

# Christ is Victor

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## “If two of you shall agree”

“Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven” (Jesus, Matthew 18:19).

Men seem to think that unless they gather a whole crowd to support their cause, no one will listen to them or be impressed. To focus the attention of the public or the government upon their project or plan, they crank up a mass rally with their supporters or stage noisy demonstrations.

In industry, thousands of valuable man-hours are lost by strikes for every conceivable reason. . . . These striking men are certain that their strength lies in numbers. Politicians too stick to this principle. Take the crowd away from them and they look so sheepish and imbecile.

It is numbers, numbers, numbers; we are brainwashed into thinking that numbers mean everything. But the Lord Jesus said that “if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 18:19).

“If two of you shall agree”: it seems a simple enough thing to achieve, but in reality it is difficult to find two people who will agree on unselfish projects.

Gather two businessmen and say to  
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## “To Obey is Better than Sacrifice”

“Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Samuel 15:22).

This is a statement made by Samuel [a prophet] who wept for Saul’s condition.

Great opportunity was given to Saul to serve God and man as king of Israel. God offers us sublime riches, which are eternal. Saul was only physically qualified. Young people must be strong and healthy. God gives to us Gospel-health also. Do not ever say it is God’s will that I should be sick and suffer. God gives us health and beauty that springs out of a clean heart. A real Spirit-filled man is beautiful. It is your right to claim health. We must have physical courage. When faith comes in, you are much stronger to face evil within and without. Physical courage alone will not do. With physical courage Moses killed a man and fled from [Egypt]. But with spiritual courage he stood before Pharaoh. God’s children fight with the blood of Christ. Is your courage physical or spiritual? We all know of heroes with physical courage, but they fell victims to sin and died eternal death.

“God gave [Saul] another heart” (1 Samuel 10:9). Merely a physically fit man was not good enough for God’s Kingdom until God gave him a new heart. “I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 36:26). God gives his people a new heart, “a heart of flesh”. This heart can withstand temptation. A mighty banyan tree which once withstood many storms fell to the earth. A worm had eaten its roots from one end to the other; so is a man whose faith is not established in Christ.

Saul began to use his power and position for his own glory. Converted men who heal the sick and drive away devils fall an easy prey to pride. “Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?” (1 Samuel 15:19). We have inherited an evil nature from Adam. Adam put the blame for his

disobedience on the woman God gave him. Likewise, Saul blamed the people for his disobedience; but as a king he could overrule the people’s wishes.

[Christians] are sons and daughters of the KING. We have to conform to the discipline of royalty. The Holy Spirit of God teaches us royal discipline. We are given power to glorify God. We are directly responsible to Him as to how we use it. 1 Peter 2:9: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light”. If we conform to this description the words will feed us, the hills will dance!

We are representatives of God. We cannot do as we like. Revelation 5:9-10: “Thou . . . hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.” If people observe your life and see the royal discipline, they cannot brush away your advice or suggestions. King Nebuchadnezzar could not do what he wished with Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Joseph could not be enslaved or imprisoned for long. You think you are younger than others—but God will declare who you are. The life of the living God in you will declare itself. A divine nature is seen operating in you because of the Cross. The dual activity of the Spirit of God works in you the Death and the Resurrection of the Lord.

When a bridge is constructed there are two types of work done—digging and building. You are dying and living. Chastening and correction remove the resistance to the formation of Christ in us. This resistance is hidden deep down unknown to us. God also adds many graces to us through unlearning and learning in the school of God. You are dying and growing. Saul did not die to self. Saul usurped God’s authority. He tried to alter God’s way to accommodate his own way and then he put the blame on others. Do not say your friends persuaded you to disobey God. You cannot testify and preach and also do things as you like.

Many misuse their witness to lift them-

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selves up before people. They fell victims to the devil. When Edward VIII was choosing an unholy marriage alliance, Baldwin (then Prime Minister of England) warned him. The British people loved their country; they could not accept a king who would marry a divorcee. So Edward had to abdicate the throne. You need your time for prayer so that the dual operation of the Holy Spirit can be carried on in you. This discipline is needed if God should use you. . . .

Saul began to do his own will. He did not want the discipline of obedience to God. Samuel told him that obedience was better than sacrifice. Right at the beginning of creation God tried to teach Adam and Eve obedience; they failed to obey. You are a free-willed person. You can choose to submit to God’s discipline. If you do, you will be above kings—even a counsellor to kings. We must be very careful. *Romans 7:5: “For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins . . . did work in our members”.*

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them, “Look, there are too many broken homes in this city. The children of these homes are neglected and love-lorn; in time they will become a danger to society, unless we find some way to shower love upon them. Perhaps you must build a special home for them and set aside part of your money for their care.” They may agree that this would be nice and even necessary to do; but one or the other or both of them will find excuses. . . . How many great plans die at the committee stage itself!

Two men can’t agree; two women rarely agree; two sisters, but they have diametrically opposed views; two leaders, but they use completely different methods. So we have a babel of voices, one crying one thing and another the opposite.

But when a man repents of his sins and receives the New Life in Christ, there comes a great longing in him to do good to his neighbours. It is not an aimless and haphazard scattering of money I am talking about, but a strong, fixed, benevolent longing, to sacrifice, to serve, and to save others. So it is not hard for two young men who are transformed by Jesus’ power to put their hearts and heads together, to launch some great movement which will transform the lives of thousands.

True conversion means renouncing self and reaching out to Christ. When self is

When sin is in us, there are promptings of the flesh. When we are in Christ we become new creatures. *Romans 6:16: “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are . . . ?”* We are servants of God to obey the Word of God. He is pleased with such obedience. Then no evil power can reign over us. So many . . . are possessed by the devil. Parents are not placing their children under the blood of Christ. There are epilepsy and fits due to devil-possession. Parents also suffer and do not know the cause.

It is a royal discipline to have the dual power of the Cross and the Resurrection operating in us. Christians should humble themselves, confess their sins, and identify themselves with the Cross of Christ. They should turn away from sinful pleasures. There is no joy in them.

We are a royal priesthood. Your hands should be preserved clean to heal the sick. Your mouth must be clean to preach the Word of God. Your eyes must be pure to be able to

still strongly entrenched in you, you cannot say you are truly converted. A person who has come to the Cross of Jesus and seen that irresistible love which claims his all—his will, mind, ambitions, and whole personality—truly turns away from doing his own will and begins to do God’s will. Turning from self-will to God’s will is true conversion.

Such a man wants to glorify God, and live a self-denying life. Pleasing the Saviour is his greatest delight. Now for two converted people to pray together and think alike is nothing astonishing. They have the Word of God to unify them. When two people thus pray together with unified hearts and minds, great power is generated; miracles take place; God is right there amongst them. It has been said that the Church is where the Holy Spirit works.

When we pray in Jesus’ Name, it is hardly possible to ask selfish little things from God. Jesus our Lord teaches us to pray for great things, things that build His kingdom.

“If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done . . .” God rarely likes to deny His children. Unless it is absolutely injurious to you, God does not want to withhold a request which comes from united hearts. I meet many young couples who have

look into the hearts of others with all their sufferings.

Study the Word of God and meditate on it. Thus it will go into your heart; it will hold you steady and give you power. You will not cross the instructions of God. Take the Word into your heart. You will live. When you grow into the likeness of Christ many souls will cling to you. . . .

In certain places in Andhra, there [was] drought for . . . years at a stretch. Why did the people allow this? When revival visited those places and people turned to obey the Word of God they learnt to pray. They could pray for rain and also pray that rain may stop and not hinder people from coming to meetings during the dates they fixed. This is how it should be—obedience to the Word of God leading to power in prayer.

—N. Daniel

been married several years but don’t pray together. Living together and yet not praying together! You can reduce your marriage to the purely animal level, but be sure, dire consequences will stem from the neglect of praying together.

From the time I was a child I saw my father and mother praying together daily. Their prayer resulted in our home being a lovely place, full of harmony and peace. In that atmosphere there was health and hardly any painful disease. We enjoyed great security as children. Fear had no place in our home. We knew that when our father prayed God did miracles. So nothing worried us unduly. Mother was gentle on the one hand and firm on the other and

## Reality Check!

**FOR ALL HAVE SINNED,  
AND COME SHORT  
OF THE GLORY OF  
GOD; BEING JUSTIFIED  
FREELY BY HIS  
GRACE THROUGH THE  
REDEMPTION THAT  
IS IN CHRIST JESUS**

**ROMANS 3:23-24**

taught us implicit obedience.

My father and mother made a wonderful team. We children never heard them fighting or arguing about money, but we often heard their voices in prayer. We had many opportunities to see the efficacy of prayer made from clean hearts.

There was a very cultured old lady who lived in our home for a long period. She had held very high government positions and as she desired the fellowship of God's children, my father let her stay with us.

One day, however, she was taken ill with severe abdominal pain. It was an emergency case of intestinal obstruction. But doctors would not operate on her as she was very old and frail. . . . But the suffering became unbearable. We children who had never known our parents' prayer

to fail, were watching the worsening condition with some concern. Whatever was to be done needed to be done quickly.

That night, father and mother spent nearly the whole night in prayer. And the Lord who said, "Whatsoever you agree on earth and pray for, it shall be done," heard their prayer. By the morning the agony ceased and the gentle old lady was healed. Never again did she suffer in that way.

Our motives are very important in prayer. If you want your prayer to be answered purely because it will add to your comfort and prosperity, God is in no way obliged to hear you. Nor should you ask for your prayer to be heard in order that your importance should be enhanced, or that you should gain a reputation among your acquaintances as a man of piety. There

should be nothing selfish in your asking.

Why do you want your health to be restored? Is it to rise up and glorify God and be His true disciple? Why do you ask for promotion? Is it that in that higher post, you want to wield a stronger influence for Jesus and for righteousness, such that all evil or unrighteousness should be banished from your office? If so, God will grant you your desire. I always rejoice when men whom Jesus has transformed—righteous men—come to positions of great responsibility. Get yourself a new heart and begin to pray with those who call on the Lord with a pure heart.

—Joshua Daniel

## **"Holy Ann"**

*"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matthew 6:6). After hearing this Bible verse one Sunday, young Ann Preston—an untaught, unlettered Irish girl—knelt down voluntarily for the first time in her life and began to cry out.*

While crying out, Ann had a powerful revelation of her distress. "I see all the sins that ever I did from the time I was five years old all written on the chair in front of me, every one," she told the mistress for whom she worked. Looking down, Ann cried out: "Oh, ma'am, worse than all, I see hell open ready to swallow me." She began to smite her breast, and cried out, "God be merciful to me, a sin-

ner." Desperation gripped her as she repeatedly cried for mercy.

At midnight, Ann jumped up: "No mercy, Lord, for me?" But as the question passed her lips, assurance filled her heart. Ann always said that as she looked up she saw the Saviour as He was on Calvary, and knew there and then that His blood atoned for her sins. "I felt then something burning in my heart," she would later say, "I just longed for the morning, that I could go home and tell my father and mother what the Lord had done for me."

Ann picked up a Testament, and then prayed her first simple request as a child of God. "O Lord," she said, "You that have taken away this awful burden, intolerable to bear, couldn't You enable me to read one of these little things?" putting her finger on a verse.

She read: "*Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst" (John 4:13-14).*

There is, however, a class of Christian life which God makes possible and Ann did not immediately possess. It is where the human will is surrendered to its Maker, the whole life is consecrated, and the Holy Spirit of God fills the soul. The years proved that Ann had a great battle: an ungovernable temper. She wept over it, confessed it, fought with it—but would fall again.

One evening, Ann heard Psalm 34 read out. Verse 16 impressed itself strongly upon her: "*The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.*" She asked the reader to mark

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the verse for her, went to her room, knelt down, and prayed for light. She opened the Bible at the place where the leaf had been turned down. “You can’t read it,” the devil said. “Well, the Lord will give it to me,” Ann replied. Wonderfully, Ann was enabled to read the verse repeatedly. (From thence, unlettered Ann could read the Bible although no other book.)

While still upon her knees, Ann said: “Lord, what is evil?” The answer came: “Anger, wrath, malice,” and so on. Ann wept and prayed all night long as her inward sinfulness was revealed. Toward morning, she cried out: “O Lord, how shall I know when I get deliverance?” The answer came: “Well, Jacob wrestled until he prevailed.” In her simplicity, Ann asked: “What does ‘prevailed’ mean?” The reply came: “Getting just what you came for and all you want.” Again she queried: “And what will it do for me when I get it?” The reply came back: “It will enable you to rejoice evermore,

*pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks. You will live above the troubles of this world and the things that now upset you.” Ann fervently desired to be sanctified [made holy] throughout—body, soul, and spirit (see 1 Thessalonians 5:23).*

The following day, Ann persisted, pleading Jesus’ promise: “Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you”. She cried: “Lord, I have been knocking all night. Open unto me! Open unto me!” The answer came.

For two hours it seemed as if Ann had entered into heaven. The house was filled with her shouts of praise! The trees appeared to clap their hands and praise God! For eight days, Ann ate nothing for joy. The following years felt as though lived in the heavenly places. When one morning Ann found her lips dumb instead of the usual praise, it was revealed to her that “the just shall live by faith” and that

she should simply trust God. Ann applied these principles and obtained perfect peace.

Ann’s life became a witness to the power of faith, holiness, and ‘prevailing’ in prayer until her death in 1906.

—See **Helen E. Bingham, An Irish Saint: The Life Story of Ann Preston (“Holy Ann”)**

## Come out to our **EASTER RETREAT** April 18-20, 2014

Community Christ Church  
Novi, Michigan

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**ALL ARE WELCOME**

## “Look to Christ and Live!”

While concerned about his soul, young Charles determined to visit all the chapels in his town to find out the way of salvation. He was willing to be and do anything if God would only forgive his sin. Yet he never obtained the answer to his deepest longing: “How can I get my sins forgiven?” One Sunday, a snowstorm prevented Charles from going on to a certain place of worship so he ended up in a little Primitive Methodist Chapel. As the minister did not come that morning, a very thin-looking man, a shoemaker or tailor or something of the sort, finally went up to preach. He had to stick to his text, having little else to say:

“**LOOK UNTO ME, AND BE YE SAVED, ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH**” (Isaiah 45:22a).

Charles thought he saw a glimpse of hope in those words.

The preacher began thus in his broad Essex dialect: “My dear friends, this is a very simple text indeed. It says, ‘Look.’ Now lookin’ don’t take a deal of pains. It ain’t liftin’ your foot or your finger; it is just, ‘Look.’ Well, a man needn’t go to College to learn to look. You may be the biggest fool, and yet you can look. . . . Anyone can look; even a child can look. But then the text says, ‘Look unto Me.’ Ay!” said he, “many on ye are lookin’ to yourselves, but it’s no use lookin’ there. You’ll never find any comfort in yourselves. Some look to God the Father. No, look to Him by-and-by. Jesus Christ says, ‘Look unto Me.’ Some on ye say, ‘We must wait for the Spirit’s workin’.’ You have no business with that just now. Look to Christ. The text says, ‘Look unto Me.’”

Then the man followed up his text in this way: “Look unto Me; I am sweatin’ great drops of blood. Look unto Me; I am hangin’ on the cross. Look unto Me; I am dead and buried. Look unto Me; I rise again. Look unto Me; I ascend to Heaven. Look unto Me; I am sittin’ at the Father’s right hand. O poor sinner, look unto Me! look unto Me!”

At length, the preacher turned to Charles under the gallery and fixing his eyes on him, said, “Young man, you look very miserable.” Well, Charles did. It was a good blow, and struck right home. He continued, “and you always will be miserable—miserable in life, and miserable in death—if you don’t obey my text; but if you obey now, this moment, you will be saved.”

Lifting up his hands, the man shouted, “Young man, look to Jesus Christ. Look! Look! Look! You have nothin’ to do but to look and live.”

Charles saw the way of salvation at once; and he looked indeed. There and then the cloud was gone, the darkness had rolled away, and he saw the sun. He looked, and lived, and leaped in joyful liberty as he beheld his sin punished upon the great Substitute—Jesus—and put away for ever. “I do from my soul confess,” wrote this Charles Spurgeon later, “that I never was satisfied till I came to Christ.”

—See **Charles Spurgeon’s Autobiography**

## Weekly Meetings —Welcome to All—

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**Detroit, MI:** 560 AM (WMUZ) Sat. 5:00 pm

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