

Christ is Victor

MAY/JUN 1999

Torn In Half

(A Story from France)

Some years ago a colporteur might have been seen winding his way through the forest to the door of a country cottage in France. Arrived, he greeted the woman within and offered a New Testament for sale.

Jeanne hesitated. Would the priest approve? That was the question. Still she wistfully eyed the neat little volume.

“Do not be troubled, Madame,” urged the colporteur. “The priest would sin against God if he prevented you reading of the love of the good Christ.”

At last she produced 50 centimes, and, taking the book, said, “I cannot refuse, Monsieur, but may I be pardoned if I sin.”

Presently in came Jacques the charcoal burner, her husband. After his tea Jeanne rather timidly produced her book for his inspection. As she rather feared, he was tired and cross, and upbraided her for spending his money in this fashion.

“But”, said she, “the money is not all yours, Jacques. I brought money from my home when we married. The half franc was as much mine as

... “TORN” CON’T ON PAGE 4

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“How Long Shall I Cry?”

“O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! Even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save! Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? For spoiling and violence are before me: And there are that raise up strife and contention. Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth.” (Habakkuk 1:2-4)

Habakkuk also saw some of the things that we see now in the present days. It is very hard for anybody whose heart is turned from sin to righteousness to see these things. Habakkuk began his prayer in a note of spiritual complaint—“How long shall I cry and Thou wilt not hear! Why should you cause me to behold grievance.”

Some times when we see such things, we tend to get used to these things. What is the general response of ordinary people? ‘Oh, we are only men, how can we expect righteousness? This is the way of the world.’ But God’s children respond in a different way. They bring their complaints before the Lord. Why do they do so? They have a burden and the hope for a better life. They know things need not continue like that. If we are faithful, our prayers will be heard and conditions will change.

“But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before

him” (Hab. 2:20) So, the Lord is not dead. He is alive. He has said that vengeance is His; not ours. But, very often we like to do what is God’s work alone. We like to surpass ourselves and enter into the realm of God. We say, “Why God is so silent?” I say many times, especially when I see evil, “Why God is so silent? Why do the righteous suffer? Why does wrong judgment proceed?” But, instead of fatality, utterances of faith should come out of our lips.

We have the great statement in the second chapter—“...the just shall live by faith” (Vs.4). This faith makes us a loving force. Many people know the theory. They pick up some phrases from the prayers of great men of God and pray wonderful prayers without knowing what they mean. Are we going to be only those who know the theories?

We have got the potential to do mighty things. God has given us enlightenment, the vision and the promises. But have we got the faith and the persistence? In Habakkuk, we see that kind of faith. He did not give up. He did not say, “This is hopeless, this country is hopeless.” He still cried for revival. He wanted to see the work of God renewed.

It is not right to be talking only of what took place ten years ago. That is not real Christianity. You must be talking of what happens today. “Revive your work in the midst of the years” (Hab. 3:2).

... “HOW LONG” CON’T ON PAGE 4

Causes Of Confusion

“Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man” (Psalm 71: 4).

The unrighteous men are cruel men. One need not kill us but he can stab us with his ideas — ideas that contradict the Word of God. Anyone that contradicts the Word of God is an enemy of the Word and of God’s children.

“My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger, Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth. Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go humble thyself, and make sure thy friend” (Proverbs 6:1-3). We are not to sell ourselves to our friends nor should we borrow their appealing ideas. And sometimes even our parents may give us wrong ideas. Then we must show them the Word of God. The Word of God alone should guide us.

Sometimes we are so friendly with people that we cannot easily break away from them. Samson could not deliver himself till sudden destruction came upon him.

It is a very sad thing to be

brought into confusion in our lives. We come into confusion when we accept thoughts contrary to the Word of God. We must be careful about every knowledge that exalts itself against God’s word. The aim of the evil one is to destroy your personality by bringing in wrong ideas. Do not lend yourselves to friends that are not truly Christians.

Your service can be limitless if you are entirely in the hands of your loving God. God has a plan for you, a very loving plan. Do not sink your personality in the pleasures of this world. God is pleading with you.

Sometimes confusion comes into us when we go down in prayer. Do not accept too much responsibility which will interfere with your prayer life. Confusion also comes when we accept spiritual responsibilities more than we can bear. The clear will of God must be before you. Take part in the work of God. We are all working as a team. Your oneness with us in the spirit is a great help. If all of us do not take our due share in the work, some will be over-burdened and they will come to confusion.

Let us pray for some of our friends who are far away and struggling to keep their heads above the waters. We should also pray that we

ourselves may not come into confusion.

Do you under value your life? God has set a great value on your personality. There is no one among you whom He cannot use in a mighty way. In your official hours, when the stress of work is upon you, you must be able to go to the great Rock for refuge. Let nothing come between you and God. Do not throw

away your usefulness. How carefully we bring up our own children! God also is careful to teach and train us.

“Thou which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth” (Psalm 71:20). However sore your troubles may be, God will keep your life out of confusion.

Let us be careful about flattery. One who rebukes us and one who corrects us is a true friend. The Word of God never flatters us. Tears are shed by the watching angels when you deliberately reject the counsel of God and plunge yourself into the hands of the wicked.

In Jesus’ life there was no confusion— even on the Cross. Your service to God will bring ten-fold returns to your own home and life.

—Late Mr. N. Daniel

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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.

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Billy's Marbles

All the children were bringing gifts to put into the missionary box. A missionary in far off Africa had once been a worker in their Sunday school in England. Since he had gone to Africa, the children had sent him a big box of useful presents each year.

Billy had heard that others were sacrificing some of their most prized possessions to put into the box. "What could a little boy like me send to Africa?" thought Billy. He got out his box of toys. He loved them all.

"Which of all these toys do I like best?" Billy asked himself, picking up one after another. Then he came to his bag of marbles—marbles of all colors. There were colored glass balls, and big ones with patterns like twisted ribbons. "Ah," said Billy, "wouldn't the Missionary like these? And I would love to give them to him because Jesus has done so much for me."

Running to his mother, Billy told her that he had decided his marbles should go into the missionary box for Africa. Billy's mother hardly knew what to say. She wondered what the people who were packing the box would think of such a gift. But she knew that Billy's heart was full of love, and that giving his precious marbles meant a real sacrifice.

So she took the bag of marbles and put a note in the top, explaining that they were Billy's gift to Jesus. Then the box was packed by a man in the church and finally was carried aboard a big ship to start its journey to Africa.

About this time the missionary was feeling downhearted. His message was not being received by the natives, although he had prayed much and worked hard. Then one day he heard that the headman of

the village was coming to tell him he must go away.

All unexpectedly the box came from England. How happy the lonely missionary was to know that the children of the Sunday school back home were still thinking of him! One by one he lifted the gifts from the box.

Then he came to Billy's bag of marbles. "Marbles!" he exclaimed aloud. "What do they think I want with marbles?" But in top of the bag he found the little note Billy's mother had written: Little Billy wanted to send you his marbles," he read, "because he prized them above all his other toys and wanted to give his best to Jesus." "Well, well" exclaimed the missionary, "God bless little Billy for sending me his precious marbles! Surely God has not forgotten."

What was that? Footsteps outside the missionary's small house. Then someone banged noisily on the door. "Who's there?" called the missionary. "The headman," came the angry reply. "Lord, help me," Prayed the missionary quietly as he went to the door. "I've come to tell you that you are to get out of my village. We won't have your teaching any more," said the headman. You must go at once!"

Just then a Voice seemed to say to the missionary. "Show him the little boy's marbles." So hurrying back into the house, he brought out the bag of marbles. "Look at what I received this morning, all the way from England," he said. Now the Africans had never seen marbles before.

The headman took them in his hand and rolled them across his palms. "Wait," he said suddenly. "I will come back." And off he dashed. In a few minutes he returned with several other village men. Before

long there were thirty men in the missionary's house, all eager to see Billy's marbles.

"Now," said the missionary, "let me tell you a story about Billy, the little boy in England, who loved Jesus so much that he wanted to give the very best he had in order to help others to come to know Jesus too."

The men listened with wide-open eyes. "Tell us more about your God," they said. So then and there the missionary did. After that he had a chance to teach them more and more about God. And as the people heard the Gospel, how that Jesus suffered and died for their sins, and rose again the third day, and lives to save all who put their trust in Him, they turned from their heathen worship to serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

And all this happened because one little boy loved Jesus so much that he gave his very best to Him.

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Say What?

"HE THAT
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PER: BUT WHOSO
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MERCY."

PROVERBS 28:13

I feel so sad, that some people are becoming good intellectual Christians. Christian habits are there: Bible reading is there; going alone for prayers is there. But there is no vital faith. Overcoming life is not there. Is it not a very serious situation? If I had settled down to a defeated Christianity I would never have grown in the Lord. If you are excusing yourself in defeat, that is not vital faith at all. Vital faith breaks through. God must create changes.

There may not be even a palm of man's hand in the sky. But the showers must come. The blessing must come. That is faith. How many times Elijah sent his servant to look at the sky! There is no cloud. "Oh, no, you must go and see again." He sent his servant seven times. Suppose you were that servant, you might have stopped after the third time murmuring about having to give the same answer. Then Elijah's prayer would have been interrupted. He would have gone himself to see the horizon.

But the servant went seven times and came back with the message. "I see a cloud as the palm of a man's hand on the horizon." Elijah said, "That is enough. Let us warn Ahab. I hear the sound of abundance of rain." How can a little cloud bring such a deluge?

Let us look at practical things. Every one has to learn to overcome. There is no exception. God will teach us to overcome. But we should not short-circuit our own prayers by allowing sin in our lives. We must be very careful. We must put away sin. There must not be anything in our lives that hinders prayer and faith.

My main work in the early retreats was prayer. Not a minute was wasted. Not an unnecessary word was spoken. A retreat was so precious. When we heard the Word, it brought great inspiration. Much prayer went up for the work. Evidences of revival began as a result of reviving in our hearts. We never had such situations, where some young people sat under a shady tree and talked something else. But people used to gather together for prayer. Soon there was revival and God's works were manifested amongst us. It must be so always with us.

— *Joshua Daniel*

yours."

"Give me the book," shouted Jacques in a temper. He snatched it from her hands. "The money was half yours and half mine, you say. Very well, the book is the same Viola!" He opened the book roughly, tore it in two pieces, dropping one into his blouse and throwing the other to Jeanne.

Several days later, Jacques sat in the forest by his charcoal fires. He felt lonely. Suddenly he remembered the torn book. He would investigate it. His rough fingers had divided it in Luke's Gospel. He began at the very beginning: "And will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

Spellbound he read to the end of the story, and then a dozen questions presented themselves. What had he done—the poor lost son? Why was he exiled? Where had he been? What induced him to return? The questions haunted him. "I wish I had the beginning of the story," he sighed. At first, pride prevented him asking Jeanne for her part of the book.

Meanwhile Jeanne lived her monotonous days and used her leisure moments poring over her part and spelling out its contents. She began to delight in it, but when she reached the end, her interest was doubly quickened. That younger son, his waywardness, his journey, his sin, his misery, and the wonderful change in his thoughts: "I perish with hunger. I will arise and go to my father." There the story stopped.

But what happened? Did the father welcome him? Her tender heart longed for a satisfactory answer. She even cried over the story, but she could not pick up her courage to consult Jacques.

The days passed. On one, however, the rain poured down with extra vigour, and Jacques came home feeling specially weary. He ate his soup and bread for supper as usual, and at last he blurted out, "Jeanne, you remember the book I tore in two?"

"Oh, yes", said she, half-fearing.

"My part had in it a wonderful story, but only the end of it. I cannot rest until I know the beginning of it. Bring me your piece."

"Oh, Jacques! How wonderful!"

"Why?"

"The same story is ever in my mind, only I lack the ending. Did the father receive the wilful son?"

"He did. But what was it that separated them?"

She brought her piece and knelt by his chair. Together they read the whole of the beautiful parable, and the Spirit of God, who had been working in both their hearts, caused its hidden meaning to dawn on them. That was the first of many Bible readings by the firelight after the soup and bread were eaten, and both have yielded their hearts and lives to the Lord Jesus Christ.

To them the parable of the prodigal son was an absolute novelty. To you it is probably quite familiar, but has it ever raised in your mind the questions that it did in theirs?

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