

Christ is Victor

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“An ‘Infidel Reporter’: blindness and conversion”

When I was preaching in Baltimore in 1879, an infidel reporter, who believed I was a humbug, came to the meetings with the express purpose of catching me in my remarks. He believed that my stories and anecdotes were all made up, and he intended to expose me in his paper.

One of the anecdotes I told was as follows: A gentleman was walking down the streets of a city some time before. It was near Christmas-time, and many of the shop windows were filled with Christmas presents and toys. As this gentleman passed along, he saw three little girls standing before a shop window. Two of them were trying to describe to the third the things that were in the window. It aroused his attention, and he wondered what it could mean. He went back, and found that the middle one was blind—she had never been able to see—and her two sisters were endeavouring to tell her how the things looked. The gentleman stood beside them for some time and listened; he said it was most interesting to hear them trying to describe the different articles to the blind child—they found it a difficult task.

“That is just my position in trying to tell other men about Christ,” I said; “I may talk about Him; and yet they see no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. But if they will only come to Him, He will open their eyes and reveal Himself to them in all His loveliness and grace.”

After the meeting this reporter came to me and asked where I got that story. I said I had read it in a Boston paper. He told me that it had happened right there in the streets of Baltimore, and that he was the gentleman referred to! It made such an impression on him that he accepted Christ and became one of the first converts in that city.

Many and many a time I have found that when the sermon—and even the text—has been forgotten, some story has fastened itself in a hearer’s mind, and has borne fruit. Anecdotes are like windows to let light in upon a subject. They have a useful ministry.

-D.L. Moody

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“Jesus the Passover lamb”

“And He [Jesus] said unto them [His disciples], With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you” (Luke 22:15-20). Read also Acts 20:1-28.

This Passover took place at night. Jesus gathered His disciples together for the feast. It was the remembrance of the deliverance from the land of sin, the land of oppression and the land of darkness.

God gave them a schedule to follow at the feast. The first Passover feast was held in the land of Egypt. A spotless lamb was to be taken and roasted. No bone in it was to be broken. The blood of the lamb was to be smeared on the doorposts and lintel. That night was a critical night for all the land of Egypt. It was a regular fight between the powers of darkness and the people of God.

Wherever the gospel of Jesus is not preached, the prince of this world reigns and darkness fills the place. “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me,” said Jesus (John 14:30). When Jesus was in this world, He had just enough power to keep the devil away from Himself and His ministry. The devil could find no sin in Jesus. But now the prince of this world was coming and had power to attack Him because He was taking on Himself the sin of this world.

If there is sin in us, the powers of darkness can overcome us. The powers of darkness, when disturbed from their long-standing rulership over a particular area over a long stretch of time, can kill men who are not protected against them. People who practise black magic are ultimately killed by the powers of darkness. The blood of the Passover lamb (Jesus) is complete protection against the

powers of darkness. After smearing the blood on their doorposts, the children of Israel were to eat the flesh of the lamb to gain strength for the long journey defying the armies of Egypt and the powers of darkness. With their waists girded and fully dressed, ready to start on the journey, they were to eat standing. Jesus was celebrating that great deliverance of the people of God.

What a bondage they were in! How they were labouring hard for a foreign king and not for themselves or for their children. They were building treasure cities for Pharaoh. The worst part of their bondage was that their male children were to be thrown into the river. They laboured and laboured days without end and in vain. Men of this world who only labour to gather wealth for themselves and their children, not labouring at all for the kingdom of God, are labouring in vain. They are labouring for a kingdom destined to fail.

The blood is of the utmost significance. People do not know it. Therefore a very shallow religion is the result. The blood has eternal power. When we observe the Holy Communion, we remember the death of Jesus who was slain for us. Through His blood we get complete protection. When we eat His flesh, we are taking in a sustaining power. His flesh is His Word. When we believe His word, meditate on it and take it in, we are taking in a sustaining power. This is a mystic observance conceived by an infinite mind. We must come to it well prepared or we are doing it to our own damnation.

The Passover had to be eaten with bitter herbs to remind them of the bitter bondage in Egypt. You have to eat the lamb. The flesh (His Word) is to be roasted in the fire (the Holy Spirit). The fire of heaven prepares for you the Word of God, so that when you take it in, a great power comes into your spirit. Whenever you remember the death of Jesus, the powers of darkness cannot attack you through your thoughts or imaginations or your memory or your affections. The blood of Jesus protects us from all sin.

—N. Daniel

“God answers prayers”

“I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications” (Psalm 116:1).

Rosalind Goforth (1864-1942), who helped to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to China, recounted personal lessons in the life of faith in *How I Know God Answers Prayer*. She made a public confession of Christ as her Saviour at the age of eleven. Below are a few accounts of answered prayer.

“ALL THESE THINGS” FOR A CHILD OF THE FATHER

“About a year after my confession of Christ, an incident occurred which greatly strengthened my faith, and led me to look to God as a Father in a new way.

“When Easter Sunday morning came it was so warm only spring clothes could be worn. My sister and I decided at breakfast that we could not go to church, as we had only our old winter dresses. Going to my room, I turned to my Bible to study it, when it opened at Matthew 6, and my eye rested on these words: ‘Why take ye thought for raiment? ... Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.’

“It was as if God spoke the words directly to me. I determined to go to church, even if I had to humiliate myself by going in my old winter dress. The Lord was true to His promise; I can still feel the power the resurrection messages had upon my heart that day so long ago. And further, on the following day a box came from a distant aunt, containing not only new dresses but much else that might well be included in the ‘all these things.’”

A HEALING TOUCH

Years later, when Rosalind was a missionary and mother in China, the Lord healed one of her children:

“In May, 1898, we started down to Tientsin by houseboat with our children for a much-needed rest and change. Cold, wet weather soon set in. Twelve days later, as we came in sight of Tientsin, with a bitter north wind blowing, our eldest child went on deck without his overcoat, in disobedience to my orders. Shortly after the child came in with a violent chill. That afternoon, when we arrived in Tientsin, the doctor pronounced the verdict—pneumonia.

The following day, shortly after noon, a second doctor, who had been called in consultation, met a friend on his way from

our boy’s bedside and told her he did not think the child could live till morning. I had taken his temperature, and found it to be 106. He was extremely restless, tossing in the burning fever. Sitting down beside him, with a cry to the Lord to help me, I said distinctly: “P—, you disobeyed me, and have thus brought this illness upon yourself. I forgive you; ask Jesus to forgive you, and give yourself to Him.”

The child looked at me for a moment steadily, then closed his eyes. I saw his lips move for a moment; then quietly he sank into a sound sleep. When he awoke, about dusk, I took his temperature, and found it 101. By the time the doctor returned it was normal, and did not rise again. Although he had been having haemorrhage from the lungs, this ceased.

Is not Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever? Why should we wonder, therefore, at His healing touch in this age? “According to your faith be it unto you.”

CONDITIONS OF PREVAILING PRAYER

The following are conditions laid down in God’s Word for answers to prayer, summed up in the word “abide”:

1. Contrite humility before God and forsaking of sin – “*If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land*” (2 Chronicles 7:14).

2. Seeking God with the whole heart – “*Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart*” (Jeremiah 29:12, 13).

3. Faith in God – “*For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them*” (Mark 11:23, 24).

4. Obedience – “**And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight**” (1 John 3:22).

5. Dependence on the Holy Spirit – “*Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit Itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*” (Romans 8:26).

6. Importunity – see Mark 7:24-30; Luke 11:5-10.

7. Must ask in accordance with God’s will – “*And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us*” (1 John 5:14).

8. In Christ’s name – “*And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in My name, I will do it*” (John 14:13, 14).

9. Must be willing to make amends for wrongs to others – “*Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift*” (Matthew 5:23, 24).

—Rosalind Goforth, *How I Know God Answers Prayer*

Reality Check!

“AND WHEN HE [BARTIMAEUS, A BLIND BEGGAR] HEARD THAT IT WAS JESUS OF NAZARETH, HE BEGAN TO CRY OUT, AND SAY, JESUS, THOU SON OF DAVID, HAVE MERCY ON ME. &HELLIP AND JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO HIM, WHAT WILT THOU THAT I SHOULD DO UNTO THEE? THE BLIND MAN SAID UNTO HIM, LORD, THAT I MIGHT RECEIVE MY SIGHT”

(MARK 10:47, 51).

“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 forever. “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

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EASTER RETREAT

MAR. 25-27, 2016

Community Christ Church
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ALL ARE WELCOME

CHRIST IS VICTOR Volume 29, No.2

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This Fellowship is an inter-denominational missionary and prayer group working for revival in churches and amongst students in several countries. We invite every layperson to become God’s ally in changing his or her corner of the world. We train people in evangelistic work and to be self-supporting missionaries.

- u USA: P.O. Box 14, South Lyon, MI 48178, Phone – (248) 446-3080
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- u EMAIL: post@lefi.org

“Jesus: Rock of offence”

“As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion [Zion] a stumbling stone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed” (Romans 9:33).

Men hardly know what to love and what to hate. They seem to cling to those things, which will most certainly destroy them and their families. They hate those who seek to free them from their folly.

We run a small school, not far from the elephant jungles at the foothills of the Nilgris Mountains. This school provides employment for four unemployed young women. There are only twenty-six children on the rolls.

About 5 miles away from our school, closer to civilisation, there is a large High School, whose founder, a charitable and philanthropic man, has one pronounced quality—he hated anything which has to do with Christ. One of our young men, who had been healed and transformed miraculously by the Lord Jesus, visited some of the High School boys there to talk to them of the Saviour, once a week, under the shade of the trees. This otherwise charitable man objected to this informal meeting. Our young man, who had himself been an inordinate idolater once, discontinued the meeting. I would like to meet this man and speak of the irresistible beauty of Jesus.

So many just know no better. They meet some nominal Christian who is a crook, or probably they have known a Mr. Peter or a John, well-known church men speaking lies unashamedly, or they have been told by a wholly prejudiced parent: “Avoid everything that has to do with Christ or Christianity as the plague.” So their minds are totally shut against Christ. Doubtless, this is a rather ignorant attitude, but it’s there, even in apparently knowledgeable circles. Besides all this of course, there is in the heart of every sinner a strange unjustifiable antipathy towards Christ. The devil teaches everyone who belongs to him to hate Christ.

The Bible says, “I lay in Sion [Zion] a stumbling block and Rock of offence.” What a name for Jesus, Rock of Offence! We involuntarily shy away from people who emit offensive odours. I hate the smell of fermented liquor. Most sea-front shops in France have a strong odour of beer. I can smell beer from the breath of the people. But what can be offensive in the adorable Saviour Jesus? Why stumble at Jesus?

I sometimes ask people, “What has Jesus done against you? Why do you hate Him? What has Jesus done against your country or your family?” Of course they have nothing to say. It’s a blind, irrational, mindless hate.

God wants us to obey Him and His word. Now that is very unpleasant and undesirable to men. They want a freewheeling, self-seeking life, wherein all is grey and therefore acceptable and nothing is black. God’s word the Bible sheds such light, that nothing is left in

doubt as to whether it is black or white. The Bible calls a spade a spade. Sin is sin and unrighteousness is unrighteousness. There can be no quibbling about it.

Men can be most unreasonable. Why don’t people say: “Why should I be required to drive on the left or right side of the road according to the law of the country? I want freedom to drive whichever side I fancy driving.” That way you will soon land in the morgue, in driving like a madman on the wrong side of the road. No sensible man will talk like that.

But when it comes to the Lord Jesus a wholly unreasonable attitude is overwhelmingly present: “Why should I yield my life to Jesus, I prefer to live my own life!” they exclaim. We like to run away from places infested with serpents and poisonous reptiles, or a place where cholera is killing men by the hundreds. But why run away from Jesus?! Why stumble at Jesus?!

A woman, who had hated the Lord Jesus greatly as a young girl, told us her amazing story. Studying in a Christian school, this girl once flung the Bible across the room in anger. Her Hindu father admonished her, saying that she should never do such a thing with a sacred book. Yet she continued to hate Christ for no apparent reason. One day as she looked at some beautiful flowers, she said: “The Lord who made these lovely flowers must be Himself exceedingly beautiful.” Yet she could think of none of the deities she knew who fitted such a description, a most beautiful God. While she hated the Lord Jesus she could think of none else who could be thought of as being impeccably lovely. The Lord Jesus then met her, forgave her sins and satisfied her heart completely. She forthwith declared her faith in Jesus to her family.

Her dad and elder brother were quite upset. They tried hard to dissuade her from following the Lord Jesus. Then threats followed and then savage thrashing which included belabouring her mercilessly with their shoes. Under one such hail of ferocious blows, she fainted. When she regained consciousness, she began to sing of the Lord Jesus. Then they set upon her again with unrelenting fury.

Finally, when they found that the vicious beating which they repeatedly gave her produced no results, they called for a guru who claimed to have magical powers. They were convinced that their girl was under a spell or a demon-possession.

They shut her in with this guru, who sat right in front of her, fixing her with his mesmeric gaze. He started and stared and [became] quite exhausted with his incantations and tricks. They all seemed to have no effect on this girl of tender years. Then he fled from the room, saying, “The power, which is in this girl, is greater than all the powers at my command.” The Rock of offence, Jesus, had become her adorable Lord and Saviour. What a deliverance from blind hate and unreasoning

antipathy this girl found!

Is my precious Saviour, who has been such an unfaithful friend to me, since my youth, still the stumbling stone and Rock of offence [to] you? Down through history, there was never another so unreasonably set aside as Jesus.

But hark to the promise of God, “He that believeth on Him shall not be ashamed.” This is true. I have proved [this to be the case] tens of millions of times. Will you also make Jesus the Chief cornerstone of your life? Then you’ll never be shaken, never be put to shame.

Never be ashamed of Jesus. Never say, “I will lose my friends and my standing in my office.” The Lord Jesus knows how to lead and guide His own children, such that they are not plunged into confusion.

—Joshua Daniel

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