is not enough. Steady foot-slogging obedience is the real test. “Lord, teach me Thy will.” “Lord help me to do it.”

At your confirmation when asked “Do you renew this threefold obligation?” of your own accord, you say “I do.” The rest of your life will testify to the truth of **this answer**, or will give the lie to it.

“GOD is Faithful”

After that promise comes the prayer of the Bishop and the congregation for you. We pray that God, Who has helped and guided you along the way of life thus far, will now strengthen you for new tasks and daily give you more and more help. What kind of help? Many centuries ago, in dark days, when men needed leadership and help, a prophet held up before them the hope of an ideal ruler to come and meet their need. He would be filled with “the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and godliness, the spirit of holy fear.” That was a great hope. For centuries no one person came up to it, until at last there came One, Jesus our Saviour, the One Man, Who made this hope come true. These qualities were shown forth in Him, making Him able and ready to serve God and His people.

What a remarkable and splendid thing that, at your confirmation you look for God to bless and strengthen you in just that way, building up in you the character and quality of Jesus Christ Himself. For that is what that prayer means. No lesser gift is adequate for God’s service.

THE GIFT

In such a simple and natural way, through the laying on of hands by the Bishop, with prayer, God pledges to you that daily increasing gift. For His part He will defend you with the grace of His Spirit, so that for your part you may continue as His child, increase in His strength and come to full growth in His Kingdom.

Life in the Family

Then follows the family prayer. We are part of a family which reaches out across all barriers and divisions of nation, race and colour, and will be satisfied with nothing less than all God’s children living together as a family. What God has given you is for them also. You must share with them. Are you willing to do this?

Two prayers follow. One is particularly for you, that the future may bring the present to fulfilment. You go forth into the future with the assurance of God’s fatherly hand over you, His Holy Spirit ever with you, leading you.

The other is for the whole family, that God will “direct, sanctify, and govern” their lives and yours, your hearts and your bodies, in His ways.

WHITHER LORD ?

Where will God lead and direct you? The Lord Jesus came into the lives of two tax gatherers years ago, to bless them and claim them. Levi followed wherever the Lord went. Zacchaeus followed at home in Jericho.

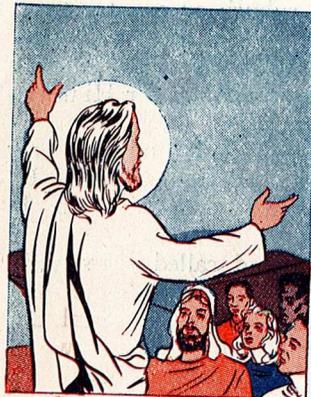


The Lord Jesus healed blind Bartimaeus who rose and "followed Him in the way." But when He freed the young man from the legion of evil spirits at Gerasa, He bade him stay in the place where he lived, and bear witness there to what the Lord had done for him.

God's call is for you, and if you are willing for Him to guide and strengthen and use you, He will. His care is also for the world. He will lavish an equally boundless love and care and blessing upon every Chinese, African, Japanese, Melanesian, Jew, Arab, American, Frenchman, Australian. In doing this He will look for men and women whom He can use. He does not ask greater ability than we have, greater courage, greater skill, greater loyalty. But He asks for all that we have. If we say, "Lord here am I, send me," it may be to the ends of the earth that He sends us, or it may be to our own home. But we must be ready to hear and to go, to learn and to obey.

What You Can Do!

The claims of war sent our men and women to strange places. In going, they had to be ready to give all, and many were called to give it.



The claims of peace are greater, for through peace God can do mightier and better things than through war.

Go forth! After our confirmation the Church sends us out—"Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no man evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour all men; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit."

You may become a doctor or a nurse, a teacher, farmer, engineer, butcher, deaconess, housewife, carpenter, artisan, priest, man of business. Whatever your life's work, it is as a Christian that you do it. Do it well.

You may stay in a city suburb or country town, farm or station, or you may go far afield into other lands. Wherever you go, you are a missionary, sent on your life's work by God, to be a witness for Him. Be a good witness, wherever you go.

But is there some special work that God wants you to prepare for and do, some special place to which He wants you to go? Ask Him in your prayers, and be ready to act on His answer.

You are claimed, strengthened, called and sent, by Him and for Him. You have acknowledged the claim and received the strength. Will you hear the call and go for Him, and for His family, as He will show you and lead you?

PRAYERS

TO BE USED REGULARLY



Defend O Lord, Thy child with Thy Heavenly Grace, that I may continue Thine for ever, and daily increase in Thy Holy Spirit more and more, until I come to Thy everlasting Kingdom. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grant O Lord, by Thy Spirit, that I may hear ever more clearly Thy Voice calling me to a deeper devotion to Thy Service, and that I may be guided to use for Thee every power and opportunity Thou hast given me for the extension of Thy Kingdom at home and abroad, for the sake of Him Who gave Himself for me, Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

The Australian Board of Missions on behalf of the Church of England in Australia is facing great days of opportunity in Australia, The Torres Strait Islands, New Guinea, Melanesia, Polynesia, Singapore, Palestine, China and Japan.

Boys and girls, men and women are needed to train for high service in the post-war world.

Do you think God is calling YOU?

If so, all needed help will be given you. Get in touch with the State Office of the Australian Board of Missions in your capital City.