

Christ is Victor

JAN/FEB 2002

“How To Win Your Family To Christ”

“Are We Running To or From God?”

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament pulsate with the truth that God is willing and able to save the Believer's entire family. God said to Noah, “Come thou and all thy house into the ark, for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation”, Genesis 7:1.

Before the night of the Passover, God laid down the principle of “A lamb for a house”, Exodus 12:3. Rahab, listed in the God's Hall of Faith, Hebrews 11, believed for the protection of all her family during the destruction of Jericho. Her petition was granted. She and her family were unharmed. Joshua 2:12-21, 6:25.

Paul and Silas told the Philippian jailor, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house”, Acts 16:31. Cornelius was promised that Simon Peter “shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved”, Acts 11:14.

There are many other scripture verses which give assurance that God desires to bring each family member into the Ark of Safety. Proverbs 11:21. The Apostle Peter reminds us that the Lord is “Not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” II Peter 3:9 He wants to save your mate, your parents, your children

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Genesis 16th Chapter

Abram had gone to Egypt and had brought back a piece of Egypt. We may have repented of our backsliding, but still we bring something with us. An Egyptian woman in Sarai's house! Sarai did not have enough faith. As soon as Hagar conceived, she became very proud and began to despise Sarai. Sarai who was the mistress of the house said, “What is this? There is confusion in the house.” Sarai dealt hard with her. This slave woman fled because she did not want correction or rebuke. This seems to be the course many people betake. Many people flee instead of submitting to God. This woman fled to the wilderness.

Genesis 16:8, “From where have you come and whither wilt thou go?” A guilty conscience asks us the question, “from where have you come?” Some of us are afraid to say where we have come from. The angel knew, but this woman did not seem to know. God wants to ask this question, “From where have you come?” During the past year, what has been your spiritual progress? What is your starting point? Trace your footsteps. We are leaving footsteps in the sands of eternity. Some of them are meaningless, some foolish, some are backsliders' footsteps. Let us look back at the footsteps of the past year. Where have we walked — in the high places of God? Have we dwelt in the high levels of God? This woman had come from Abram's house to the wilderness. Many people choose like that. From the presence of God, joy and peace, they run into self-will and misery. It is very important to ask ourselves from whence we have come. Your path is either upward or

downward. You cannot be stationary.

On the hills, one bus is struggling up and one coming down. Are you following the path of least resistance? When I want to climb up there is resistance. Some of you are following the path of least resistance. It is the path of the backslider — of one who is going down. You must tell God from whence you have come. You have become a very easy-going person saying, “What is there if I do this? Everybody is doing that.” Then you are not a converted man.

Second question: “Whither wilt thou go?” We must ask ourselves this question. You are running from the presence of God, but where are

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you going? You have come to the wilderness, left the safety and security of Abram's house. Where are you going? Are you going closer to God or farther away from God? Am I going in the path of holiness? There is a very humble cry in the Book of

Psalms. Psalm 102:24, “I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days; thy years are throughout all generations.” What a humble cry this is! But when the Psalmist asks for longevity there is a strong purpose and motive behind it. Psalm 71:18, “Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to everyone that is to come.” “I want to show Thy strength to this generation.” Here the Psalmist has a purpose for living. The second motive was to show God's power to everyone to come. Surely God has fulfilled the prayer of David in Psalm 71. Today we still think of David and his exploits for God. His 51st Psalm, his confession and repentance, is a light to many

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and all other members of your family circle. And He wants to work through you in bringing about this thrilling miracle.

"All my family saved?" you gasp, "That seems an impossibility." But Jesus says, "With God all things are possible", Mark 10:27. If you are with God and God is with you, nothing is impossible! When Martha had difficulty comprehending how the Lord could bring her brother, Lazarus, back to Life, Jesus said "...If thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God", John 11:40.

Spiritual men and women through the ages have claimed their families for Christ, and God has honoured their faith. Catherine Booth of the Salvation Army exclaimed, "Oh God, I will not stand before thee without my family!" Her entire family came to know Christ and served Him faithfully.

YOUR HUSBAND CAN BE WON

Mrs. J. of California knows that a husband can be won to Christ. It took 24 years of praying, trials and consistent Christian living. Her husband is a happy Christian businessman today. Here is the letter she wrote:

It took 24 years to win my husband. It was a long, thorn-crowned path that I walked but I never gave up. Even when things looked the blackest, I would reason: "Well, even if my husband never gets converted I will still try to do my part by the grace of God."

Each day I tried to please Jesus. Many times I went through very hard places. I was at death's door several times. My children often suffered from serious illnesses. I can remember days, during the depression, when we did not have one dime to buy food. The power company cut off our electricity. I washed by hand for our four small children. When we would get a few dollars my husband would spend them for liquor. In des-

peration, I would pray and ask God to miraculously supply food for my little ones. And God heard me. We never starved. Of course, my children could not figure out where Mama got the food. It was a secret between the Lord and me.

My husband was a hard-headed Swede. He knew he should become a Christian. He told me that he knew Christ had changed my life when I was converted. He admitted that God had done miracles for our family. But he would not pay the price of being an out-and-out Christian father.

He seemed to go in cycles. Sometimes he did not want religion discussed; other times he seemed hungry for reality. During these later times I would witness to him about Christ. At other times, he would become very angry if I mentioned the Lord. But when I could not talk to him about God, I would talk to God about him. He could not stop me from praying for him.

It was not long until I became aware that my husband was being unfaithful to me and to his marriage vows. Of course, he tried to hide this fact from me. But one day, while I was praying, God seemed to show me where my husband was and who he was having an affair with. My heart was broken. Naturally, my husband denied the whole matter. But I found out later that God had shown me the tragic truth. My husband was unfaithful.

God enabled me to keep a Christian disposition through these dark hours. I tried never to aggravate him. When he was in a bad mood and made cutting remarks, I kept quiet. Each day I found a new supply of patience, endurance, and closeness in the Lord. I certainly did not have any of these qualities when I came to the Lord. I had too much of my natural Irish in me, I guess. Before my conversion, I was stubborn, quick-tempered, and saucy. But then, I allowed Jesus to take over my life. And He changed me completely. In fact, other

Christians told me that I was "too easy going," that I should defend myself. But God told me to keep sweet and let the Lord defend me.

In 1950, our home and our business were really going on the rocks. I was tempted to tell my hubby that he could do his own praying from now on. (I knew that he seemed to feel a certain amount of security from my prayers.)

But then, as someone has said, "The darkest hour of the night is just before the dawn." After 24 long years of tears, headaches, prayers and persistence, I saw my husband go to the altar in an evangelistic meeting. The prodigal husband had come home to God at last. I was bubbling over with joy.

Today, after many years, my husband is still serving the Lord. We have a Christian home, go to Church together and run a successful business.

If God could perform a miracle in our home, He can do it in any home. With the Lord's help I know a woman can win her husband to Christ!

YOUR WIFE CAN BE WON

A few years ago a prominent manufacturer in an Eastern state became a Christian. He then determined to try to win his pretty brunette wife to the Lord.

It was not easy. "Church! Church! Church! Can't you go anywhere else?" she nagged. "You seem to think of no one but God anymore!"

She threatened to leave him. But he suggested, "Let's take a vacation in California. I'm sure we can work out our difficulties, honey."

A change of climate did not seem to help. "Believe what you will, I personally don't believe there is a God!" She boldly blurted. Heartsick at his wife's attitude, the manufacturer prayed desperately that the Holy Spirit

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would convict her and draw her to the Lord.

Soon prayer was answered. One night, while driving down the coast of California, his wife moved over closer to him and whispered: *"Honey, I really didn't mean what I said about God. I really believe in Him and I want Him in my life, too."*

"Thank God!" The husband smiled. *"He has answered my prayers."*

That night around 11 O'clock they found a small church open. They walked in, went to the altar, and soon the joy of salvation flooded the wife's heart, too.

Today, this Christian manufacturer, now the father of five children, would gladly tell you, *"Yes, a husband can win his wife to Christ. God still answers prayer."*

YOUR PARENTS CAN BE WON

A little girl pleaded with her agnostic father. *"Please come to church with me, just once. I love you, Daddy. Won't you please come?"*

Finally, he said, *"O.K, honey, just once."*

His little daughter was overjoyed. She loved Jesus and now she hoped her father would hear a sermon that would make him love the Lord, too.

But she was terribly disappointed her pastor read a lengthy Old Testament passage that was full of long, difficult names. Nearly every verse said, *"So and so begat so and so and then he died ... then he died ... then he died."* *Oh, Daddy will never want to come to church again,"* She sobbed to her mother.

But she was wrong. God used that phrase *"and he died"* to convict and convert her father. He testified later that those three words haunted him for days afterwards. He realised that some day he would die unprepared. At last he decided to make his peace with God. His little daughter had led him to Christ. Lydia H. Sigourney says: *"We speak of educating our children. Do we know that our children also educate us?"*

Yes, children can win their parents to Christ.

— Selected from Nathanael Olson's *"How to Win Your Family to Christ"*

“Gold: A Bad Life-Preserver”

How many are worshipping gold today! Where war has slain its thousands, gold has slain its millions. Its history is the history of slavery and oppression in all ages. At this moment, what an empire it has! The spirit of greed even tries to turn the globe itself into gold.

Tarpeia, the daughter of the governor of the fortress situated on the Capitoline Hill in Rome, was captivated with the golden bracelets of the Sabine soldiers, and she agreed to let them into the fortress if they would give her what they wore on their left arms. The contract was made; the Sabines kept their promise. Tatius, their commander, was the first to deliver his bracelets and shield. The coveted treasures were thrown on Tarpeia by each of the soldiers until she sank beneath their weight and died. Thus does the weight of gold carry many people downward.

The worthlessness of gold for which so many are striving, is illustrated by a story that Dr. Arnott, the Scottish physician, used to tell.

A ship carrying a company of emigrants has been driven from her course and wrecked on a desert island, far from man's reach. There is no way of escape but they have a good stock of food. The ocean surrounds them, but they have plenty of seeds, fine soil and sunshine, so there is no danger. Before the plans are laid, an exploring party discovers a gold mine. The whole party goes to dig there. They labour day after day and month after month. They get large heaps of gold. But spring is past, and not a field has been cleared, not a grain of seed put into the ground. The summer comes and their wealth increases but their stock of food grows small. In the fall, they find that the heaps of gold are worthless. Famine stares them in the face. They rush to the woods, chop down the trees, dig up the roots, till the ground, sow the seed. It is too late! Winter has come and their seeds rot in the ground. They die of want in the midst of their treasures.

The earth is like the island and eternity is like the ocean around it. We have been cast on the island's shore. There is a living seed, but the gold mines attract us. We spend spring and sum-

mer there; winter overtakes us in our toil, and we are without the Bread of Life. We are lost. Let us who are Christians value even more the home which holds the treasures that no one can take away.

“True Prayer”

Ezra 5:1-17 & 6:1-13

"And thus they returned us answer saying, we are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, which a great king of Israel builded and set up. But after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon." The people who began to build the house of God were able to acknowledge their faults. When we approach our enemies, it is good to acknowledge our faults. A sense of guilt which goes deep into our consciousness and every aspect of our thinking is good. These people confessed that their fathers provoked God. We should acknowledge our parents' sins. Sometimes we have to confess the sins of our children and then pray for them. God accepts such prayer.

Lamentations 2:14, *"Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity; but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment."* Misleading prophets were the main cause of the ruin of Jerusalem.

REALITY CHECK!

“WHEN THE RIGHTEOUS ARE IN AUTHORITY, THE PEOPLE REJOICE: BUT WHEN THE WICKED BEARETH RULE, THE PEOPLE MOURN.”

PROVERBS 29:2

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Haniah prophesied false peace to them. Jeremiah wept and let tears run down like a river because of the destruction of the daughter of his people. The true prophet was imprisoned and false prophecy was accepted in the land. When the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem was fulfilled, Jeremiah lamented. The king and the princes were so proud that they would not allow any truth to approach them. Pride which does not allow us to acknowledge our sins is a terrible thing. At conversion this pride begins to leave us. It does not however leave us completely. It shows up time and again. When pride leaves us completely, grace begins to operate abundantly.

The true exercises of prayer are very efficacious. It permeates every cell of your being. To listen to a good prayer is a great blessing. By sin our minds have been spoiled so that our minds are in opposition to God's. Ezra 6:10, "That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons." Pharaoh also asked Moses to bless him. How was it possible? Without obedience no blessing is possible. Would to God we could obey His Word. We should learn to dive deep into the depths of prayer to rescue others.

God has been very good to us. God's nature is to love us and to bless us. By transgressing His Word we go into danger. Lamentations 5:7, "Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquities." Let us give ourselves to prayer. Prayer will never go in vain. Since it is essential to acknowledge our sins it is good to tell our own people the truth of God lovingly. Let us acknowledge before God the powerless and fruitless life we are living.

A prophet is one whose lips and heart are perfectly in harmony with the heart of God. Would to God we were of such oneness of mind with Jesus!

— Late Mr. N. Daniel

"God's Patience"

Dennis Miller writes:

Out of parental concern and desire to teach our young son responsibility, we require him to phone home when he arrives at his friend's house a few blocks away. He began to forget, however, as he grew more confident in his ability to get there without disaster befalling him.

The first time he forgot, I called to be sure he had arrived. We told him the next time it happened, he would have to come

home. A few days later however, the telephone again lay silent, and I knew if he was going to learn, he would have to be punished. But I did not want to punish him! I went to the telephone, regretting that his great time would have to be spoiled by his lack of contact with his father.

As I dialed, I prayed for wisdom. "Treat him like I treat you," the Lord seemed to say. With that, as the telephone rang one time, I hung up. A few seconds later the phone rang, and it was my son. "I'm here Dad!"

"What took you so long to call?" I asked.

"We started playing and I forgot. But Dad, I heard the phone ring once, and I remembered."

"I'm glad you remembered," I said. "Have fun."

How often do we think of God as One who waits to punish us when we step out of line? I wonder how often he rings just once, hoping we will phone home.

"Power With God"

In a seminary missions class, Herbert Jackson told how, as a new missionary, he was assigned a car that would not start without a push.

After pondering his problem, he devised a plan. He went to the school near his home, got permission to take some children out of class, and had them push his car off. As he made his rounds, he would either park on a hill or leave his car running. He used this ingenious procedure for two years.

Ill health forced the Jackson family to leave, and a new missionary came to that station. When Jackson proudly began to explain his arrangement for getting the car started, the new man began looking under the hood. Before the explanation was complete, the new missionary interrupted, "Why Dr. Jackson, I believe the only trouble is this loose cable."

He gave the cable a twist, stepped into the car, pushed the switch, and to Jackson's astonishment, the engine roared to life.

For two years needless trouble had become routine. The power was there all the time. Only a loose connection kept Jackson from putting the power to work.

J.B. Philips paraphrases Ephesians 1:19-20, "How tremendous is the power available to us who believe in God." When we make firm our connection with God, His life and power flow through us.

— Selected

... "RUNNING" FROM PAGE 1

people. Some parents say, "Because my children are young, I must live." That is a legitimate reason, but let us rise higher.

Genesis 16:13. This heathen woman who came from an idolatrous land gave a name to God. "Thou God seest me". She was a proud woman who could not submit. God sees our pride, how we cannot humble ourselves. The devil is watching. When there is pride in your heart, when you do not want to submit to God, he is waiting for an opportunity to strike. Long prayers are not a substitute to obedience. The devil is watching to throw you into confusion. This foolish woman was trying to run away. God sent His angel to warn her, "Go and submit to Sarai." She said, "Oh God, Thou seest me."

I feel very sad when I cannot see some people and discern some people. Generally people do not deceive me. But there are a few people who hide the truth from me. That, to me, is a very terrible thing.

You are dealing with a God who sees you. Do not try to play with God. If you want to pursue pride and have become rebellious, then God will deal with you. We cannot thwart the will of God. We have a God who sees us. Let us enter the New Year with fear and trembling and with repentance.

— Joshua Daniel

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