

Christ is Victor

MAY/JUNE 2011

“For God So Loved the World”

“Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”

2 Corinthians 11:28

St. Paul went through many trials and adversities in his life. Concluding his list of adversities, he says, “Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.” To him the stripes, the prisons, and even the stoning seemed like a pretty simple matter; it was the care and responsibility for all the churches which was his principal burden. This concern came upon his soul daily. Irresponsibility and a lack of concern for others are becoming more and more quite a mark of our times.

As you look around at people today, it is immediately clear that most people are struggling with their own burdens and sorrows. Problems, problems, problems! The word “problem” has become a favorite word in many people’s vocabulary. Under the weight of mounting problems their nerves are shattered, their homes have become little hells and they have no thought or tear for anyone else. How sad this is!

Now, a Christian can never be that way. He might share the tears of thousands and carry the weight and burdens of many, yet he still has that extra capacity to love and bear the cares of some more souls. Hence, God gives us immense resilience and endless expandability. Some people say, “How is that possible?” But I see this

... “WORLD” CON’T ON PAGE 4

“A Glimpse of Heaven”

I had a vision once which made me take my Christian life far more seriously than I had ever done before.

In this vision, I saw myself as one who was active in Christian activities. I went to Christian meetings, taught in the Sunday School, and now and then visited the sick. In all these things I was quite sincere and had no idea of playing the hypocrite. In fact, I considered myself to be quite a shining light.

Without any warning, I became terribly sick one day, and was brought to the brink of death. But since I was a born-again Christian, I knew that I could rely on the mercy of my Saviour. Then I lost consciousness, and all of a sudden, found myself in heaven. It was wonderful to see the saints of God there.

At first I was swallowed up with great joy with the thought that I was safe and free from sin- and I was. But then I began to feel lonely and a little sad. I somehow felt unfit to mingle with these glorious saints.

My thoughts went back to my past life and it unfolded before me like a movie-film. But across it all was written the one word “Forgiven”. “Oh, praise God,” I thought, “there is no record of my sins.”

But further glance at the record of my life troubled me. The record showed my thoughts, feelings, actions etc. It showed how and for what I had used the time, talents and money which God had entrusted me with, during my life on earth.

Now I saw the world as God saw it- reeking with lust, adultery, hatred, witchcraft, war, lying, gossiping, rebellion, greed, pride, hypocrisy etc. I could now see the millions blinded by sin, staggering and falling into the pit of hell. No one seemed to care for them. I also heard the screams of agony of those caught in

the web of sin. But no one seemed interested in helping them.

I had been too busy (during my earthly life), having fun- even religious fun. As I now saw myself and my way of life as God had seen it, I became sick with the realization that I had lived selfishly.

“If only I could get back my wasted life,” I thought. But that could never be possible. My opportunities on earth were now past. “Oh God”, I thought, “I would give anything to have lived my life to its fullest for Christ”.

Suddenly one of the glorious saints came to me. He said he had come to hear me tell of the victories I had won and of the souls I had had the privilege of pointing to Christ. What could I say? All I could remember was my life of ease and comfort. My life had been filled with seeking to please myself. He asked me concerning his son. His son had been full of rebellion and he had lived near me. “Did you speak to him of Christ? Is there some hope of his being saved?” he asked.

My heart sank within me as I heard his question. What could I reply? I had known the boy and his problems. But not wanting to get involved in his difficulties. I had ignored him. The boy’s father must have guessed the truth when he saw me silent. He looked at me with a look of disappointment for himself and pity for me, and then slowly turned and went away.

And then I saw another glorious person. This was a widow who had struggled through great difficulties on earth, and had led all her children to Christ except her youngest girl. She told me that her youngest daughter had been led astray by the empty glamour of the world. “If someone had shown her Christ’s love perhaps she might have opened her eyes,” she said, “You knew

... “HEAVEN” CON’T ON PAGE 4

Christ is Victor
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“A Teenage Triumph”

“THREE YOUNG PEOPLE KILLED, 3 HURT IN 3-CAR CRASH. Palm Springs, June 6. Three young people were killed and three others injured in a three-car head-on collision on Highway 111 at the northern edge of this desert resort town this afternoon. The dead were Robert Joseleyn...his passenger Karen Ruth Johnson 17...”

With these words a correspondent for the Los Angeles Times broke the front page news in cold print to the sprawling city of Los Angeles that a horrible tragedy had just taken place in nearby Palm Springs. Three young people had been cut off in the bloom of their lives, and a fourth soon died from injuries in the accident.

What the correspondent could not have known was that the family of Karen Johnson would publish a brochure in which they described this indubitable tragedy from a human point of view as “A Teenage Triumph.” Perhaps as many as 1,000,000 copies of this brochure, in twelve different languages, have since been distributed.

TRIUMPH?

How could a grieving family possibly view the sudden death of one of their dear members as “triumph”? The answer to this question lies in the fact of Karen and her family’s belief that not even death itself can separate us from the love of God.

DEDICATED

Like so many other Christian parents, Edward and Joyce Johnson

decided to dedicate their first-born daughter to the Lord. One Sunday morning they went to Moody Memorial Church in Chicago where, in a dedication service, Pastor Harry Ironside prayed that the Lord would bless their small child. For the Johnsons this was no mere ceremony. They believed that the Lord had given Karen Ruth to them as a gift; Karen belonged to Him, not to them. To be certain that Karen would later know that she had been dedicated to the Lord, Ed Johnson made a recording of the service.

As a small child, Karen was full of life. She loved to play. She also loved to listen to Bible stories which her mother and father read to her. One evening when she was five, she said to her mom: “I want to give my life to the Lord.” She got down on her knees and asked Jesus to come into her heart.

THREE HOMES

Not much time later, as the family was driving near the Johnsons’ summer home at Bethany Beach, Michigan, with Karen sitting in the back seat of the car, she suddenly piped up with: “Daddy, you know we have three homes.” One of her startled parents turned to the five-year-old in the back seat and asked: “What do you mean, Karen?” She responded, “We have one home in Illinois, one home in Michigan, and one home in Heaven.” Her father was to remember this incident very clearly later in his life.

Karen Johnson was a very special person. Both the fellows and the girls in her youth group found her both kind and outgoing. They held a

surprise party for her when she was a senior in high school. Her classmates at San Marino High School were so impressed by her personal warmth and charm that they described her as a “precious pearl” in her senior yearbook.

But what made her so special? What made her so attractive to literally hundreds of people? It was probably only after Karen’s death that some of us began to realize how deep her love for the Savior had been. For she knew Jesus in a way that transformed her relationships with her teenage friends.

On Thursday June 4, 1959, Karen finished a school assignment at San Marino High School. On Friday, June 5, 1959, she gave it to her teacher. On Saturday June 6, the very next day, Karen’s earthly life ceased in the split-second trauma of a head-on automobile accident.

It was only after the accident that a next door neighbor girl reminded the Johnsons that Karen had written the school assignment. The San Marino high school principal looked for it and gave it to the parents. The Johnsons had never read it before. Karen had written it as her last senior paper for her high school teacher. The paper revealed her deep love for the Lord Jesus.

Karen’s “Philosophy of Life” starts like this: “My philosophy of life is based on the Holy Bible and the God that wrote it. I know that He has a plan for my life and through daily prayer and reading of His Word I will be able to see it. As far as my life work or life partner is concerned I am leaving it in His hands and am

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This Fellowship is a non-denominational missionary movement 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.

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willing to do anything He says.”

“I feel that this philosophy is very practical and can be applied to everyday life. Every decision can be taken to the Lord in prayer and the peace that comes from knowing Jesus Christ as my personal Savior is something many cannot understand. Many search for a purpose and reason for life. I know that I am on this earth to have fellowship with God and to win others to the saving knowledge of His Son, Jesus Christ. I know that after death I will go to be with Him forever...”

When the automobile accident took place on June 6, 1959, Karen’s family was out at the family cabin in Hesperia, near Palm Springs. As a friend and several others came toward the cabin, Ed Johnson sensed that something was wrong. He left the cabin to meet them and asked, “Is it Karen?” The friend sorrowfully explained what had happened and asked if he could help Ed by telling the family. Ed Johnson thanked him and said that this would not be necessary. He walked back into the cabin and gathered the family around him. Even in this dire situation, the Lord met Ed Johnson’s needs as a grieving father. Ed introduced the family members to the tragedy with these words: “Before we asked God why He took Karen Home, let us thank Him for the seventeen years we had with her.”

One of the police officers who had first come upon the scene of the accident took Ed Johnson aside at the inquest, saying to him: “You are a Christian, aren’t you?” “Yes,” replied Ed Johnson. Then the officer told him, “I will never forget the smile on her face.”

Throughout the years the Johnsons have received boxes of letters from people who had read Karen’s “Philosophy of Life.” many have noted that they had decided to follow Christ after reading this “Philosophy,” and some young men decided to go into the Christian ministry as a result of it. Perhaps the Johnsons were right after all. This was indeed a “Teenage Triumph.” Their daughter Karen was at her third home-with the Lord she so dearly loved.

-Selected

“The Widow’s Faith”

“...And many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing...For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.” (Mark 12:41-44)

Jesus watched and He saw the self-congratulatory way in which the rich were giving their contributions. They were not giving with gratitude that God had enabled them to give that much for His great purpose. As for the widow, according to mathematics, she gave 100 percent and that was in greater proportion than that of the rich. It is not the hand, but the heart behind the hand that matters. We should not give with the attitude of bribing God.

God is specially mindful of widows. It was the widow’s oil that Elijah, the man of God, multiplied. It is the widow that has brokenness who is very acceptable to God. “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” (James 1:27)

There is, in this widow, no hatred or resentment or unfaith in God. The rich men had a very different attitude. Their money had buried them in self-satisfaction and hence prevented their talents from coming out. God sees wealth in the rich man greater than his riches. It is your personality, life and preaching that God depends on, but He looks for faith. How many young people in Christian homes die early! They never cared for God nor developed faith, and now they cannot cope with sickness. What a loss is their death! The rich men’s faculties are never developed. The riches of the rich men are buried in them and the talents God has placed in them for the benefit of the world lie hidden.

Hudson Taylor and Wesley- how they developed their spiritual faculties and proved a blessing to the world! How many men who came into riches in the middle of their lives, have become useless for the kingdom of God! Some got it by marriage and some by their own pursuit. It was money that they aimed at and it was money that they got. Of course, they give to God. But they themselves are not His. This widow gave her all.

“Who has known God’s mind?” Do you know how much He has given for you? If you did, you would give all. You would empty yourself. “Empty the barrel

and empty the oil out of the cruse”, was what Elijah said. “You will see how it will be filled again.”

God sent the prophet to the widow of Zarephath. He came to turn death into life, sorrow into joy. Let not disappointment pull you down. When you come to the end of your resources, it is God’s time, God’s opportunity. As long as you have something to look to, and to rely on, you will look in that direction. But when there is nothing to depend upon, then you come to the place of the widow’s hopelessness, the widow’s brokenness, and that is God’s opportunity. The widow had no future. But God created a future for her. God was mindful of her. When there is no one to help you, God will help you.

Once Sadhu Sundar Singh was in a desert and missed his way. In that helplessness, he cried to God. He could see nothing but sand all around. Then there came a man and engaged him in gentle conversation that completely relieved him of his fatigue. Soon they came to a village and the man disappeared. Sundar knew it was an angel.

God’s angels are watching those in despair. It is not God’s purpose to let any one die in despair. God has great things for you. When you come to a place of despair, you will see God’s glory. Keep your heart humble, then you will see God’s blessing and His multiplying you.

-Late Mr. N. Daniel

**REALITY
CHECK!**

**“I WILL BLESS THE
LORD AT ALL TIMES: HIS
PRAISE SHALL CONTINU-
ALLY BE IN MY MOUTH.”**

- PSALM 34:1

her. Did you take time to talk to her?" Again I was silent. I bent my head down as I could no longer bear to see her looking intently at me for an answer.

As I was deep in thought, another form appeared before me. This was the glorified form of one who had been a black man on earth. He introduced himself and asked me concerning the Christian group with whom he had labored and of his companions whom he had left behind- many of whom I knew. "Did you try to help them?" he asked, "Was your life an example to them? Please tell me, did you make some attempt to lead them to salvation?"

I knew his group. But I had never given them any encouragement or help. I had reasoned that they did not belong to my group, they did not hold my convictions, and they were quite different from me in many respects. But now in the clear light of heaven, I could see that I had been full of spiritual pride. "Oh God," I thought, "Is this heaven? Will the selfishness of my past life haunt me throughout eternity? Lord, I feel so wretched and unworthy. If only I could live my life over again."

I felt nothing but anguish and wondered if I would find any comfort at all in heaven. I had wasted my life in useless ambitions and trifling pleasures- when it might have been filled with sowing deeds that would have produced a never-ending harvest of heavenly fruit.

Then I saw a marvelous sight. Thousands of God's faithful servants through the ages were passing by me. They looked like gods and I would have given anything to possess their joy and beauty. And then I saw Jesus, the King of kings Himself. What a look of love and admiration He gave those faithful servants of His, as though He was saying. "Well done, My faithful brothers." Oh, that look of Jesus! I felt it would be worth dying a hundred deaths to get one such loving look of recognition from Him.

Then He turned and look at me- in pity- and said, "You will find yourself very little in harmony with these who laid down their lives to bring honor to Me".

"Oh God! Oh God!", I cried, "Hide my shame. If only I had valued the opportunities that You had given me to serve You. Why did I chase after such hollow ambitions and comforts? Lord, help me!"

Mercifully, it was only a vision. I awoke to find that I was still on earth. I still had opportunity to live my life completely for Him Who had given up everything for me.

-William Booth

happening all the time in my own life and in the lives of those who are seeking to tread in Jesus' footsteps.

"The care of all the churches comes on me daily." How careful we should be that instead of worrying about things and getting deeper and deeper into materialism we should be concerned about the perishing souls and cry to God. Nor should we say. "It is just for my church or my little circle that I am concerned about." We cannot become insular, parochial, or even paranoid about our own nations. These churches for which St. Paul prayed and yearned daily were scattered over a very large geographical area and therefore did not belong to any one nation. In the Fellowship where I am called upon to minister and from where I go to speak and labor in many nations, we are being taught to love all people. So there are no linguistic, caste or class, color or other barriers or divisions among us. Christ died for all. Christian love and concern knows no narrow boundaries.

It is getting around in many Christian circles that the man who loudly strums a guitar—be he in time or not- and jumps up and down and swings and sways with the melody is the best Christian in town. That is wrong. You need to go and see whether the carpet by his bedside is worn from his kneeling or whether the carpet in front of his mirror is worn from his strenuous labors there. When did he last shed a tear for someone in pain or someone in Satan's wild clutches? We have very false standards today and we must repent for deceiving ourselves in this fashion. Where is our care and love for the millions that have not even heard the name of Jesus?

In a corner of England, a tiny church raised eighty thousand pounds for famine relief for Ethiopia. I was amazed that with all the unemployment that was prevailing in many areas of England at that time, twenty or thirty ordinary people should be able to raise such a huge sum of money. It, no doubt, shows their tremendous compassion and their firm desire that children should not die for lack of bread or any effort on their part in a distant land. We must all praise God for such caring people.

After the recent tsunami tragedy, faced with a picture of many destitute children and homeless people before us, are we moved to tears to pray and help such people? What the camera cannot picture is the desperate gnarled, broken, pit-ridden, devastated bleeding souls of men, women and children who are without Christ. We must see them as Jesus sees them. We must strain every nerve, wring every tear, spend all we can to reach such souls.

I always keep saying to myself, "How little I am doing for my Lord and for souls!" It is a crying shame that those who call themselves Christians today have little burden and practical concern for the millions who are without Christ. What shall we answer God? Does the care of all these souls come upon us? Do we ever act as our Lord and Master did, when he said. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring in."

Please know this, that when you lift others you become stronger. When you build the work of God, such that more souls can be brought into the kingdom of Jesus Christ, then you will become richer and your life far more beautiful. Do not get bogged down nursing some grievance, some hurt which someone gave you, or some selfish project of your own. This is the time to weep for souls, and to reach out to men and women wherever God has placed us and also to the ends of the world.

-Joshua Daniel

Weekly Meetings —Welcome to All—

Sunday Morning Worship at 10:00 am at:
Community Christ Church in Novi, MI
46200 West Ten Mile Rd.

Call (248) 486-6326 or (248) 380-8633
University of Michigan Mondays 7:00pm
Angell Hall, Room G-144
Call (248) 486-6326

University of Windsor Sundays 5:00pm
Iona College 208 Sunset Ave.
Call (519) 966-4603

Oakland University: (248) 374-5565

For info on other meetings. Call:

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Los Angeles, CA: Time Warner Cable-24

Sun. 7:30 am

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