

# Christ is Victor

MAR/APR 2003

## “God Ruleth in the Affairs of Men”

*“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”*

*James 1:2-4*

God tells us in the Book of James that we can count it all joy when we go through trials and tribulations. He isn't saying we have to be happy when we suffer a loss. Rather, we can have confidence that a just and loving and merciful Father is working everything out for the good of His perfect will — and we can rejoice because God uses moments of crisis to reveal where we have anchored our hope. Have we anchored our hope in the circumstances that surround us? Or have we anchored our hope on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness?

I heard a testimony of a couple a few years ago who lost their daughter Kathryn. They told how easy it was, even as Christians, to become angry with God. They asked God to save Kathryn, and it seemed He didn't answer their prayer. *“But slowly... very slowly...we began to realize that our perspective was limited,*

... “RULETH” CON'T ON PAGE 4

## “Crucified with Christ”

*“And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” (John 12:32)*

Jesus is speaking about His death on the cross. The difference between Christianity and other religions is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This truth and atonement, you can find in no other religion. Hindu sages tried hard to overcome the world and sin. They went into the forest, subjected their bodies to difficult conditions, and ate only vegetarian food. They subjected their bodies to severe fasting. In spite of all this, they could not find victory over their bodies or the way of salvation.

Buddha tried meditation and subjecting his body to severe fasting to gain salvation. Kill your desires, adopt nonviolence and attain Nirvana, he preached. This also is a path of defeat.

All men have sinned. They have also inherited a sinful nature by birth. Man has tried to find remedy for both sins committed and the sinful nature that runs in his veins. The One who created the first Adam, sent the second Adam into this world to redeem the fallen men. Jesus, the second Adam, lived a holy, perfect life and was lifted up on the cross to die, thus to atone for our sins. To remedy the sin nature, He who was nailed to the cross, draws us also up to His cross. Here, our sin nature is crucified with Him. Jesus draws sinners to His cross so that they may obtain forgiveness of sins through His death.

After this, He draws them to have a life crucified with Him so that they are de-

livered from sin nature. There was no other who had a sinless body like Jesus, in this world. This Lamb of God carried away our sins in His body to the cross and died. He rose again with the authority to forgive sins. No other person has the power to forgive our sins.

Another grace also is granted to those who look at the cross. The desires of the flesh die. To subject the body to severe denials through one's will-power is the same

as strangling one's body with a rope. Even if you go to the grave this way, your sins and your sin nature will still be upon you. When you starve your body and make it weaker and weaker, it may appear to you that the desires of the flesh have died. But

they will be still there. When the surface of the earth is dry for want of rain, the seeds or bulbs that lie in it do not sprout. Those who try to dry up the body are just like that.

The cross of Jesus is the remedy for us. *“That sin may not reign in our mortal body, the old man is crucified with Christ.”* If we die with Christ, we will also live with Him. That is, if through faith, we appropriate or enter into the death of Christ, the body of sin, dies to sin. Sin will not reign over us. Through faith we are saved. And again, through faith, we are crucified with Him. We, who once wholeheartedly gave ourselves to sin are redeemed from sin, that we may become wholeheartedly, the servants of righteousness. The result is that holiness becomes our portion. The gain thereof is eternal life.

This is a mysterious experience, which becomes ours through faith. Have we found

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*“The difference between Christianity and other religions is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.”*

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new life in Jesus Christ? If so, it is good. But have you been crucified with Jesus? Through our body we contact the world, and the desires of the world enter our body. These lusts try to captivate our will and rule over the soul. There is no power on earth that can deliver from this servitude or slavery. Our spirit should be subject to the Holy Spirit who has quickened it. And our will should be under the control of the spirit. This transformation is called being born again. Everyone who is converted tries to bring his will under the authority of his spirit which is controlled by the Holy Spirit.

Our will which was a slave to the desires of this world, completely unites with the will of God, when we are crucified with Christ. As we take hold of the Word of God in prayer, our inner being which is being taught by the Spirit of God bridles our will and leads it into God's way.

As you look at the cross, your defeats will disappear and will be replaced by victory. As you meditate on the cross, your ugly and evil nature gives place to holy desires. When you are thus lifted up, you will lift others also. He who is lifted up to be crucified with Christ becomes a powerful man to attract others. The spiritual magnetic field around him keeps growing. As you fill your heart abundantly with the Word of God, this inner part of you, which is able to hold your will in its grip will be getting stronger. As your obedience to God's word increases, your power to attract others increases. If an ordinary strip of iron is strapped with a magnet, that piece of iron becomes a magnet too. As you look at the cross, you are changed into a spiritual magnet. You will draw other plain pieces of iron towards you.

Those who are crucified with Christ become those who rise again with Him. There is

no defeat to such people. When Jesus was crucified, He obtained complete victory over the world, and was lifted above all the power of the enemy. Those who partake of His death and resurrection, share in this authority. Please read the sixth chapter of Romans, a hundred times and meditate over it. Appropriate the power in the death and resurrection of Jesus, with a body that is dead unto sin and a spirit that is alive unto God. Then in every place that the sole of your foot shall tread, you will see victory.

O Christian, have you won your village for Jesus? If you are crucified and buried with Jesus, you will surely win your town for Jesus Christ. You will not be distracted by looking at others but you will pray, gather a prayer group around you and intercede until your town is won for Christ. Even if you be a lone man like Elijah, you will still win, or else if you work with a team like Nehemiah, you will win. The glory of Christ will be seen in every place which you tread. You will be a co-worker with Christ. Love, faith, humility and holiness will spring out of you, as of themselves. The fruit of the Spirit will come out of those who are crucified with Christ.

You will see victory in your family life. You will win back those children of yours who have strayed out of the way. While you are praying, the spiritual drawing power in you, goes towards the lost and takes hold of them. It will take hold of your wife, it can take hold of your husband. When you were converted, the Lord gave you a pure heart and a clean conscience. In order to preserve and strengthen the pure heart and clean conscience, you need to be crucified. Paul speaks of this experience in Galatians 2:20. *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."*

—Late Mr. N. Daniel

## “The Importance of Example”

One evening a couple years ago, we were getting ready for supper. While Dana, my wife, was putting the food on the table, I asked my three children what they wanted to drink

“You can have milk, juice, or water”, I said.

Michael and Manda, my two youngest, both said they wanted milk. Matthew, my oldest who was almost 5 years old at the time, asked me, *“What are you having, Daddy?”*

*“Well, I’ll probably have water,”* I answered.

*“I’ll have water, too,”* Matthew decided.

I got the milks for Michael and Manda, then decided that milk sounded pretty good. *“I’m having milk, too,”* I announced, and poured out another glass for myself.

*“Then I’ll have milk, too,”* Matthew informed me.

*“Changed your mind? Okay, I’ll get you milk, too.”*

During the meal, I asked my wife to pass the corn. *“I’ll have some, too, Daddy,”* Matthew told me.

I was starting to notice a trend.

*“Matthew,”* I said, *“If I went outside and ate some dirt for dessert, would you want some, too?”*

He giggled. *“Yes,”* he said.

*“If I ate a bug, would you eat one, too?”* I questioned.

More giggles. *“Ew. A bug?”* he questioned, wrinkling his face.

*“Yep. A great big fat juicy one. Would you eat one if I ate one?”*

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“Yes,” he said, laughing.

“Why would you eat dirt or a bug if I ate one, Matthew? Don’t you think that would taste yucky? Why would you eat it just because I did?” I asked him.

“Cause you’re my Daddy!” he said proudly.

I don’t remember the rest of the dinner conversation. I’m pretty sure my wife tried to turn the conversation away from dirt and bugs at the dinner table. But Matthew’s words stuck with me, and I thought about it the rest of the evening.

“Cause you’re my Daddy.”

I think it was then that I truly recognized the awesome responsibility I had in raising my children. Until that point, I had tried to be a good father. I tried to teach my kids to be good kids. But at that moment, I realized exactly how much of an impact I was having.

My children, whether I notice it or not, are watching my and Dana’s every move. As the saying goes, “*Actions speak louder than words,*” and I think this holds double for children. For at least the first few years, everything they learn about life, how to act, how to treat other people, they learn by watching Mommy and Daddy.

If Daddy treats Mommy with love and kindness and respect, they will treat her the same way.

If Daddy is friendly to people he meets, they will learn to be friendly, too.

If Daddy reads his Bible and prays frequently, they will learn the importance of God in their lives.

If Daddy is always honest, they will learn the value of telling the truth.

Of course, the opposite is also true.

If Daddy and Mommy aren’t nice to each other and argue a lot, the children will treat their parents and siblings the same way, and they will learn how to argue and backtalk.

If Daddy is grouchy, and curses at the driver in front of him on the way to the store, they will learn to curse and put down other people.

If Daddy tells Mommy to tell the person who telephoned that he’s not home, they will learn that it is okay to lie.

If Daddy goes to church occasionally, but doesn’t live a Christian life, they will learn how to be hypocrites.

With each of our children, I realize that I only have a few years before there will be other influences in their lives, competing with me in how and what my children learn. Some of these influences will be positive, and some will not. And some will be stronger influences than I am.

Soon, Matthew, Manda, and Michael will be spending more time with schoolmates and friends than with Mommy and Daddy. They’ll be learning how to act from the older kids down the street. They’ll be seeing things on TV that we may not be able to control, such as watching movies at a friend’s house.

They’ll be exposed to the “real world”.

It’s our job, as parents, to do our best to prepare them for the real world, and to teach them how to act and to treat others. We have to teach them how to make good decisions when faced with choices. We have to teach them how to distinguish right from wrong. We have to teach them discipline, positive attitude, friendship, love, and prayer.

And we have to show them by our example. It’s not enough just to tell them. We have to show them. We have to live the way we want them to learn to live.

They’ll do what we do. They’ll act how we act. They’ll say the things we say. They’ll treat people the way we treat people. They’ll pray and worship the way we do.

Matthew, at least for now, will try to be like me. That will change as he gets older and new role models enter his life. But in the meantime, I’m it. I’m the role model. And that’s a huge responsibility. And one I take very seriously.

‘Cause I’m his Daddy.

— Selected

**“...when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.” (Matt 13:45-46)**

Each of us is a collector. Some collect coins, stamps, baseball cards, paintings and the list goes on. If you analyze yourself you will find that you are a collector of “treasures.” The Bible says where your treasure is there lies your heart. Are you wasting your time and money when not a single item can go with you after death? You need to obtain the only thing that you can have now and take with you when you die—Eternal Life.

Eternal life is possible from God as a free gift you can choose.

Social work and doing good cannot buy you this eternal life. You can’t throw up a rope and climb to Heaven—it has to be dropped down. When you admit to your helplessness and hopelessness and call out to Him from your heart, He will listen and help you.

When you know that you are going to lose even your dime, what have you to lose by calling on God’s mercy and pardon through Jesus? You only have eternal life to gain! Go ahead! Choose for yourself.

— Selected

**REALITY CHECK!**

“FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE.”

(JOHN 3:16)

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## "He was wounded for our transgressions"

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." *Isaiah 53:5*

In the book of Isaiah, in chapter 53, we find a portion of Scripture of unrivalled beauty and poignancy. Please read the whole passage, where, so clearly and graphically Isaiah foretold the propitiatory death of Christ. But bear in mind that Isaiah prophesied thus seven hundred years before the event actually took place. That is yet another unique aspect of the Bible. The prophets foretold that the Saviour of all mankind would come and become the supreme sacrifice for man's sin.

The deep-seated desire in the human heart to somehow appease the just wrath of God at man's rebellion and sin, found expression in a variety of sacrifices being offered. Many of these sacrifices were intended to atone for man's sin. But how can any offering, animate or inanimate, expensive or inexpensive, please the heart of the Holy God, to whom our sins are unutterably loathsome and immeasurably offensive? It is inconceivable that we can please the Living God by some gift, and buy our way to Heaven.

But God found the Lamb for the sacrifice—His own Son, who is the express image of His person. Thus while we were without hope, the Saviour came. At a location called Calvary, just outside the walls of Jerusalem, He gave His life as the sacrifice for our sins and the sins of all mankind. It was on a cruel cross, rejected, despised, spat upon and sneered at, that He died.

The colossal cost of Calvary's cross is impossible to calculate. Sin was foreign to Him—He never knew sin. Yet He took upon Himself your sins and my sins. Even we ordinary mortals abhor our sins at times, and even make many futile resolutions not to dirty ourselves again, though all in vain. But the sinless Saviour left Heaven's holy clime and came down to identify Himself with you and me. This is love, at its highest and purest level.

The Bible says, "*Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*" (*Philippians 2:8*). To pay the penalty for man's sin, He had to humble Himself further and the Immortal had to bear the indignity of death and that too the death of a criminal.

His own disciple Judas Iscariot betrayed Him and literally sold Him for thirty pieces of silver. There are many today who betray Christ for far less money than that.

Think of all the greed which our sick modern society has produced. A lie is nothing to them; deceit is a trifle; their body they will give to immorality; their souls they will sell away in acquiring ill-gotten money.

Judas had to choose between money and Christ; he chose money. Many, like Judas, choose money today and throw moral values to the winds and their souls to the devil.

"*He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised and we esteemed him not*" (*Isaiah 53:3*). How tragically true these words are even today! Never did God come as a man to dwell with man, until Jesus came; never did a man walk on earth, sinless and untainted by impurity, until Jesus walked on earth; and yet He was rejected and despised of Men. His matchless purity reproves them too severely of their impurity, so even today men would rather have someone else than Jesus.

It was no sin of His that brought this shameful death upon Him. He was wounded for our transgressions and sin. Taking our sins upon His body not only caused Him physical suffering but was a crushing weight upon His soul.

Let me illustrate. In an army camp an offence was committed by the men in a tent. The major was a strict man and wanted the culprit to own up to his crime as someone in the tent would have to pay the penalty. He would have to bear 50 lashes with the heavy whip. Almost everyone knew who it was but none admitted having done the crime. To the officer's dismay, Willie the little drummer boy stepped forward and asked to be whipped.

It was a cruel scene. The penalty could be no less severe because it was a weak boy who was under the heavy whip. As the stripes were counted out, Willie bravely took the whipping until he could bear no more, and collapsed. Unable to bear the sight of innocent Willie taking his whipping, the real culprit stepped out and asked to be whipped. But once again the penalty was meted out to Willie.

Willie never recovered from the whipping. At Willie's death-bed, the real culprit Robert was found sobbing, "*Willie, why did you do it, why did you take my whipping?*"

Now, the little drummer boy Willie loved Jesus and simply felt he had to take Robert's whipping, although it cost him his life.

Yes, our precious Lord Jesus took our sins upon His own body and died in our place, so that we may be freed from our sins and live this most beautiful and victorious life, which He gives.

— *Joshua Daniel*

that we'd placed our hope in an answer to prayer that we insisted was best rather than trusting in the character of God to answer the prayer as He saw best (*Jer. 29:11*). We had hung our hopes in the wrong place — until God reminded us that we serve a God of hope, and His hope will not disappoint." That is what we have to cling to no matter our circumstances. If, for a single moment, we think God isn't in control, then we've lost our focus; and we're making judgments without all the facts.

Paul told us that — because we have this tremendous hope inside — we shouldn't grieve our losses like other men. We believe Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe God will resurrect those in Christ who've been taken from us. And we're to encourage one another with these words of hope. After all, if our God is not a God in times of trouble, then He isn't a God at all.

— *Rev. Saunders*

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