

Christ is Victor

MAY/JUN 2006

From Confusion to Peace- A Young Man's Search for Meaning

I was born in a Hindu family in India, and I was a strong believer in the caste system. I worshipped idols from my youth. When I was a small boy, I would go to the temples and bow down before the idols. At the age of seven, my family went to Canada, and there also I continued to believe in Hinduism for some time. But at a young age, I became interested in finding out more about God. Then someone told me about Christianity. I began to read a New Testament in secret, not wanting my parents or anyone else to find out.

In those days, I was very afraid of what would happen to me after death. I wondered whether there was a heaven and hell and if Jesus Christ was real. I wondered if God even existed.

Thus, in a way, I was searching for God. But when I went into grades 7, 8, and high-school, the sins of the flesh began to take a stronger hold on me and I began to seek the things of the world. I was too afraid to go to church at that time. I began to read pornographic magazines, I was running after girls, and I was going to the dances and the movies. My thoughts became very corrupted as I watched many hours of television. I could not look on a girl with clean eyes by the time I was in grade 12 and 13. I became a slave to the sin of masturbation at this time, and there was no deliverance for me from these sins.

In about grade 10, I overcame my fears and began to attend a church. I started to go to the youth group and to the Sunday services. Because I went regularly to church, the

... "PEACE" CON'T ON PAGE 4

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God's Mercy and Truth at Calvary

"Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."

(Psalm 89: 14-16)

One of the attributes of God which we seem to neglect and not take into account is that the Lord is Just. He does not in any sense reward us with any kind of harshness or vengefulness or vindictiveness. He is just; He is obliged to be just.

"Justice and Judgment are the habitation of your throne". So God clearly demarcates between evil and good, righteousness and unrighteousness: and those who are his children do likewise. They do not compromise with evil, they have a true sense of justice. They do not want injustice and oppression to be perpetuated, and today we see many people just turn and look away when they are confronted with evil or injustice or greed or graft or corruption. No, God obviously visits those who have no regard for moral values in judgment. That is why we dare not have an inanimate God. We dare not have a God of our own making. We dare not make an image and call it God.

God is God. His holiness is so basic that when you come with people who do not even know that God is holy, you simply cannot fathom such people. They do not have a true sense of direction, they cannot have it. Their compass is false. They are totally misdirected in their ways because God is not in their hearts. When the Lord Jesus Christ comes into our hearts we love to see justice, in our courts of law, in our judges, in our magistrates, on our streets and in our offices. We do not want to gain any undue advan-

tage over some weak person. We don't want to see the poor oppressed. We don't want to turn away or look the other way, when someone is doing harm to another.

Today we are confronted with a situation where people do not want to get involved. On the other hand, a Christian is involved. He is involved with these issues of Righteousness, of Judgment, of Love, and of Mercy. The Bible tells us that Mercy and Truth shall go before His face. So if God is with you and God is directing you the same will happen to you.

Mercy, oh, how marvelous! Mercy for a sinner! Mercy for the man who has grieved God and broken His heart! Mercy for the one who has been responsible to break the heart of God. Your sin and my sin are responsible for Calvary. You sin and my sin came upon the sinless body of the Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, through His death and resurrection, there is mercy offered for us. Truth says, *"Now this man has fallen short, this man can never enter the Kingdom of Heaven, this man has gone contrary to My law, the truth. This man has trampled down the truth, so there can be no place for this man in Heaven."*

Now Mercy says, *"Yes, because this man has acknowledged that in the Cross of Jesus Christ his sin has been dealt with, because this man has confessed the truth about himself that he is a sinner and has come short of the glory of God, there is mercy for him."* What a wonderful God we have! Mercy for the sinner. Mercy for you and me.

Therefore we rejoice in God our Saviour. You remember the song of Mary, *"My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour"* (Luke 1:46,47)

What is the cause of our rejoicing today? You know the excitements pass over so quickly and leave an aftermath of pain and sorrow, a sense of guilt and shame. Most of the joys of this world are evanescent, ephemeral; they pass

away and leave a bitter taste behind. But a man who rejoices in the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, his is an enduring joy. You know it is to be experienced, cannot be explained. So you had better take hold of Jesus and experience this joy- the joys which are for evermore, the pleasures which are at God's right hand. You know today's religion seems to be getting pleasure as quickly as possible, and at any price and at the cost of anybody. You want to tread over bodies, tread over lives, walk over virginity, but obtain pleasure.

Now that kind of pleasure, that selfish pleasure does not satisfy. It can only bring guilt and sorrow and a backwash of disease and misery and death. Here we are told, "In your righteousness shall they be exalted." For those who love God's righteousness, for those who are willing to pay the price to establish, and to work our righteousness, there is a price to be paid. "You will be hated," the Lord Jesus Christ told us. "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved." (Matthew 10:22).

Now there is a price to be paid for righteousness. People may hate you, slander you, and look askance at you, but "in your righteousness you shall be exalted." As we are full of Jesus, He sets us apart as the sons of God. We are clothed upon by His righteousness. I do not mean, my friend, that this is a theoretical righteousness but this is a practical righteousness which I am referring to. When the Lord Jesus was touched by that woman who had an issue of blood for twelve years, virtue went out of Him. You know power went out of Him, and she was healed. His righteousness is a healing righteousness, it is not a condemning righteousness; it is not a Pharisaic righteousness; it is a river of blessing- a river that brings righteousness.

— Joshua Daniel

The Importance of Restitution

If you have ever taken money dishonestly, you need not pray God to forgive and fill you with the Holy Spirit until you make restitution. If you have not got the money now to pay back, will to do it, and God accepts the willing mind. Many people are kept in darkness and unrest because they fail to obey God on this point. If the plough has gone deep, if the repentance is true, it will bring forth fruit. What use is there in my coming to God until I am willing, like Zacchaeus, to make it good, if I have done any person wrong or have taken anything falsely? Confession and restitution are the steps that lead up to forgiveness.

There was a friend of mine who had come to Christ and was trying to consecrate himself and his wealth to God. He had formerly had transactions with the government, and had taken advantage of them. This came to memory, and his conscience troubled him. At last he drew a check for the amount he had underpaid and sent it to the Treasury of the government. He told me he received great blessing after he had done it. That is bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. I believe a great many men are crying to God for light; and many are not getting it because they are not honest.

A man came to one of our meetings, when the subject of restitution was touched upon. The memory of a dishonest transaction flashed into his mind. He saw at once how it was that his prayer were not answered, but "returned into his own bosom," as the Scripture phrase puts it. He left the meeting, took the train, and went to a distant city, where he had defrauded his employer years before. He went straight to this man, confessed the wrong, and offered to make restitution. Then he remembered another transaction, in which he had failed to meet the just demands upon him; he at once made ar-

rangements to have a large amount repaid. He came back to the place where we were holding the meetings, and God blessed him wonderfully in his own soul. I have not met a man for a long time who seemed to have received such a blessing.

When I was in Canada a man told me that when he was a boy a man gave him by mistake a piece of money that was called in Canada a "ten shilling" piece. It was just about the size of a quarter of a dollar, and it was gold. Instead of giving the boy a silver shilling, as intended, the man gave him a gold ten shilling piece by mistake, and the boy kept it. The next day the man came back to the boy and said, "When I made change with you yesterday, didn't I give you a ten shilling piece instead of a one shilling piece?" The boy lied, "No, sir, you did not."

For forty-three years that man had that lie on his conscience. At last the Spirit of God got hold of him and he became a Christian. He no longer knew where to find the man so he just figured up to interest and handed principal and interest to an orphanage. So he got off his conscience at last. If you have anything on your conscience, straighten it out at once. If your mind goes back to some transaction with your neighbour in which you cheated him, pay back every dollar at once.

— D.L. Moody

Little Faith in A Great God

There was a woman in a community who was well known for her simple faith and great calm in the midst of many trials. Another woman who had never met her but had heard of her came to visit one day. "I must find out the secret of her calm, happy life," she thought to herself.

As she met her she said: "So you are

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the woman with the great faith I've heard so much about."

"No," came the reply. *"I am not the woman with the great faith, but I am the woman with the little faith in the great God."*

— Selected

Spurious Christians

Cliff Robinson, a Quaker missionary, was serving in Calcutta many years ago and he narrated the following tragic story.

One day, law and order broke down completely on the streets of Calcutta. In the section where Cliff was living, a vast group of young Muslims formed a kind of radical revolutionary army and seized control of that area, which was predominately a Hindu part of town. Cliff and his wife Betty watched from the third floor of their apartment as the mob came down the street. The angry Muslims went from house to house, pulling out the people and beating them, often killing them in cold blood.

Suddenly they came to a street where a group of Christians were living. They were personal friends of Cliff, four Christian families living side by side in four little apartments. In those days Christians painted a huge red cross on their houses or cars or doors to tell everybody, *'Leave us out of this, we are not Hindus, we are not Muslims.'* And so these four Christian families had huge red crosses painted on their front doors.

As the young Mohammedans came down the street they stopped in front of the first door with a red cross. Cliff couldn't hear them, the noise being too great, but he could see that they were talking with one another. They reached the second apartment, and eventually passed by that door. But at the third door the young men in the army began quite an argument.

Suddenly one of the leaders bashed that door open and rushed into that home despite the red cross. They pulled out the screaming occupants, men, women and children, and slaughtered them right there on the streets with

their swords. Cliff couldn't figure it out. The first door with the cross was all right, the second door was all right, the fourth door was all right. What was so different about that third door? It had the same cross, but those people were killed.

After law and order was restored, Cliff began to investigate. He learned that the people who lived in that third home were carpenters by trade. Although they were Christians, they had been carving Hindu idols on the side and selling them in the bazaar to make a little extra money. When those fierce monotheistic Muslims, who spit at the very sight of an idol, heard that those so-called Christians had carved Hindu idols, they said, *'They're not Christians. We don't care what they profess. They have idols in their homes, and they deserve to die.'* So they wiped out the household.

It's a sad story but one that is enacted in many of our lives. We have a cross on the door and claim that the true and living God rules our lives, but we have allowed an idol to become our priority. As the second commandment says, we must not make an idol of anything, even something good. Idolatry is worshipping that which should be used, or using that which should be worshipped.

Is there an idol in your heart? Can Christ look down into your heart and say, *'There is a rival for my claim over your total personality. You're not all mine?'*

'Little children, beware of idols.' The Lord your God is a jealous God who will tolerate no rival.

—Selected

Crown of Thorns

"Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb to heaven, thence will I bring them down" (Amos 9:2)

God is speaking to the Israelites. Some of them thought that they could escape God. But God says they cannot escape Him. Young people forget that God is watching them and searching them so that He may bless them. How is He trying to bless them? He wishes to give them His nature. But people are afraid of coming into a

living touch with God. When people were worshipping other gods in the Old Testament times, He told them, *"Seek ye first the Lord."* Then He gave them the law. After the people were given the law through Moses, He taught them, *"Seek ye first the kingdom of God."* He could not teach both at the same time. You cannot teach Calculus till you have first taught Algebra. You must know Algebra to understand Calculus.

A lawless people were given the law and they became a moral people. *"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command them."* (Deuteronomy 18:18) They were to receive a spiritual law through Jesus. When Christ came, He brought them the true life- His very life. In Him was the promise, *"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh"* (Ezekiel 36:26)

Moses saw God in the burning bush. We see God in the bleeding cross. They are both very different. They present two different facets of God. The cross is a new aspect of God. The people of the Old Testament saw God as a disciplinarian. They did not see the God of love. No one but Jesus could reveal the God of love. Neither Elijah nor Moses nor any of the prophets of the Old Testament times could represent the God of love.

In Christ, mercy and truth are met together (Psalm 85:10). David was blessed of God. He obtained a kingly crown. But Jesus appears to us with a crown of thorns and suffering yet He is the King of kings. Unfortunately Christians

... "CROWN" CON'T ON PAGE 4

REALITY CHECK!

"CONFESS YOUR FAULTS ONE TO ANOTHER, AND PRAY ONE FOR ANOTHER, THAT YE MAY BE HEALED. THE EFFECTUAL FERVENT PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN AVAILETH MUCH."

JAMES 5:16

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people there took me for a Christian. I would come forward at the altar call saying that I accept Christ, and I would raise my hand when they asked for a decision. But even when I did all these things, there was no change in my life. There was no deliverance from my unclean sins. I felt that God was real only when I was in a meeting. When I went home alone, I had no prayer life. I would spend only five minutes every night in prayer. I felt very empty and wondered if Christianity was real.

After I got out of high school I began to attend the University of Waterloo where I was studying computer science. There I began to attend a large Christian group on campus. Because I attended regularly and was very enthusiastic, they made me a Bible-study leader and I began to lead others.

But despite all these things, I was growing very restless in my life. I was beginning to wonder about the validity of the Bible. I was talking to many people about different religions, and they were telling me that their religion was the true religion and that Christianity was false. I was very uncertain because I lacked a true conversion. Although I had gone to church for several years, no one had told me that I needed to confess my sins and forsake my sins. As a result, the way in which I was trying to follow God was becoming very unreal to me. So when these people told me these things, I began to believe them and I began to doubt the validity of the Bible, and I began to doubt the very existence of God. Thus I was deciding in my heart that I would throw away the Bible and turn to some other religion.

At this time, in my confusion, I was praying and asking that the one true God should reveal Himself to me—the God who could save me from my sins, the God who could give me peace and deliverance in my life—that was the God whom I wanted to follow. When I was praying this prayer in 1981 in the summer, I met a brother from the Laymen's Evangelical Fellowship. He told me that Jesus Christ is a living and a speaking God, and that Jesus Christ can give a young man the deliverance and the victory over sin in the days of his youth. I had gone to so many Christian leaders and youth retreats and youth camps, but no leader had ever told me that it is possible for a young man to live a holy life.

When this brother told me these things, I was first suspicious because he came from India. I felt that the gospel should go from Canada to India and that I should be teaching him. I had invited him to my Bible-study to teach him.

But when he told me these things, the Word of God began to burn into my heart. As I began to pray with this brother and as he talked with me, I began to see the depth of my sins. For the first time, I saw that I needed to confess my sins before God.

As I waited upon the Lord and studied His Word, God convicted me deeply that I needed to retribute the things I had stolen. As the Spirit of God convicted me, I obeyed God in these steps. I went to my parents and asked their pardon because I had stolen money from the house. And I went to places where I worked, at a gas station, and returned money. I humbled myself before people to whom I had lied. In all the areas that God showed me, I set my conscience right with man, and I humbled myself deeply before God.

Then the cross of Christ stood before me, and I saw that the Lord Jesus had died for my sins. A great joy and peace began to take hold of my life, and a new power came into my life. God gave me victory over all my unclean sins. God began to give me victory in my thoughts, and God spoke to me from Psalm 73:22 and on, that he had forgiven me. It says:

"So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."

When I read these words, I was really filled with joy and praise and I knew for the first time, after over ten years of doubting and questioning, that Jesus Christ is the only way to God.

After this, God taught me how to pray. God showed me that I should spend one-tenth of my time every day in prayer and Bible study. He also taught me to keep the Lord's Day, to sanctify it and to keep it holy. Even when I had examinations early Monday morning, I would close my books Saturday night. As I obeyed God in these things, a new grace came into me to concentrate more on my studies in the other six days of the week, instead of my thoughts wandering all over the place. God put me at the front of the class in some of the subjects I was taking, much to my surprise. How I praised God for these things. God began to teach me and lead me in every step. He also strengthened me through the fellowship of his children.

—Vinay Deshpande

go only some distance in religion. They want blessing from God. But what do they do for God? Nothing!

If one of your children chooses to do God's work, you are distressed. There is no sacrifice. When it comes to sacrifice you step back. You seek God for health and happiness for yourself. Are you seeking God when it means many more things in the package? Or are you seeking God at all costs? If the Government were to go against you, would you still seek God? You want to see the mighty God doing great things for you but the bleeding Saviour you do not want. *"And seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not."* (Jeremiah 45:5)

Do not seek God for a reward. If you are willing to bear the crown of thorns for your neighbour, it is the proper thing. If you are ready to be put to shame for Christ, it is the right thing. The final teaching of the Lord is not a kingly crown but a crown of thorns. Have you desired to do anything for Christ? When you seek God first other things will follow. Those who seek God will not seek things for themselves. Some of us have only seen God in the fiery bush. We have to see Him on the bleeding Cross.

—Late Mr. N. Daniel

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