

Christ is Victor

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2011

“Another Year is Dawning”

“The Lord Delivers Us From Bondage”

It is always challenging to approach a new year and to realize anew that our days upon this earth are so rapidly passing. How important it is that we pause with the psalmist and pray for a “heart of wisdom” that will enable us this year to live each new day in a way that brings all glory to our God.

In January of 1874, the many friends of Frances Ridley Havergal received a New Year’s greeting with the heading, “A Happy New Year! Ever Such May it Be!” Following this greeting appeared her text, still considered to be one of the finest New Year’s prayers of consecration ever written:

Another year is dawning, Dear Father, let it be,

In working or in waiting another year with Thee;

Another year of progress, another year of praise,

Another year of proving Thy presence all the days.

Another year of mercies, of faithfulness and grace;

Another year of gladness in the shining of Thy face;

Another year of leaning upon Thy loving breast;

... “YEAR” CON’T ON PAGE 3

Christ is Victor
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“I am the LORD, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King. Thus saith the LORD, which maketh a way in the sea and a path in the mighty waters.” (Isaiah 43:15,16)

This is how the Lord describes Himself. To be the redeemer of the people of Israel, the Lord had a way for them right through the sea. He showed that Pharaoh was no longer their king. When Pharaoh was their king, they had to bear a great burden. They were under hard task-masters. They wanted deliverance.

The devil knows the areas in which he can oppress us with the maximum pain. He does not normally inflict pain, which is easy to bear. He creates pain and oppression in that area, where you are most pained thereby inflicting huge loss and damage.

Who is a redeemer? One who delivers you in that area where you are a captive. Certain thoughts are very strong. Oh, you put them out of your mind but they come back again. They chase you. They persist in pursuing you. You cannot run away from them. You may cross the oceans but the thoughts are still there. The devil oppresses many people with wrong thoughts. They are weakened. So there is no rest for them. That is not the work of God. God’s thoughts are strengthening, ennobling and freeing.

Very often we do not see the difference between our thoughts and God’s thoughts, because of the spirit

of perversity. That is why the Bible says, “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man.” (Proverbs 14:12) You say, “My thought is right!” “My plan is right!” “My ways are right!” No! No! You must know how to go to God, who searcheth your heart, and weigheth your spirit, to know whether this is a perverse spirit or the spirit of God. This perverse spirit can be a very strong spirit. It can afflict the whole family. It seems to afflict father, mother, sons and daughters. It makes it impossible to see what is right and what is wrong. The spirit of perversity is always to be found wherever there is idolatry. This perverse spirit is also found where Christians make an idol of something. I can detect this spirit very well.

“The Lord delivered them from all their oppressions,” says the Word of God. But their nature of grumbling was still persisting for forty years. There remained in Israel the spirit of unbelief in the face of daily miracles for forty long years.

But the Lord was trying to make a way for them. Right from the start, it was a way in the wilderness. When they came out of Egypt, they came against the sea. When you come against a forest, you ask somebody, “Is there a path through this?” But when you stand by the shore of a mighty sea, you never ask such a question. But God says, “I am the God, who maketh a path in the mighty waters”. When you see the mighty waters before you, you tend to get fearful. I do not think in the

... “DELIVERER” CON’T ON PAGE 4

“Real Revelation”

“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.”

(Hebrews 5:12)

Salvation depends on revelation. When your own nature is revealed to you, you repent. The more you dig into your nature, the more you find out that your nature is undependable, and that it is dangerous for your life and for those that depend on you. When God’s revelation comes to you, you not only know the wretchedness of your condition but also the purpose of God in creating you. If you really progress in the correct direction, you will call God as your ‘Father’. You will hallow His name. You will wish for His kingdom to come and that His will may be done in your life. As angels haste to do God’s will, you also will wish that His will may be done on earth. But, there is a drive in you that makes you run counter to God’s will. That is the deceitfulness of your heart. Man chooses to run after sin and the heart becomes even more deceitful. Such evil is in our blood.

“*In sin did my mother conceive me.*” It means she had a body of sin, with sinful emotions. “*Create in me a clean heart*”, is the prayer of a Christian.

When by faith you obey the first principles of the gospel, you feel the joy of salvation. But your old nature tries to woo you back into the life of sin. People who never had a revelation from God, mock at Christian life. The beginning of salvation is by revelation. Christianity was not something that originated in man. It was revelation. But Buddhism originated in man, and it teaches a man to kill his instincts. It does not lead one anywhere. When revelation came to St. Paul, he knew that there was nothing good in him. Next he had further revelation and said, “*O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*” Then by revelation he was attracted to the Cross. Sorrow for sin makes you to see in the Cross the great power that lifts you. You were self-centered once. But now that self-centeredness gives place to concern for others. You are saved and you seek to save others. As you seek to save others, you see that there are hindering forces in you and you humble yourself further and seek God’s help. You grow humbler and humbler. If you do not seek to save others, it means there

is something wrong in you. If you cannot help even those you love, what is the use of your life? You love your children; but are you able to give them anything lasting? If not, your love is not true love. Once a small child began to swallow some pills which were within her reach. The mother did not bother to stop it. The child came nigh to death. They treated her and saved her life, but those pills which she had swallowed created a permanent weakness in her. Was this true love?

When I was a student, God used to give me a message everyday and I used to give others that message when I was prompted to do so. One day God gave me a message, and on my way back from prayer I saw a group of carpenters. I sat with them and gave them the message. One of them got converted and became a preacher of the gospel. Have you got a message for others? Or are you still drinking milk? If you are able to eat meat, you will have strength to feed others. When you are eating meat, you are always ready to give a message to others. Many young people were saved when I gave my witness to them as a student, because I gave it with all my heart and with a clean heart. Can’t we have victory over the love of money? Can’t we have victory over selfishness? We can! It is possible!

— N. Daniel

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“Grace Abounding”

A convict, who has just finished his term of penal servitude, wishes to lead an honest life. He comes to a man who has a large jewelry establishment and who requires a night watchman. He is engaged to watch this building through the quiet hours of the night when he has everything under his care and every opportunity to rob his employer. On the first evening, he meets one of his old companions, who questions him, “What are you doing here?”

“I’m the night watchman.”

“Over this jeweler’s shop?”

“Yes.”

“Does he know what you are?”

“No, keep quiet; if he knew, I should be fired.”

“Suppose I let it out that you are a returned convict?”

“Oh, please don’t; it would be my last day here, and I wish to be honest.”

“Well, you have to give me some money to keep quiet.”

“Very well, but don’t let anyone know.”

Thus the poor man would live in fear, lest it should come to the ears of his employer what his previous character had been.

Let us suppose, however, that instead of the employer’s engaging the man in ignorance of his character, he went to the convict’s cell and said, “Now I know you—what you are, what you’ve done, every robbery you’ve committed, but I am about to give you a chance of becoming honest. I’ll trust you as my night watchman over my valuable goods.” The man is faithful at his post. He meets an old companion who threatens to inform his employer about his past. He asks, “What will you tell about me?”

“That you were the ringleader of thieves.”

“Yes, but my master knows all that; he knows me better than I know myself.”

Of course, this silences his companion forever. Jesus Christ is the only Master who is “full of grace and truth.” Jesus Christ is gracious to you and me because He knows the truth about us, that we deserve nothing but hell. But through His grace heaven can be our share, if we personally and by faith appropriate His grace.

- F.B. Meyer

“Seven Brothers”

Seven unmarried brothers lived together in a large house. Six went out to work each day but one stayed home. He had the place all lit up when the other six arrived home from work. He also had the house warm, and most importantly, had a delicious, full-course dinner ready for his hungry brothers.

One day the six brothers decided that the one that had been staying home should go to work. “It’s not fair,” they said, “for the one to stay home while the others slaved at a job.” So they made the seventh brother find work too. But when they all came the first night, there was no light, nor was there any warmth, and worst of all, there was no hearty dinner awaiting them. And the next night the same thing: darkness, cold, hunger. They soon went back to their former arrangement.

It’s the day of rest and worship that keeps the other six bright, warm and nourishing. When we desecrate the Lord’s Day, we only hurt ourselves.

- Selected

Another year of trusting, of quiet, happy rest.

Another year of service, of witness for Thy love;

Another year of training for holier work above.

Another year of dawning, Dear Father, let it be,

On earth, or else in heaven, another year for Thee. Amen.

One can well imagine that those who received this greeting card from Miss Havergal that year read her words thoughtfully. They were written by one who had already become widely known throughout England as “the consecration poet.” It was said of her that she always lived her words before she wrote them. Her life was one of constant and complete commitment to God. Her many talents—an accomplished pianist and vocalist, proficiency in seven languages, a keen mind (memorization of the entire New Testament, Psalms, Isaiah, and the Minor Prophets)—were all dedicated to serving God and others during the New Year. May that be our challenge for this New Year as well!

—Selected

REALITY CHECK!

“JESUS SAITH UNTO HIM, I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE: NO MAN COMETH UNTO THE FATHER, BUT BY ME.”

- JOHN 14:6

Christian life, there is ever a person, who does not confront mighty waters some time or other.

I look to the one who alone can make this path. To many of you in your personal lives there may be the desire for sanctification. But somehow, it is slipping away. Somehow you seem to fail. Some evil thoughts still prevail. Some anger, some wicked and covetous desire, some bitterness or some lust is lurking somewhere in the heart. The mighty waters are before you. But what does God say to you? *"I am the Lord, who maketh a path through the mighty waters."* May be, you are despairing about your condition. No, these mighty waters are going to divide by a clear path of victory.

-Joshua Daniel

"Looking Unto Jesus"

Two boys were playing in the snow one day, when one said to the other, *"Let us see who can make the straightest path in the snow."* His companion readily accepted the proposition, and they started. One boy fixed his eyes on a tree, and walked along without taking his eyes off the object selected. The other boy set his eyes on the tree also, and, when he had gone a short distance, he turned, and looked back to see how true his course was. He went a little distance farther, and again turned to look over his steps. When they arrived at their stopping place, each halted and looked back. One path was true as an arrow, while the other ran in a zigzag course. *"How did you get your path so true?"* asked the boy who had made the crooked steps. *"Why,"* said the other boy, *"I just set my eyes on the tree, and kept them there until I got to the end; while you stopped and looked back and wandered out of your course."* This is a perfect picture of the Christian life. If we fix the eyes of our hope, our trust, and our faith upon Jesus Christ, and keep them continually fastened thereon, we will at last land at the desired haven, with flowers of victory.

- Selected

"Abundant Fruitfulness"

"He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." (John 15:5)

There is in the Vine such fullness, the care of the divine Husband-man is so sure of success, that the much fruit is not a demand but the simple promise of what must come to the branch that lives in the double abiding—he in Christ, and Christ in him. *"The same bringeth forth much fruit."* It is certain.

Have you ever noticed the difference in the Christian life between work and fruit? A machine can do work: only life can bear more fruit. A law can compel work: only love can spontaneously bring forth fruit. Work implies effort and labor: the essential idea of fruit is that it is the silent natural restful produce of our inner life.

The gardener may labor to give his apple tree the digging and manuring, the watering and the pruning it needs; he can do nothing to produce the apple: the tree bears its own fruit. So in the Christian life: *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace."* The healthy life bears much fruit: The connection between work and fruit is perhaps best seen in the expression *"fruitful in every good work"* (Colossians 1:10). It is only when good works come as the fruit of the indwelling Spirit that they are acceptable to God.

Under the compulsion of law and conscience, or the influence of inclination and zeal, men may be most diligent in good works, and yet find that they have but little spiritual result. There can be no reason but this—their works are man's effort,

instead of being the fruit of the Spirit, the restful, natural outcome of the spirit's operation within us.

Let all workers come and listen to our holy Vine as He reveals the law of sure and abundant fruitfulness: *"He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit."* The gardener cares for one thing—the strength and healthy life of his tree: the fruit follows of itself. If you would bear fruit, see that the inner life is perfectly right, that your relation to Christ Jesus is clear and close.

- Andrew Murray

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University of Michigan Mondays 7:00pm
Angell Hall, Room G-144
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