

# CHRISTIANITY WEARS WELL

By R.C. Bell

When his risen Lord probed Peter's love for him the third time, the fact that Peter was grieved, rather than angered, and meekly replied, "*Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee*" (John 21), showed that his old self-importance and self-sufficiency were gone, and that he trusted Christ's omniscience supremely.

Peter was ready to hear his Master continue: "*When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shall be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.*" The author explained: "*Now this he spake, signifying by what manner of death he should glorify God.*"

What Peter learned through Christ's prophecy, namely, that all who truly love Christ, and "would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," other Christians learned by experience. And as long as Christians live in a world wherein "whosoever therefore would be a friend to the world maketh himself an enemy of God," they cannot avoid persecution without reasonable compromise.

There is abundant evidence in Peter's epistles, written some third of a century after Pentecost that he serenely approached the end, which Christ had predicted, a well-adjusted, self-fulfilled, gracious, hopeful, and happy man. He comforted fellow sufferers on their pilgrimage through "this present evil world" by reminding them that the God of all grace, after they had suffered a little while, would himself perfect, establish, and settle them (I Pet. 5:10).

Indeed, the only life that involves no risk at all is the Christian life. Only a Christian at death may "lie down to pleasant dreams" in satisfaction and triumph, "with joy unspeakable and full of glory" in view of dawning eternity (I Pet. 1:8, 9).