

Christ is Victor

JUL/AUG 1998

Darkest Night Precedes Brightest Morn

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Mark 15:39-47

There were certain people who followed Jesus to the grave. They had the privilege of seeing what happened to Him right up to the end. They were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and Salome. They loved Jesus and were devoted to Him. I think the mother of Jesus would have been taken home away from the scene by that time. It was too much for her to see her Son whose birth was announced by angels, —her wonderful Son, to die a criminal's death.

Joseph of Arimathaea made a bold decision to go to Pilate and ask for the body of Jesus. He was clear of the blood of Jesus. He did not agree with the decision of the Sanhedrin. Very few people could have done what Joseph did. Pilate was surprised to learn that Jesus was so soon dead. The Centurion who was stationed at the cross handed over the body to Joseph of Arimathaea. Joseph bought a long piece of fine linen cloth. It must have been very costly.

Nicodemus also came bringing a hundred pound weight of spices, to keep the body from putrefying. They did not know what great service they were rendering. It was their darkest hour. The sun which gave them light till now was suddenly darkened. In their darkest hour they did not forget their duty to Jesus.

Faith is the habit of looking to God. When the subconscious is relieved of all sin, we get to the place where we always think hopefully-even under the worst cir-

cumstances. This is only possible for Christians. Oh! The wailing at Hindu funerals. This was their darkest hour, yet Joseph and these women had some kind of hope. It was the darkest hour for the disciples too. They were all sitting together in a room. Their darkest hour had come. Their hopes were shattered. It is wonderful how they faced and came through that hour. Those who know Jesus develop the capacity to stand with hope in the darkest hours of their lives. To know Jesus and to know Him as the Lord of life is the greatest thing.

Death is vanquished. The last thing that God is going to remove from this world is death. Do not think that death will always be here. During the thousand years of Jesus' reign, there will be no death. Death and sin are conquered. A Christian must believe that death and sin will be conquered in his life. How Joseph of Arimathaea must have rejoiced when he saw Jesus on the throne in Heaven and remembered the service that he had rendered to Him. You will never rejoice in anything at the end of your life but in the service you render to Jesus like Joseph who served Him in that darkest hour.

People invited Jesus to dinner, when He was famous and acclaimed. But at this hour when Jesus was killed like a criminal, Joseph valued that bruised and lacerated body. Kings and great warriors receive great honour at the time of their burial. There was no one to pay such homage to Jesus here. The faith of Jo-

... "NIGHT" CON'T ON PAGE 2

The Forgetful Saint

Saint John Cantius was an extremely clever man. So clever, in fact, that he was the head teacher, or professor, in charge of a college for training priests at Krakow, in Poland, a little over five hundred years ago.

But fond as he was of reading and study, nothing gave the Polish saint more pleasure than to go on pilgrimages on foot during the long summer holidays. Best of all he liked to visit cities like Rome. Once he even walked all the way to Jerusalem and back to Poland!

But clever though he was, John Cantius was also very absent-minded and forgetful. When his mind was busy, thinking of all the sacred places he had seen or was about to see, he would often forget almost everything else: what date the term at college was due to begin, or where he had put his money.

His friends were naturally anxious for his safe return from his long pilgrimages. In case he should lose his money, or get into difficulties, they used to sew some gold pieces into the lining of his cloak before he set out from Krakow.

Now it happened on one of his pilgrimages that John Cantius was attacked by robbers. They took all the money they found in his bag: then they asked him if he had

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

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seph was a wonderful faith. He did not expect anything like the resurrection. If people knew He would rise on the third day and receive great glory, many would have done Him honour. But Joseph did Him honour when he did not know about the resurrection. Sometimes when you are straining every nerve and serve God, it appears like a thankless job. People criticize you, your dress, your actions and everything about you.

Jonah was three days in the fish's belly. Jonah 2:2-4. "And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and He heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple." 7th verse "When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD..." There will come times when our souls faint within us. In our desperate condition let us look again to God. Where else is there hope? Jesus used the case of Jonah as an illustration of His death. Jesus was three days in the grave. He was in the darkest place. He went to hell, where lost souls dwelt. But there was nothing to hold Him down there. The Father raised Him again from the dead.

The mystery of Christian life is the life-giving principle in the darkest hour. When temptation is very hard upon you, do not forget to utter the name of Jesus. At the worst moment of your life cry unto Jesus. As Joseph was serving Jesus there must have been some

faint hope in his heart. For ten years I served in this City of Madras during very dark days, when there was no sign of any success. But I looked to God. Now as I see the development of the work, I wonder at it.

Your youthful life will stand as a witness. Victory should be yours in your youth. The victory in your youth will have a great influence on all your life. Get victory over the flesh and in your spirit. Christ's body was bruised for you. One day you will wear a body that cannot be touched by sin. You will enjoy Heaven. Abraham will be there but Judas will not be there. Blind Bartimeus will be there, but the Pharisees who troubled Jesus will not be there. Lazarus will be there but the rich man will not be there. This was the darkest night but it led to the brightest morn.

— Late Mr. N. Daniel

Not Afraid to Die!

In the early days of the first world war, a young English soldier sat right in the front line in a place of extreme danger, calmly reading his New Testament, which had become increasingly dear to him in the terrible days of fighting.

A young officer passing along the

trench glanced at the book and stopped. "Why waste your time over such a worn-out book as that?" he jeered. That is no book for a red-blooded man to read." The young soldier looked steadily into the officer's face. He held up the little Testament and said quietly but earnestly: "This little book, sir, has taught me not to be afraid to die." With a sneer the officer left, but he had not gone far when there was a terrific explosion behind him. He whirled round. A shell had made a direct hit on the parapet in front of the young soldier, and the explosion had buried him beneath tons of debris. Rushing back, the officer and others dug for the buried man, but they reached him too late.

As they lifted out the lifeless body, the officer noticed the little Testament lying on the ground. Without a word he put it in his pocket. Day after day those last words of the young soldier haunted him: "This little book has taught me not to be afraid to die." Finally, he felt impelled to read the little book for himself to find out what in those worn-out pages could make a man unafraid to die.

Months later, when on leave in England, he gave his testimony to a company of God's people telling first the story of the young soldier, and saying: "Those last words of his never left me: 'This little book has taught me not to be afraid to die.' So I, too, began to read it." Then holding up the little Testament, he continued, "This little book has led me to Jesus Christ as my own Saviour and has likewise taught me not to be afraid to die."

— Selected.

CHRIST IS VICTOR

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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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A Master Fisher of Men

Mr. J. Bosinger of Coonor, who died in 1906, 85 years of age, and who came to India in 1847, as the first Industrial Brother of the Basel Mission, having spent more than sixty years in India without a furlough, told me much about Mr. Hebich whom he knew intimately for more than a decade, having sometimes accompanied him on his mission tours. In answer to my question concerning the stability of Hebich's converts he replied:

"The majority of them proved themselves true Christians, many of them having also become great soul-winners. Mr. Hebich knew how to sound the deepest depths of men's hearts. He would give no peace nor rest, until they had made a full surrender to Jesus.

"His method with men often seemed harsh, but then he would say, 'I must first kill them with the hammer of the law, before I can comfort them with the Gospel.' Let me relate to you an instance of his way of dealing with men:

"One day we were out taking a walk, and we came to an engineer's bungalow. 'Come,' said Mr. Hebich, 'let us call and see this man.' I reluctantly entered the house of the gentleman, for I was a stranger to him. As soon as Mr. Hebich saw him, he said, 'I have called to tell you that you ought to be ashamed of yourself, for disgracing your God and your country by your sinful life.'

"The gentleman replied, 'That is none of your business!'

"Mr. Hebich then shouted in a loud, almost angry voice, so great was his zeal: 'That is my business. As a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, I must denounce all sin and unrighteousness. I have now called to demand of you, in

the name of our Righteous Judge, that you repent of your sins.'

"This denunciation made the engineer very angry. 'Leave my house, Mr. Hebich!' he shouted, 'I did not ask you to call, and will not listen to your violent tirades in my own house!'

" 'no, never,' the old man replied, 'I will not leave you, until you confess your sins and beg God's pardon on your knees for leading such a disgraceful life. You are a bad man, and ought to be ashamed of yourself. Get down on your knees and confess, or you will go to hell, to the devils whom you serve. I will not leave you, until you hear my message!'

"Then the man jumped up in a rage and said sarcastically: 'If you don't leave, then I will!' Ordering his boy to have his horse saddled, he left us without another word, and soon we saw him riding away at a furious gallop. Then we left the house.

"I felt annoyed at Mr. Hebich's abruptness and remarked to him: 'Now you have spoilt all by your hard words. It is not necessary to break down the door, if you would enter a house.'

The old man only smiled and said,

'I have fastened a hook in him that he will not get away from.'

"He was right. Before he called to see such men, he would always spend much time in prayer for them. Only when he had the assurance of victory in prayer, the witness of the Spirit, would he call to see them, but then he came as a victor.

"Three days after this stormy visit to the engineer's bungalow, the gentleman wrote Mr. Hebich a chit: 'Dear Mr. Hebich, for God's sake come to see me at once! I have not slept a wink since you were here. I am all undone. I can find no peace nor rest. My conscience condemns me. I am in hell. What must I do to be saved?'

"Then Mr. Hebich brought Jesus to the man and the man to Jesus. Soon the engineer saw Jesus on the cross, and could believe that the bleeding Saviour had with His own precious blood also washed his sins away.

"This engineer, in after years, proved by his pure, consistent, humble life that he had truly repented of his sins, and that he had become indeed a true disciple of Jesus."

— Selected

You are invited to attend the L.E.F.I.

Summer Retreat!

Aug. 18-23, 1998

*Please call any of the numbers
listed on page 4*

*Or write to us at: Summer Retreat
25128 Fair Oaks Dr. South Bend, IN 46614*

anything else? "No," replied the saintly professor, in his usual absent-minded manner, "nothing else, nothing at all."

So the robbers left him, and went on their way over the brow of a hill and out of sight.

Scarcely before John Cantius remembered: those extra gold pieces sewn into his cloak lining! Oh, dear! What a shame and what a terrible thing! Here were poor men, so desperately in need of money that they would stoop to robbing travellers, and he, a follower of Jesus Christ, had told these poor men a lie! He must act at once to put matters right.

A few minutes later the astonished robbers heard someone running down the road after them. It was John Cantius.

"Stop! Stop!" he was shouting, "I find I've got some more money after all! I forgot to give it to you!"

You will be glad to hear that this story had a happy ending. Those robbers were not such very wicked men, really. They were so touched by the open-handed goodness of the Polish saint that instead of accepting the extra gold coins he wanted to give them the robbers insisted upon giving him back all his money.

If ever anyone should say to you that the teaching of Jesus takes a great deal of living up to, just tell them this story from the life of St. John Cantius. For all he was so forgetful, he remembered to act in the spirit of what Jesus commanded:

"Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you... To him who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from him who takes away your cloak do not withhold your coat as well." *Luke 6:27-29, R.S.V.*

— Selected



Family Day Meeting in Germany (March 29)

How quickly a month has gone by since the Family Day in Germany! And now Easter has also come and gone! Although our work is quite young in Germany, it is the first country where our retreat began to be held regularly overseas. Thus over these 25 years and more, some of our people have been getting older. One com-

mon factor in the minds of many elderly people is that 'over sixty' should mean more sickness and at greater frequency. Now this is entirely wrong. The closer we get to the tape which signifies the end of the race, the more determinedly we run. It grieves me, however, to see some of our older people leaving for Home or getting weak in body. Thus we miss them at some of our meetings.

Quite a number of people gathered at this big Recreation Centre near Stuttgart and we had an intense time at the Lord's Feet. The hall would have been more full, had not the Confirmation Day in Germany, when children of 13 are confirmed in the State Church, clashed with our Family Day. This meant that some strangers and others who had dinners and celebrations over someone confirmed in the family- which are a staple on Confirmation Day- did not come. Notwithstanding there were a lot of new faces and our Swiss team was also present. The same evening, following the afternoon session I left for London.

In Malaysia (April 16 & 17)

Although Thursday and Friday were working days and the traffic in Penang was said to be very crippling, yet a goodly number gathered on Thursday night. The meetings went on through the day on Friday. Labouring amongst these young Chinese students will surely give us a great eternal reward in the days to come.

It was unfortunate that Kuala Lumpur, Jehor and Ipoh which desired meetings could not be allocated any time during this trip.

In Singapore (April 18 & 19)

Our Sunday services is slowly gathering swing and our brothers are faithfully labouring. Amongst those who attend our meetings are people from mainland China also. Their knowledge of English is very limited but they sense the spirit of the message and are drawn to the meetings. I always seek to spend a few minutes with these strangers, with no religion, or some little superstitious adherence to Buddhist ritualistic practices such as 'feeding ghosts' of ancestors, etc.

In Australia (April 22 to 27)

While the shifting sands of Australia and the turbulent tides in the land can swirl and waft people along and away quite unpredictably, yet a small group of people who value our retreats come with earnest expectation. Many of them have been bashed and battered rudely and almost brutally from their earlier experiences, without God.

Rodney and Andrea who have a big job bringing up four children, have a longing heart to glorify God. One can get rather lonely and isolated, 'down under' as Australia is not gen-

erally on the beaten track. But the dear Lord gives us a burden for the work.

One woman in fact said to me upon my enquiring after her husband, "He is in the bush," by which she meant that his work place was out in the Australian outback. One lady expressed her deep disappointment over her divorced and remarried pastor, who seemed to have no conscience about getting some of his people to do likewise, especially if he found that they were divorced. The truth which Jesus preached that to marry again, when there is a living partner, is adultery, is something people do not want to know, as it restricts and restrains their wild nature too much. It is hardness of the worst order and affects one's relationships. This long week-end from Friday to Monday noon was owned by God as I preached on the theme: "Choosing the destiny of your family."

It was a joy to see some of our regular radio listeners to our Sunday evening broadcasts, at the retreat. Other radio stations are getting interested in our broadcast. So please pray much for this little work and our hard-working team in Australia.

ARE YOU CONTINUING TO PRAY FOR CHINA? The people there are much upon my heart.

— Joshua Daniel

Weekly Meetings
—Welcome to All—

Ann Arbor every Sunday Morning at 10:00 am
Ann Arbor YMCA, Zonta Room, 1st floor
Call (248) 486-6326

University of Michigan Mondays 7:00 pm
Angell Hall, Room G-144
Call (734) 326-1837

University of Windsor Sundays 5:45 pm
Call (519) 254-0839

Oakland University: (810) 620-1306
For info on other meetings, Call:
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Hear 'The Lord's Challenge'
Weekly Gospel Radio

South Bend, IN: 103 FM (WHME) Sun. 8:30 pm
Buffalo, NY: 99.5 FM (WDCX) Sat. 9:00 am
Detroit, MI: 560 AM (WMUZ) Sat. at 5:00 pm
Shortwave (Sundays at 2:15 pm, EST)
WHRI 19 Metre band 15.355 MHz

Des Moines, IA: 1460 (KDMI) Sun. 10:30 & 1:45 am
Fort Wayne, IN: 1090 AM (WFCV) Sat. 4:00 pm
Chattanooga, TN: 1450 AM (WMOC) Sat. 3:30 pm
Council Bluffs, IA: 1560 AM (KLNG) Sat. 3:45 pm
Atlanta, GA: 86 AM (LOVE 86) Sun. 2:00 pm
In Guyana - GBC - Sundays at 6:30 pm