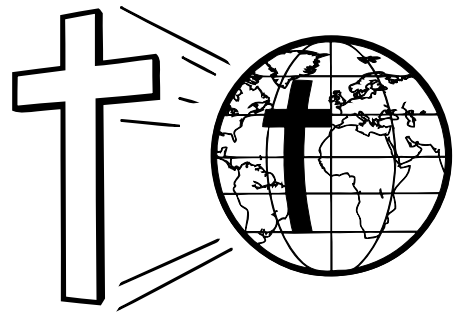


Foundation of Faith



The
Living Christ

Reconciliation

Two Kinds of
Bible-Reading

For Me!

Experiences with God

*Salvation
through Christ*



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Dear Reader,

In this month's publication of Foundation of Faith, we would like to focus on Jesus Christ and His amazing grace. "I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever; with my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, 'Mercy shall be built up forever'" (Psalm 89:1-2).

Dear reader, our ever-faithful heavenly Father has prepared eternal grace for all of humanity through Christ Jesus. The Father's love for us sent His Son to save us. Jesus Christ left heaven's glory and became the servant of man. Motivated by pure love and mercy, He humbled Himself and became poor so that we could become rich by reconciliation on the cross of Golgotha.

In John 1:14, we read the following: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Christ's disciples witnessed and personally experienced how the Savior offered love, mercy, and grace on a daily basis. He bestowed grace upon grace wherever He found receptive hearts and faith. The fact remains that in Christ Jesus we find salvation and grace. Christ embodies grace and truth! This abundance of grace and truth is infinite. His immense love and grace is comparable to the vastness of the ocean.

The Son of God gives free grace to all because He became the sacrificial Lamb of God. He bore our sins on the cross of Golgotha and took our misdeeds upon Himself. His suffering and death reconciled us with the Father and gave us God's peace.

Dear reader, have you sought and embraced God's grace?

*"God's grace is free, God's grace is free,
There is still hope that heaven you may see.
Come and be free, come and be free,
Believe in Him and live eternally."*

H.D. Nimz

The Heart

He was a respectable, hard working and morally good person. He never wasted his money on useless things like smoking or drinking. His speech was also kind and not evil. But he was still a sinner living without God. Even though he regularly visited church services he never repented of his sins.

On one Sunday afternoon during a family gathering his 4 year old grandson snuck up from behind him and pressed a toy camera against his back.

“What are you doing my son?” he asked. The boy replied: “Grandpa, I am taking a picture of your heart with my new camera.”

Later that evening when the family was singing a familiar song he asked the grandson: “Say, my boy, did that picture turn out? Did you get a good picture?”

With disappointment in his voice the grandson replied: “You know grandpa, your heart was awfully black.”

Suddenly he became very uneasy on the inside. He knew that the picture that his grandson had “taken” was the true resemblance of his heart. He knew that his heart had become this black because of the sin in his life. He felt a sincere desire to be made “white”; he wanted to be made

new. He felt what the Psalm-writer must have felt when he wrote: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me,” (Psalm 51:10) and “wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (Psalm 51:7b).

Silently he left the family and went into his bedroom. There he knelt before God, confessed his sin and asked God to forgive him and make him new. Through faith he experienced the joy of salvation. With joy he went to the church service that evening. He found lasting joy in Jesus Christ. A little child had been called to lead him to Christ.

If God took a picture of your heart, what would it look like? The color of your heart is known by God and most people around you as well. Every thought, every deed, and every word are captured with God’s “camera.” The picture of your heart is either beautiful or ugly. It is determined by the condition of your soul.

God promises that “if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all evil. Even if the heart is black it can be made as white as fresh snow.

Without Awareness of Sin, There Is No Grace

During a trip through France, a prince visited the prison in Toulon. He wanted to extend grace to one of the prisoners and grant him his freedom.

So he walked through the prison and spoke to these unfortunate souls. He wanted to find out the reason why they were sitting in their cells. However, everywhere he went, he only heard complaints about the injustice, oppression, and false accusations.

He finally encountered one who acknowledged that his punishment was just. “Sir,” he said, “I have no reason

to complain, for I was a corrupted and worthless wretch. I have committed crimes and deserve not only prison, but rather a death sentence. It is by grace alone that I am still here.” Without having to consider any further, the prince said: “This is the man to whom I wish to grant freedom!”

Without acknowledgement and confession of guilt, no release is possible. Should that not induce every sinner to confess with David: “Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight—That You may be found just when You speak” (Ps 51:4)? Whoever recognizes and does this can receive salvation and grace!

For Me!

*That Jesus came from glory
To us in flesh and blood,
I knew this gospel story,
I heard its truth—So what?
But when my heart was opened
In faith and I could see,
A miracle then happened:
I knew He came for me!*

*I knew the Lord descended
To poor humanity,
But never comprehended
His life in poverty,
Until His love so tender
Allowed my heart to see
Why He left all His splendor:
The Lord was poor for me!*

*Upon the cross, for all man's sin
The penalty He bore,
And took the curse upon Him;
I heard this truth before.
But when I took that story
Applied it person'ly,
For all my sins and worries,
I knew He died for me.*

*My heart was crushed and bleeding
When I confessed my sin,
And by the Spirit's leading
A new life could begin.
I have the bless'd assurance:
The Christ of Calvary,
Who suffered with endurance,
Has ransomed even me.*

*Born to become a human
So I could be like Him,
And poverty assuming,
He made me rich within.
Christ took humiliation
And so He lifted me.
My burdens He has taken;
Yes, Jesus set me free.*

*He chose this condemnation
That He would die for me,
So I could have salvation
And evermore be free.
In resurrection glory
He rose triumphantly;
The grave ends not the story,
For Jesus rose for me.*

*O love that knows no limit,
That even goes to death!
I'm thankful every minute
Until my dying breath!
How can I ever thank you
Enough. Your love is free.
I'm humbled and exalted,
I know it was for me.*

*In living and in dying
I never shall forget,
And heaven's splendor spying
I will remember yet.
In glory I'll be present
And then His wounds I see,
I'll cry out in amazement:
For me, For me, For me!*

J. H. Winsemann

The Great Reminder of Saving Love

What is the purpose of memorials and monuments? They serve as a reminder of outstanding people or events in history. Christ has left us such a landmark memorial so that we do not forget His deed of love on Golgotha.

We have the tendency to forget our benefactors. We even forget those who we loved with all our hearts. It may be ten or twenty years since your beloved was taken from your side by death. At that moment it seemed that life had lost all purpose and yet today, the picture of the dearly departed remains merely an unclear shadow in your memory. Simply a picture or any other memory will make you aware of the love you still have for that person. I admit that the love has not died, and yet, how soon we begin to forget! Our greatest benefactors and what they have done for us are forgotten. It sometimes even seems that we sooner remember those who have hurt us than those who benefited us. When one cuts a notch into a tree with an ax, the scar can be seen for many years afterwards. However, there is no trace left of the care, the watering, or the tending provided by the gardener who planted it. The good is forgotten!

That is just how we people are. Christ knew of our tendency towards forgetfulness. He knew that if we were not repeatedly reminded, His great sacrifice, suffering, and death would be forgotten by many. Shortly before His death, He introduced something that was to be a reminder of His great act of salvation. When He was gathered with His disciples for that last supper, He said to them: “Do this in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19).

Communion is therefore a commemorative meal of the suffering and death of our Savior. It was a foreshadowing of that which was shortly to occur at Golgotha. Whenever a church celebrates it, communion should be a powerful remembrance of His bitter suffering. We are to remember our Savior, how He hung on that cross bleeding and dying. Communion becomes a symbol for us of the great love that drove Him to the cross in our stead.

We honor the memory of great people by celebrating their birthdays. Yet Christ wanted His followers to keep the memory of His death alive. His coming to Earth was

wonderful for mankind. Yet even more wonderful and important was His death at Golgotha. It was the fulfillment of His mission. He had come into the world to reconcile God with mankind.

We therefore take part in communion to especially reflect on His death. Just as wheat is mowed down, threshed, ground, and baked into bread, so the body of our Lord was shattered and broken. Like the juice is pressed from the vine, Jesus’ blood flowed for our propitiation. Christ’s suffering and death occurred for our sake. We need to remember that.

How are we to remember it? Are we to remind ourselves of the gruesome manner of His death in order to awaken our sympathies and shed tears of pity? Are we to condemn His tormentors who nailed Him, who had never done any wrong, on the cross? Are we to marvel at the courage with which Christ suffered for the truth?

Jesus said “This is My body which is given for you,” and “My blood, which is shed for you” (Luke 22:19-20). “For you!” It was an atonement, making amends for our guilt! It occurred for the forgiveness of my sins and your sins! When we take part in communion and reflect on the sad events at Golgotha, then we are certainly grieved. However, we can also rejoice when we remember the purpose of our Lord’s crucifixion. Jesus died because of His love for us, to save us who are unjust. Communion is the great reminder of His saving love!

When we gather at the Lord’s table, should we not especially thank God for His work of grace? Should we not love Him more because He has saved us from our guilt and sin through the shedding of His blood?

“Do this!”—not as a mere ritual, not as a strict law, not as a preparation for the judgment—no: “in remembrance of Me.”—In remembrance of His suffering and death, in remembrance of His saving love!

E. Martin

A wooden cross stands against a sky with soft, golden clouds. A vibrant red cloth is draped over the horizontal beam of the cross, cascading down both sides. The lighting is warm, suggesting a sunset or sunrise.

Crucifixion Account According to Luke

When they came to a place called The Skull, they nailed Him to the cross. And the criminals were also crucified—one on His right and one on His left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.”

And the soldiers gambled for His clothes by throwing dice. The crowd watched and the leaders scoffed. “He saved others,” they said, “let Him save Himself if He is really God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.” The soldiers mocked Him, too, by offering Him a drink of sour wine. They called out to Him, “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!” A sign was fastened above Him with these words: “This is the King of the Jews.”

One of the criminals hanging beside Him scoffed, “So You’re the Messiah, are You? Prove it by saving Yourself—and us, too, while You’re at it!” But the other criminal protested, “Don’t you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom.” And Jesus replied, “I assure you, today you will be with Me in paradise.”

By this time it was about noon, and darkness fell across the whole land until three o’clock. The light from the sun was gone. And suddenly, the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn down the middle. Then Jesus shouted, “Father, I entrust My spirit into Your hands!” And with those words He breathed His last. When the Roman officer overseeing the execution saw what had happened, he worshiped God and said, “Surely this man was innocent.”

Luke 23:33-47 (NLT)

The Living Christ



What an empty religion Christianity would be had Christ remained in the tomb! But that is what differentiates Christianity from all other religions! He lives so that we can live with Him.

The salvation of the disciples was dependent on the fate of their Lord Jesus. They had set all their hopes on Him. And when He passed away on the cross, everything seemed doomed for them. How extremely sad and grieved were the disciples! The three-year-long teaching position Jesus Christ held had, by all appearances, ended in a tremendous failure. They could no longer talk with Him. The enemies of Jesus were celebrating, and it seemed there was no other option for the disciples than to return completely discouraged and brokenhearted to their former occupations.

It was completely out of the question for the disciples to preach about a dead Christ. Who would have believed in such a savior? Who would accept a Messiah who claimed to help others but couldn't help Himself in that pivotal hour when He was nailed to the cross by His en-

emies? Could anyone think that such a savior possessed a saving power? What could He do for others? Since He had been broken by God, how could people believe that He could be their mediator?

No, the people could not and would not trust a dead Messiah. It would have been totally impossible to preach this. The words would have been like voices fading away in a grave. And the testimony that salvation can come only through Jesus Christ would have been laughed at because of the fact that He was dead. Where, then, was the proof that He could save from sins?

The resurrection of Jesus Christ changed all of this. It gave them a living Christ! Through the glorious resurrection, the truth of all of His statements was verified, and it awoke in the disciples a living hope, as Peter himself testified. It gave them their beloved Lord back, a hope that was

not weakened by death and the grave, but clothed with immortality and power, glorified, and changed into the King of all kings! They no longer needed to be ashamed to preach Him. He was not a cold and dead body, which would have nullified their testimony. No, a living Christ worked alongside them. A Christ who was resurrected and raised to the right hand of God and who had all the power to redeem from sin and to protect His children from sin.

Yes, the crucial difference between Christ and other teachers is the resurrection. When a teacher passes away, his students only remember his teachings. But for the disciples of the Lord Jesus, this was completely different. He Himself, their Great Teacher, was given back to them. They had His teachings, as well as the sweet memories of being together with Him. But the best thing about it all was that He Himself was given back to them.

“Why do you seek the living among the dead?” the angel asked. At that time, they did not yet know it. Abraham, Moses, David, the prophets, and John the Baptist—all had died and were laid in their graves. They expected the same with Jesus. That is why they all went to visit the grave.—But why do you seek the living among the dead? Our Jesus is not found in the grave. He is risen. He met us on our paths of life. We have a living Christ!

It is written that the disciples did not know the scripture that Jesus must be resurrected from the dead. In the literary sense, they must have known of it, as Jesus Himself had told them about it. But they had not registered the meaning of the words. They resembled a poor person who stares at a document in which he is assured a considerable fortune, but who cannot see much more on the paper than a few words written on it.

Isn't this what happens to us with the well-known story of the resurrection? This historical event that is recorded in the Bible, is that everything that we know about it? Or have we registered and experienced its meaning and importance in our hearts? Is Jesus Christ alive for us and within us? Does He reveal Himself to us? Is He familiar to us? Do we walk with Him? Has He become our inheritance, or do we satisfy ourselves with His teachings? We may eagerly agree with the written Word, our mind may grasp it and rejoice in its glories and truths. But if

our love for Jesus is diminishing and only human energy motivates us anymore—what a loss we suffer there! Only in communion with Jesus do we find the satisfying riches of residing peace and eternal life. He is the living Christ, and He asks for and requires a living relationship with Him. That is Christianity. Christ is the core and the life of Christianity. Everything else is only superficial. Actual life and true nutrition is contained only in the core. Teachings, rules, and all ordinances serve their purpose only when they contribute to bring us in closer communion with Him. We are only Christians if we have fellowship with Christ.

When the two disciples were on their way to Emmaus on that first Easter evening, they encountered the risen Lord. And with joy they turned back to Jerusalem to bring the good news to the other disciples. Although the disciples were tired from their journey, we read: “So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem.” They had been granted a new perspective of Jesus, and they hurried to share this with the others.

Have we also recognized Jesus in His fullness so that we, too, want to bring this message to others? The revelation of the risen Lord moved those disciples to action. And a revelation of Christ in our hearts will motivate us, too, to action.

The first day of that week was the beginning of a new experience. Prior to that, they only knew Jesus in the flesh. And when He died, all of their hopes were dashed. But now they began to get to know Jesus in the Spirit. Death lost its power. They were reunited with the living Christ. Through Jesus' resurrection, their sadness became joy, their weakness became strength, and their defeat was transformed into victory. “The Lord is risen indeed” was their song of triumph and victory. From this time on, Christianity became a power crowned with great success that destroyed the kingdom of Satan and that planted the kingdom of God in the hearts of people.

This can happen to you too, dear reader. Sadness can be changed to true joy, death into life, and defeat can be transformed into victory if Jesus becomes a living reality in your life.

G. P. T.

The Resurrection of Jesus

The Foundation of Our Hope

The Man of Sorrows sank into the dark tomb, after the most bitter, agonizing suffering, and with Him all hope of the disillusioned disciples who had faithfully followed Him. In life, He had been their most devoted Friend and Counselor. They recognized Him as their Messiah, their Master. They recognized Him as the Son of the Living God, and witnessed daily the biggest and mightiest deeds that He performed. They marveled at the perfect character of Christ. With fervent love, they clung to Him. And now—their spirits were shattered, their faith was shaken, and their hearts were grief-stricken.

The open tomb and the risen, conquering Hero could not be discerned by the disciples' veiled eyes of faith. Either they did not understand the words of Jesus' own mouth concerning the resurrection, or they simply forgot them. Perplexed and helpless, each disciple went his own way. They grieved over their dead Lord and Master.

Yet look! The golden rays of the rising sun lifted the secretive veil of darkness. The angels of God had climbed down onto the cold, stone tomb and the Ruler of Life wakened out of His death slumber and victoriously overcame the greatly feared enemy of death!

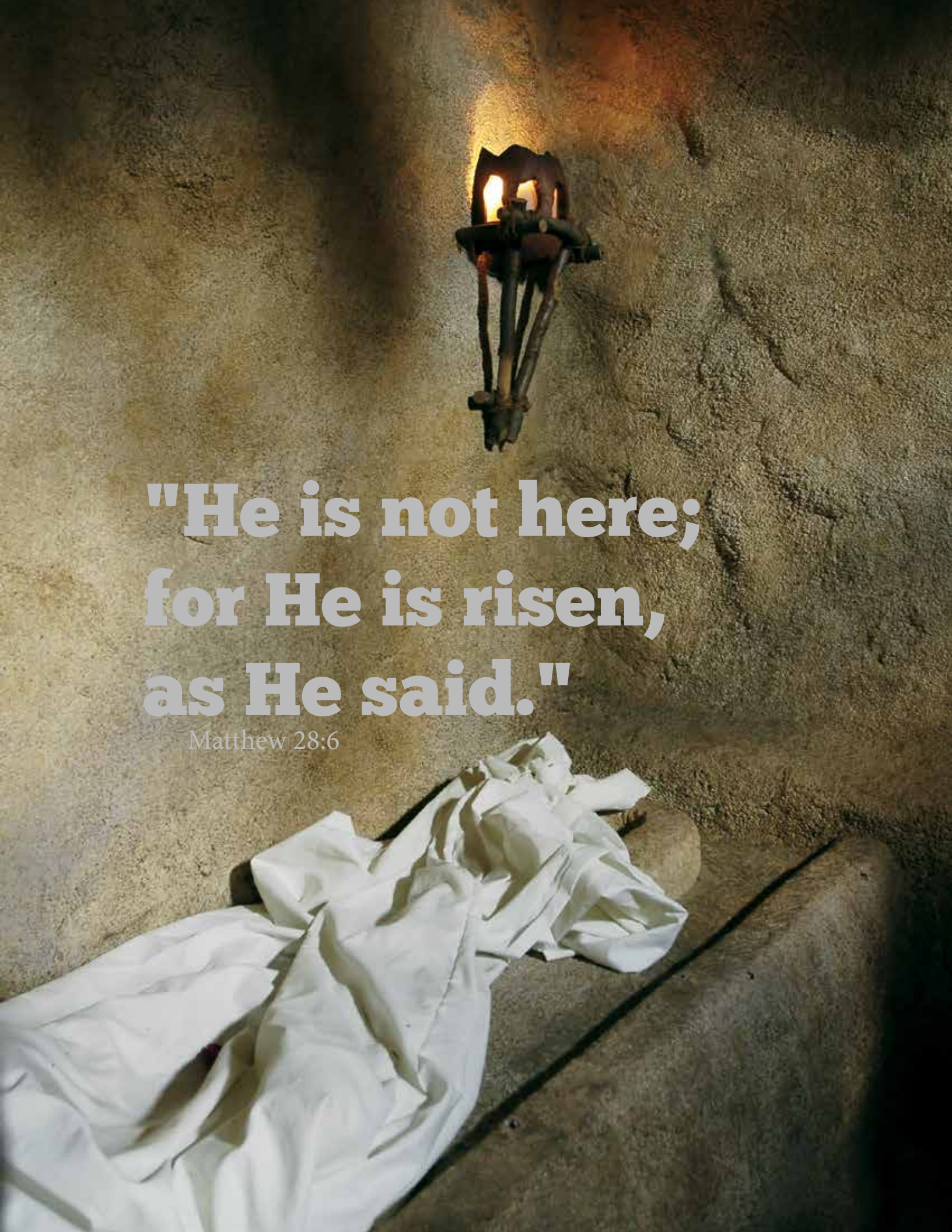
In the early morning hours, some women went to the tomb in order to anoint the body of Jesus. They still did not know that Jesus had been resurrected. Along the way, they spoke to one another, "Who will roll away the stone in front of the tomb for us?"—To their astonishment and joy, they noticed it had already been rolled away, and the angel of the Lord sat upon it. From his mouth they heard the joyous news, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen" (Matthew 28:5–6).

What a precious Easter message! "He is risen!" Jesus' resurrection seals the eternal atoning sacrifice that the Lord brought for all mankind. "Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:54). He took away sin, the sting of death, and conquered death itself. He enslaved Satan, the unyielding tyrant, and placed him outside the door of glory. The Lamb of God, who bore the world's sin, rose from the grave as the Ruler of life. He rose for everyone.

Jesus' resurrection is of immeasurable value for us. Had He not risen, we would not experience resurrection. All our hopes would eventually need to collapse at the cold, dismal grave. We would have to deliver our loved ones to the insatiable jaws of death, without hope of ever being able to see them again. How tragic that would be!

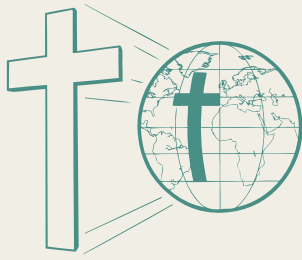
Hear the words of the apostle, "And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable." Yet hear him give testimony to the glorious truth with joyous certainty, "But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:17-20).

Dear reader, has this risen Christ become your personal Christ and Savior? All His suffering, His atonement, and His resurrection benefit you nothing unless you are risen with Him from sin's death to a new, godly life. If your life is not yet filled with the power of Christ's resurrection, if you still cannot look beyond the grave with faith-filled eyes, then come to your Redeemer and Lord. Follow Him to Golgotha and into the dark tomb, and rise up with Him to a new life that is buried with Christ. Then you too will know that "to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21).

A photograph of an empty tomb. The interior of the tomb is dimly lit, with a single lantern hanging from the wall. The lantern is made of dark wood and has a small fire burning inside, casting a warm glow. The walls are made of rough, textured stone. In the foreground, a white cloth is crumpled and lies on the floor. The overall atmosphere is somber and quiet.

**"He is not here;
for He is risen,
as He said."**

Matthew 28:6



Radio Broadcast

The Message of Salvation

Friedrich Krebs
Kitchener, Ontario

Reconciliation

“We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world” (1 John 2:1-2)

What a lovely and meaningful word: reconciliation! It speaks of forgiveness, peacemaking, and mediated harmony. This is about an experience that produces a beneficial change. Reconciliation must be looked at from different points of view.

God’s Reconciliation

With respect to God offering us salvation, as it is depicted in His Word, He had to first be reconciled to Himself. He had suffered and was deeply wounded by the disobedience of the people. For this reason, He had to be reconciled first.

Without the reconciliation of God there could be no mercy, no forgiveness, no peace and no healing for mankind.—But how could God be reconciled? Since the fall of man, there was nothing he could do to bring about this reconciliation. The prophet Micah posed this question: “With what shall I come before the Lord?” (Micah 6.6). This question raises two remarkable facts: First: God had to be reconciled. And second: man had no means to do it!

The Bible explicitly states: “In mercy and truth atonement is provided for iniquity” (Proverbs 16:6). With this statement we can already perceive the wonderful idea of grace. God’s Reconciliation goes back to Old Testament times. With the entrance of man’s sin and guilt into the world, God turned away from mankind in deep sorrow. If there ever was to be another chance for mankind, then a change had to take place. God had to be reconciled! For this to occur, certain sacrifices had to be offered by the people.

Only the sin- and blood sacrifices were sufficient for a temporary reconciliation. To highlight the importance

and necessity of reconciliation, a large annual Day of Atonement was also required. On this day the people stood around the tabernacle. The people stood silent as the high priest took this special atoning sacrifice, walked through the crowd with the blood of the sacrifice and then entered the tabernacle or temple which only he was allowed to do. On this special day the priest also entered the Holy of Holies and sprinkled the blood before God.

This is how he offered reconciliation for himself and the people. It was just a temporary reconciliation as we read in Hebrews 10:1-4: “For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the thing, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.” The ultimate future sacrifice was Jesus Christ!

All Old Testament sacrifices were a constant reminder of the coming sacrifice of the Son of God. Only Jesus’ sacrifice was sufficient for the reconciliation of God! John wrote that there was no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth able to perform this work. 2 Corinthians 5:19 states: “that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.” Since God has been reconciled by the sacrificial death of Jesus, His relationship to us has been changed. Consequently, our relationship with Him can also be changed.

We Can and Must Be Reconciled with God

All of us need this reconciliation—everyone who wants to be released from his guilt of sin and receive that inner peace with God. Paul emphasized the need of reconciliation with the words: “Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God” (2 Corinthians 5:20). Since God was reconciled through the blood sacrifice of His Son on the cross, there is forgiveness and reconciliation for us and for all people by His saving grace. John wrote: “[W]e have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world” (1 John 2: 1-2). Again he wrote: “In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10).

A preacher wrote: “25 years ago I began my work in a district where the hostility towards religion was huge. When I made my home visits, the first thing I heard was: “We do not need a priest.” And just as boldly I replied: “That’s right, you do not need a priest. You need a Savior!”

A very serious warning is given to us in the New Testament: “Looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; . . . lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, . . . for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears” (Hebrews 12:15-17). It does not have to end like this for us. In Hebrews we read: “For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:15-16). We can only be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ who is our helper, advocate, and reconciler.

Reconciliation With Our Fellow Man

Our fellow man can not be excluded. In Matthew 5:24, Jesus explicitly states: “First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” This is necessary for inner peace. One thing is certain: Anyone who wants to live and die in peace, must be reconciled with God and men!



How Can I Dress Modestly?

Modesty is not considered a desirable virtue today, especially in the western world. On the contrary, it is actually viewed as outdated. We as Christians also stand in danger of accepting this worldly attitude and dismissing a pure walk as old-fashioned because of the influence of our surroundings. We may not even know what is included in chastity or in a modest life. Deciding whether clothing is modest or not is also often assessed differently. In all these issues, it is important to explore the eternally-applicable standard of the Bible.

The Word of God mentions self-control (or chastity in German) as part of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5 and thereby makes it especially desirable. What can we then understand about the concept of chastity? Wikipedia defines chastity as “holding oneself blameless and shunning what is shameful and anything opposing to morality.” In the Bible, the term “chaste” is used to express a pure relationship between men and women. That is why Paul tells Timothy to treat younger women as sisters in all purity (1 Tim. 5:2). Just as a man can do something with his natural sister without being drawn to her physically, so the relationship of men and women outside of marriage should be likewise clean and without ulterior motives. While the Bible commands women to be chaste and to have chaste conduct (Tit. 2:5; 1 Pet. 3:2), Paul also gives testimony of himself as a man living in purity (2 Cor. 6:6).

Although the Bible does not speak directly of chaste clothing, a pure life includes clothing as well as conduct. In order to better understand the background to this, it is helpful to go back to the creation of Adam and Eve. After God expressed that it was not good for man to be alone and let Adam fall into a deep sleep so that He could create Eve from his rib, Adam greatly rejoiced at the sight of his wife. We read later that they were both naked. God created mankind and especially the

woman with all her physical features and attractions. It is therefore the Creator’s intent that we feel drawn to the opposite sex. The man was especially created to rejoice at the sight of his wife. The relationship between man and woman—and this includes the sexual relationship as well—is therefore a special gift from God to mankind. We must especially notice that this only applies exclusively between a man and his wife. Already in the Ten Commandments, God indicated that we should not covet the wife of our neighbor. Jesus sharpened this expression in the New Testament by saying that even a lustful look at a woman is adultery in the heart (Mt. 5:27).

Unfortunately, we no longer live in the Garden of Eden, and sin was able to spread over the world through the devil’s influence. Exactly this gift from God is used by the devil to bring the people to whom it was given to their downfall. Satan certainly knows the power of attraction between the sexes, perverts it, and uses it to pull as many people as possible from God’s path. One look at our society and it is clear how successful he has been and to what degree this sin has grown today.

Taking into consideration what power of attraction the simple existence of physical proportions can exert, it is comprehensible why our clothing plays an important role if we are concerned about leading a chaste and pure life. Because mankind is created to be drawn to the physical features of the opposite sex, it is important that these be covered in public so that they do not bring the other into temptation to commit adultery in their thoughts. Naturally we cannot control someone from going directly to lustful thoughts because of his own lost situation, but we are responsible for it if it was our clothing that led him to it. Even so, we should not only pray that we not be led into temptation, but we should also avoid being a temptation to our peers in regard to our clothing.



God's Word therefore especially advises women to "adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation" (1 Tim. 2:9). The dictionary describes "propriety" and "moderation" as "following the moral boundaries and rules of decency." This standard applies universally for all time and all countries of the world, independent of traditions and cultures of the populations. The practical application of this standard is of course slightly dependent on space and time. We have to consider that there are general cultural differences in the world, and standards for one country do not necessarily apply to others. Clothing in Germany that is considered chaste and decent could therefore cause quite a stir in India. We can also not make global standards that a skirt must be so and so long or a shirt must be so and so wide. On the other hand, we are to shine in this world and live as children of God, blameless and harmless "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" (Php. 2:15). That is why we cannot place any worth on any of the world's standards or justify ourselves with them. If we want to dress according to the chaste, blameless, and harmless standard of the Bible, then we cannot orient ourselves according to what especially the western world considers decent. We have to stand against the trends of showing as much skin as possible or emphasizing body proportions through clothing. This applies equally to men and women. Even if the world around us declares a piece of clothing to be modest, for a child of God, the skirt can still be too short, or

the blouse too low, the pants too tight, or the shirt too figure-forming.

In addition, modest clothing can also be dependent on the situation. Clothing that is decent and acceptable in a church service, for example, would not be appropriate for sport activities and vice versa. We should pay attention to choosing clothing that would not invite any unnecessary glances at our bodies, no matter the activity. Although our clothing may be modest when we stand still in front of the mirror, that does not mean it will remain so while walking or sitting with crossed legs. It can be helpful here to ask a parent or a spouse to assess the modesty and chastity of our clothing.

It is important that we be aware that the way we dress can be a temptation for the opposite sex. It should therefore be our goal to choose clothing long and wide enough that the details and proportions of our body are not unnecessarily visible or emphasized. It is God's command and desire that we shine and live pure and holy lives in this world. A pure walk is so rare today that we truly have the opportunity to shine in this. According to 1 Corinthians 6:19–20, you should know "that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit . . . and you are not your own[.] For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body." Let us dress our bodies in a way that the Holy Spirit can feel comfortable in us, and we can praise God through our bodies!

Paul Hinz, Gifhorn
(Germany)

Experiences with God

I am writing this testimony to the glory of God, and as an encouragement to all who are Christians to share God's Word at every opportunity.

It is never a bad time to share the Word of God. I worked as a math and physics teacher in an evangelical denominational school. There were not enough teachers to have a religion class so the principle of my school asked me to include religious studies in a few classes. I gladly agreed to fulfill his request. I used the opportunity to tell the children and youth about Jesus and His love for us. Because of this I was often laughed at and ridiculed, but God gave me the grace to continue to sow the seed and not to keep silent.

Many years later I experienced a special encounter. Late one night, I was on my way home riding my bike through a park. Suddenly a young man was following me.

I tried to peddle faster to increase the distance between us, but it didn't work. He just ran faster. Fear gripped me and I silently prayed to God for protection. Suddenly I heard this man calling out my name. I stopped and got off my bike. In front of me stood one of my former students. He said: "I have some wonderful news for you. I used to make fun of you, but I repented and gave my life to Christ. Now I'm a Sunday School helper, and tell other children that God loves them. I now know that with God nothing is impossible."

Thank you, Lord, that you gave fruit from the seed that I sowed.

Irmtraud Prenzlów
Bielefeld, Germany

After many years there was a camp meeting in Germany last year. At first it did not look like I would be able to attend the meetings because of my busy schedule, but God had a much better plan for me, my wife, and my son. We had a blessed, pleasant, and refreshing time, totally different from what I had imagined. Afterwards we could only marvel. The daily fellowship with other believers was wonderful. The precious time getting to know the brothers and sisters from other congregations really encouraged me.

After registering for the camp meeting, I often had to think about the presence of God, His majesty and power. I wanted to experience God! I wanted to see miracles! God unmistakably revealed Himself and His power to me personally.

For months I had had ailments that would come and go, with varying degrees of severity. One of the services

was guided by the theme: "Miraculous Healing." The day before this service I had had a very difficult day, more so than ever before. After the service I was anointed based on James 5:13-16. I claimed God's promise for myself and expected that God would heal me. By the next day all my illness was gone! That is how it has been ever since! To God be the glory, praise, and honor!

Even after this I continue to experience God in a very real way. I would suggest that it is not a rare miraculous occurrence to be healed or witness God's intervention in difficult situations; it is the norm for a child of God!

For me to have these experiences, God's Son had to die for me—I thank God for that!

Alfred Doberstein,
Eppingen, Germany

Good for Nothing

A friendly gentleman once had a conversation with several children. He pulled out his pocket watch and asked, “What good does my watch serve?”—“To tell the time,” answered the children.—“What if it no longer works, and the clock maker can’t repair it again, what good is my watch then?”—“It’s good for nothing!” replied the children.

Then he showed them his ballpoint pen and asked, “Why do I own this?”—“To write,” rang the answer.—“But what if there were no ink reservoir inside the pen, and it couldn’t write a single stroke, what good would it be?”—“For nothing!”

So then, a watch and a pen are good for nothing if you cannot use them for what they were designed to do.”

“Exactly,” replied the children.

“Now, my dear children, for what purpose is a boy or a girl created?” The children did not immediately know how they should answer.—“Surely you know the answer to the question, ‘Why did God create mankind?’—“So that they praise God and bring glory to Him!”—“Therefore if a boy or a girl does not do what they were created to do, what good are they?”

The children answered together, apparently without taking time to consider, “They are good for nothing!”

Dear children, consider the thought that those who do not praise God and bring glory to Him are actually good for nothing!



Strong Faith in Advanced Age

"Here I am this day, eighty-five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in." (Joshua 14:10b-11)

When we think of the aged heroes of the faith who still bravely fought for the Lord, our thoughts immediately go to Caleb. At 85 years of age he was as strong and ready for battle as at 40 years! We probably said to ourselves about this thought: "I will not be like that. Caleb was an exception. I could not and will never be so. Already I lack the power, health, courage, and adventurous spirit." And when we look at our fellow aged saints, we seemingly do not see very many "Calebs"—or do we?

Of course, most of us will not be as physically fit at age 85 as at the age of 40. But what about our life of faith? Satan targets older Christians directly and attempts to weaken or destroy their faith. He wants to dispute their salvation and make their future dark and dreary. If they draw their attention to his rallying cry they become weak and dejected soldiers of faith.

But Caleb was not so! At 85, we find him tackling the enemy with fresh courage, and fighting for God's cause and his inheritance with a full and joyful effort. What was his secret?

1. He Was a Man of Faith

Throughout his life, Caleb had simply trusted in God. When the ten spies discouraged the people and incited them against Moses and Aaron, we read: "Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, 'Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it'" (Numbers 13:30). And in the next chapter: "If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey.' Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them" (Numbers 14:8-9). And now in his old age he is to go against the enemy again, and here too he did not throw away his confidence in any way. Whether he felt well or not, if the enemies were strong and many or not,

he relied on God! And such faith is the victory that overcomes the world.

2. He was Determined to Remain Faithful

Faithful even in the most difficult circumstances. Regarding the time when the people wanted to stone him for his decisiveness and faith he said: "Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the Lord my God" (Joshua 14:8). And three times God's Word confirms that this was really the case. Caleb not only intended to be faithful, but actually was so; he followed the Lord his God faithfully to his end. If that is your intent, God will also allow you to accomplish it.

3. He Remained in a Covenant with God

"And Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance" (Joshua 14:13). Hebron means "Place of the Covenant." God had promised him this place, but it belonged to the strongest of the giants. And now Caleb must take it as an 85-year-old! What does He say to this? "It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said" (Joshua 14:12). "God, you promised! And you will surely keep your side of the covenant and I will also remain in this covenant. Even if there are many giants there, and if they seem too strong for me, but if this is your inheritance for me, then I will stay there where you want me, even if I should die!"

We also made a covenant with God on the day of salvation, and promised to serve him faithfully. God never breaks a covenant, so we want to remain in this covenant with God despite the greatest tests of faith.

4. He Lingered in the Sanctuary and in the Word of God

"Caleb drove out the three sons of Anak from there: Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak. Then he went up from there to the inhabitants of Debir (formerly the name of Debir was Kirjath Sepher)" (Joshua



15:14-15). Kirjath Sepher means “City of the Book” and Debir “the back room, the Holiest of Holies in the Temple, the place where God speaks.” How marvelous is God’s Word, where even the names of these cities have such deep meaning!

He who often dwells in the sanctuary, there in the immediate presence of God, and talks with Him, will not become weaker in his walk of faith, but rather stronger and more courageous. Those who live in the “City of the Book” will constantly receive life-giving manna from God, in order to become reoriented and edified. He who holds fast to these two things and remains therein will be a fresh and courageous soldier of the faith in old age!

5. “Give Me a Blessing”

When Othniel, Caleb’s nephew, won Kirjath Sepher for Caleb and received Achsah, Caleb’s daughter, as wife for a reward, she begged her father: “Give me a blessing; since you have given me land in the South, give me also springs of water. So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs” (Joshua 15:19). Imagine: to dwell by living springs, from above and below. Springs from above we can easily understand: A living stream that flows down from God onto us. It comes from the sanctuary of God and provides continuous healing and life, eternal life. But how is it with springs from below? In Psalm 84:5–7 we read, “Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, whose heart is set on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baca, they make it a spring; the rain also covers it with pools. They go from

strength to strength; each one appears before God in Zion.”

Is that not wonderful? Always new wells and springs in the vale of tears. Other translations use the following terms: “You make the vale of tears full of wells, a place of springs.” Not only do these pillars of faith make it through the vale of tears and bitterness, they bestow blessings on others! They feast on the living, inexhaustible spring Jesus Christ. They not only yearn for God’s blessing; they are also a blessing for others. In the midst of their hardest battles they make wells where others may refresh themselves. Only God can do this! Do you also have this desire: “Give me a blessing!”?

The name Caleb means “the Bold,” “the Fierce One,” “the Grappler,” “he with a whole heart.” How fitting is his name. Until old age he fought tirelessly for the things of God. Through all the years his faith did not waver. As an old man, he was still fighting so boldly, so determinedly, pressing onward with his whole heart. And he won his inheritance: At the place of the covenant, in the “book,” in the sanctuary, in the place where God speaks, where living springs flow. Certainly everything will not always have looked so rosy. He had to survive some great spiritual struggles. But God’s Word gives him the testimony three times that he followed his God faithfully.

If you faithfully follow your God with the same intent, with the same determination and dedication, you too will receive an indescribable inheritance from God, in old age and in eternity!

R. Taron

If You Would Believe

Part 3



First the Kingdom of God

Not yet married and completely dedicated to God's work, Wanda traveled throughout Poland with an evangelistic team. She sang and she testified about her yearning for assurance of salvation, and how, as she knelt at the altar, God gave her assurance that her sins had been forgiven and her name was entered in the Book of Life. Enthusiastically she spoke of the great privilege of serving the Lord. "There is no greater joy than to serve God." She testified how Jesus Christ instantly healed her from tuberculosis and how today He is still able to heal body and soul.

So committed and focused was Wanda to Christ's cause that she was unaware that Gustav Sonnenberg, a young evangelist on the same team, had been observing her for some time. Giving no indication of interest, he earnestly prayed for God's guidance, and received it. Many years later he recommended that same formula to his sons. And so it was that one day he approached Wanda with a marriage proposal: "Wanda, I feel it is God's will that we marry to dedicate ourselves to jointly further God's work. You would be a great support to me in the ministry. Will you marry me?"

Wanda was completely taken aback, as she had not perceived any indication of interest from him earlier. Even on the threshold of 30 years of age, she had not given any thought to marriage. She had surrendered her life to Christ, and saw herself fully in God's will in her maiden state.

"Gustav," she finally responded, composing herself; "I had no idea!" Thinking a moment, she shook her head. "I cannot accept your proposal, Gustav. That would crimp my service for the Lord. That, I cannot do!"

But Gustav was not so easily dissuaded. "It need not," he countered. "Your support would make my ministry more effective. Together, supporting each other, we can achieve even more for God's Kingdom."

"No", she objected. "And what if we have children? That would spell the end of my involvement. And furthermore, how do you expect to support a family on your meager income?"

"I trust God will provide for us."

"Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'... For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things."

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

(Matthew 6:31-33)

"Wanda", he continued, "Take my proposal to the Lord in prayer, and at the end of two months give me your answer."

Caught by surprise, she felt uncomfortably confronted by an extremely difficult decision. As was her habit, she sought God's will in earnest prayer. God's will for her was always top priority. "Lord, what would you have me do?" But to receive more clarity, she wrote a letter to the USA, most likely to Sister Lemke, who earlier had done missionary work in Europe and gotten to know Gustav well. It appears she was doing a background check on the man who had proposed to her.

For the following two months their relationship continued as before. Shortly thereafter, on March 31, 1928,



BRO. & SIS. SONNENBERG 1957

in the home of Gustav's parents in Danzig, a double ring ceremony took place as Wanda's sister Else and Pastor Daniel Mantei were married at the same time. Pastor G. Zuber of Zürich, Switzerland officiated at the wedding, choosing his text from Matthew 7:24-27. Many years later, our father selected the identical text for each of his sons and daughters-in-law, urging them to build their house on the rock.

Twenty five years later, the telephone rang at our home - now in Canada. Father was on a mission trip, holding evangelistic services. Mother had urged him to accept the call. "People are dying without having salvation, let us do everything we can that souls would be saved," she encouraged. On the telephone, mother recognized father's voice. "Do you know what day it is today," he asked? It was their silver wedding anniversary.

The years passed - in fact, almost 25 more years passed. The moment for which mother had yearned finally arrived, as she entered her eternal home with Jesus. "Many times have I stood at an open grave attempting to comfort a spouse left behind," father recalled. "But the loss of a spouse can only be understood by one who has personally experienced it. I have lost my support." One time, with open letter in hand he stood at the bottom of the stairway lamenting, "This difficult letter I would normally have discussed with mother before answering. How shall I answer? I miss mom!"



Getting Even

“I’ll get even with that fellow if it takes ten years.” Thus declared a man about another who had wronged him, as his eyes flashed with passion, and his teeth set firmly with resolve. In his heart, he determined to do his enemy as great an injury as his enemy had done him. “Get even,” I thought, “what does it mean to get even?” Then appeared before my mind’s eye a view of the various classes of humanity, each person in the scale of morality where his life had placed him. I saw the Christian on God’s plane of holiness and truth. Far below him stood the moral, though unchristian man; and down, down, step by step, my mental eye beheld man to the lowest depth of moral degradation.

Vile and wrong deeds always degrade man to a lower state. Every evil deed, word, or thought lowers us in moral being. If someone has done evil toward us, he has lowered himself by that act, and for us to decide to “get even” by a similar act toward him is for us to decide that we will lower ourselves to his level. To “get even” means to get on the same level. It means to abase and degrade ourselves. If we “get even,” we are as bad as he and worthy that others look upon us with the same feelings with which we regard him. If you want to get even with anyone, do not choose someone below you but someone above you in moral attainments, and labor to attain to his height instead of the other’s depths. This will ennoble you, make you better, and be worthy of a reasoning being.

The principle of revenge has no part in Christianity. God refuses to let us avenge ourselves, no difference what the provocation nor how good the opportunity for vengeance. He says, “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. Therefore ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:19-21). “Repay no one evil for evil” (Romans 12:17). “See that no one renders evil for

evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all” (1 Thessalonians 5:15). When one, who is a Christian, so far forgets what is right that he stoops to take vengeance, he is then upon the level of the sinner who did him evil and is himself a sinner and is fallen from his high position to the level of sin. God forbids us to threaten to “get even” with anyone. “Do not say, ‘I will do to him just as he has done to me; I will render to the man according to his work.’” (Proverbs 24:29).

The spirit of Christianity is to render good for evil, blessing for cursing, love for hatred. The blood of Christ will wash away the “get even” disposition from us, and until we are thus cleansed, let us not presume to call

“If you want to get even with anyone, do not choose someone below you but someone above you”

ourselves by that holy name of Him who “when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously” 1 Peter 2:23. Good is stronger than evil. Evil used against evil begets more evil, but we may “overcome evil with good.”

I once asked a man why he did not become a Christian. He replied that there were so many in his business who were trying to get the financial advantage of him that he



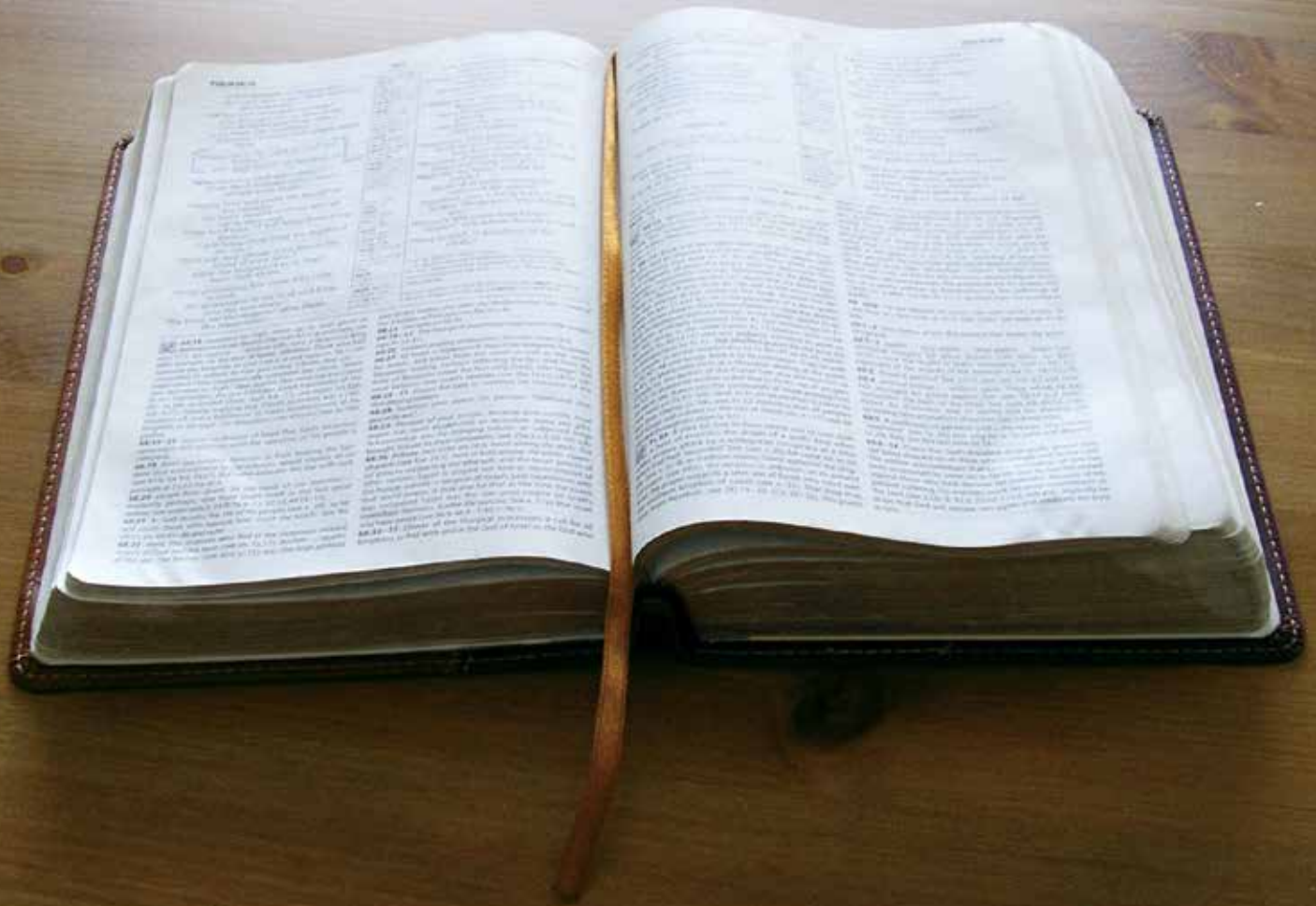
could not do right but must do the same with them or he could not “keep even.”

But let us see what it really means to be “even.” If a man lies about me, and to get even I lie about him, then we are even. He is a liar and I am a liar—both on the same plane. He is going to the judgment to give account for his lie and so am I for mine: even again. If he does not repent, he will go to hell for lying, and if I do not repent, I shall go too. Yes we may get even, but I would rather not be so. If a man beats me out of ten dollars, to get even I must watch my chance to do likewise to him. If I do not try to beat him to get even, he may have more

money in his pocket than I, but if I turn the matter over for settlement to Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” when the final account is rendered, I shall be ten dollars or more ahead.

Let us not endeavor to be “even” with our enemies by taking vengeance but let us do right and win them to the gospel by overcoming evil with good. Let us get even by raising others up instead of lowering ourselves to their sinful level. Be a blessing to all. Set a right example.

Heart Talks
C.W. Naylor



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Two Kinds of Bible-Reading

There are two ways of reading the Bible. The one does not lead to change, but the other makes our lives fruitful. For many years, I did not realize there was more than one way to read the Bible. Accordingly, my Bible-reading remained barren. After the now long-departed Pastor Hoffmann of Deaconess House in Stuttgart began writing me letters, I became familiar with another way of reading the Bible, a way that has filled my life with many blessings. And that is why I want to speak about this topic.

Which is the first and altogether unfruitful kind of Bible-reading?

People read chapter after chapter just as they appear in a Bible-reading plan. People pick up a Bible and read the prescribed chapter to God, a chapter that God has known for many years.

If someone had asked me, after I had read one of these chapters, what kind of blessing the chapter brought me, I would not have had an answer. I had read my chapter and had, therefore, done my duty. Even if I did not say these words directly, they summarize what I thought at the time. Many people think that their Bible-reading is a good work that they must do, a Christian duty that must be fulfilled.

I did not experience any real or lasting blessings through this kind of Bible-reading. Then, I received the advice that Pastor Hoffmann gave to his Sisters. He wrote to them that they should always read the Bible in a spirit of self-examination. After reading a verse or passage, they should always ask themselves: "Have I already experienced that?" "Do I really know that?" "Am I doing what this verse says?"

I paid attention to his advice and began to follow it. Suddenly, my Bible-reading changed completely; it became a blessing to me and brought forth much fruit. I no longer picked up the Bible and read a chapter to the Lord out of duty. Instead, the Lord spoke to me through His Word.

When I asked myself whether or not I followed what was written in the Bible, it was as if God's Word examined me with accusing eyes and questioned me: "You have been saved for so long, and yet you have not experienced this, or you do not know that?" It was not the written word that spoke to me thus; it was God Himself Who spoke to me through His Word. And without even thinking about it or even meaning to, I would find myself praying: "Lord, forgive me for not being who I should be; forgive me for not attaining all that you have offered me!" My prayer continued, "Lord, give me what I lack!"

As a result, I began a conversation with God—He spoke to me through His word and I spoke to Him through prayer. I was blessed because I recognized my weakness and asked Him for help and renewal.

May I give you an example of what I mean by reading the Bible in a spirit of self-examination?

In the course of my daily Bible-reading, I read 1 Peter 2:7, "Now to you who believe, this stone [Jesus] is precious." I paused and asked myself, "Is He precious to me?" I was able to answer, "Yes, He is precious to me." However, I could not shake off these words. They continued to press me: "Why is He precious to you?" After a few moments, I was able to answer, "He is precious to me because of the manger: He left heaven and came to us, to this poor world. He is precious to me because of the cross: He purchased my salvation on that cross. He is precious to me because of the empty grave: He gave us eternal life."

Again, a voice asked me, "Is that all?" After some reflection, I answered, "No, that is not all. He is precious to me because He leads me through life, He hears my prayers, and He comforts me in my sorrow."

Again, the voice asked me, "Is that all?" "No," I replied, "that is not all. He is precious to me because He

speaks to me through His Word. He is precious to me because He has given me His Spirit. He is precious to me because of His blood, through which He has purified me from all sin."

Once again, the voice said, "Is that all?" "No, He is precious to me because He called me, who was reluctant to serve Him, into His ministry. He is precious to me because He has given me strength and grace for this ministry. Even though my doctors told me that I had an incurable throat disease, I can preach without fatigue. He is precious to me because He has blessed my ministry in both the written and spoken word."

God's Word also addresses more serious matters. We read in Colossians 3:12, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" (NIV). Now, we must ask ourselves if we live according to this passage. Do I have compassion for people in need? Am I kind to the people that I meet every day? In humility, do I regard others as better than myself? Do I respond to those who abuse me with gentleness? Do I have patience when things do not happen as quickly or as well as I would like? When I ask myself these questions, I cry out to God, "Dear Lord, forgive me!" But I do not stop there, I also pray, "Dear Lord, help me!"

As you can see, this kind of Bible-reading is profitable for our spiritual life. Such Bible-reading imparts great blessings. When people spend more time examining the Word, they make precious discoveries.

I recently had this experience with Ephesians 2:19: "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God." After reading this passage, I asked myself, "According to these words, what am I?" I am a fellow citizen with the saints. Therefore, I have the rights of a citizen in the City of God. What else am I according to this verse? I am a member of God's household. In other words, God is the head of the household. He is the Father, and I am His child. If God is the Father, do I need to worry about food, clothing, rent, and so on? No, every father provides for his family. How much more does God provide for His family!

This verse has blessed me richly and brought me great joy! It is true that when we read the Bible in the spirit of self-examination, we will be richly blessed. Then, we rejoice in His Word as "one who finds great treasure" (Psalm 119:162).

Try it! When you read the Bible, read it in a spirit of self-examination and see how God works in your life!

Ernst Modersohn

Salvation Through Christ

Christian Experience

An impure fountain does not send forth a pure stream; if we want the stream to be pure, we must make the fountain pure. A holy and pure life naturally flows from a holy and pure heart. The wisdom of Solomon declares that “out of [the heart] spring the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23). The state or condition of the heart determines the manner of the life. One wiser than Solomon said: “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts” (Mark 7:21-22). This illustrates the fact that the interior of man, or the heart, controls the exterior life. Jesus further illustrates this by a cup and platter, which, He says, when made clean on the inside, will be clean on the outside also. We shall take it for granted that every reader will agree with us when we say that Christian conduct necessitates Christian experience, and that where the former is wanting the latter is also wanting.

All people are naturally in sin, and consequently without Christian experience. Christianity is not a mere profession; it is a real inward, or heart, experience. In the plan of redemption we find certain things required of man in order that he may obtain this change in his moral condition. The principal thing required, and one which covers almost the whole, is repentance.

Repentance

The Scripture tells us that repentance is a godly sorrow for sin, or, that “godly sorrow produces repentance” (2 Corinthians 7:10). This is unlike the sorrow of the world. When a man has committed a wrong, and because this wrong is made public and he stands in danger of punishment by the law, he experiences a sorrow, but his sorrow is only of the world. A child who, having disobeyed its parents, grieves through fear of punishment, does not sorrow in a godly sense, and such sorrow contains but

little or no merit. But when through force of temptation he disobeys his parents, and sorrows because he has wronged a parent who loves him, he may be said to sorrow in a godly sense. When man wails and laments and seeks a Christian life merely to escape the torments of hell and to gain heaven, he is not truly penitent; but when in his very soul he grieves and sorrows because he has sinned against a God of love, having no thought of reward or punishment, but only sorrows because he has wronged a being who loves him—then he experiences a godly sorrow. When a man sorrows in this manner he will turn away from his sins and forsake them. It must be obvious to the reader that man cannot be said to be truly sorry for his sins when he continues in them.

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But when in true penitence he turns away from his sinful life, God will pardon him. “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil” (Isaiah 1:16). “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:7). When a man is truly sorrowful because he has sinned against God, he not only ceases to walk in the ways of sin, but he gladly makes right, as far as he can, all the wrongs he has done. We do a kind act toward God by doing it toward man, as Jesus says: “inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me” (Matthew 25:40), and we wrong God when we wrong our fellow man:

consequently, when a man truly repents, he will make right, as far as he can, all the wrongs he has done to his fellow man. We have this exemplified in the repentance of Zacchaeus when he said: "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold" (Luke 19:8). Jesus, upon seeing such penitence, said, "Today salvation has come to this house" (Luke 19:9). The law governing the restitutions of wrong in true repentance is recorded in Ezekiel 33:15. "If the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has stolen, and walks in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live; he shall

not die." The fruit of repentance is the forsaking of sin, of making right the wrongs we have done, of forgiving those who have wronged us, and of confessing our sinfulness to Him who sees and knows the heart; and, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9). When pardoned, man experiences a change of affections; he experiences a change in his feelings and exterior life; he is no longer a sinner but a Christian.

Christian Conduct -
Charles E. Orr

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For me!

Isaiah 53:3-10 (NKJV)

He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.

He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of my people He was stricken.

And they made His grave with the wicked—But with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth.

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.